

A PATRIOT'S LIFE

HONOR & GALLANTRY
AT HOME & ABROAD



BY JOINING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, you have demonstrated your patriotism. But what does it truly mean to be a Patriot?

Patriots change lives. They are called to serve their country, and in answering that call, they have an effect on the people they encounter.

Patriots serve according to both their mission and their passion. They work to save lives. They work to protect the innocent. They work to spread freedom around the world. Some respond to a moment's need and are rightly called heroes. But others serve, just as honorably, by showing up every day and doing the work that must be done.

Whether or not they are wearing their uniform is irrelevant to these generous souls. They don't think of themselves in terms of "in uniform" or "on duty" any more than they think of possible rewards during their heroic and gallant acts. They see what needs to be done and they act.

What they all have in common is a core belief in generosity, bravery, commitment and all the traits that have made our nation and the Guard great. What sets true Patriots apart is that they live every day according to what they believe.



SSG Ken Weichert of the CAARNG.

ALWAYS PREPARED

SSG KEN WEICHERT

SSG Ken Weichert and his wife Stephanie were driving on I-5 when they came upon the scene of a horrendous accident. One vehicle was burning and several others were smashed up nearby.

SSG Weichert, a trained Combat Lifesaver, told his wife to pull over, leaped out of the car, grabbed his first aid kit and the pair ran to offer assistance. Stephanie began doing assessments looking for critical cases. Her husband had taught her the drill: Responsiveness, Breathing, Pulse, Bleeding, Shock, Bones, Burns, Head injury- don't waste time.

"Slow down, learn first aid, stock up your first aid kit... Be safe, be alert, and be alive!"

The Staff Sergeant ran toward three children who had been thrown from a vehicle and began bandaging wounds. By this time paramedics had arrived on the scene and told him that a helicopter was in route. They prepped the children for transport and loaded them onto the helicopter. As the children flew to a nearby hospital, the Weicherts accepted the thanks of the police and the Med Techs and headed off. They didn't make it very far.

Four hundred meters past the first accident was a second, much worse, multi-vehicle pile-up. The couple unhesitatingly threw themselves into the scene. Stephanie once again began conducting triage and searching for scattered victims. SSG Weichert began treating injuries, directing medically inexperienced police officers and firemen, and even leaving triage cards on the people he had helped.

Although three lives were lost in the two accidents, many more were saved. For their unhesitating service, Stephanie Weichert was awarded the Good Samaritan Medal and SSG Ken Weichert was awarded the Knight of Justice Medal.

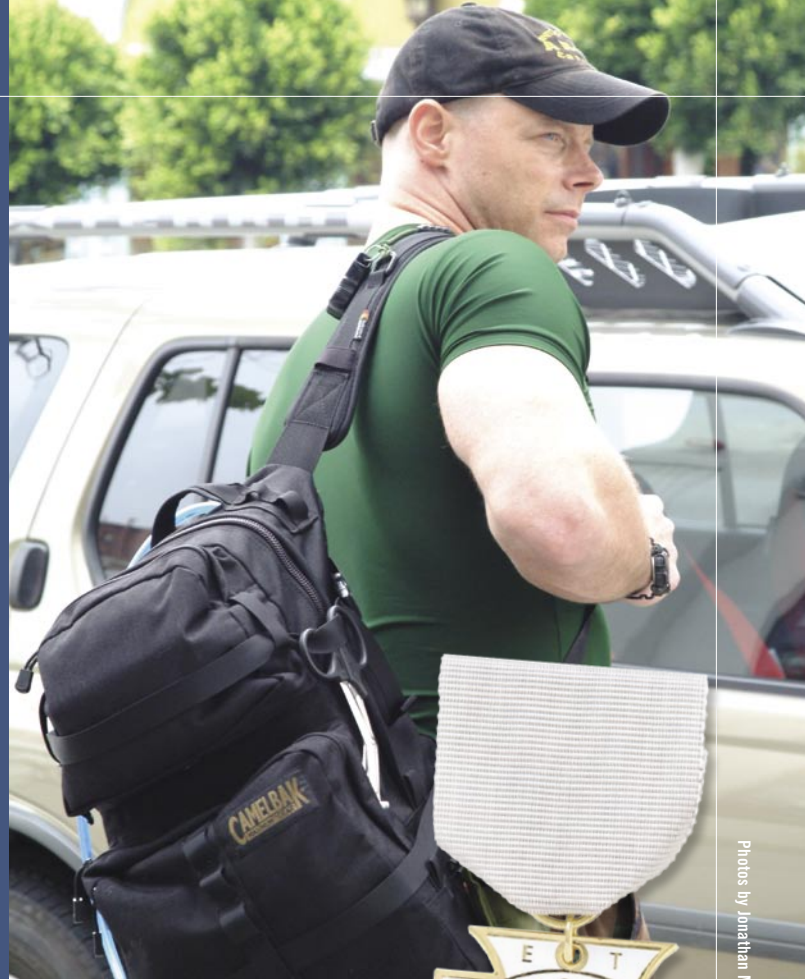
SERVICE

SSG Ken Weichert was awarded the "Knight of Justice" medal and his wife, Stephanie, was awarded the "Good Samaritan Medal" by the California Highway Patrol.

SSG Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie Weichert, operate START Fitness, the Strategic Army Training Program in San Francisco, CA. (No association with the U.S. Army or Department of Defense). For information, go online to: www.StartFitness.com.



Photos by Jonathan Miller



When SSG Weichert told his wife, Stephanie, about an Iraqi boy who lost his arm in a Fedayeen attack, she knew what she had to do. With donations from friends and clients, Stephanie started Operation Humanitarian Aid. With the generous support of actor Gary Sinise, the California Pacific Medical Group and American Airlines, the boy and his father are going to be flown to San Francisco for medical care. As SSG Weichert says, "That's what makes Guard families awesome!"

For information on how you can help Operation Humanitarian Aid go online to: www.StartFitness.com

A NEW NATIONALISM

AFGHANISTAN NATIONAL ARMY

Since early 2002, the Army National Guard has been building the foundation for the new free nation of Afghanistan, working towards the nation's first direct presidential election on October 9. This election, described by President Bush as "a critical step forward in Afghanistan's transition to democracy," will be possible, despite terrorist threats, largely because of protection by the Afghanistan National Army (ANA), which has been trained almost exclusively by National Guard Soldiers.

Assembling a unified National Army has proved a significant challenge primarily because the Afghan people's loyalty historically has been first to their tribe. However, Coalition forces are confident that Afghanistan will succeed, as the new ANA is training not only in combat, but also nationalism and its role in the greater good of Afghanistan's future.

Tribal culture, however, is not the only challenge facing ANA training. Combating desertion and instating crucial



THE PATCH OF THE 1ST KANDAK (BATTALION) OF THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

Near the top of the patch the words "God is Great" is embroidered with the unit identification inscribed below two sheaves of wheat. Near the bottom of the patch are the colors of the Afghanistan national flag.

ethnic diversity also proves significant. To rectify this, recruitment centers have been established around the nation to draw a force more representative of the Afghan people. Additionally, recruiter training is now underway with recruiters expected to enlist 350 new recruits every three weeks.

"The Afghan people could have no better partners in building their new army than these National Guard units of the United States Army" declared MG Craig Weston, Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation during the Aug. 5 ceremony in which the INARNG assumed control over the ANA from the OKARNG.

COMMITMENT

Operating under the name Task Force Phoenix II, the OKARNG grew the ANA to almost

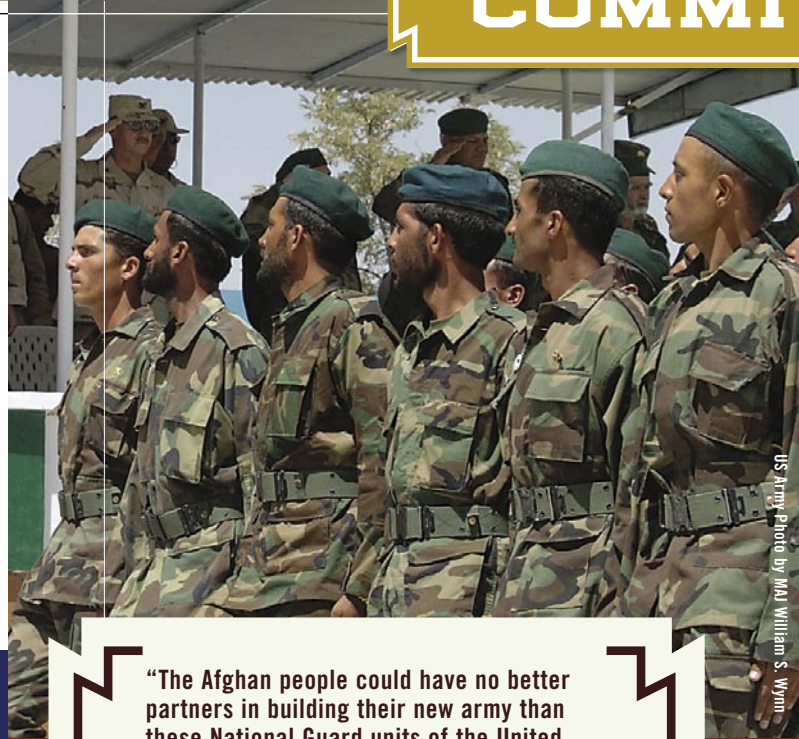
14,000 Soldiers - a huge step up from the ANA's humble beginnings of just 350 in their first 2002 graduating battalion. The long-term plan set by the U.S. administration and the UN organizers is for U.S. and Coalition forces to train up to 18 battalions for the ANA (70,000 Soldiers by 2009).

One Guard Soldier who recently visited the Kabul ANA recruitment camp reports, "The recruiter has no car and is totally reliant on COIs and VIPs to help bring kids in. Once he gets them to sign, he houses them in the recruiting station until he has, literally, a bus load, and then he takes a 12-14 hour bus ride to get them to MEPS. The record, here in Kabul, is 29 enlistees for one recruiter in a day." He added, "The recruiters here are doing a tremendous job, and it is an honor to be able to assist, even in small ways, to help build the first National Army in this country."

With Afghanistan's first presidential election just over the horizon and boiling tensions erupting in violence, the importance of the ANA is underlined. Dozens of civilians and electoral workers have died this past summer in election-related, terrorist attacks carried out by the Taliban, who continues to "warn" the Afghan people against voting. October 9, 2004, will no doubt prove to be a monumental day in Afghanistan's history - whether or not that is in infamy or celebration has yet to be seen. However, the ANA, backed by the Army National Guard, are determined to give freedom and democracy a chance to take root.

"The Afghan people could have no better partners in building their new army than these National Guard units of the United States Army"

**MG Craig Weston
Chief of the Office of Military Cooperation**



US Army Photo by MAJ William S. Wynn