

VANGUARD



Virginia Air National Guard

192nd Fighter Wing

March

Enlisted Elite

■ *Best in blue recognized
for being top performers*

State and Wing Honor NCO

While enjoying the Curaçao end-of-deployment party in December, Tech Sgt. Adrian Taylor was pleasantly surprised to find out he had just been named both the 192nd Fighter Wing and Virginia Air National Guard Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.



Tech Sgt. Adrian N. Taylor

According to Taylor's immediate supervisor, Senior Master Sgt. Eddie Harris, Taylor goes above and beyond what he needs to do, in order to support the mission. "I can call him when we're flying night missions during the week and he'll come out after his regular job and volunteer with us," Sergeant Harris said. "I can always count on him when I've got a slot I need to fill somewhere. He is very deserving of the Outstanding NCO title and everyone in the unit is very excited for him. We're very proud of him."

"I never mind helping out if I can," said a modest Taylor. "I try to set an example for others, that hard work and cooperation helps get the job done."

Wing Honors Senior NCO



Master Sgt. Angela M. DiCentes

In the five years she's been with the unit, her service and contributions have truly shined. Thus, it wasn't a big surprise for many people, to learn that Master Sgt. Angela M. DiCentes was named the Wing Outstanding Senior

NCO of the Year.

The modest Imagery Analyst and Intelligence NCOIC said she was truly surprised. Considering her work on the Theater Airborne Reconnaissance System (TARS), it's understandable. She has taken numerous deployments over the last two years to monitor and test the systems' abilities.

"We receive new TARS from contractors, which we attach to our aircraft," DiCentes explains. "We test them here, at Edwards AFB [California] and with the [Tucson] Arizona Guard. Testing ended last fall," she says. "Now we just use them in missions."

What does she like most about the Guard?

"I love my job and the people I work with are great. Especially, the traditional staff. They make my job easy," DiCentes says.

Her advice to new members is to take advantage of the educational opportunities. Tuition assistance is a benefit worth using!

ABOUT the VANGUARD

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for the U.S. military service. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of, nor are they necessarily endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or the Virginia Air National Guard.

Submission Requirements

The Vanguard is printed monthly and the deadline for submitting stories and photos is **close of business on Saturday of the drill weekend**.

The editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 192d Fighter Wing, Virginia Air National Guard, Richmond IAP, 50 Falcon Road, Suite 30, Sandston, VA 23150-2524. Write the PA office or call (804)236-6388 to submit material for publication.

Check out the electronic Vanguard on the base Intranet Web page and visit the VaANG on its Web site at www.varich.ang.af.mil.

192nd Fighter Wing
Virginia Air National Guard

Wing Commander
Col. Stephen R. Hicks

Chief, Public Affairs
Maj. Nahaku McFadden

Public Affairs Staff
TSgt. Michael Rawlings
TSgt. Sabrina Reynolds-James
SSgt. Ann Martin
A1C Veronica Harris

Photographic Support
192d Multimedia Support Center

Wind beneath my 'Wing'

■ *Members roll-up sleeves - saving base over \$90,000 in time and money*

What do you do when you are faced with something you must do and you have never done it before? Do it and do it well.

This was the situation faced by members of the 192nd Maintenance Squadron recently, when a leak was discovered around the wing of aircraft 245. Master Sgt. John L. Hughes, crew chief for aircraft 245 along with Master Sgt. Charlie "Bud" Wood, fuel systems craftsman supervisor were concerned.

"We made a call to the depot," said Wood. "They were backed up and when the time came where they could finally get to it, the cost to the unit would be in excess of \$90,000."

"I guess we all were a little uneasy at first," said Hughes. "We were getting ready for the UCI and the reunion. We had a paint project going on and couldn't use the other side of the hanger. We just had to take the time and do it."

Staff Sgt. David K. Pack, fuel systems craftsman, stated the District of Colombia Guard gave us information on how they were doing it. "We just decided to go by the plan," he said.

"The fuel shop, repair and reclamation, weapons release and the

sheet metal shop were major players in the project," said Hughes. "Fuel shop had the most tedious job of all. They were responsible for removing the old seal, removing the bolts and resealing the wings. R&R was responsible for assisting and handling the wing using the crane to lift and steady it. The sheet metal shop made a few tools to assist with the job. Weapons release was responsible to disconnect the electronics from the wing."

"The whole thing turned out to be not such a big deal after all," stated Hughes.

The operational checks proved successful and it was not long before aircraft 245 was back in the mix. Says Hughes, "We had the capabilities all along."



Image by Senior Airman Culeen C. Schaffer

Gift of Life - Tom Phalen, Fire Department Crew Chief, instructs a CPR class as Senior Airman Denise Dunham looks on.

IN THE NEWS

Wing Honors First Sergeant



Master Sgt. Barry S. Coleman

When asked about his selection as the Wing's Outstanding First Sergeant of the Year, Master Sgt. Barry S. Coleman said, "I was honored and surprised. Several members of the council, I felt, were deserving."

Coleman emphasized the team effort of all first sergeants and everyone doing their part. As First Sergeant, Coleman worked hard on the Unit Family Care Program, the Diversity Council and the Christmas Food / Toy Drive.

"Making sure families are taken care of when a member is to be deployed is crucial. Diversity is equally as important. As a first Sergeant I represent everyone, I appreciate those differences and because of those differences, I'm better at doing what I do. I just try to do my part and do it well," he said.

Coleman stated mentoring and being a positive role model is key to being a good first sergeant.

"Young troops are our future," says Coleman. "It is important that we groom them for positions involving greater opportunities so that we as a unit can continue to flourish."

State/Wing Honor Airman



Senior Airman Ann W. Bey

Senior Airman Ann Bey, a Maryland native, joined the Virginia Air National Guard as a traditional member eight years ago.

According to Bey, she was surprised to hear she was named the Outstanding Airman of the Year for both the wing and state levels.

"I had no clue that I was being considered for this," admitted the 192nd Wing Orderly Room member. "I was just doing my job."

"I enjoy working with the people," said the airman. "It makes my job very interesting. I always strive to provide good customer service. If I don't have an answer right away, I'll do whatever I can to guide people in the right direction."

According to Logistics Squadron First Sergeant Bryant Thorpe, what makes Bey so successful at her job is that she is very customer oriented and a great organizer. "She is a real go-getter. Airman Bey is always willing to do what it takes to get the job done."

She wants to stay with the Virginia Air National Guard until she retires.

BRIEF BEAT

Air Force/Guard news

Gallup Poll Measures Priorities for Incoming Administration

Providing military security for the country ranked 7th out of 14 priorities for the new administration. Of those polled, half ranked improving education as number one. (OSD/PA)

Harris Poll Shows Stronger Military Leading Public Opinion

Asked to look back at the last eight years and ahead to the next four 79% of respondents said that "the U.S. military will be stronger," placing it atop the list of issues about which people are optimistic. (OSD/PA)

New Secretary of Defense Sworn In

Donald H. Rumsfeld was sworn in as the 21st Secretary of Defense. In remarks following the ceremony, Rumsfeld said, "I am grateful to the President for the opportunity to serve again as Secretary of Defense." He was previously the 13th Secretary of Defense, the youngest in our country's history. (DefenseLink)

Medal of Honor Recipient Dies

Air Force Sergeant John L. Levitow, one of only 16 airmen awarded the Medal of Honor for exceptional heroism during wartime died Nov. 8 at his home in Connecticut after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 55. Levitow was the lowest ranking airman to earn the medal. At that time, he served as loadmaster aboard a severely damaged AC-47 gunship flying a mission over Long Binh, South Vietnam in 1969. (AFPN)

TAIL END

State / 203rd Red Horse Flight Honors NCO Who Made a Career Honoring Others

Chief Master Sgt. William S. Fuller, Supply Manager, Readiness Technician and Training supervisor of the 203rd Red Horse Unit of Va Beach, was the choice for state and 203rd's Outstanding NCO of the Year. This award is presented annually to guard members who stand out among others due to their leadership, job performance or involvement in community or Guard related activities.

"There are a lot of members that deserve to be selected," Fuller said. "It took some good people under

me to get things done."

Looking ahead is important to Fuller. The "Testing-out Program," which he was instrumental in developing, serves to validate the training of members in situations rather than continuous classroom time. There is written and performance criteria that must be met.

As a member of the 203rd Top Three Council and the State's Chief's Council, he always expresses his concern for others and those behind him. The most important aspect of his career now is, "Doing my best to take care of troops

under me," Fuller says. "It is important that I continue to do what I can to see that people are ready to move up and that they have the right tools to do the job."

What does he like most about the Guard? Fuller says its members. "The guard family." His wisdom to a new recruit would be to "Give 100%," Fuller says. "Make sure that you feel you are a member of the guard family and do whatever it takes." (No photo available)

From the hands that feed you...

Lunch Saturday March 10

Roast Beef
Veal Steaks
Mashed Potatoes
Green Peas
Devils Food Cake w/Frosting

Lunch Sunday March 11

Roast Pork
Meat Loaf
Oven Brown Potatoes
Mexican Corn
Yellow Cake w/ frosting

Meals will be available during mobility. Visit Services flight for menu.



Image by Senior Airman Culeen C. Schaffer
Preparing Lunch - Staff Sgt. William A. Riccio, services flight



VANGUARD

Serving the 192nd Fighter Wing

April 2001



ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

MSgt. James Beninati
SSgt. Paul Blancato
TSgt. Ernest Blawas
SSgt. Andrew Bridges
MSgt. Eric Bulman
SSgt. Paul Cramer
TSgt. Michael East
SSgt. Ronald Elkin
SSgt. James Ferguson

SSgt. Randy Johnson
SrA. Mathrew Kidd
MSgt. Michael Lane
TSgt. Edwin Richardson
TSgt. Dean Shelby
SSgt. John Sincavage
SSgt. Gregory Skurupey
SSgt. Richard Summerell
Maj. Frederick Watkins III

■ SPECIAL MEMORIAL ISSUE

ABOUT the VANGUARD

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for the U.S. military service. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of, nor are they necessarily endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Air Force, or the Virginia Air National Guard.

Submission Requirements

The Vanguard is printed monthly and the deadline for submitting stories and photos is close of business on Saturday of the drill weekend.

The editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 192d Fighter Wing, Virginia Air National Guard, Richmond IAP, 50 Falcon Road, Suite 30, Sandston, VA 23150-2524. Write the PA office or call (804)236-6388 to submit material for publication.

Check out the electronic VANGUARD on the base Intranet.

Wing Commander

Col. Stephen Hicks

Chief, Public Affairs Editor-in-Chief

Maj. Nahaku McFadden

Public Affairs Staff

TSgt. Michael Rawlings

TSgt. Sabrina Reynolds-James

SSgt. Ann Martin

A1C Veronica Harris

Photographic Support

192nd Multimedia Support Center

NEXT UTA

April 7th and 8th

Heart wrenching and warming

Col. Stephen R. Hicks

Wing Commander

On March 3, 2001, one of the most tragic events in National Guard history occurred.

Twenty-one National Guardsmen lost their lives in a C-23 crash, 18 were members of the 203rd Red Horse Civil Engineer Flight in Virginia Beach.

The days following the crash were the most heart-wrenching of my life. Thirty-five children are fatherless and eight wives are without husbands. Almost 300 immediate family members are without a son, grandson or brother. Red Horse members are without their fellow Guardsmen and close friends. Our country has lost patriots who are modern day heroes and we are all affected by it. They will be missed, but not forgotten.

In the midst of this heart wrenching

tragedy, there were many heart warming moments. Such life-changing events often bring out the best in people and the 192nd united.

Upon notification, a crisis team was mobilized. Commanders, officers and our entire staff of chaplains were dispatched to the 203rd Red Horse Flight to assist with the difficult task of next-of-kin notification.

Public Affairs personnel worked around the clock dealing with the media. Our Support Group commander established a 24-hour Command Post operation at Richmond to handle critical support needs such as transportation, casualty assistance, administrative personnel, security police, food service, family support, medical, honor guard, mortuary affairs and funeral details. Our safety officer was dispatched to the crash site to assist in the recovery effort.

Our adjutant general for air and command chief master sergeant flew to Dover AFB to receive the remains. Our State Headquarters Chief of Staff mobilized a team of more than a dozen people to plan a memorial service for the 21 Guardsmen. All working 18-hour days to plan and execute a service in less than a week.

Military honors were rendered with a missing man formation of F-16s, the playing of "Taps" and a 21-gun salute.

Nearly 4,000 people attended the ceremonies, including dignitaries at the state and federal levels. Approximately 400 members of the 192nd Fighter Wing traveled on seven buses to participate. It was commented that this was one of the most moving tributes ever witnessed.

Every person in this wing stepped up to the plate in a time of crisis and made a difference.

You showed great love, encouragement and comfort to the families of our fallen airmen. I believe you were doing God's work. I feel proud and honored to be associated with such caring professionals.

Congratulations on a job well done.



Photo by SrA. Shannon A. Johnson

VOICES LIFTED - Staff Sgt. Avis M. Bennett, Civil Engineer Squadron, leads the wing in song at the memorial service March 11.

From pain, comes hope

By Chaplain (1st Lt.)
Ronnie A. Hankins

Unexpected and tragic losses such as the one suffered by our 203rd Red Horse Flight can often leave many people confused and bewildered, asking "How could something like this happen?" or "Where was God in the midst of all of this?"

Our immediate responses are often feelings of panic, despair or even abandonment.

Yet we can all be encouraged by the words of scripture written by the apostle Paul, which state...

"Nothing, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor death nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord..." Romans 8:38-39.

Because of the unstoppable love that God has for humankind through Jesus Christ, we can find great comfort in the midst of turbulent and difficult times. Jesus stated in the Gospel of Matthew...

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted".

We are blessed, even in the midst of our recent tragedy. Not because of the fact that we have lost a loved one or someone whom may have been very close to us. But in fact, we are indeed blessed because in the midst of our painful loss, we have a close and everlasting relationship with God almighty that sustains us in the midst of the painful times that we are experiencing. Through the storms of this life, we find a great source of encouragement through the faithful relationship we have with God the Father in the midst of the storm.

A wise man once said, "Faith is what's left standing in our lives after the storms has passed..."

Where would we be now, if we did not have God in our lives through these difficult times? This is where we as Children of God find *hope* to continue on.

The men of the 203rd Red Horse

"Our immediate responses are often feelings of panic, despair or even abandonment"

flight who perished while serving their country are "Heroes". They were uncommon men, who uncommonly gave the greatest gift that any person on this Earth can give... they gave their lives.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King once said, " ...Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato or Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's Theory of relativity to serve. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love..."

These men of the 203rd Red Horse Flight were not only truly great, but they were indeed filled with both of these elements, as are the men and women who serve in Virginia

Air Guard. Together, we salute the 18 men of the 203rd and the crew of the Florida Army National Guard. They will live on within our hearts.

Your service and your sacrifice will never be forgotten...



Photo by SrA. Shannon A. Johnson

BURNING BRIGHT - Master Sgt. Gerald L. Golden Sr., Logistic Support Squadron, lights a candle at the 192nd Fighter Wing memorial service held March 11.



Photo by TSgt. Kenneth D. Wright

Nearly 4,000 mourn, celebrate 18 fallen 'Horsemen'

FINAL CALL UP

By SFC Eric Wedeking
National Guard Bureau

Tears and tributes punctuated this past weekend's three memorial services in Virginia and Florida that honored 21 members of the National Guard who perished in a March 3 military airplane crash in rural Georgia.

Governors from both states in which the units are located personally offered their condolences. Letters from President George W. Bush, a former Texas Air National Guard fighter pilot, were read to those who mourned.

An estimated 4,000 family members, friends, military people and other dignitaries poured into the cavernous Rock Church in Virginia Beach, Va., on Saturday to pay their respects.

Nearly 1,000 attended Sunday's services in airplane hangers in Lakeland and Jacksonville, Fla.

The 18 Air National Guard civil engineers from Virginia's 203rd Red Horse Flight and the three Army Guard aviators from Florida's 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation C-23 Sherpa detachment were remembered at all three services.

The Army Guard flight crew was transporting the one officer and 17 enlisted members of the Air Guard construction unit, formed in 1985, back to Virginia

NEVER FORGOTTEN -- Lt. Col. Thomas Turlip (left), 203rd commander, eulogizes his 'lost Horsemen.' A 203rd family (above) observes a portrait of their loved one.

following two weeks of annual training at Hurlburt Field in Florida.

Virginia Gov. James Gilmore III told the families at Virginia Beach that their losses have affected the entire country.

"Today, we come together in this magnificent church to remember and to honor good men who lost their lives doing something they believed in to their core: serving their country, their state and their communities," Gilmore said. "The pain of this tragic loss has touched far more than communities in Virginia, Florida, North Carolina and Georgia. It has touched the nation."

Families also heard messages of condolence from the nation's leaders, including two letters read by Virginia

IN the NEWS



Photos courtesy of military media pool

National Guard Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Claude A. Williams, who hosted the service.

"We mourn together with their loss," wrote Bush in a letter read by Brig. Gen. Claude Williams, Virginia's adjutant general. "They personified the term 'citizen-soldier.'"

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated in a letter to the families that the citizen-airmen and soldiers would be remembered. "These were true patriots serving our country," he said. "Their contributions will not be forgotten."

During the 90-minute Virginia memorial, families viewed poster-sized photographs of their loved ones. Red baseball caps bearing the 203rd Red Horse Flight logo and personal items were also on display.

The families were presented shadow boxes containing folded US and Virginia flags and the citizen-airmen's ranks, ribbons and awards. Members of the unit made those boxes by hand.

After a solitary bagpiper concluded the service with a rendition of "Amazing Grace," the crowd flowed outside to watch four Virginia Air National Guard F-16 jets from Richmond's 192nd Fighter Wing roar over the church. A single fighter peeled off in the "missing man" formation.



Friends of the deceased airmen expressed the hope that the memorial services will start the healing process for the thousands of people who are still feeling the pain.

The accident was a devastating blow to the community. Thirty-seven children ranging from toddlers to high school students are without fathers.

"Especially with the family and the unit members, it's going to give them some closure," said **Patricia Horrocks** of Virginia Beach and wife of Master Sgt. Jeff Horrocks. She is the 203rd's Family Support Group coordinator.

Other dignitaries included Virginia US Sen. John Warner, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Gen. Michael

REMEMBERING -- 203rd family members (above, left) watch as their loved ones are honored.

Ryan, US Air Force chief of staff. Lt. Gen. Russell Davis, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and Maj. Gen. Paul Weaver Jr., director of the Air National Guard, also attended.

Every branch of the US armed forces was represented. It was a testimony to the joint effort for aiding the families after the tragedy.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki said all service leaders were genuinely concerned for the families and troops. "We had our people on that aircraft," he said. "I came to pay my respects."

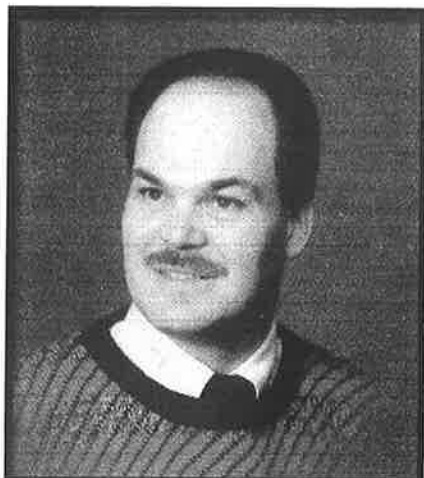
Three pairs of Army boots and camouflage helmets were prominently displayed next to memorials for the 18 Air Guard members at Virginia Beach.

Lt. Col. Thomas Turlip, the 203rd's commander, urged people to embrace the future.

"They were all fine men," said Turlip of the airmen he called "my lost Horsemen."

"I shared in their pride with serving in the National Guard and the 203rd Red Horse Flight," Turlip added. "I have seen us come together in time of grief. We are now bonded together eternally."

IN MEMORY



Master Sergeant James Beninati

Master Sgt. Beninati was the 203rd's electrical shop superintendent. He was always concerned for the welfare and growth of the unit members. His 21-year military career included a tour with the U.S. Navy.

Jim's broad grin was always an uplifting sight and he was known to produce laughter with his humor.

In his civilian life, Jim was a Project Designer for Dominion Virginia Power. On special occasions, he would dress-

up in a costume and surprise his co-workers.

Jim was a Christian and was devoted to his wife and their four children.

He was an outstanding individual, military leader and dedicated family man.

"I will always cherish our time just the two of us shared. Our Friday night 'date' was important to him," said **Bonnie Beninati**, wife.

Staff Sergeant Paul J. Blancato

Staff Sgt. Blancato served with the Virginia National Guard for six years and four months. As a member of the 203rd's heating and air conditioning shop, he was always volunteering to fulfill unit taskings. He had 11 years military service to his credit.

Paul's warm smile and humor uplifted those around him. His "can do" attitude was an inspiration to all

unit members.

He was genuinely concerned with the well being of people and he would always offer to assist those in need.

"When you first met him, he would be kind of quiet. But once you got to know him, you'd find a warmhearted man with a great sense of humor. If he was your friend, you had a friend for life," said **Maria Rodriguez**, Paul's fiancée.



Technical Sergeant Ernest Blawas

Tech. Sgt. Ernest Blawas was a member of the Virginia National Guard for eight years and served in the military a total of 23 years.

"If you didn't like Ernie, you didn't like anybody," insisted his former wife, Barbara Detar.

He was a valued member of the 203rd's power production shop. He was dedicated to the 203rd and often volunteered for unit deployments.

While on unit deployments, Ernest often enjoyed sight-seeing and learning about the many exciting activities in the local communities.

Ernest began his military career as an Army infantryman in 1976. He joined the 203rd in 1993.

Tech. Sgt. Blawas was a caring individual and loving father to his twin daughters, Janean and Christina, 24.

IN MEMORY

Staff Sergeant Andrew H. Bridges (Doc)

Staff Sgt. Bridges "Doc" was the unit's medic. He had served in the U.S. Coast Guard and was a member of the Virginia National Guard for almost five years. He had 13 years of military service to his credit.

A giant of a man, his warm, compassionate manner always calmed those in need. His knowledge as a medic was immense.

He served as a firefighter and

medic with the City of Chesapeake, and was also a lab technician at Maryview Hospital.

A devoted husband and father, he enjoyed life to its fullest. "Doc" Bridges always gave one hundred percent.

"My brother was there for everyone and anyone," said **Larry Bridges Jr.**, brother.

"Andy's physical body has died, but his spirit within my heart will always be there," said **Larry Bridges Sr.**, father.



Master Sergeant Eric G. Bulman

Master Sgt. Bulman was an active member of the Virginia National Guard for almost nine years with 15 years total military service to his credit.

A former Army veteran, he served in the infantry in Vietnam.

Eric was an avid golfer and private pilot. He was instrumental in establishing the Civil Air Patrol Unit at Camp Pendleton, Va.

He was a professional land surveyor,

owned Technical and Environmental Services, Inc. and instructed at two universities.

A respected leader renowned for his compassion, Eric was the 203rd's First Sergeant.

"Eric used to make tapes and send them back, (Vietnam) and we'd all gather around listening to them -- how much we enjoyed hearing his voice," said **Artie Bulman**, his brother.

Staff Sergeant Paul E. Cramer

Staff Sergeant Cramer joined the 203rd in 1997 serving in the unit's heavy equipment shop, where he was an equipment operator. A veteran of Desert Storm, he has 15 years military service to his credit.

Paul was an accomplished craftsman and possessed extraordinary skills in construction. He was partner in TBG Construction.

Paul was a Scoutmaster for Boy

Scout Troop 902 and an active member of the First Baptist Church of Norfolk.

He was committed to his God, family, country and friends.

"I remember him walking hand-in-hand with each one of the kids when they were little," said **Jamie Pittman**, his ex-wife.

"We took a road trip the summer before last," said **Benjamin Cramer**, son. "It was just the two of us."



IN MEMORY



Technical Sergeant Michael E. East

Tech. Sgt. East served in the electrical shop with the 203rd. He was an experienced electrician and was a leader within his shop.

A quiet man, Mike always was a significant contributor to all missions assigned to the 203rd. He had served in the Virginia National Guard for almost eight years and had 14 years total military service to his credit.

He continuously served those in his community who were not capable of

helping themselves, serving as a volunteer fireman and medic on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

Mike was employed as an electrician for a private contractor, H&H Construction Inc., at NASA's Wallops Island facility. He enjoyed the outdoors often going hunting and fishing.

"He was a husband and a dad. He was Mike. That was good enough for the kids and good enough for me," said **Elizabeth Manske**, wife.

Staff Sergeant Ronald L. Elkin

Staff Sgt. Elkin was a dedicated member of the 203rd. Ron's Virginia National Guard service was almost ten years with a total of 22 years of military service. He worked in the equipment/pavements shop.

His caring spirit and sense of humor was always evident in his approach to assignments. His willingness to always assist his fellow man was at the core of his daily approach to life. He always went the extra mile.

A loving husband, father and grandfather, he had four children and two grandchildren.

"He always had these stupid Christmas flannel boxers he wore around. And one time the people in the Guard, they made him go out and buy a regular pair of shorts. They couldn't handle those Christmas boxers," said **Carol Elkin**, wife. "He just had this unique thing about him."

"He could always make people laugh."



Staff Sergeant James P. Ferguson (Fergy)

Staff Sgt. Ferguson was a member of the 203rd's power production shop. He had been a member of the Virginia National Guard for five years and with a total of 18 years of military service.

He was always seeking ways to help his fellow man and members of the Red Horse family. When deployments were scheduled, he was always one of the first to raise his hand to volunteer.

Fergy was employed as an electrician

at the Newport News Shipyard.

An avid football fan, he always supported the Detroit Lions during the season.

"He always helped cook every big meal we ever had; he made the gravy. He was the gravy king. And then we always watched the football game afterward. Just like another member of the family," said **Craig and Josephine Harlan**, friends.

AROUND the WING

Special Commissary Sale

There will be a commissary sale from Ft. Lee Commissary, Saturday April 7th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the open area supply storage located between supply and operations.

Guard members and their families are welcome to shop until you drop. Bulk as well as individual grocery products will be available at significant savings.

Bring your military identification card as it is needed to make purchases.

If you have any questions, contact Lt. Col. Rick Turner, wing executive officer at (804) 236-6763.

Officer Selection Board

The Military Personnel Flight (MPF) is accepting applications from individuals interested in becoming an officer in the Virginia Air National Guard. The deadline for submission for the Officer Selection Board is close of business, Sunday June 3rd. Late applications will not be accepted.

By submitting an application, a pool of qualified personnel is established. Individuals selected must meet the following minimum qualifications:

Age: Individuals must be commissioned by age 35. No age waivers will be considered.

Education: A bachelor's degree is desired. Waivers of education will be considered. Applicants must have a minimum of 90 semester hours for consideration of a waiver.

Test Requirements: All applicants must take the Air Force Officer

Qualification Test (AFOQT). If a person tests and qualifies, their scores won't expire. An MPF representative can explain qualifying scores.

For more information, call MSgt. John Rollings at (804) 236-6708 or stop by the MPF. The address to mail applications is ATTN: MSgt. Rollings 192 MSF/DPMPE, 50 Falcon Rd., Sandston, Va. 23150

Emergency Data Updated?

Have you checked your Record of Emergency Data, DD 93, lately for accuracy?

If there have been any changes to addresses of family members, to add a dependent, or remove a deceased family member.

MPF hours of operation are:

■ Tuesday to Friday: 6:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

■ Saturday Drill: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

■ Sunday Drill: 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Closed for training after 1 p.m.)

Health Corner: Diabetes

Type II and adult onset diabetes can be prevented by making healthy choices in life-style.

Risk factors include:

■ Being overweight
■ Having a parent or sibling with diabetes

■ Being over 40 years old
■ Being of Native American, African-American or Hispanic descent

■ Being a woman who has had

more than one baby weighing more than nine pounds at birth.

The number one thing you can do as a potential diabetic is to keep your weight down. Excess weight interferes with the body's ability to use the insulin it produces to properly control blood sugar. High blood sugar can damage the body, leading to blindness, impaired circulation and heart disease.

Symptoms of diabetes are excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, blurred vision, fatigue, tingling or numbness in hands or feet, increased appetite and skin infections.

If you have any questions regarding diabetes or any other health related topics, contact the medical squadron or 2nd Lt. Eris Bill at (804) 236-6307.

Life Insurance Increases

Effective April 1, 2001, all members are now eligible to receive up to \$250,000 from Servicemembers Group Life Insurance, an increase of \$50,000.

The monthly cost for the maximum insurance is \$20.00 and will automatically go into effect.

If you want to reduce or decline the amount from \$250,000, your orderly room will be able assist you to complete a new SGLI form. If you make any changes to your insurance coverage, it must be done before April 30th or you will be charged for the month of April.

This task is very important in order to ensure your family members are properly cared for in a crisis.

Questions? Contact SSgt. Karen Lindsey at (804) 236-6310.

APRIL's MENU

The Hands That Feed You

SATURDAY -- APRIL 7

Spaghetti w/ Sauce
Pork Chops
Broccoli
Mashed Potatoes
Salad Bar
Devils Food Cake
Assorted Drinks
Ice Cream

SUNDAY -- APRIL 8

Beef Tips
Baked Chicken
Rice
Mixed Vegetables
Salad Bar
Peach Cobbler
Assorted Drinks
Ice Cream

IN MEMORY

Staff Sergeant Randy V. Johnson

Staff Sgt. Johnson was a member of the Virginia National Guard for eight years and had 18 years service to his country. After serving on active duty in the Air Force, he became a member of the utilities shop at the 203rd Red Horse Flight.

Randy's warm smile and concern for his fellow man were traits that were hallmarks of this fine individual.

A dedicated husband, father and friend, he loved those around him.

Randy enjoyed the outdoors and was an avid fisherman and athlete.

He was active in his church Little Shiloh Baptist Church, where he served as an usher.

Excerpts from a poem personalized for Randy...

It broke our hearts to lose him, but Randy didn't go alone.

For part of us went with him the day God called him home.

LaVerne Johnson, wife and family.



Senior Airman Mathrew E. Kidd

Senior Airman Kidd served the unit as a carpenter. He served proudly in the structures shop and had been in the Virginia National Guard for five years.

He will always be remembered for his incredible energy and vision.

His motto "I live life; it doesn't live me" illustrates his approach to dealing with taskings and people. His infectious smile always brought joy to others.

He always strived to do his best and could always be counted on to go the

extra mile to complete assignments.

Mathrew always used his joyful spirit to uplift people during periods of conflict or trouble.

"The picture in my mind is him, out of his seat, holding the sides of that plane together, trying to save everybody. I don't know if that was the case, but that's how I'll remember him," said **Martha Kidd Bartels**, his mother.



Master Sergeant Michael E. Lane

Master Sgt. Lane was a senior member of the utility section of the 203rd. Michael was a dedicated member, always volunteering to do whatever was required to complete a mission, tasking or assignment. He was a knowledgeable plumber and often provided innovative ideas to resolve design and construction projects.

On deployments, he was always interested in exploring the cultural and

historical features of the surrounding community. The members of the 203rd respected Michael as a true leader. He joined the unit in January 95 and had 16 years military service to his credit.

"His word was his honor," said **Shannon Haas**, sister. "His wife (Roxanne) was his world."

"He will be missed," said **Gail Ayers**, friend.



IN MEMORY



Technical Sergeant Edwin B. Richardson

Known as "Butch" to friends, **Tech. Sgt. Richardson** served in the unit's heating and air conditioning shop. He served in the Virginia National Guard for almost thirteen years and had a total of 16 years military service.

"He was a man you couldn't help but like," insisted his neighbor and Malibu resident Charles Proffer.

Richardson was a devoted husband and father who always

cared for his family, friends and the people in his community.

He enjoyed working on mechanical things and often assisted fellow guardsman.

He loved life and coaching his son's, Tommy and Matthew, baseball teams.

He was employed as an HVAC technician at Oceana Naval Air Station.

Technical Sergeant Dean J. Shelby

Tech. Sgt. Shelby was a quiet individual, who always volunteered to do whatever was required to accomplish an assignment. He was a member of the 203rd's structural section and had served in the Virginia National Guard for almost five years with a total of 17 years in the military.

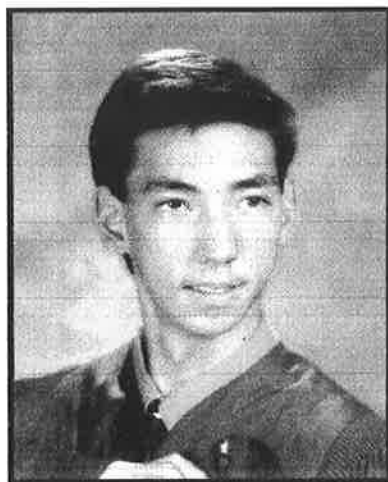
On projects, his creative ideas always provided that "little something" extra that enhanced the unit's

reputation outstanding work.

Dean was a devoted husband and father. His friendly, calming manner was always appreciated.

"The perfect example of what a father and role model should be," said his son **Zack Shelby**.

"While most 20-year-old men were interested in having a good time, he was lovingly caring for a wife, a baby and a grandmother," said his wife **Lucinda**.



Staff Sergeant John L. Sincavage

Staff Sgt. Sincavage was an honest, dedicated individual who served in the 203rd's equipment/pavements shop. He worked as a heavy equipment operator.

A quiet individual, John always gave one hundred and ten percent on any assignment given. He volunteered to do whatever was asked of the unit.

His willingness to assist others in time of need was noted not only in the

military, but also in the civilian community. He was an active participant in Habitat for Humanity.

"John was the type of person that would go out of his way to make you feel special. He had that way about him," said **Dan Mason**, friend. "He was very proud of his role in the military. The 203rd was his home away from home."

IN MEMORY

Staff Sergeant Gregory Skurupey

Staff Sgt. Skurupey was a heavy equipment operator in the 203rd. He joined the Virginin Air National Guard in 1987 and had 15 years of service.

Gregg loved working with heavy construction equipment. It was like working with large "Tonka toys" to him. His wife said, "he could drive anything with keys."

He was actively involved with the Boy Scouts of America and in his lifetime had achieved Eagle Scout.

Gregg is survived by his wife, two children and parents.

"Gregg was, to say the least, full of life, oftentimes larger than life," said family members. "These are the thoughts and memories we cherish most: Blacksburg, Mom and Dad, Little League, camping, cliff rappelling, calling his brother "Goober," Boy Scout Jamborees, "Shorty," Mamaw and Gramps, Cub Scouts Pack 175, ..."



Staff Sergeant Richard L. Summerell

Staff Sgt. Summerell was a member of the transportation section of the unit, serving in both the Army and Air National Guard. He was with the Virginia National Guard for five years and had 18 years total service.

Rick was a doer, committing himself to helping others.

As an independent businessman, he was recognized in his community for his honesty and giving manner.

He was a devoted husband and father, whose son also serves in the 203rd. Married for 25 years, he had four children and three grandchildren.

"He was incredibly thoughtful and selfless, and every time that I would tell him that I loved him, he would always reply, 'I love you two times more than that,'" said Ellen Summerell, wife. "He treated me like a queen."

Major Frederick V. Watkins, III (Rick)

Major Watkins lived out his belief in "By Jesus' blood I am saved."

His fellow unit members will always remember him for looking out for other's needs first.

He was a loving father of two sons and was always involved with them.

Rick was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed fishing, hunting and hiking.

Gifted at refinishing furniture, Rick also was often accused of increasing

friends and family waistlines. He was an great cook with a specialty for cheesecakes.

Rick was an excellent and highly respected Civil Engineer and was the unit's in-house structural expert. He was employed at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

"He will be missed greatly, but the memories will remain," said Fred Watkins, father.

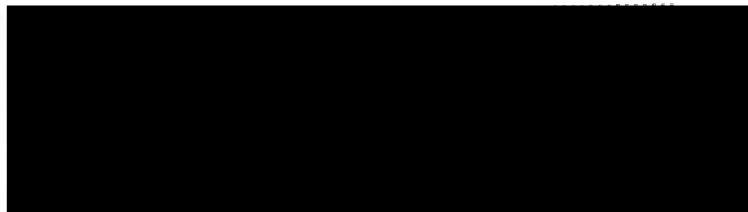


TAIL END



Photo courtesy of military media pool

HALLOWED HORSEMEN -- Virginian Guardsmen pay their respects as 21 of their fallen comrades are eulogized March 10th at Rock Church, Virginia Beach.



PRE-SORT
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RICHMOND, VA
PERMIT NO. 999

192d FIGHTER WING/PA
VIRGINIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD
50 FALCON RD
SANDSTON VA 23150-2524