

DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS

Jan. 6, 2011



Brothers in arms, yet again



Brothers Spc. Eric M. Kuppler, left, and Sgt. Andrew Kuppler show off their 'survival bracelets.' Photo by Master Sgt. Mark Olsen.

By Sgt. Wayne Woolley
DMAVA Public Affairs Specialist

JOINT BASE McGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST – Sgt. Andrew Kuppler began his New Jersey Army National Guard career a step behind his younger brother, Spc. Eric Kuppler.

The younger brother enlisted first and had already begun Advanced Individual Training as an MP before the older brother finished basic training.

But in the years since, the brothers have been side-by-side when it mattered most, on deployment into a combat theaters. It's already happened once, Iraq 2008 with the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and now, it's about to happen again, Afghanistan next month with the 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

On Tuesday, the brothers were among the 70 Soldiers from the unit to board a plane bound for Fort Lewis, Wa., where the Cherry Hill-based troops will train for 30 days before shipping out.

As the Kuppler brothers made the final checks of their gear before boarding, they reflected about what it means to be able to serve together.

"Deployments are lot easier with him along," Andrew Kuppler, 27, said, nodding toward his brother.

"And a lot easier on our families, they worry less because they know we're taking care of each other," Eric Kuppler said.

Both were wearing a second set of Survival Bracelets made by their family. The brothers wore their first bracelets on their year in Iraq as members of the 328th MP Company. Although they worked opposite shifts in detainee operations, they saw each other every shift change and spent most of the few hours both had off together.

It's unclear where exactly in Afghanistan they'll end up, although they expect they may remain in close proximity because they both do the same job. "We'll have each others' backs," Andrew Kuppler said.

The long reach of Hometown Heroes

By Sgt. Wayne Woolley
DMAVA Public Affairs

It was a small group of Soldiers, but they illustrated the vast reach of the New Jersey Army National Guard.

On Wednesday, nearly two dozen Soldiers returning from deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq and Djibouti underwent a reconstitution at Joint Forces Headquarters at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

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Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, the Adjutant General, addresses Soldiers returning from deployments in Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa at a reconstitution on Wednesday. Photo by Sgt. Wayne Woolley

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Jersey Devils to host military Appreciation on Jan. 22

Here's a chance for the entire Guard family to enjoy a night on ice.

On Jan. 22, the Trenton Devils hockey team will be having their military appreciation night.

All National Guard members are eligible to buy \$8 tickets for themselves, friends and family for the game against the Wheeling Nailers. That's half off the regular game-day price. And it comes with an added bonus: an hour long post-game skate. So, bring your skates and round out a night of family fun.

Face off is at 7 p.m.

Make your reservations by calling Brian, Megan or Jackie at 609-599-9500 on any weekday.

Snow? A handy list of Where to tune in for DMAVA employees

The following radio stations have agreed to broadcast special announcements in the event that inclement weather causes other than normal operation of State offices during the 2009 winter season: WSNJ-AM 1240, Bridgeton; WJLK-FM 94.3, Ocean Twp.(Monmouth); WRNJ-AM 1510, Hackettstown; WOBB-AM 1160, Ocean Twp.(Ocean); WFPG-FM 96.9, Atlantic City; WOBB-FM 92.7, Ocean Twp.(Ocean); WPUR-FM 107.3, Atlantic City; WCHR-FM 105.7, Ocean Twp.(Ocean); WMVB-AM 1440, Bridgeton; WIXM-FM 97.3, Millville; WCTC-AM 1450, New Brunswick; WKXW-FM 101.5, Trenton; WMGQ-FM 98.3, New Brunswick; WSJO-FM 104.9, Egg Harbor; WSUS-FM 102.3, Newton; WNJT-FM 88.1, Trenton; WNNJ-FM 103.7 Newton; WNJS-FM 88.1, Berlin; WHCY-FM 106.3, Newton; WNJN-FM 89.7, Atlantic City; WNNJ-AM 1360, Newton; WNJB-FM 89.3, Bridgeton; WINS-AM 1010, New York; WNJP-FM 88.5, Sussex; WPST-FM 94.5, Princeton; WNJM-FM 89.9, Manahawkin; KYW-AM 1060, Philadelphia; WNJZ-FM 90.3, Cape May Courthouse; WADB-AM 1310, Ocean Twp. (Monmouth); WIMG-AM 1300, Trenton; WCMC-AM 1230, Wildwood

Email your Highlights submissions to wayne.woolley@njdmava.state.nj.us

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ODDS AND ENDS

Riddle me this.

What do Dairy Queen, Disneyland, Nike and Apple Computers have in common?

They are among more than 175 companies that offer military discounts, according to a list compiled by the Website BradsDeals.com.

Discounts vary from 10 percent off tickets on Amtrak and purchases at Bass Pro Shops to even greater savings, such as 25 percent off vehicle rentals from Avis.

Some vendors, such as Applebees restaurants, automatically offer the discount with the presentation of a military ID. Other companies only offer the discount on certain days. Old Navy, for example, knocks 10 percent off purchases on the first day of every month.

Other vendors, such as Apple Computer, require you visit their Website to arrange for the discount. Some, like Avis require that the reservations be made online and require the use of a coupon code. The code for Avis is AWD # A555084.

Also, keep in mind that some national chains don't offer the discounts in every state and always, remember the words you hear in the annoying car ads: "Some restrictions may apply."

The best rule of thumb in the quest to save a little is to carry your military ID with you and ask about the discount.

To give you a better idea of the diversity of companies offering discounts, here's a partial list. For the full list, got to the BradsDeals Website.

Companies: **A&W, All State, American Airlines, Anheuser – Busch Amusement Parks, AT&T, Azamara Cruises, Bass Pro Shops, Bath & Body Works, Burger King, Champs Sports, Dell Computers, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ford Motor Co., Gap, GM, KB Toys, Kohl's, Marriott Hotels, Mary Kay Cosmetics, NAPA Auto Parts, National Credit Solutions, Quizno's, Samsonite, Taco Bell, Timberland Outlets, Toyota, Travelodge.**

Veterans Outreach Campaign schedule

The DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign has kiosk displays at malls throughout the state and other special events to help veterans and their family members discover and apply for the benefits they are eligible to receive.

Jan. 11*, 12, 13

Moorestown Mall

***Medal ceremony 10:30 a.m.**

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth – The Adjutant General
Brig. Gen. James J. Grant – Director, Joint Staff
Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs
CW 2 Patrick Daugherty – Public Affairs Officer
Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Public Affairs Specialist

DMAVA IMAGES

Departures and returns ...

Maj. Gen Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, shakes hands with Sgt. Piacenta M. Jackson, left, as the 70 Citizen-Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard's 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion boarded a jet at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst to take them to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., prior to deploying to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on Jan. 4, 2011.

Irene Gorgas, below left, hugs her mother Sgt. Lisa Gorgas. Gorgas has deployed four times since Sept. 11, 2001. She's part of the 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, which gathered with family and friends at the Cherry Hill Armory before deploying.

Left, Spc. Jesse Violante with State Command Sgt. Major Jerome Jenkins, left, and New Jersey Army National Guard Chief of Staff, Col. Steven Ferrari during the reconstitution for more than two dozen Soldiers returning from deployments in Afghanistan, Iraq and Djibouti. Violante served as an infantryman in Afghanistan.



Photos right and above by Tech. Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, photo left by Sgt. Wayne Woolley

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Although the Soldiers normally serve with units across the New Jersey National Guard, they served overseas with a variety of units. The largest group, 50 Soldiers, spent their yearlong deployment in Afghanistan with the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Vermont Army National Guard. Others had returned from a year as an eight-man detachment that flew fixed wing aircraft missions for U.S. Africom in across eastern Africa. The remaining Soldiers were among five New Jerseyans who served in Iraq with The Louisiana Army National Guard's 256th Brigade Combat Team.

Even the group that served in Afghanistan found itself spread across the vast country, with its Soldiers running missions ranging from humanitarian assistance, to hunting Taliban fighters to training the Afghan army and police forces.

"All of us were out there doing something different," said Col. Dennis Devery, who spent the tour overseeing the training of Afghan army and police forces from the NATO Headquarters in Kabul. Devery said the forces are making substantial progress, but that the country as a whole is still plagued by a lack of infrastructure and abject poverty.

Spc. Jesse Violante, 23, spent his time serving with an infantry line company in the restive region near the border with Pakistan. He and the other three New Jersey Soldiers with that company were awarded Combat Infantry Badges on the tour.

"We did the full spectrum of combat operations and we had our fair share of action," Violante said. "I think the Afghan people are coming around. They know what we're trying to do for them."

The pilots who went to Djibouti ended up flying missions to more than a half dozen eastern African countries. Most flights involved transport of high-ranking U.S. Africom staff.

"We got a chance to see a lot of the continent," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brett Berlinger.

The pilots also supported missions to vaccinate livestock and to help the local people sanitary water wells.