



NGAUS
The National Guard Association of the United States

Notes

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One in Five New War Veterans Has 'Invisible Wounds'

Nearly 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffer symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or major depression, according to an independent study released yesterday.

As many or more have possible brain injuries from explosion or other head wounds, said the study, the first major survey from outside the military.

Military officials said the report by the RAND Corporation, "The Invisible Wounds of War," helps clarify mental health hurdles the Defense Department is seeking to overcome.

"We're on a journey, and we've come

a long way, ... but we've got a long way to go," said Col. Loree Sutton, chief of the newly created Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury. "That's why we're so thankful to teams like the RAND team that have stepped up and helped us better understand our challenges."

Sutton called it "heartening" that the RAND report's conclusions are "very consistent" with previous studies by the Army's Mental Health Advisory Team and other published results.

RAND found that only about half of

those reporting symptoms actually seek treatment.

For those who do seek help, only about half receive treatment that researchers consider "minimally adequate," the report stated.

"Clearly, that's a finding that concerns us," Sutton said.

One reason many troops avoid psychological treatment, the RAND report says, is because they fear it will harm their careers.

More funding for PTSD and traumatic brain injury research and treatment is a continuing NGAUS legislative priority.

Educational Foundation to Help Promote Film

The National Guard Educational Foundation and the National Guard Bureau are partnering with the GI Film Festival to promote a May 16 showing of *This Is War: Memories of Iraq*, a documentary by an Oregon Army National Guard unit.

The award-winning film is the story of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry's 2004 mission in Iraq as told in the unit members' own words, pictures and video.

The view is especially intimate and honest, says Gary Mortensen, the film's director, because the soldiers had no idea their shots and recordings would ever be aired.

"We wanted to make a very nonpolitical film that took someone who's never been to Iraq ... to show what it means to go into combat," he says. "We told it in a non-specific way so that it could represent soldiers everywhere."

This Is War is one of several movies

scheduled for the second annual festival, which is set for the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington, D.C., May 14 to 18.

The event will present films from new and established international and domestic filmmakers that honor the heroic stories of the U.S. armed forces and the worldwide struggle for freedom and liberty. Some of the titles featured will be well-known, others less so and a few will be making their debut.

The GI Film Festival is open to filmmakers of every experience level. Prizes will go to winners of three main categories: feature, documentary, and film shorts.

In addition to presenting feature, documentary, and short film screenings, the festival will also present panel discussions, educational forums and other guest appearances. For information, go to www.gifilmfestival.com.

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Army Units Now Eligible for the New Combat Action Streamer

Army units that have been deployed in support of combat operations now have a new way to be recognized: the Combat Action Streamer (CAS).

Army Secretary Pete Geren approved creation of the streamer Oct. 13 for units that have served or are serving in a theater of combat operations. The award is retroactive to Sept. 18, 2001, for units meeting the criteria.

If 65 percent or more of the soldiers in a unit have been awarded the combat action badge, then that unit can display the CAS with its distinctive flag or

guidon.

The qualifying percentage is based on the unit's authorized strength, Human Resource Command officials said.

For the war on terrorism, only one streamer will be authorized per unit, regardless of the number of times a unit deploys, or whether it deploys to Iraq and Afghanistan, officials said.

In the future, a streamer will be awarded to a unit for each separate war or military operation in which the criteria for the award have been met, they said.

Commanders of battalions, groups,

regiments and brigades are authorized to award the CAS to companies under their commands.

Requirements and restrictions for displaying streamers are governed by chapter 9, Army Regulation 840-10, Flags, Guidon, Streamers, Tabards, and Automobile and Aircraft Plates, Nov. 1, 1998.

Other regulations containing award criteria are AR 600-8-22, Military Awards, Dec. 11, 2006 and AR 870-5, Military History: Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures, Sept. 21, 2007.

Air Force Has New Web Site for Retirees

The Air Force has a new Web site just for its retiree community that is full of news and information, plus it is easy to access and navigate.

The Air Force Retiree Services site is located at www.retirees.af.mil.

This public Web site offers the retiree family in-depth information on the Survivor Benefit Plan, plus a list of Air Force retiree activities offices worldwide and various other resources. There are also sections dedicated to the Afterburner and Air Force Retiree News Service (AFRNS).

Visitors can access the sections by using the top navigation bar on the home page. The home page also features the latest Air Force headline news and video clips. There is even a special icon for quick access to the Combat-Related Special Compensation information page.

Subscribing to the electronic version of the Afterburner and AFRNS is now much easier: just click on the word "Subscribe" found on the top navigation bar: find "Afterburner/AFRNS" near the top of the second column and click in the circle to subscribe; enter the required e-mail address; and then click on the submit button.

NGAUS HISTORY

A broad study of national defense as it relates to reserve forces—specifically, the Army National Guard—is the mission assigned to a special roles and committee appointed by Maj. Gen. James F. Cantwell, NGAUS president, in early 1964.

The committee was expected to develop sound and logical policy recommendations for consideration by the association's executive council.

Cantwell considered the committee's task to be the association's most important work in the next two years.

THIS WEEK IN GUARD HISTORY

April 13, 1970: Space—"Houston, We Have a Problem!" is a message that could have been the NASA's worst nightmare, three astronauts lost in space. The man who said it, former Air National Guard Capt. John "Jack" Swigert (*left*) was one of three crew members of the ill-fated Apollo 13 heading for a Moon landing. Along with him was another former Air Guard pilot, Capt. Frederick Haise Jr. (*right*).

Both Guardsmen joined NASA as test pilots before becoming astronauts. Swigert had flown in both the Massachusetts and Connecticut Air Guard while Haise had served in the Oklahoma and Ohio Guard. As a member of the 164th Tactical Fighter Squadron (Ohio), he served on active duty during the Berlin Crisis in 1961. The Apollo 13 crew overcame their malfunctions and returned to Earth safely. Actors Kevin Bacon and Bill Paxton would portray the astronauts in the 1995 movie *Apollo 13*. Tom Hanks played Jim Lovell, the third member of the crew.

In a later interview, Swigert credited his time with the Guard as some of the best flying experience he ever had. For example, he had to make a "dead stick" (no power) landing after his engine flamed out.

He said that he was trained to react coolly and with deliberate purpose, just the kind of preparation he needed to bring the crippled Apollo 13 home.

