

Army National Guard Celebrates 368 Years of Service

Guard Commemorates Birthday With Nationwide Swearing-In Ceremonies



(NAPSA)—For most Americans, celebrating a 40th birthday is a monumental, but dreaded, occasion.

For the Army National Guard, commemorating its 368th birthday in 2004 was cause for celebration.

During the month of December, the Army National Guard celebrated 368 years of dedicated service. To mark this occasion, units across the country participated in statewide swearing-in ceremonies, welcoming new recruits to the Guard and highlighting the 350,000 men and women who serve our country with pride and distinction.

“Our citizen-soldiers are at the root of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions in this country and around the world,” said Lieutenant General Roger C. Schultz, Director of the Army National Guard. “Since 1636, the Army National Guard has fought in every major American war and continues to meet the challenges ahead of us with courage and determination.”

The Army National Guard aims to recruit over 60,000 men and women to support an overall force of 350,000.

The Army National Guard is one of three components of the U.S. Army (the Active Army, the

Army National Guard and the Army Reserve). The Army National Guard is composed primarily of citizen-soldiers who typically train part-time, but stand ready to serve whenever and wherever needed. The Army National Guard has more than 3,200 units located in more than 2,700 communities across 54 states and territories.

The federal mission of the Army National Guard is to maintain properly trained and equipped units, available for prompt mobilization for war and national emergency. On the state level, the Guard is charged to support the governor with homeland security responsibilities or disaster relief efforts such as responding to fight wildfires or helping communities deal with floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms or other emergency situations.

“Our organization dates back before the birth of our great nation—in every conflict, the Guard has answered the call,” LTG Schultz said. “We have the finest citizen-soldiers in the world and their sacrifice and dedication are an inspiration to all Americans.”

For more information on the Army National Guard, visit its Web site at www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com.