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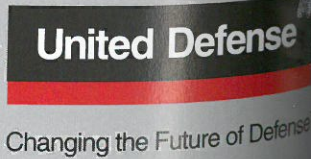
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Modernized vehicle systems such as the M2A2 ODS Bradley Fighting Vehicle, the M113A3 Armored Personnel Carrier and the M88A2 HERCULES improved recovery vehicle provide decisive tools for victory to our troops under the most severe battlefield conditions—clearly demonstrated during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

United Defense—the National Guard's modernization partner.



Features

24 A Conversation with President George W. Bush

President George W. Bush invited seven veteran service organizations for a roundtable discussion aboard Air Force One last month. NATIONAL GUARD was among the invitees who traveled with the president to MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., where he addressed 10,000 service members, and on the way answered questions pertaining to veterans' issues and health care for Guardsmen and Reservists.

31 Forgotten Front

After nearly three years of participation in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Guardsmen from nearly every state have completed everything from combat missions to construction projects. But as Iraq has dominated the news, operations in Afghanistan have moved to the back burner. Today, however, Guard troops continue to flow into Afghanistan as the country moves from a war zone to a more civilized and inhabitable part of Southeast Asia.

35 Full Partner

If the Guard was to become an equal player in the defense of the nation at home and abroad, President Reagan was a catalyst. At his passing at the age of 93 in June, NATIONAL GUARD looks back as the Guard in the 1980s went from part of the nation's strategic reserve—a perceived "second team," focused on defending Europe during the Cold War—to an equal partner in the Total Force.

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