A Final Farewell to Major General (Retired) Kathryn G. Frost

On September 15, 2006, the Army and The Adjutant General's Corps bade a final farewell to Major General (Retired) Kathryn G. Frost, the 60th Adjutant General of the Army. The funeral service was attended by hundreds of her friends and family from South Carolina, by Members of Congress, by senior active and retired leaders of the Army, by scores of AG Corps members, and most importantly by many Soldiers and Civilians whose lives had been touched by MG Frost.

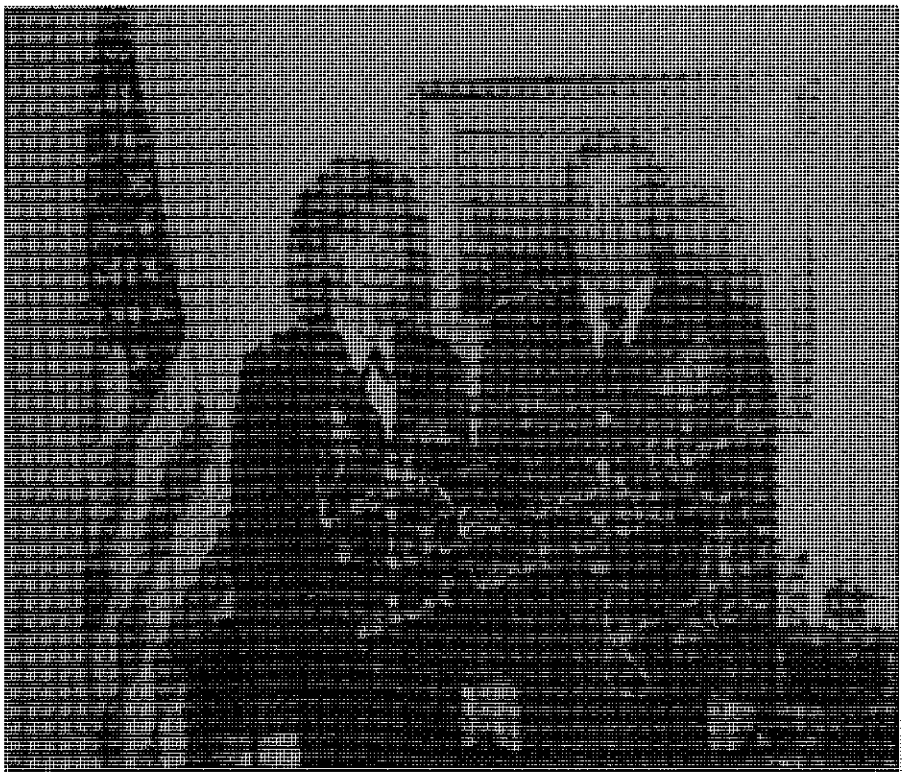
Martin Frost, former Member of Congress for 26 years and currently a scholar in residence at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. had shared some of his thoughts about his wife in a tribute that is reprinted here with his permission.

For those who were lucky to have worked closely with MG Frost, it's quite difficult to put into words just how special a person she was and how her enthusiasm inspired everyone. Her philosophy was embodied by her "Recipe for Success" that she used to guide the Soldiers and Civilians of The Adjutant General Directorate (TAGD). This "Recipe for Success" is still used in TAGD today and expresses her vision of the AG Corps as one that must focus more on proactive support to Soldiers and less on bureaucratic procedures. These were not idle slogans to her – they described the way she approached every day.

Responsive - We exist to serve the field... get them solutions quickly!

Energetic - Approach every job with vigor!

Compassionate - Think of the impact of every action on the individual Soldier and their family.



Innovative - Look for better ways to do things: streamline and simplify!

Positive - Say "Yes" when you can, "No" when you can't, and be helpful always.

Empowered - Get things done at the lowest possible level.

Perhaps the best way to convey what made MG Frost so special is to share a few remembrances with some of those who were privileged to work closely with her.

MAJ Martine Kidd was MG Frost's Aide de Camp during her final assignment as CG of AAFES. Speaking at the

funeral service, MAJ Kidd shared many remembrances, including the following:

"*She was funny.* General Frost's close-knit group of high school girlfriends, known as the 'Ya-Yas,' recalls her most clearly as being the funny one of the group. Just before their high school graduation, as each of the 'Ya-Yas' struggled to choose a caption for their senior yearbook pictures, General Frost, without hesitation chose the following: 'A girl doesn't mind being called intelligent provided she is assured it doesn't interfere with her looks.'"

"*She was kind.* As life beckoned and she and her hometown friends went their separate ways, General Frost remained close to each of them by sending handwritten words of congratulation during their triumphs and expressions of encouragement during their trials. As recently as this August (shortly before her passing), General Frost made a special effort to send flowers to the mother of one of her closest friends who needed some encouragement. Enclosed with the flowers was a note in which General Frost wrote, 'You are my hero.'"

"*She was loyal.* General Frost cultivated the very best of lifelong friends. As a little girl she held tea parties at the age of five, was crowned queen of her junior high school ball, and went on to attend her senior high school prom – each of these with Dewitt Coleman, someone she thought of as a brother. She held his hand all throughout her younger years and in the end, Dewitt, with so many others, was there standing by her bedside and holding hers."

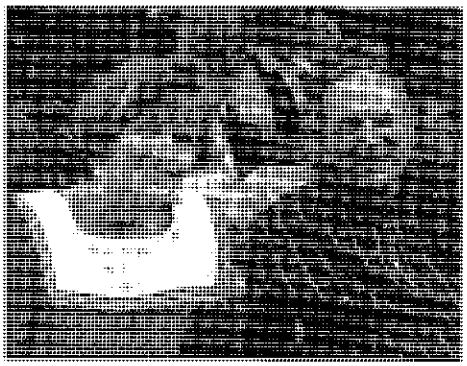
"*She was caring.* In early 2004, during a visit to wounded troops at Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany, General Frost spent some time with a Marine whose leg had been amputated. She was inspired by his amazing spirit. When she asked him what he thought he might do when he got home, he quickly replied, 'I know one thing...come November I'll dance at the Marine Corps Birthday Ball.' Next she asked if his family was coming to visit. He said they would but it was going to be a couple of weeks before they could get there, so General Frost asked if he wanted her to call them. He said, 'Sure, I guess so,' probably not realizing she'd do it. Of course, the first thing she did when she got home was to call that Marine's parents and reassure them that their son was doing well."

"*She was forgiving.* As we were leaving the building after one of our trips to the Pentagon, I had left her beret back in her temporary

office. Just before walking outside I realized this and knowing I was responsible was going to run back and get it. She stopped me and said, 'It's OK, we'll have it mailed to us. If anyone asks while we're outside, I'll just say with a straight face that Tuesday is a No Headgear Day for General Officers. They'll believe me... I've had to do it before.'"

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Holtan, previously Department of the Army Staff Bands Officer in TAGD recalls, "She was a person who appeared unchanged by her rank or position . . . unvarnished and very real . . . without pretense..... quick to dole out praise and she created an environment where people wanted to do well working for her."

MG Frost's feelings about her husband Martin were deep and genuine. In February 2000, Rep. Frost was heavily engaged in legislative action on Capitol Hill. As the third-ranking Democrat in the House his hours were long and hard. Her schedule as TAG was equally challenging, but Valentine's Day is still Valentine's Day and husbands forget it at their peril. LTC Dan Sacks, her XO at the time recalls an evening we later referred to as the "St. Valentine Day's Massacre." Dan recalls: "February 14th started out like so many other days with numerous meetings and various staff actions to process, yet as the day wore on, it was noticeable that MG Frost was becoming more and more agitated. As often the case as XO, I entered the 'beaten zone' of the TAG's office to inquire about her apparent agitation. It did not take long to ascertain that it was nothing work related, but clearly the fact that Congressman Frost had fallen into the same trap that so many men stumble into. Unfortunately, he took his wife too literally that she didn't need roses from him on this overly commercialized holiday to show that he loved her. But he didn't understand that she expected something as a romantic gesture. What infuriated her even more was that he had called several times and didn't even wish her a Happy Valentine's Day. MG Frost was getting more steamed after each phone call: 'No card, no flowers ("roses were not necessary"), no chocolates, not even a greeting,' she ranted and as the day grew into evening, 'not even a special dinner invitation.' Realizing that not only Congressman Frost but the entire TAGD staff might suffer fallout for the next few days, I



quietly slipped into another office to contact the Congressman and advise him a quick recovery plan was clearly essential. Fortunately for all, a late evening floral delivery and a special weekend dinner invitation averted another St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

LTC Sacks, as XO, understood his role in helping facilitate interaction between MG Frost and her key leaders. She was a hands-on boss who wanted actions to move quickly in order to provide better response to the field so her division chiefs often walked urgent actions directly into her office. Unbeknownst to MG Frost, to assist the staff the XO created a covert "General Officer Barometer" on his desk. It gave the staff a fun, quick method to inquire about the boss without uttering a word and falling prey to the General's exquisite hearing. It was a small wooden statue of an American Soldier. If it was facing forward, all was well and the boss was operating in her normal upbeat (and up-tempo) fashion. If it was facing backward, it was probably best to delay walking things in or the action might receive copious amounts of red ink from MG Frost who was a superb writer and demanding editor. If it was facing sideways, one would be entering at their own risk. This barometer was quietly appreciated by the key staff for nearly two years. Many chose to delay engaging the TAG for guidance or chose to do an immediate about face rather than risk an extensive rewrite of a non-urgent action. Unfortunately, COL Paul Bethke, unaware of the barometer's secrecy, made the mistake of revealing the secret signal to MG Frost. Yet to her credit, she never directed that it cease or even commented on it; but merely gave a sharp glare at it when it was not facing forward. In fact, MG Frost even got into the fun of it by facing it backward on several frustrating days. Hence, when LTC Tom Palmatier took over as XO, he had a model

In Memory of a Wonderful Wife, Great Patriot

Monday, August 21, 2006
By Martin Frost
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One day in December of 1996 a vibrant, beautiful woman dressed in green walked into my Congressional office in Washington. Brigadier General Kathy Carlson had just been assigned as Deputy Commander of the Army, Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) which is headquartered in Dallas, Texas, and she was paying a courtesy call on her Congressman.

I was so struck by her that I directed my staff to look for opportunities for me to see her again. She agreed to serve on my military review board to recommend students for our nation's service academies. She was the keynote speaker at the annual small business procurement seminar I sponsored each year at the University of Texas at Arlington, and she was the luncheon speaker at my local Lions Club. My staff was being very creative.

Twenty months after we first met, Kathy and I were married in a small family ceremony conducted by the chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Over the years, I learned a lot about this very special woman. She had entered the Army in 1974 on a direct commission to the Women's Army Corps (WACS). A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of South Carolina, Kathy was ranked first in her WAC basic course and first in her WAC advanced training class.

Kathy served two tours of duty in Berlin, spent several years as a White House social aide and worked as a Congressional liaison for Gen. Colin Powell when he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. She was passed over for selection for the Army War College and for the Command and General Staff School – both prerequisites for appointment to general officer – but completed both courses by correspondence.

She steadily rose through the ranks of the Army (the WACS had been merged into the regular Army a year after she was commissioned) until she was named to be a one-star general in 1996.

After serving two years as deputy commander of AAFES, Kathy was named The Adjutant General (TAG) of the Army in the summer of 1998, a post she held for four years. During that time, she was, among other things, responsible for casualty notifications following the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. While serving as the TAG, Kathy was promoted to major general and given her second star.

And then in July of 2002, one month before she was to assume command of AAFES, Kathy was diagnosed with breast cancer. She waged a courageous battle against this disease for more than four years, undergoing various forms of chemotherapy and radiation. . . a battle she lost on Friday, Aug. 18.

Kathy assumed command of AAFES in August of 2002, one month after undergoing a mastectomy. While ill from the effects of chemotherapy, she rarely missed a day of work and provided extraordinary leadership to this $8 billion business with 48,000 employees worldwide.

Kathy was commander of AAFES when we entered Iraq and immediately set about

providing temporary PXs for our troops. She liked to remind people that AAFES was on the ground in Iraq before our forces got to Baghdad and months before Brown and Root had mess halls functioning.

Ultimately there were 31 PXs in Iraq, selling everything from snack food to sophisticated electronic equipment to our Soldiers, Airmen and Marines. Also, AAFES ran a number of fast-food operations for the troops. Its Burger King at Baghdad International Airport sold more whoppers than any Burger King anywhere in the world. AAFES's presence there was vital to maintaining troop morale.

Kathy and AAFES were presented a special award from the National Retail Federation for what they did for our troops in Iraq and she happily traveled to New York City to accept the award. True to form, Kathy wrote and produced a video about AAFES's work in Iraq, which was shown at the awards ceremony.

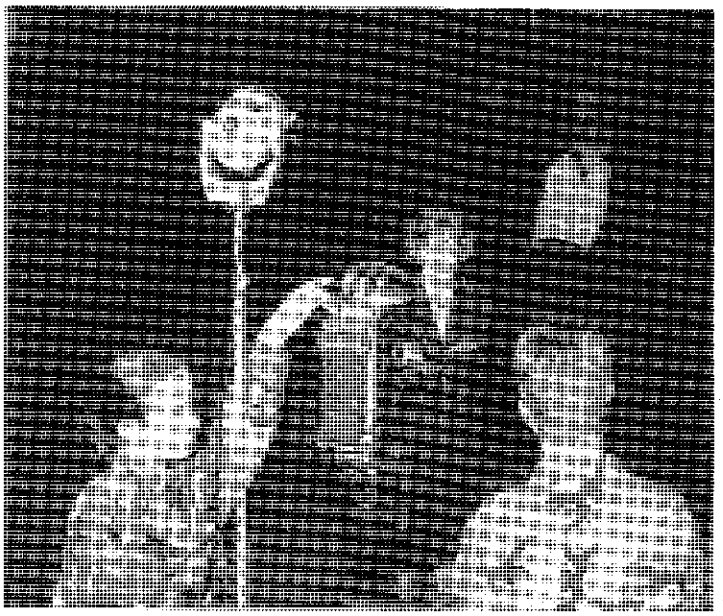
Kathy retired from the Army in April of 2005 after 31 years of service. She accompanied me to Boston last fall where I was a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. While there, she audited classes with great enthusiasm. Kathy's mother was widowed when Kathy was very young and the family had little money. They could not afford to send her anywhere but to a state university in South Carolina. There is no question Kathy would have excelled at an Ivy League school if she had been given the chance.

During our eight years of marriage, she made me a better Congressman and a better person every single day. She critiqued my speeches, made sure I dressed more fashionably and that I was more considerate of other people. She will be missed by all who knew her, especially her husband.

tank on his desk. The direction of the turret conveyed the same secret signal -- all of the senior staff except COL Bethke were told about it.

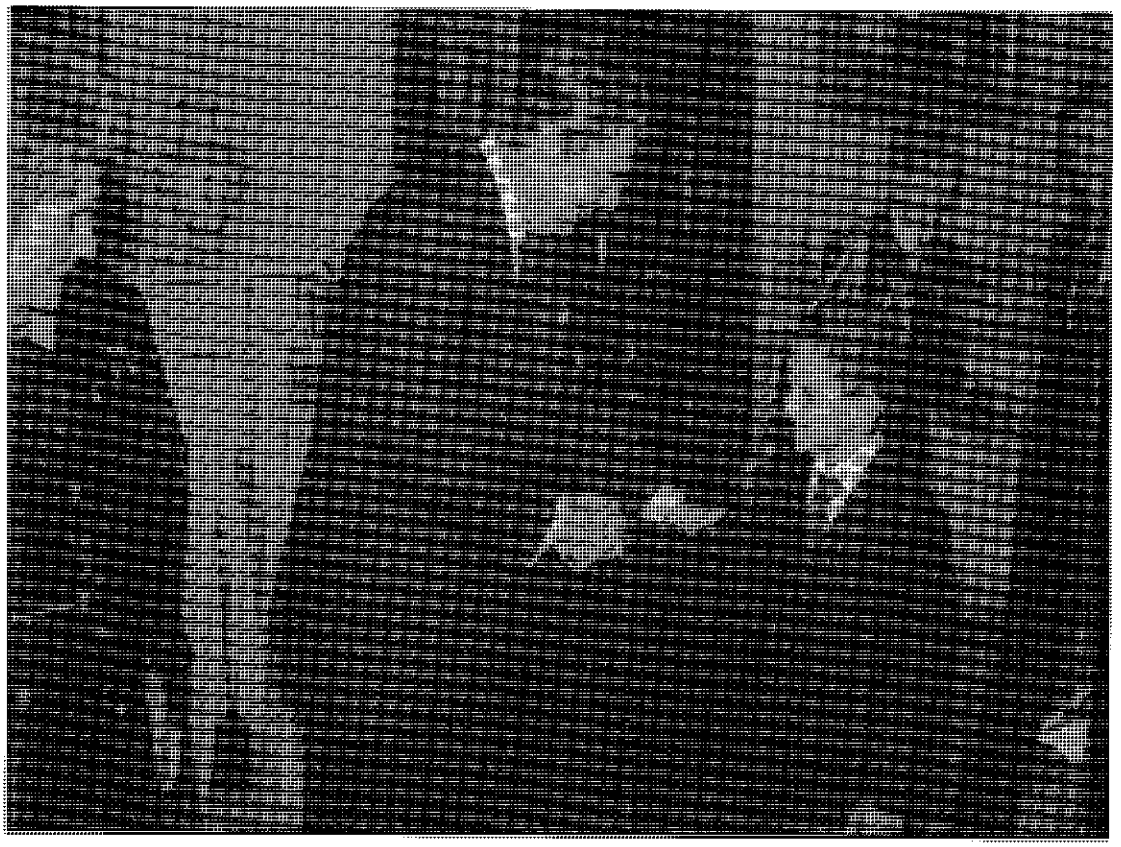
Immediately after the September 11 attacks and as Operation Noble Eagle and Operation Enduring Freedom started, the Military Awards Branch became busier than normal. When a Soldier's remains are placed in the casket for military honors, the Soldier is clothed in full uniform. Because commands were often awarding posthumous medals (sometimes without the proper authority) without updating the records, ensuring the ribbon sets were correct at the time of interment became a real challenge requiring round-the-clock coordination between CENTCOM units, Military Awards Branch, and the Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center. CW4 Michael Coy recalls many calls to his cell phone from MG Frost, who always started by asking him if he was driving and if so, could he safely pull over. Despite being under intense pressure from all quarters, her first thought was always the welfare of her Soldiers.

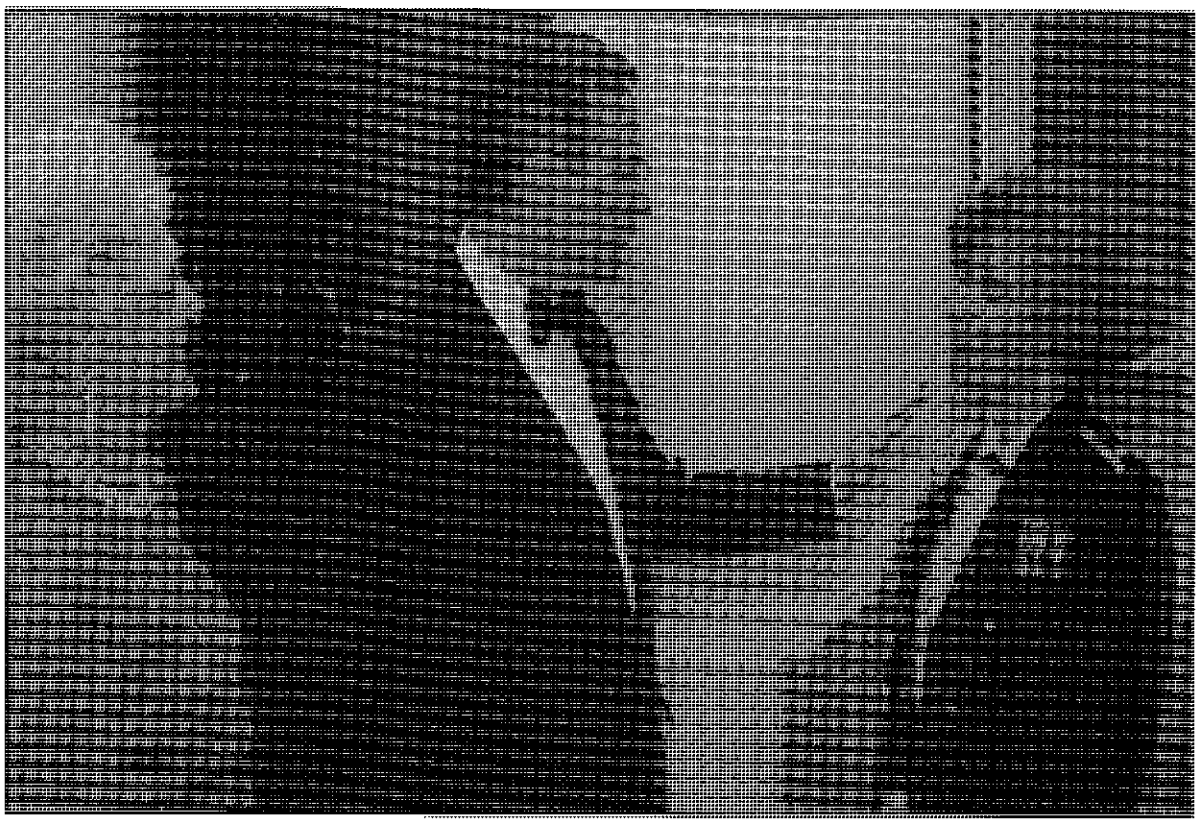
LTC Tom Palmatier, DA Staff Bands Officer and then XO to MG Frost recalls two events that told much about MG Frost. "She was not the least bit impressed with herself and didn't want people to think that just because she was a general, she was superior in any way. However, she embodied Selfless Service and would do what her role required. Once I was escorting her to talk to a group of about 300 Army band Soldiers and she was carrying her own suitcase. I kept trying to get it from her and she kept telling me she was quite capable of carrying her own suitcase and she wasn't going to have a Soldier waiting on her.



As we approached the conference room I asked her to stop and said, 'Ma'am you're going to go in there and shake hands and take pictures and spend time with these AG Corps Soldiers. How about if you let me do my job and take care of your bag and you do your job as The Adjutant General.' Then I held my breath knowing I'd kind of crossed the line. She handed me her bag, said thank you, and dove into the crowd of Soldiers, lighting up the room."

Prior to the September 11 attacks, MG Frost was still a BG but was on the MG list. Having served as the Commander of Eastern Sector, United States Military Entrance Processing Command, General Frost understood the importance of positive media events for recruiting. Hence, she chose to have her promotion ceremony in her beloved hometown of Latta, South Carolina to expose more people to our Army. LTG Timothy Maude, our senior AG leader, readily agreed this ceremony would be a great idea to help our hard-working recruiters. Her staff had already been writing scripts, arranging for an Army band, working with the South Carolina Army National Guard to get a cannon salute, and all of the other things that go into planning a major ceremony for Latta's "favorite daughter." LTC Palmatier recalls, "a few days after the September 11 attacks we got a call that GEN John Keane, the VCSA, was enroute. GEN Keane walked straight into her office, laid the 2-star shoulder boards on her desk, and told her it was time to put them on – the Army needed her. After the VCSA left, instead of the big hometown ceremony a handful of us stood in her office as she slipped on the shoulder boards while crying, knowing that LTG Maude's recently confirmed death was the reason she was pinning on her stars early. That day taught me what 'The Army Goes Rolling Along' truly means. When a





could do to help. Quite often, she would take short breaks from her extremely demanding schedule to sit a few minutes with us in the outer office, sip on a diet coke, and inquire as to how things were going and how our families were doing. Anyone who has worked for her knows that MG Frost was the epitome of a caring and giving leader. Her focus was always directed towards caring for others which explains her intense passion, enthusiasm and relentless quest to enhance all Human Resource systems that serve the needs of our Army's Soldiers.

Soldier falls, someone else has to step up." It was especially meaningful that on September 15, 2006, in Arlington National Cemetery, The U.S. Army Band and The Old Guard rendered the honors that MG Frost had missed when she had been promoted. Two Ruffles and Flourishes and the 13 rounds of the cannon salute paid fitting tribute to this great Soldier, proud American, and wonderful woman who wanted to be known as "just Kathy."

LTC Marcus Cochran, TAGD Chief of the Retirements and Separations Branch who later served as the final TAGD XO for MG Frost recalls the immense capacity for generosity and compassion that characterized our Army's 40th The Adjutant General. Regardless of where she traveled, she was always thinking of those who worked for her and would often bring back small souvenirs for the staff. If a member of the TAG Directorate was to encounter health problems or other personal setbacks such as the loss of a family member, etc. as her XO, I could expect her top priority would be an immediate phone call to the individual to see if there was anything she

Brigadier General Gina Farrisee was Commander of the Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center while MG Frost was TAG. She felt that nothing summed up MG Frost's love of life more accurately than one of the General's favorite quotations that she asked to have included in the program at her own funeral service. The quote is from "Come from the Heart," from the album "Willow in the Wind" by Kathy Mattea. It says simply: ""You've got to sing like you don't need the money; You've got to love like you'll never get hurt; You've got to dance like there's nobody watching; It's got to come from the heart, if you want it to work."

Martin Frost served in Congress from 1979 to 2005, representing a diverse district in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. He served two terms as chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, the third-ranking leadership position for House Democrats, and two terms as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Frost serves as a regular contributor to FOX News Channel and is a scholar in residence at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. He holds a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri and a law degree from the Georgetown Law Center.

LTC Daniel Sacks, LTC Thomas Palmatier, and LTC Marcus Cochran served as Executive Officer to our Army's 40th The Adjutant General. Each officer gained a great deal of respect for the strength and compassion of a Senior Army Leader who juggled the demands of transitioning HR support to a modular force while simultaneously sustaining the HR mission of an Army thrust into a Global War on Terrorism. Each will strongly attest to the fact that MG Frost embodied the spirit of all HR warriors in that she could not and would not rest until she had exploited every opportunity to improve the care given to our fighting force. She will never be forgotten.

LTC Marcus Cochran currently serves as the Director of Training for the Adjutant General School, and LTC Thomas Palmtier is the Commandant of the Army School of Music

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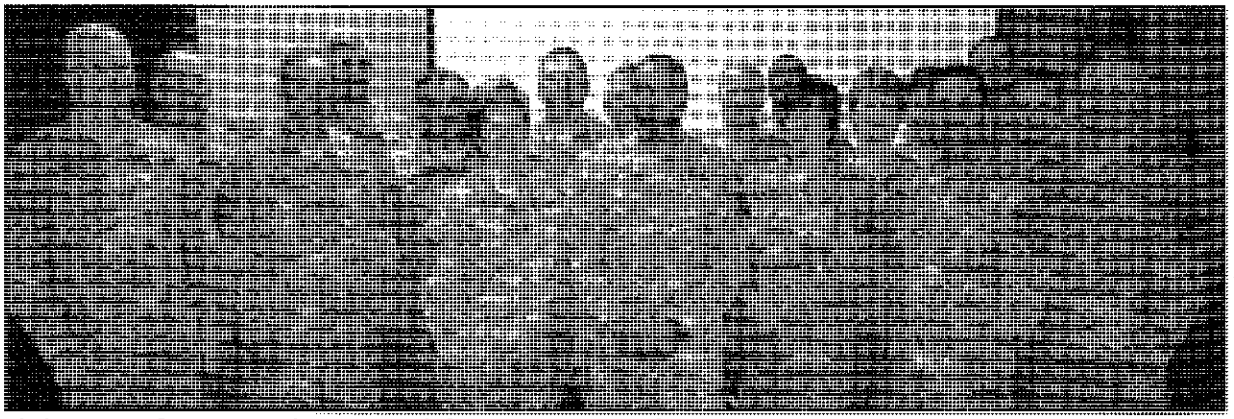
ARNG HR Technicians Meet at the Annual National Command Chief Warrant Officer Conference



ARNG HR Technicians at the annual National Command Chief Warrant Officer conference, held in Sacramento, CA on 1 March 2007. From left to right are CW5 Richard Ernest (NC), CW5 Tom O'Sullivan (NGB), CW5 Tommy Gilbert (AL), CW5 Mark Marini (CT), CW5 Juan Espinosa (NM), CW5 Julia Mosman (IA), CW5 Dana Kees (WV), CW4 Darrell Partee (GA), CW5 Gerald Sims (CWO AGC), CW5 Jerry Key (GA), CW5 Linda Blinco (CO), CW5 Dennis Howell (VI), CW5 Rhea Pruett (MI), CW5 Jan Ready (SC), CW4 Francis Pablo (GU), CW5 Randy Niedt (NJ), CW5 Christopher Serio (TRADOC), CW5 Paul Wilson (SD), CW5 Leslie Williams (LA), and not pictured, CW5 Rickey Goodrich (TN).