War College remembers Pearl Harbor, recognizes National Guard Birthday

By Curt Keester   07 December 2018

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CARLISLE, Pa. (Dec. 7, 2018) – Classes paused at the Army War College today to salute the U.S. National Guard in an early celebration of its 382 years of service to fellow Americans. At the same time, the joint student body, faculty and staff remembered the historic events of the attack on Pearl Harbor 77 years ago.

Lt. Col Jon Stewart, a war college student and member of the Ohio Army National Guard, shared a few historical notes with his colleagues. As part of a peacetime emergency measure, President Franklin Roosevelt ordered over 300,000 Soldiers of the National Guard into federal service prior to Dec. 7, 1941 to augment the defenses of the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands. Guardsmen saw action on the day of the Pearl Harbor attack, he said.

Stewart explained how today's Guard serves to support national security demands,

states' needs and local communities' in 2,600 communities throughout the country. National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are integral part of the Joint Force: a combat-tested and experienced operations force, serving at home and overseas.

The National Guard predates the nation. An order of the Massachusetts Bay Colony's General Court to organize their militia into three permanent regiments in 1636, Stewart said. Three Massachusetts Guard units –181st Infantry, 101st Field Artillery, and 101st Engineer battalions -- can trace their history to the original regiments.

"The National Guard has taken on many forms over the years, and today's National Guard is "always ready, always there," said Stewart.

The Army War College Class of 2019 has 27 Army National Guard and 2 Air National Guard students in the Resident Program, and 158 Army National Guard and 1 Air National Guard in the Distance Education Program.