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Serving the New York Army and Air National Guard, Naval Militia, New York Guard and Families

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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

As Soldiers and Airmen, we members of the New York National Guard know about fitness.

We'll push ourselves to do that extra pushup in the gym to stay in physical shape and we'll push away that extra portion of desert to keep our weight down.

Being fit, though, involves more than just physical fitness. It also involves being mentally and spiritually fit by knowing how to make good decisions as we deal with family, emotional, relationship and financial stresses and strains which are an inevitable part of life inside and outside the military.

Our ability to deal with these stresses, to develop the critical thinking skills and the knowledge to work through these challenges and realize that they are local and temporary, not global and permanent, enables us to perform our mission better both in combat and here at home. Trying to do your mission while worrying about your family, your finances and your friends makes a hard job even harder and can help contribute to traumatic stress syndrome.

The Army has implemented a new program known as Comprehensive Soldier Fitness to address the needs of Soldiers and Families to cope successfully with the stresses of military life on the individual and the family to remain home physically and emotionally fit.

Soldiers will learn the skills they need to

deal with financial difficulties; learn how to approach life's challenges in a positive, optimistic way; build strong bonds within their families and with others that sustain them when the going gets tough; and strengthen the beliefs, principals, and values that sustain them outside of these other relationships.

Over the next few months our Army National Guard units will begin putting in place a plan for teaching these comprehensive Soldier skills across our force. We will start with a train the trainer program and by the summer of 2012 the program will be in place. The training will be based on real world situations that a Soldier is likely to encounter.

Our New York National Guard Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen is the proponent for this program and chaplains across our Army National Guard units will play a key role in tracking the effectiveness of this training. But this is a commanders' initiative, and leaders at all levels will play a role in ensuring that our Soldiers get this training.

As we gear up to send almost 4,000 Soldiers to Afghanistan in 2012, it's vital that every man and woman be prepared for the challenges of service far away from home in a tough, demanding environment where long hours are the norm and physical danger is a real possibility.

I believe this training effort will be helpful to all of you, the Soldiers of the New York



Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy

Army National Guard, as you serve our state and nation. You and your family make many sacrifices as you serve, and it's my responsibility as Adjutant General to ensure that you have all the tools, both physical and spiritual, that you need to do those tough jobs.

COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS

STRONG MINDS ★ STRONG BODIES

<http://www.army.mil/cs/>

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FORT DRUM-- A team from the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team sends a Javelin anti-tank missile downrange during new equipment training here on Sept. 23. Sixty-one Soldiers participated in the live-fire exercise as the 27th gears up for a possible deployment to Afghanistan. The Javelin is the Army's latest generation infantry anti-tank weapon, capable of knocking out a tank, or busting a bunker more than two kilometers away. Photo by Capt. R. Romano, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

ON THE COVER: Sergeant First Class Wayne Stone holds an M-14 ceremonial rifle at the present-arms position during a mock funeral service as part of New York's Honor Guard participation in the annual competition held the week of Sept. 23rd at Fort Snelling, Minn. See the full story on page 11.

BACK COVER: A team from the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team sends a Javelin anti-tank missile downrange during new equipment training at Fort Drum on Sept. 23.

New Resiliency Guide Available for Guard Leaders

By Sgt. Darron Salzer, National Guard Bureau
ARLINGTON, Va. -- The Army National Guard has published an in-depth leader's guidebook to Soldier resiliency.

The guidebook, published by the Guard's Soldier and Family Support division, is meant as a tool to help Soldiers "learn how to [handle] difficult times in their lives, get through those times, and come out stronger afterwards," said Army Sgt. Maj. Jim Moore, of the division.

The book can be used to not only help build individual resilience, but also resiliency at the unit level. It includes strategies to help mitigate suicidal behavior, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic abuse and child maltreatment.

Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Burch, the Army National Guard's top enlisted Soldier, said even though suicides are a major concern, "these other issues have been identified as potential risk factors that could compound suicidal ideation and risky behaviors."

"With the Guard being a cross section of

society, issues that are problematic in the civilian world are sometimes carried over into our organization -- as leaders, we need to help Soldiers and families to overcome these other, not-so-desirable behaviors," Burch said.

"The guide teaches battle drills to help identify an event, identify what emotions are tied to it, and then how to develop coping measures to get through the event and identify how to be stronger once the event is over," Moore said.

Moore also said the guide is versatile, in that it is designed for first-line leaders to use one-on-one or with larger groups. For instance, larger groups, such as squads, can go through the battle drills to learn how to help each other identify and get through issues. Moore said that Guard Soldiers often have more issues to deal with than their active duty counterparts.

"They have civilian jobs, are geographically disbursed, or may not have access to the same facilities as our active counterparts," he said.

"So it is very important to create that resiliency support network during and away from the drilling environment."

Burch said the guidebook helps identify some best practices and helps leaders learn to build resiliency from the individual Soldier on up to the unit level. He said resiliency is the ability to bounce back from adversity. He also added that he doesn't expect Soldiers to memorize the entire book, but wants them to instead use it to overcome adversity.

"As the Army Guard Command Sergeant Major, my expectation is that people will ask for help, that we look out for one another and identify risky behaviors, and that we reach out and give help to those who need it," Burch said. "This book is another step in the right direction."

The guide is available for download by National Guard leaders at www.ng.mil/news/archives/2010/10/Leaders_Guide.pdf.

Air Force Moving Info, Services to new Total-Force Website

By Staff Sgt. Steve Grever, Armed Forces Press Service

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas -- Air Force personnel specialists are in the process of migrating personnel information and services to the new Air Force Personnel Services website.

The transfer aims to move the Air Force toward its goal of establishing a single, online knowledge base for active duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, civilian members and retirees.

"The Air Force is transforming the delivery of personnel information and services for total force Airmen through responsive, effective and modernized processes and capabilities," said Chief of the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Program Integration Office Col. Steven Talley. "The new website incorporates total force personnel information -- what we call knowledge -- and makes it available to all Airmen, online."

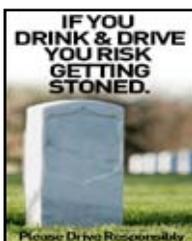
Each Air Force component did its part in the overall planning, coordination and execution phases of migrating more than 3,400 total force knowledge articles to the personnel services website, said Tom Oates, AFPC's knowledge management branch chief for the active-duty component. "We reconfigured the website to have the capability to serve all total-

force Airmen and retirees," Mr. Oates said. "The website reconfiguration plan included modifying our existing drop-down menus, specific customer segment menus and categories for knowledge articles to accommodate total-force component content."

The new knowledge base is designed to offer "one-stop-shopping" for personnel information and services for customers. Knowledge articles from all components continue to be phased into the new website as they are updated and approved by component representatives, offering the most current and applicable information for customers, according to Senior Master Sgt. George Macaluso, Air Force Reserve knowledge management operations superintendent.

"While we want Reserve and Guard members to visit the Air Force Personnel Services (AFPERs) website, they can still find information on the Air Guard or Air Force Reserve websites until the migration is completed in 2011," Sergeant Macaluso said.

More information about the Air Force Personnel Center can be found at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil.



November, 2009 - Leandra's Law Passes State Senate

On Nov. 17, 2009 Leandra's Law was signed by the Governor of New York imposing the following changes:
A person who operates a vehicle while under the influence with a passenger under the age of sixteen would be guilty of a class E felony punishable by a fine of up to 5 thousand dollars and or a period of imprisonment of up to four years.
A person who causes the death of a person under the age of sixteen be charged with the crime of aggravated vehicular homicide and increases the penalty from a class B felony to a class B violent felony.
A person who causes serious physical injury to a person under the age of sixteen be charged with the crime of aggravated vehicular assault and increases the penalty from a class C felony to a class C violent felony.



A Soldier receives his annual influenza vaccine. File photo courtesy of the Dept. of Defense.

National Guard Prepares for Flu Season

By Tech. Sgt. John Orrell, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - With the flu season approaching quickly, the Army and Air National Guard have released guidance for their 2010-2011 vaccination campaigns and will start shipping vaccinations to the states for immediate distribution, Guard officials said Sept. 7.

Maj. Gunnar D. Kiersey, a medical readiness officer with the Army Guard chief surgeon's office, said

the Military Vaccine Agency is expected to start deliveries to the states by October.

Air National Guard units are scheduled to receive their doses of the flu vaccine by October, said Air Force Maj. James Coker, the chief of the Air Surgeon's Public Health and Prevention branch.

"It is highly encouraged for Guard members to receive their vaccination in a timely manner to

protect them from influenza during the peak months of influenza activity, which is generally December through March in the U.S.," said Coker. "Personnel who receive the influenza vaccination begin to develop antibodies sufficient to protect them from influenza infection within two weeks of vaccination. This protection will generally last six to nine months and sometimes longer."

Kiersey said Soldiers, who get their shots early, will protect themselves and their families from the influenza virus.

The 2010-2011 flu vaccine will protect against H1N1, and two other influenza viruses: an H3N2 virus and an influenza B virus, Kiersey said.

For more on influenza and vaccines used by the Department of Defense, go to www.flu.gov.

Driving While Distracted or Drowsy: A Recipe For Disaster

With the recent introduction of Apple's iPhone, it is prudent to revisit the subject of driving while distracted or drowsy, as noted by The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2002:

While much focus has been placed in recent years on alcohol-related driving and speeding, less focus has been paid to other forms of potentially unsafe driving behaviors that draw drivers' attention away from the primary task of driving such as distracted and drowsy driving.



Inspector General Corner

Lines of Operation: Part One

By Col. Eric J. Hesse, Command Inspector General

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham -- This is the first of a four part series in which I will address The Adjutant General's four Lines of Operation (LOO) from an Inspector General (IG) perspective. An article covering one LOO each quarter will appear in the Guard Times and the IG quarterly.

The backdrop to this all is the Command Training Guidance (CTG) and the Operational Environment chart. These are our TAG priorities for the New York Army National Guard. The four inputs of our focus are Soldier, Family, Equipment and Facility Readiness. The output is a "well trained, mission ready relevant Guard force."

These inputs are mutually supporting, so improving one may improve them all. For example, a satisfied Soldier who is challenged and well-led may produce a Soldier who also wants his family to bond with the unit. If you maintain your facility, Soldiers want to be there, if you do nothing but complain about your facilities, so will your Soldiers.

Now, back on point ... the first of the four LOOs is Soldier Readiness. Soldier Readiness is much more than getting a Soldier through the process of readiness checks for medical or dental screening for deployment. Soldier readiness is about leadership. While all of us from sergeant to brigadier general may have different levels of responsibility, by virtue of our rank we are all leaders.

Specifically, we owe our Soldiers tough realistic training. That is often the easy part. We also owe them well-trained leaders and we have the responsibility to know what drives them. Are they in the Guard for the college money? Did they do it to deploy? Is it because family members have served in the past? There are many reasons Soldiers enlist and then continue to show up.

The four inputs are Soldier, Family, Equipment and Facility Readiness.

The output is a "well trained, mission ready relevant Guard force"

-- Col. Eric J. Hesse, Command Inspector General

I have served as an IG for a few years and now start my second year as your IG. From my perspective, I see a lot we can do to improve Soldier Readiness without too much effort. But first, you have to know your Soldiers.

Far too often, the IG is the end-around when unit leaders aren't getting the job done. If Soldiers don't take their physical fitness test as required by regulation or if we "pass" them, if we aren't preparing them for promotion boards, if we don't make them wear their Class A or Army Service uniform at least once a year, we are doing nothing for that Soldier's readiness. I could go on and on based on what we see in the IG office. There is much more to Soldiering than shooting a rifle.

I like to stick with the basics; that's the way I'm wired. Once a month, I brief the TAG and often have to remind myself that much of the time I only get to see the negative events in our units. I know there are a lot of good things going on.

Bob Dylan wrote that "time lost is not soon found." It is a great line to live by. If we are too busy to mentor Soldiers and too busy for the basics, we won't improve Soldier Readiness and the time lost might certainly be time not soon found. **gt**

Time for a new DA Photo?

Guard Times Staff
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham -- Have you ever heard the old cliché, "a picture is worth a thousand words?" Well, the mandatory Department of the Army (DA) Official Photo is no different. There are very few boards that don't require Soldiers' photo. Therefore, the DA Photo is an essential document in your board files; it represents you.

When board members are reviewing your packet for Army selection boards for promotions, professional education, unit vacancy promotions, command selections and other special recognition boards, the photo is one of the first documents viewed. A current photo also lets the board members know that the Soldier is concerned about his or her career.

Your DA Photo is an official document and must be taken in accordance with Army Regulation 640-30. It must be taken at an authorized photographic facility or a commercial contract facility. To ensure that you have a current photo on file, it is in your best interest to view your official photograph online. You may do this by logging into your iPERMS file at <https://statepermsompf.hoffman.army.mil/rms/login.jsp>.



If you need further assistance, contact Maj. Lynn Currier, Visual Information Manager at (518) 786-4407 or mail: lynn.currier@us.army.mil.



Back to School Danger – Speeding in School Zones

According to the United States Census Bureau, 76 million students are heading back to school this year. That is a lot of students walking to and around school grounds. Despite research that shows just how much you can help to avoid pedestrian fatalities by reducing your speed in school zones, many people still don't abide by the posted signs. Research conducted in 63 school zones across the country by SAFE KIDS found that over 65 percent of all vehicles in their study traveled at least 10 mph over the posted school-zone speed.

Chaplain's Corner

Faith: The Key to Our Country's Future

By Chaplain (Chief Warrant Officer) Charles G. Valenti, New York Guard

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham
-- Today the United States is faced with many challenges. As we all know, we are a country at war. The war in the Middle East has touched the lives of every American, especially those in uniform and their loved ones.

While our country has weathered the storm of the most serious recession since the Great Depression and our economy is rebounding, there are still millions of people who are out of work, many of whom have lost their homes through foreclosure and have seen their life savings evaporate in an attempt to make ends meet. Even though security has tightened significantly since the tragedy of September 11, 2001, we live with the possibility of another 9/11 incident each day. What does the future hold in store for us?

That question must have been on the minds of the disciples as they were sent out to spread the faith. According to the Gospels of the Christian Bible, the disciples were told to go out and spread the Good News. They were warned that it would not be easy and that they might be rejected. The disciples were also instructed that they should take nothing more than the clothes on their backs as they went out on their mission so that they would realize that they should place their faith in God to provide for them. Like us, the disciples faced an uncertain future, yet out they went to do God's work, putting their faith in God.

As we face our uncertain future, we should take a lesson from the disciples. We should put our faith in God that He will provide for us. This may be easier said than done. When we find it difficult to do so, we should seek the help we need by prayer. All of the various faith groups have special prayers that have been used for years. While they are certainly appropri-

ate, we must not forget that prayer is simply our thoughts directed to God. Our own words are as good as formalized prayer. One does not have to belong to a faith group to pray. The only prerequisite is a sincere heart.

When we pray we should not treat God like an honored guest; we should treat Him as He really is: our best friend. Best friends are honest with each other. Therefore, our prayers should reflect our true feelings, even if those feelings include anger, disillusionment, and doubt.

While our future may be an uncertain one, we can face that future without fear, if we have faith. With faith, there are no limits to what we can achieve. **gt**



Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen, State Chaplain, Joint Force Headquarters, leads attendees in a commemorative prayer at the Albany Rural Cemetery during a wreath laying event Oct. 5 in honor of President Chester Arthur, America's 21st President. Joining Chaplain Olsen were Brig. Gen. Renwick Payne (left), Director of the Joint Staff and Willard Bruce, president, Albany Cemetery Association. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, Guard Times Staff.

New York State Seat Belt Law: State Law Statute

Did you know that New York was the first state to legally require its citizens to buckle up? In 1984, New York passed the first mandatory vehicle occupant restraint law in the entire nation. Today, New York is still serious about getting its citizens to buckle up. New York seat belt law is described in Section 1229 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, which states in part that: "No person shall operate a motor vehicle unless such person is restrained by a safety belt approved by the commissioner. No person sixteen years of age or over shall be a passenger in the front seat of a motor vehicle unless such person is restrained by a safety belt approved by the commissioner."



Military Personnel News: the MILPO Corner

Congress Approves Stop-Loss Pay Extension.

The Army extended the deadline to apply for Retroactive Stop-Loss Pay to Dec. 3, 2010. If you or anyone that you know is eligible, please take action to receive this entitlement.

The criteria and documents required are detailed at the official DoD site which can be accessed at www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0710_stoploss.

Applications can be completed by utilizing www.stoplosspay.army.mil. Also, please keep in mind that the survivors of our fallen Soldiers that were in this category are eligible too. Currently, the New York Army National Guard has approximately 1,300 Soldiers who may be eligible, many of whom have since separated.

In the event that you know surviving family members, we strongly encourage you to contact one of the New York Army National Guard Survivor Outreach Service Coordinators for assistance. Raul Lopez - Valhalla (914) 784-8243, Dan Arena - Syracuse (315) 438-3301, or Mike Batza - Albany (518) 270-1541.

Enlisted Promotion Information.

It is imperative that Soldiers learn and know how to access the military personnel (MNP) web-portal in order to view their current Enlisted Promotion information. If something needs updating, see your unit administrator with the proper documentation so that they can be updated or submitted to MNP. The sooner a Soldier knows something needs to be updated, the better. It helps streamline the accuracy and timeliness of the Promotion List preparation.

To submit your automated NYARNG 120R-E through AKO, log in with your AKO username and password at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/553732>. Select Enlisted Personnel and Click on "HERE" to view the 120R-E. Fill in ALL red fields and then choose your zones.

When finished with the form, sign with your CAC card. If you do not have the ability to CAC sign, follow the instructions to sign with PPIN. Once finished, email the form to MNP-EPP@ng.army.mil using the link on the form.

Army Personnel Office Gateway.

The National Guard Bureau has announced the ARNG G1 Personnel Gateway. The Gateway is a one-stop shop for program/process, policy and benefit information as well Army

National Guard resources and websites.

It is designed to empower each Soldier, their Family and veterans and retirees by connecting all available resources through an organized, up-to-date, and centrally-located site.

Family members, Soldiers or retirees will not need a CAC Card to enter the web site. Only some specific personnel office links to information require a CAC Card. The following link may be used by all Soldiers and state personnel: <https://glarng.army.pentagon.mil>.

Soldier and Family Support.

There are three military sponsored programs that Army National Guard families can use to seek local support programs to help deal with deployment issues. They are:

National Guard Bureau Joint Services Support: Go to www.jointservicesupport.org. This site allows families to connect to local resources and other programs, like the National Guard Family Programs staffed by state and regional family program personnel.

Military OneSource: Go to www.militaryonesource.com. Service and family members can ask about any topic or concern for which they need answers or assistance. Additionally the site has access to Community support Coordinators who can connect families with local services.

The Army Strong Community Center: Go to arfp.org. This was formed to assist geographically dispersed families by connecting them with support resources in their own community. The staff provides resources and referrals for health and community resources.

GI Bill Rates Expected to Rise.

Montgomery GI bill benefits are expected to increase 4.2 percent in the new fiscal year that begins October first, to a maximum of \$1,426 a month for full-time students who spent three or more years on active duty.

Some increases occur automatically under a procedure set in place by Congress so benefits keep pace with rising prices. This could be the last time Montgomery GI Bill payments increase. Congress is now considering a GI Bill reform package, aimed at improving the new Post 9-11 GI Bill that would freeze the flat-rate Montgomery GI Bill at current rates in order to pay for improvements to the newer program.

The Montgomery GI Bill, created in the mid-

1980s, provides a flat-rate payment for students, regardless of tuition and fees at their school. In contrast, the Post-9/11 GI Bill pays up to the full cost of tuition and fees for in-state students in undergraduate studies at public colleges, plus a book allowance and a monthly living stipend for eligible students.

There is a \$1,200 contribution to sign up for the Montgomery GI Bill, a benefit that remains available today, but there is no enrollment fee for the Post-9-11 GI Bill. Effective October 2010, all GI Bill rates increased, not just Chapter 30, Active Duty GI Bill. To see the most current rates visit www.gibill.va.gov.

Guidance for Officers.

All officers are highly encouraged to periodically check their iPERMS File for completeness. This action will prevent unnecessary mistakes or omissions from officer records that could impact career decisions.

For Additional guidance, field grade officers should visit the MNP-OPM webpage via <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/555489> or contact Mal. Mark Frank (518) 272-6495 or mark.p.frank@us.army.mil. Company Grade officers should visit the MNP-OPM webpage via <https://www.us.army.mil>.

Security Clearances.

How do you know if you require a security clearance? Generally speaking, the need to hold a clearance is MOS driven. That is, if your MOS requires you to have a certain level of clearance, you need to obtain that level of clearance in order to become MOS qualified.

You must also maintain that level of clearance to be able to retain your primary MOS. There are some instances where a clearance may be required even though the qualifications for the MOS do not demand it.

You should know if the position you hold requires a security clearance. If uncertain or if you want to re-class into another MOS, there is a reference where you can look to determine what each MOS requires a clearance. Army Pamphlet 611-21 is available at <https://smartbook.armyg1.pentagon.mil/default.aspx>.

Points of contact are Sgt. 1st Class John DeVaul at (518) 272-6434, email john.devaul@us.army.mil or Staff Sgt. Shawn E. Goggin at (518) 272-6439, email shawn.e.goggin@us.army.mil.

Subscribe to Education Updates.

The New York Army National Guard Education Services office is now set up with Gov (Government) Delivery email subscription service. GovDelivery allows Soldiers to sign up for regular updates on education topics that may concern them. To sign up for updates on education benefits and bonuses, go to our Education site at <http://dmna.state.ny.us/education/education/php> and enter YOUR email address.

Casualty Assistance Training.

The New York Army National Guard will conduct three Casualty Assistance classes in February, 2011. The training will be held at the Thompson Road Armory in Syracuse from Feb. 2-3, the Joint Force HQ in Latham from Feb. 9-10, and at the 53rd Troop Command Headquarters in Valhalla on Feb. 16-17.

This training is mandatory for all AGR/long term ADOS Soldiers who are either Sgt. 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Two/Captain or above in rank. If you have taken the class previously, complete the online refresher training available at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/tagd/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm>.

If you have any questions, please contact 1st Lt. Coye, (518) 270-1542.

Survivor Outreach Services.

A third Survivor Outreach Services Coordinator has been added to the Personnel directorate of the New York Army National Guard. Mr. Raul Lopez has joined the team and is currently working out of Headquarters 53rd Troop Command in Valhalla to provide support and services to the families of our fallen heroes in the southern counties. Raul can be reached at his office 914-784-8243, cell phone 914-564-8170, or by email: raul.lopez5@us.army.mil

Operation New Dawn in Iraq.

The Department of the Army announced that beginning September 1, 2010, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) has ended and Operation New Dawn (OND) has begun. Since combat conditions continue to exist, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, and the Global War on Terror Service Medal eligibility remains the same.

Soldier Awards and Decorations.

The military personnel directorate receives numerous questions on a daily basis from administrators and Soldiers in the field. Most of these questions can be answered by accessing very informative online web sites.

a. MNP WIKI Site: Go to "Awards and Decorations" https://www.kc.army.mil/wiki/Portal:NYARNG_-_MNP_Procedural_Guide.

There are links to several references, including the NYARNG Awards and Decorations Handbook.

b. MNP AKO Main Page: You can access awards guidance through the MNP AKO Main Page, under MNP References. There is a link there which will bring you to a folder with numerous references at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/553732>.

c. Institute of Heraldry: The Department of the Army maintains this site at <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/>. Once on the main page, click on "Decorations and Medals." It will bring you to a menu which provides access to the background and the awards criteria for each award and order of precedence. In addition, it provides information on how to obtain medals from the U.S. Army Veterans Medals Unit.

d. Awards and Decorations Branch, Soldier Programs and Services Divisions. The Human Resource Command (G-1) maintains this site at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/tagd/awards/index.htm>.

TRICARE Health Information.

A new feature of TRICARE Online allows users to save personal health data such as medication and allergy profiles, demographic information and a personal health summary to their computer. The new feature, called the Blue Button, is at www.tricareonline.com.

TRICARE Reserve Select Available for Troops, Families.

TRICARE Reserve Select is a premium-based health plan available to members of the Ready Reserve (and their families) who are not eligible for or enrolled in the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program.

When enrolled in TRICARE Reserve Select, you may visit any TRICARE-authorized provider, network or non-network. Care at military treatment facilities is on a space-available basis only. You do not need a referral for any type of care but some services may require prior authorization.

The type of provider you see determines how much you'll pay out-of-pocket. If you're visiting a network provider, you'll pay less out of pocket and the provider will file claims for you.

TRICARE Reserve Select is a great option for you and your family if you are a member of the

Selected Reserves of the Ready Reserve, not on active duty orders or covered by the Transitional Assistance Management Program and not eligible for or enrolled in the FEHB.

Visit the TRICARE Site below for eligibility and enrollment details at <http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/Plans/Learn-AboutPlansAndCosts/TRICAREReserveSelect>.

TRICARE Assistance Program.

Soldiers and family members of TRICARE Reserve Select enrollees, and those eligible for Transitional Assistance Management Program coverage, are eligible 24 hours a day for on-line guidance concerning non-medical, short-term, solution-focused counseling to resolve problems before they become larger, and more serious. The site offers TRIAP video counseling and is private, non-reportable, and available throughout the United States.

TRICARE and Retirees.

This program, recently launched, will allow selected "gray area" retired National Guard personnel who are not yet age 60, the opportunity to purchase TRICARE health coverage. Under TRICARE Retired Reserve, TRICARE Standard and Extra coverage will be available for purchase. Details involving specific eligibility criteria, coverage and costs are still being finalized. Visit www.tricare.mil/subscriptions and sign up for "Benefit Changes" for "Retired National Guard and Reserve Member."

TRICARE Suspicious Calls.

There has been a rash of false calls to military personnel from potential scammers claiming to be with the Department of Defense requesting information under the guise of a TRICARE national survey. An active duty Hurlburt Field Airmen was contacted about a TRICARE survey on Sept. 15. The Airman was asked for personal information such as social security number, home address, date of birth, deployment status and length of deployments. When the Airmen asked why TRICARE was asking for information already on file, the caller immediately hung up.

The national and local TRICARE offices were contacted and verified they do conduct surveys; however, they never request the above type personal information. If you receive a call from anyone about TRICARE and believe it to be false contact your local TRICARE office. Remember its YOUR personal information, so protect it.

Guard Chief Visits Joint Task Force Empire Shield

Story and photo by Pfc. Ubon Mendie, New York Guard

NEW YORK - General Craig McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau got a first-hand look at the Soldiers and Airmen of Joint Task Force Empire Shield (JTFES) and learned how the New York National Guard supports law enforcement agency partners during a one-day visit here Aug. 26.

McKinley was joined by New York Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy and New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department Commanding Officer of the North Region, Assistant Chief Stephen Conner during a visit to the Grand Central rail station.

McKinley began his visit with a tour of Grand Central Terminal, where he met members of JTFES posted throughout the terminal. They were partnered with the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) police force during a security surge mission. The Task Force's 250 Soldiers and Airmen constitute a full-time security force on State Active Duty in the metropolitan area.

He also visited the New York City Office of Emergency Management operations center in Brooklyn to learn about citywide preparations and response planning.

The New York National Guard has had a force in New York City continuously since September 11, 2001. For the past nine years, the mission has evolved and matured to provide the city with additional security forces at all major locations, including a maritime presence by elements of the New York Naval Militia.

The most important aspect, explained Lt. Col. Greg Dreisbach, the commander of the task force, was the working relationship between the New York National Guard and its agency partners throughout the city, which include the New York Police Department (NYPD) and Fire Department of New York (FDNY) along with state and federal Homeland Security officials.

McKinley asked the troops and their leaders for a frank assessment of their training, equipment and preparedness to support civil authorities.

"I don't command these great National Guard forces," McKinley explained to the law enforcement leaders, "but I am their strongest



New York Army National Guard 2nd Lt. Jeff Hansen, a platoon leader in New York's Joint Task Force Empire Shield, a state active duty security force that operates in New York City, briefs Gen. Craig McKinley, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau on his team's mission at Grand Central Station Aug. 26. McKinley was in New York City to visit city emergency management officials, see the New York National Guard's task force in action and give a speech.

advocate for resources out of Washington. If there's something they need, I need to know."

McKinley met with Lt. Col. Kaarlo Hietala, the commander of the 24th Civil Support Team located at Fort Hamilton. The team recently completed its validation for full employment as a Chemical, Biological, and Radiological, Nuclear or High Explosive (CBRNE) response team. The CST trains to support civil authorities and for the 24th, that means the FDNY, NYPD, Port Authority and a multitude of city, state and federal agencies.

For the 24th CST, Hietala explained to General McKinley, "there are multiple challenges working in an urban environment to include high-rise buildings, rail and subway systems, as well as the ports of New York maritime setting." All involve both unique training requirements and resources for the National Guard to support, especially the modernization of CST equipment nationwide.

"You guys here in New York are on top of this," he added. "You are integrated full up with

"You guys here in New York are on top of this ... it really doesn't get any better than this, in my opinion."

--Gen. Craig McKinley, Chief, National Guard Bureau

your agency partners. It really doesn't get any better than this, in my opinion."

The Guard Bureau Chief said that the impression from his talk with Soldiers, Airmen and law enforcement officials reinforced his confidence in learning what works best and applying Guardsmen when and where they're needed, before, during and after a disaster or major incident.

"When I go back to Washington and the Pentagon, I can point to New York as an example of how the Guard makes its mission relevant and resources it."

"New Yorkers are concerned enough about this to put their money where their mouth is," McKinley said. **gt**

Honor Guard Takes Top Honors

Eight-Soldier Team Represents New York at Minnesota Event

By Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham -- The New York National Guard's Honor Guard was judged best in the nation, Sept. 23 at a competition held in Fort Snelling, Minn.

The four-day event pitted eight members from the 120 member New York Military Forces Honor Guard against similar teams from seven other states, all of which had taken their top regional honors.

The Soldiers were judged on their military bearing, appearance, and ability to execute a variety of tasks ranging from removing a casket from an aircraft to presenting a flag to a fallen Soldier's next of kin.

The competitors were judged by Active Duty Soldiers assigned to the Army's Third Infantry Regiment, known as the Old Guard, which provides funeral honors at Arlington National Cemetery. Third Infantry Regiment Soldiers guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as well.

The National Guard Honor Guard's provide 80 percent of all military funeral honors for veterans across the country. New York's eleven regional Honor Guards provide honors at 800 to 900 funerals monthly. Last year the New York Military Forces Honor Guard was involved with 10,374 funerals.

"We are proud of these dedicated, talented Soldiers," said Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York. "Honor Guard members are very passionate about what they do every day; providing final honors for our veterans. Their commitment is exemplified by their receiving top honors in this very tough national competition," he added.

"The winning performance of this team is indicative of the high standards we expect of all 120 Soldiers who serve on our Honor Guards across the state," Murphy added.

"The week-long competition was tough and grueling," said Don Roy, the civilian director of the Military Forces Honor Guard. "The judges check everything from the shine on a Soldier's shoes to creases in their uniform to the precision of their movements as they transfer a casket from a hearse to the simulated grave



The New York Honor Guard team conducts an honorable remains transfer from a Minnesota Air National Guard C-130 Hercules at the 2010 Army National Guard's Honor Guard competition at Fort Snelling, Minn., Sept. 22. Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Orrell, National Guard Bureau.

site," he explained.

"I am very proud of all of our Soldiers. All of them work and train hard to provide proper honors to our Veterans and their family," Roy said.

"I am especially proud of our winning team. We are all proud to provide these honors. At times it is hard not to feel the family's pain. It does get easier as it goes along but it is never easy," he added.

New York's competition team included Soldiers from New York City, Syracuse, the Hudson Valley and Western New York. Representing the Military Forces Honor Guard were: Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Stone, Syracuse, Sgt. Goanergis Vargas, Bronx, Spc. Tomas Couvertier, Bronx, Spc. Ruben Martinez-Ortiz, Bronx, John Baker, Buffalo, Spc. Jared Fatigate, Sherman, Conn., Spc.



The New York Military Forces Honor Guard team simulates a funeral service during the 2010 Army National Guard's Honor Guard competition at Fort Snelling, Minn. on Sept. 23. Photo by Tech Sgt. Amie Dahl, Minnesota Air National Guard.

Daniel Messina, New Windsor and Spc. Jason Grossman, Airmont. **gt**

New York Participates in South Africa Air Expo

By Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing

CAPE TOWN, South Africa - Air and Army National Guard units from New York, New Jersey and Rhode Island participated in the African Aerospace and Defense Exposition 2010 here Sept. 21-25.

The 106th Rescue Wing provided an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter and pilots from the 101st Rescue Squadron, pararescuemen from the 103rd Rescue Squadron and maintenance personnel from the 106th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Lt. Col. Rodney Lisec piloted the HH-60 during

a demonstration which involved the pararescuemen and a HC-130J from the 143rd Airlift Wing from Rhode Island.

Pararescuemen, known as Guardian Angels, parachuted out of the C-130J Hercules piloted by the 143rd commander, Col. Larry Gallegly. After landing at the drop site, the Guardian Angels provided aid to a simulated victim who was then hoisted up to a hovering HH-60.

A C-5 Galaxy from the 105th Airlift Wing carried Army National Guard equipment and personnel including an M1117 Armored Security Vehicle from the 442nd Military Police Company, based in Yonkers, a M997 Humvee ambulance from the 466th Area Medical Company, Queensbury and an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter assigned to the 244th Aviation Security and Support Battalion in Latham.

C-5 Aircraft Commander Lt. Col. Omar Valasquez, is a traditional guardsman who flew the loaded C-5 to South Africa. The plane landed at Cape Town International Airport rather than the Ysterplatt Air Force Base airshow site because of its size. The C-5 needs at least 5000 feet of runway for takeoff and landing and a runway that can sustain the C-5's max landing weight of 769,000 pounds, Valasquez explained.

Major General Margaret Woodward, 17th Air Force Commander who led U.S. Department of Defense representation at the event, praised the participation of the New York Air and Army Guardsmen.

"It's been a great opportunity for us to showcase our equipment and the Airmen and Soldiers who make it all come together," Woodward said. "Bringing in their own assets from the C-5 to the helicopters to be able to do this, it's just been an incredible contribution to this effort and I can tell you, 17th Air Force couldn't have been as successful in their participation here without that incredible Guard relationship and professionalism in putting the show together as they did." **gt**



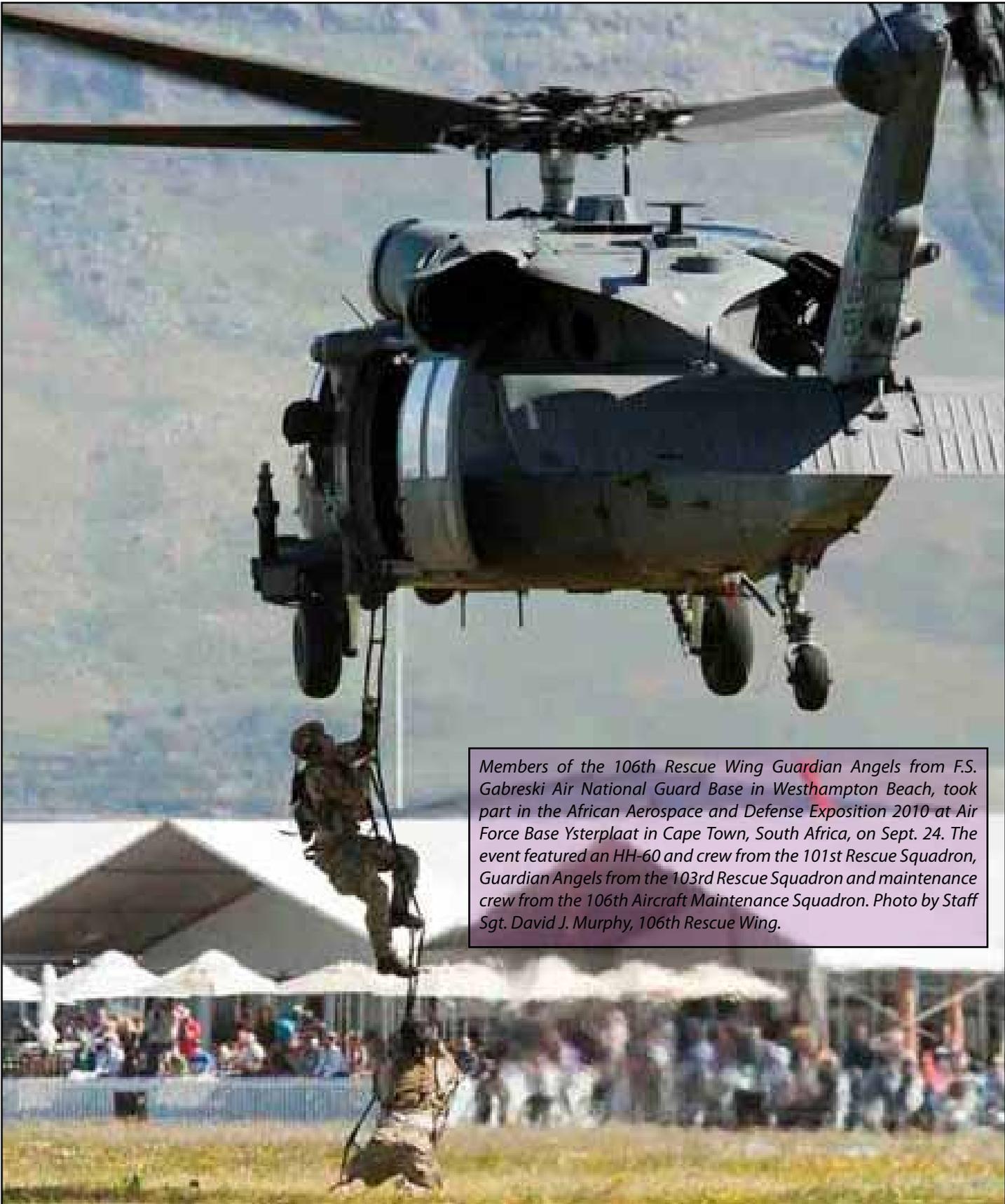
Army Sgt. Kevin Ressler steadies the tail of an OH-58 Kiowa assigned to Detachment 1, Company A, 1st Battalion 224 Security and Support Aviation on Sept. 13, as he and other maintainers prepare the aircraft for a flight to Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh. Ressler, and four other Army aviation members of the detachment, accompanied the aircraft to the Africa Aerospace and Defense Exposition 2010 in South Africa. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.



Director of Joint Staff Brig. Gen. Renwick Payne and Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Teichner (front) an aviator with the 224th Aviation Security and Support Battalion perform a demonstration flight in an OH-58A Kiowa Sept. 22, at Air Force Base Ysterplaat, Cape Town, South Africa. Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryanna Poulin, 7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Guardian Angels from the 106th Rescue Wing, F.S. Gabreski Airport, Westhampton Beach jump out of an HC-130J from the 143rd Airlift Wing, Rhode Island, as part of a demonstration at the African Aerospace and Defense Exposition 2010 at Air Base Ysterplaat in Cape Town, South Africa. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing.



Members of the 106th Rescue Wing Guardian Angels from F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach, took part in the African Aerospace and Defense Exposition 2010 at Air Force Base Ysterplaat in Cape Town, South Africa, on Sept. 24. The event featured an HH-60 and crew from the 101st Rescue Squadron, Guardian Angels from the 103rd Rescue Squadron and maintenance crew from the 106th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing.



All New York Militia Tribute

SARATOGA SPRINGS -- Service members who appear in Rumara Jewett's original oil painting now on display at the New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center in Saratoga Springs include (from left to right) Logistics Specialist 1st Class James Savaria U.S. Navy Reserve, Lt. Col. Robert Mitchell, New York Army National Guard, Lt. Col. Kim Terpening, New York Air National Guard and Sgt. Brandon Lee Gibson, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and New York Naval Militia. The service members are posed close to their positions in the painting. Photo by Pfc. Jeremy Bratt, Joint Force Headquarters.

Supporting the NY Jets and Giants Pre-Season Opener



EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. -- New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery's Headquarters Battery, Battery A and Battery B were on hand during the preseason exhibition game opener at Meadowland Stadium on Aug. 16, to assist displaying the American Flag on the field alongside military personnel from the active Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. The military servicemen and women appeared before a crowd of more than 80,000 fans who later watched the Giants "Big Blue" defeat the Jets "Gang Green" 31-16. Photo by 1st Lt. Mark Getman, 258th Field Artillery.

New York Guardsmen Build Strong Bonds

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters

LAKE GEORGE VILLAGE -- For Spc. Vincent Thompson, his wife Rachel and their 16 year old daughter Amanda, getting ready for his deployment to Iraq next May just got a little easier.

The Thompsons practiced the skills they'll need, and learned useful information, to maintain healthy family interactions and deal with the trials of deployment separation and reintegration through the New York National Guard's Strong Bonds program.

During the August 29-30 event at the Fort William Henry Hotel in Lake George the Thompsons and a dozen other Guard families shared their experiences and fears about family separation and its stresses and strains. For Thompson, a relatively new member of the 105th Military Police Company, and his wife Rachel, from Gates, N.Y., talking to veteran couples was critical.

"They shared tips on how to cope with the separation and gave us a lot of insight on what to expect," Rachel said. "We have a very strong faith and church family, which will help us get through it," Rachel added.

"I had a lot of fun spending time with my family and had fun with other kids who know what it's like being in the National Guard," Amanda Thompson said.

Strong Bonds is an Army-wide program which builds Soldier resiliency by strengthening their family ties. Strong Bonds employs relationship education and communication skills to help Soldiers, their spouses and their children work out their difficulties.

Strong Bonds is conducted in a retreat setting to maximize the training effect. The retreat or "get away" provides a fun, safe, and secure environment to address the impact of relocations, deployments, and military lifestyle stressors.

"It's a way to say thank you for the sacrifices our Soldiers and family make and to help them identify community resources that can assist with concerns about health and wellness, even crisis intervention," said Col. Eric Olsen, State Chaplain for the Joint Force Headquarters in Latham.

"The 12-hour interactive program enables couples and families to get past assumptions and preconceived ideas and to learn to laugh and relax," Olsen said.

Getting away for a free weekend retreat isn't just about building good communication and relationships skills. It's also a time for relaxation, recreation, fellowship, and fun, Olsen added.

Parents enjoy small group and one-on-one activities that open up honest conversation about the dynamics and the stressors of military life, reveal common bonds, nurture friendships and learn how to maintain closeness during turbulent times.

"It's important to remember that living in a military environment produces great stressors on a relationship. It's key that couples take time to work on committed relationships and hear how we are perceived by those we love," Olsen said.

All New York National Guard personnel are eligible to attend a Strong Bonds retreat once a year. The program is also offered to Air Guard



Major Scott Harron, assigned to the 52nd Air Operations Group in Syracuse, his wife Kelly, and their sons Nick and Jake discuss their families' values during the Strong Bonds program weekend retreat at Lake George, Aug 28. The Army-wide program is designed to build Soldier resiliency by strengthening their family ties.



Children of New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen recreate a battle during their visit to the Fort William Henry Museum while their parents participated in the Strong Bonds program weekend retreat at Lake George, Aug. 28. About two dozen families attended the event designed to build Soldier resiliency by strengthening family ties.

members.

Strong Bonds is offered statewide at various locations in western, central and northern New York as well as New York City, although a Soldier is not limited to attending in their own geographic area.

Soldiers and their spouse are placed on military travel orders to cover transportation; all other expenses are covered by the National Guard. Soldiers can also attend in lieu of drill with their commander's approval.

The programs vary, some including child care and family activities. All events are on a first come, first serve basis. Signing up is easy at <http://dmna.state.ny.us/family/famredi.php> **gt**

Troops Match Up for Logan-Duffy Competition

69th Infantry Stacks up Against Massachusetts's 183rd Infantry in Marksmanship Match

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Peter K. Towse, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT DEVENS, Mass.-The New York Irish beat the Boston Irish as the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry and the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry squared off at the annual Logan-Duffy Rifle Match here Oct. 2.

The rifle match, named for the commanding officers of the two regiments during the Spanish-American War-Brig. Gen. Lawrence Logan of Massachusetts and Brig. Gen. Edward Duffy of New York was started in 1936. The winner of the match takes the Logan-Duffy trophy back to their home armory for display until the regiments compete again.

"Both regiments are of Irish heritage and it was a special occasion when the Fighting 69th of New York met the Fighting Irish of Boston in 1861 during the Civil War," said Lt. Col John Andonie, commander of the 69th. "It was this meeting that began a regimental friendship that has endured for nearly 150 years."

"When you look at the history of this match, how it is based on an event that happened during the Civil War where both regiments met each other on a battlefield, I welcome the opportunity to meet the 69th on a foreign battlefield and team up," said Lt. Col. Thomas Stewart, commander of the 182nd. "I would love to serve alongside the 69th just the way our ancestors served together in the Civil War."

The first match in 1936 was won by the Fighting Irish of Boston and the 69th took the trophy home to New York in 1937. When both units were mobilized just prior to World War II in 1940 the annual competition was put on hold, being reinstated in 1958 and the two battalions have competed to hold the trophy since then.

Seventy-four years later, members of the 69th and 182nd came together again, bringing back the tradition of the competition that brought two regiments of Irish infantrymen together in camaraderie that is only matched by their deep devotion to their traditions.

As the announcement was being made there was silence in the room and the anticipation was apparent. The results were close with the 69th winning by only two shots.

"Winning means so much to both sides, but what trumps the winning and the losing is the fact that just because of doing this match, we have strengthened the friendship between both regiments," Stewart said. **gt**



Specialist Alex Rodrigues, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment fires an M4 during the annual Logan-Duffy Rifle Match between the "Fighting 69th" of New York and the "Fighting Irish" of the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 1st Battalion 182nd Infantry Regiment here on Saturday, Oct. 2.



Lieutenant Colonel John Andonie, 69th Battalion Commander receives the Logan-Duffy trophy from Lt. Col. Thomas Stewart, Battalion Commander, 182nd Infantry Regiment. The 'Fighting 69th' won the match by two shots October 2. The trophy will be brought to the 69th's armory to be displayed until the two regiments meet again. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter K. Towse, 42nd Infantry Division.



FORT DRUM -- Specialist Michael Beane, a Company B mechanic from Sodus, mans an M-240B machine gun from a humvee's gunner turret during the 427th Brigade Support Battalion's convoy training here on July 28. Photo by Spc. Ian Boudreau, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

501st EOD Trains this Summer For Fall Deployment

Story by Pfc. Trisha E. Hogle, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT DRUM – The humvee carrying six Soldiers, made its way down the dirt road kicking up a dust cloud that would make a desert sand storm envious. Upon reaching their destination, the Soldiers dismount, brush the dust from their uniforms and begin another day of training in the hot August sun.

Members of the 501st Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal, or EOD) conducted the units Pre-Mobilization Training (PMT) at Fort Drum from August 2-20 in preparation for deployment in support of Operation New Dawn, the follow on mission to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As part of the three week PMT the unit conducted in depth training that includes Army Warrior Tasks, Battle Drills, combatives, marksmanship, urban operations, and cultural awareness, among others.

“PMT ensures assigned Soldiers complete all theater and destination specific training requirements,” said Lt. Col. Robert A. Mitchell, Commander, 501st EOD. “In short, it ensures Soldiers have the right training at the right time that prepares them to conduct their deployed mission.”

Although the 501st isn't expecting to be involved in heavy combat, the unit isn't taking any chances.

“Anything can happen when you're over there, so we are training for all the possibilities” said Sgt. William B. St. John Jr. a volunteer attached to the 501st.

As with any unit getting ready to deploy into harm's way, leaders with in the 501st haven't forgotten that mission success depends on a unit's ability to work as a team.

“The 501st is a unit of less than 40 Soldiers. In order to succeed, teamwork is pivotal,” said 1st Lt. John A. Harder, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 501st EOD.

“It's been the best part of this training. Everyone in the unit works great together, and

that builds moral,” added Harder.

St. John, appreciates the small size of the unit.

“It's a small unit, so I'm able to easily interact with everyone in the 501st, said St. John. “That, more than anything has prepared me for this deployment.”

The moral in the unit is above par and excitement seems to be in the air.

“The Soldiers are excited for this deployment,” said Harder. “Whether the Soldier is married, has kids or has a great job, they are all looking forward to this deployment.”

The 501st EOD is a relatively new unit. Converting from the New York National Guard's historic 105th Infantry Regiment in 2005, the Glenville based unit is capable of taking command and control of two to five Explosive Ordnance Disposal companies in a combat theater.

Since conversion to an EOD Battalion the 105th has sent technicians to both the Iraq and Afghanistan theater of operations. This will be the battalion headquarters' first combat deployment since its conversion to an EOD battalion. **gt**

Specialist Marie Navarro bounds forward during a pre-mobilization training exercise Aug. 8, at Ft. Drum, NY. Photo by Pfc. Mary Hogle, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



... and Receives Family Send Off for Mobilization

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Guard Times Staff

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA – Almost 300 people jammed the dining facility here Monday, Oct. 25 to say goodbye to the 34 members of the 501st Ordnance Battalion who are headed for Iraq.



Members of the 501st EOD Battalion enter the Scotia dining facility where friends and family await to say farewell. Photo by Capt. Amy Bonanno, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

“I am completely overwhelmed by the turnout today,” said Lt. Col. Robert Mitchell, the commander of the 501st as he scanned the crowd and saw no empty seats. “That speaks volumes for the support this nation has for these Soldiers,” he added. “

The explosive ordnance disposal battalion will lead three EOD companies in Southern Iraq as part of Operation New Dawn. The unit departed for Fort McCoy, Wisconsin on Oct. 27 for post-mobilization training. The Soldiers will be deployed for a year.

Family members, friends, National Guard leaders, employers, and political leaders turned out for the ceremony.

“It’s an honor to recognize the men and women of this wonderful unit that will now assume a very difficult, a very technical and a very critical mission,” said Rep. Paul Tonko, whose district includes Glenville, where the 501st is based.

Brigadier General Michael Swezey, commander of the 53rd Troop Command, urged the Soldiers to look out for each other. They need to take care of each other because people care about each of them, Swezey told the Soldiers.

“There is truly a sea of goodwill out there today of people who respect what you are doing, what your soldiers are doing and what all your loved ones are going through,” Swezey said.

The 501st is a relatively new unit to the New York Army National Guard, and was created about five years ago. It draws its lineage from New York’s historic 105th Infantry Regiment, which served in both World Wars and carries the nickname “Apple Knockers,” as the unit’s first members used to work in the Hudson Valley’s orchards.

It’s based at the Scotia Armed Forces Reserve Center and is organized and staffed to assume control of two to five Explosive Ordnance Disposal companies in a combat zone. The 501st is the higher headquarters for the New York Army National Guard’s 1108th EOD Company, also based in Scotia along with EOD companies in Greenville, North Carolina, Camp Edward, Massachusetts, Camp Dawso, West Virginia, and Camp Grayling, Michigan.

During operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, explosive ordnance disposal experts work to remove bombs and clear roads so that Soldiers and supplies can move while restoring safe conditions for civilians who live in these areas. **gt**



Staff Sergeant Shawn Nethaway and his family watch the activities at the farewell ceremony for the 501st Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) held at Stratton Air National Guard Base Oct. 25. The 501st will deploy to Southern Iraq for Operation New Dawn to lead three Explosive Ordnance Disposal Companies. Photo by Capt. Amy Bonanno, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



Carolyn and William Caldwell, at left, gather with son Nicholas and daughter Emma after a farewell ceremony for the 501st Ordnance Battalion at Stratton Air National Guard Base Oct. 25. Carolyn and William are deploying together with the 501st. Both Emma and Nicholas are Guard members. Emma, a senior airman, is a mechanic, and Nicholas, a private first class, works in food service. Photo by Capt. Amy Bonanno, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

Washington Grays get Their new Guns

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT DRUM - Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery launched rounds downrange here with 16 new M119A2 howitzers during a live fire exercise Sept. 16-19. The event marked the unit's ownership of the newly assigned howitzers after five years of borrowing artillery "tubes" from other artillery units in order to train.

The battalion reorganized as a towed artillery battalion in 2005 to support an infantry brigade. Prior to that, the 258th was equipped with M109 self-propelled howitzers and supported an armored brigade.

Following the unit reorganization, the battalion borrowed M102 howitzers of Vietnam War vintage when they went to the field.

"Every time we fired, we had to borrow cannons from another unit," said Command Sgt. Major Christopher Parker, the battalion Command Sgt. Major. "The Soldiers love the new guns...These men are artillerymen and they love to shoot and it is important to them to have their own equipment and not have to rely on another unit."

The new tubes were christened by Lt. Col. Michael Hoblin, commander, just after successfully sending the first round down range.

"The transition to the new guns went very well," Hoblin said. "The battalion's ability to become certified after such a long period of time without having guns is really a testament to the non-commissioned officer leadership and to the firing batteries."

The 258th traveled to Michigan and Florida earlier this year to certify gun crews on the new M119 howitzers. They were trained by instructors from Fort Sill, Oklahoma prior to receiving their own.

"Now, each gun chief has been assigned a cannon and it will always be their cannon," Parker said. "It's more personal."

The 258th is part of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and is the only artillery unit in the New York Army National Guard. With a possible deployment to Afghanistan, the 258th will set their sites on preparation training.

"This is very exciting to get a new gun," said Sgt. Joseph Shields, the gun chief for gun seven, Battery A. "We were prepared to get them.



Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hoblin, commander of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery christens an M-119 howitzer belonging to Battery B during live fire training at the Fort Drum artillery range Sept. 16-19, before sending the first round downrange. This weekend drill was the battalion's first live fire exercise with its new 105 millimeter guns.

This weapon is more accurate and makes it easier on the chief and crew. Battery A is very excited to field these new weapons and we will train as hard as we can...we do not know what the future brings, but we promise that we will be ready," he added.

"This is the first time this battalion, in recent history, has had 16 guns and 16 certified crews on these weapon systems," Hoblin said. "Without their dedication and expertise, this would have been a very difficult enterprise." **gt**



A 105 mm high explosive round leaves the tube of an M119A2 and heads toward the target downrange during a live fire exercise Sept. 17, at the Fort Drum artillery range. The unit received new howitzers and this weekend drill was the battalion's first live fire exercise with its new 105 millimeter guns. The new modern artillery pieces replace the M-102 howitzer's the battalion had been borrowing for training.



Staff Sergeant Onix Lugo, platoon sergeant for the target acquisition section, Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Battalion, calculates fire data for fire support during a live fire exercise at Fort Drum, Sept. 16-19.

The Eyes of Field Artillery

Story and photo by Sgt. First Class Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT DRUM – Soldiers of the target acquisition section, or forward observers, are regularly among the first to the fight. Here at Fort Drum, members of the target acquisition section of the 1-258th Field Artillery practiced their skills in locating targets and relaying their location to the new howitzers and crews during live fire training Sept. 16-19.

Whether in battle or in training, these two to three man teams make their way inside enemy territory, keeping themselves concealed, and keep an eye on the enemy's activity.

Once a target is located, these observers, using only a compass, map and pen, send map coordinates and calculations directly to the battery fire direction center and call for fire.

"We are the eyes of the field artillery," said Staff Sgt. Onix Lugo, platoon sergeant for the target acquisition section, Headquarters Bat-

tery, 1-258 Field Artillery Battalion. "Without the eyes, the guns will not know where to shoot."

The data the forward observers send back to the battery fire direction center can often mean the difference between victory and defeat for the maneuver forces the artillery crews support in the field.

"We can be as forward as the unit needs us to be," Lugo said. "We go to the mountaintops and the hillsides to observe enemy locations and activities and report back to our gun batteries."

Working in seclusion, far from friendly support, the observers have the daunting task of staying just out of reach of the enemy, but at the same time, always within visual range of the military force that is continually seeking them out.

"We use high-powered binoculars to find the enemy and a laser range finder that will

give the distance, direction and a 10-digit grid coordinate of any target that we acquire," Lugo said. "This is extremely helpful when we need fast results."

Once the calculations are given to the gun batteries, the observers sit patiently for the highly anticipated sound of the Army's "King of Battle" letting loose the rain of steel and high explosives on the target below.

"It is an exciting moment when we can call back 'steel on steel,'" Lugo said. "That is our way of saying direct hit and the enemy is destroyed. It is an awesome feeling!" **gt**

"Without the eyes, the guns will not know where to shoot."

-- Staff Sgt. Onix Lugo, target acquisition section



Heavy Lifters Remember Hurricane Katrina Response

ROCHESTER -- Five years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the coast of Louisiana, Sgt. 1st Class John Bobeck, Detachment 1, Company B, 126th Aviation talks to local media on Aug. 26 about the 126th's experience when they deployed with their CH-47 Chinook helicopters to provide medical and logistical relief to citizens recovering from the aftermath. Bobeck is one of two original members of the New York Army National Guard who responded to the catastrophic event and are still serving in the unit. This also includes Staff Sgt. Daniel Krebs. Chief Warrant Officer Jim Hall, who piloted a UH-1 Huey helicopter as part of the 224th Air Ambulance Medical Company, renamed the 169th Aviation, deployed along with the 126th. "We saw the devastation first-hand and it was like a giant hand had swept everything away," Hall said. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

369th Sustainment Brigade Units Train in NTC Desert

Story by Sgt. Michael E. Davis Jr., 369th Sustainment Brigade

FORT IRWIN, Calif. - National Guardsmen from the 369th Sustainment Brigade received combat training from Soldiers of the 111th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Irwin's National Training Center (NTC) on how to clear rooms with a three and four-man groups during their annual training in July.

"We used three different techniques to communicate before clearing a room," said Pfc. Jasmine M. Rivera, a Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) Specialist with the 369th Sustainment Brigade. "I haven't received this type of training in over a year, so for me it was a refresher."

Rivera stated that she feels confident and glad to get training from an active duty unit in case she were to face a possible deployment. She also adds that knowing everyone's weaknesses and strengths in the training exercises reveals what and how much more training the 369th will have to work on in the future.

Rivera said she feels the only challenge she faced was getting in sync with the other Soldiers in her unit because of the different tactical training each one had in Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training.

For Rivera, she thinks that the 369th will have to conduct combat missions such as room clearing in Afghanistan or Iraq. Because of this, she may not have a chance to perform her Military Occupational Specialty as a CBRN Specialist.

"It's different working with Soldiers that are normally pack clerks, mechanics or truck drivers," stated Sgt. Nicholas S. Carducci, a two-time deployed infantryman with A Troop, 111th Armored Cav. Regt.

Despite not being a combat-oriented unit, Carducci said he expects the 369th to complete their annual training at NTC more combat-ready than they came.

"For a National Guard unit that only works one weekend a month, I feel the 369th has a pretty basic understanding of what's going on with military tactics," said Carducci. "And I see a lot of young leadership that's motivated to learn and to train and that's the most important thing."

"I always feel it's a positive experience when you get different groups of Soldiers with different backgrounds and integrate them into one mission," said 2nd Lt. Matthew T. Cowser, A Troop, 111th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

This is Cowser's first time working with a National Guard unit. He said the primary mission of the 111th is to assist training units that are scheduled to deploy by replicating accurate environments of different situations and issues that they may have to deal with when they deploy. **gt**



1569th Transportation Company Soldiers, await instructions after delivering supplies to a forward-operating base at the National Training Center. Active duty units stationed on FOBs outside the safe zone rely on shipments like this from Reserve units to accomplish their missions. Photo by Spc. Michael Crawford, 361st Public Affairs Operations Center.



Above: Soldiers with the 369th Sustainment Brigade, better known as the "Harlem Hellfighters", remove barbed wires and barricades after conducting entry-point control training at the National Training Center here.

At Left: Soldiers with the 1569th Transportation Company, based in New Windsor, N.Y., secure pallets of sports drinks on a flatbed truck at the National Training Center. The 1569th brought supplies to a forward-operating base outside the safe zone as part of a convoy with the 298th Transportation Company, based in Franklin, Pa. and the 758th Maintenance Company, an Army Reserve unit from Whitehall, Ohio. Photos by Spc. Michael T. Crawford, 361st Public Affairs Operations Center.



Soldier's Work Brings Employment to Korea

Story and photo by Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

ALONG THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE, South Korea -- For his last assignment on active duty, Staff Sgt. Anthony Fischle spent two years along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) on the Korean Peninsula. Like most Soldiers, he assumed he'd be pulling patrols along the heavily fortified border separating North and South Korea.

But Fischle didn't guard against infiltrators from the north, as U.S. troops once did in support of the South Korean military. Instead, he helped thousands of workers, along with truckloads of raw materials, cross into North Korea each day.

The mission, under the auspices of the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission, supports a sprawling industrial complex about six miles north of the DMZ that's unknown to many Americans.

The Kaesong Industrial Park opened in 2003, part of former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung's "Sunshine Policy," promoting reconciliation between the two Korea's. So far, 117 South Korean companies have set up operations on the complex with 123 more in the process of building additional factories as the complex expands.

These companies employ almost 43,000 North Korean workers who manufacture clothing, pots and pans, and small electronic components, and process mushrooms, garlic and chestnuts for delivery to the south. Another 1,000 South Koreans work at the factories, mostly as supervisors.

The relationship benefits both North and South Korea, explained Canadian Navy Lt. Cmdr. Hugh Son, the U.N. Command Military Armistice Commission's control officer for the western transportation corridor that leads to the factory complex.

It provides a cheap labor source for South Korean companies, which pay the North Korean workers, through their government, \$57.99 a month in U.S. currency.

Son's four-man detachment, with Fischle as its noncommissioned officer in charge, played a big part in preventing political turmoil from spilling over into the more than four-mile-long sector leading to the Kaesong complex.

The team monitored everything crossing through the DMZ, looking for banned weapons, high-tech computers and luxury goods from being shipped into North Korea. Fischle's team reviewed manifests for the South Korean unification and defense ministries and customs.

Fischle left the active Army on August 25 and now serves with Company C, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry at the Camp Smith Training Site near Cortlandt Manor. He said he recognizes the big, long-term implications of the work he and his tiny detachment did along the demilitarized zone.

"When you see something like this, it gives me hope that one day I will turn on CNN and hear that North and South Korea have come together," he said. "The prospect of that makes me feel warm inside." **gt**



Canadian Navy Lt. Cmdr. Hugh Son, left and New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Anthony Fischle, stand at the entrance to Kaesong Industrial Park in the Korean demilitarized zone. The two men were formerly the U.N. Command Military Armistice Control officer and NCOIC of the Western transportation corridor leading to the industrial park. Fischle served in Korea prior to joining the New York National Guard's 69th Infantry this year.

Finance Crew Goes Tactical at NTC

By Sgt. Brandon LeFlore, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment



1st Lt. Mark Weisenborn (left), commander, 14th Finance Co., discusses the land navigation course the company will be maneuvering through with Staff Sgt. Virginia Wolden (center) and Sgt. Desiree Timothy, both of 14th Finance Co., at the National Training Center, Aug. 10. The unit is spending three weeks at NTC to train for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – The California sun beamed down on a group of Army National Guard 14th Finance Company Soldiers from New York as they hiked through sand, rocks and brush to find four plotted points on a land navigation course here Aug. 10.

However, the course was a little different from a traditional training scenario, with



Brigadier General Michael Swezey, Commanding General for the 53rd Troop Command, Valhalla, challenges Pvt. David A. Serrano, a finance specialist with the 14th Finance Detachment, Whitestone, in a race to disassemble and reassemble an M16A2 rifle blind folded at a range resting tent at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., on Aug. 16.

opposing forces and simulated improvised-explosive devices.

“The objective here was to advance tactically through enemy territory using the Defense Advanced Global Positioning Systems Receiver (DAGR) systems,” said Sgt. Matthew Feuer, finance specialist, 14th Finance Co. The DAGR system is a relatively new satellite GPS. It’s more powerful and a quarter of the size of the old Precision Lightweight GPS Receiver systems, and allows Soldiers to see terrain maps as opposed to simply grid coordinates.

The 14th Finance doesn’t normally have the opportunity to conduct dismounted land navigation or driver’s training in a desert terrain, but the National Training Center at Fort Irwin offers the proper climate and training resources to train this unit for a future deployment.

“The environment here is drastically different from what we are used to,” said Staff Sgt. Lisa Neely, 14th Fin. Co. “We don’t have the opportunity to do much land navigation training back home, but we were able to actually get out there, plot points and try not to get lost.”

Instead of skyscrapers and paved roads, the New York City-based finance Soldiers were met

with rolling hills and sandy trails which offer them a chance to practice their basic Soldier skills in a desert environment.

“The land navigation course is something we can’t do in the city,” said Feuer. “The National Guard has places to train in upstate New York and New Jersey, but the biggest difference here is the climate and the terrain.”

(Story continued on page 26)



Private First Class Quanise Miller (left), finance specialist, 14th Finance Co., and Cpl. Christmally Torres (right), supply specialist, 369th Sustainment Brigade, collaborate to send a mock nine-line medical evacuation request during a land navigation training exercise, Aug. 10.

(Finance Troops, Cont'd from page 25)

This land navigation course is not unlike something the unit would experience while deployed. If for instance, there is a forward infantry unit, the finance company might have to move cash out to that unit through rough terrain, said 1st Lt. Mark Weisenborn, commander of the 14th Finance Co.

The finance company doesn't routinely have the chance to train in a tactical environment and in addition to conducting land navigation training the unit has also participated in a combat lifesaver's course, nine-line medical evacuation, convoy operations, radio procedures and driver's training while at NTC.

"Here Soldiers have access to up-armored humvees and drive-off road as opposed to around the block in a place like Queens."

"There's no driver's training noncommissioned officer back at our company so we normally have to seek out other units to conduct driver's training," added Neely.

While all the training the unit receives during their annual training here is not necessarily essential to their role as a finance company, it provides an opportunity for members to hone their core competencies in a field environment.

"The training is not necessarily central to our mission because we don't typically run convoys or logistical routes, but in the event that we have to assume control we have to rely on the basic Soldier tasks we train on here," Feuer said.

In addition to training tactically, Soldiers from 14th Finance Co. have trained with the finance office here at Fort Irwin.

"Here we have access to a finance office and active duty pay and active duty Soldier's pay problems. We have exposure to a lot more training resources and hands-on training than we would ever get at home," Feuer said.

The finance training offered is unique in that Soldiers have the resources available to process actual pay inquiries for active duty Soldiers stationed here at Fort Irwin, which is particularly useful for Soldiers who have not deployed yet.

With new Soldiers coming into the finance detachment, training at NTC will be paramount to the unit's readiness as they prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan next year.

"The training here is extraordinary," said Staff Sgt. Virginia Waldon, Senior Financial Management Specialist, 14th Finance Co. "The Soldiers have a chance to see what they may face when they go down range." **gt**

Gamers Discover the Guard

Guard Times Staff



A Soldier from the New York Army National Guard's 466th Area Support Medical Company competes with a visitor here Sept. 11 during the readiness center Interactive Gaming Experience. The event, free to the public, encouraged gaming enthusiasts to visit the Soldier Readiness Center and learn more about the National Guard and career opportunities with the 466th or the 1427th Medium Truck Company based here. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Coon. Recruiting and Retention Command.

QUEENSBURY SOLDIER READINESS CENTER -- With the New York Army National Guard, it still comes down to location, location, location.

To let the community near Glens Falls, N.Y. learn more about the new Soldier Readiness Center and careers with the New York Army National Guard, the 466th Area Medical Support Company and the 1427th Medium Truck Company supported a Recruiting and Retention event featuring some of today's most popular video games on Saturday, Sept. 11.

The free event gave local students and game enthusiasts an incentive to visit the new Soldier Readiness Center and compete in electronic game tournaments to win prizes.

The exhibit included over 30 electronic gaming stations, with 19" and 42" HD flat screen monitors featuring Nintendo, Wii, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 game consoles.

Games included all the most popular current titles, including "Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2011," "Transformers: War for Cybertron," "Iron Man 2," "Skate 3," "Red Dead: Redemp-

tion," "UFC Undisputed 2010," "NCAA Football 11" and "Madden NFL 11."

The afternoon competition included "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2."

The former New York State Armory was centrally located in downtown Glens Falls. The new Soldier Readiness Center is the community's new military spot since August 2009.

"If we build it, they will come," said Sgt. Arthur P. Coon, Recruiting NCO at the center. "Our goal is just to get people here."

The day long event, called The Interactive Gaming Experience, helped spread the word about the Soldier Readiness Center and the New York Army National Guard units that use the site.

"In this era of intense demands on the United States military, the mission of recruiting outstanding men and women as the New York Army National Guard's future officers and enlistees is one of the most important contributions we make to this nation and its security," said Ed Smith, the Recruiting Command's Marketing Specialist. **gt**

Fort Drum Facility has the Best MATES

New York Maintainers Take Top Army Honors for 2009

By Eric Durr, Public Affairs Director

FORT DRUM - The New York Army National Guard's maintenance operation at Fort Drum has been named one of the best in the Army for 2009.

The Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site–New York, known as MATES, was named in May of this year as the best medium sized National Guard Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) maintenance facility by the Chief of Staff of the Army and has been awarded the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence.

Eighteen maintenance units and operations across the Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve were recognized by this year's awards. MATES provides storage for New York Army National Guard equipment used for training at Fort Drum, as well as providing maintenance support to National Guard units training there. The facility is staffed by 94 full-time Guard Soldiers and civilian federal and state employees.

"New York MATES represents the best the Army National Guard has in the way of people and facilities," said Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General. "The recognition of the New York MATES as one of the Army's premier maintenance and first in the medium category illustrates

the switch the facility has made from servicing mainly tanks and other tracked vehicles to supporting wheeled vehicles," Murphy said.

Beginning in 2005 the New York Army National Guard has shifted its focus from fielding tank and mechanized infantry units towards providing lighter infantry and artillery units and military police elements. These units can deploy more quickly and are needed in low-intensity combat like that in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Army Award for Maintenance Excellence was established in 1982 as a way to recognize the valuable work done by maintenance Soldiers.

"The MATES staff made earning this award a priority," said Col. Reginald Sanders, MATES superintendent. His team wanted to show that they can stand with the best maintenance operations in the National Guard and in the Army, Sanders added.

Units and facilities which earn the award demonstrate high equipment readiness rates, effective use of resources, innovative management programs through on site inspections. Army maintenance facilities are divided into TDA facilities that support a post or various facilities or a Table of Organization and Equipment for units that deploy to combat theaters.^{gt}



The Army Chief of Staff recognized the New York National Guard maintenance facility at Fort Drum as the best medium sized National Guard maintenance facility in 2009. From left, displaying the Army award are Col. Reginald Sanders, MATES superintendent, Chief Warrant Officer George Scholl, reset coordinator and Maj. Stacey L. Smith, Surface Maintenance Manager. Photo courtesy of New York MATES.

Where Army Accoutrements Come From

Story and photo by Eric Durr, Public Affairs Director

WATERVLIET ARSENAL - Before that pack on your back and helmet on your head was yours, it belonged to Sgt. 1st Class David Nichols.

Nichols, a 34-year Army veteran from Rensselaer and experienced supply sergeant, is the manager of the New York Army National Guard's Central Issue Facility (CIF). On August 4, he and the nine other Soldiers and civilians who run the place were tracking \$7,885,782.69 worth of gear stacked 30 feet high in the warehouse at Watervliet Arsenal just north of Albany.

That works out to about 300,000 items of personal equipment that included 500 helmets, 852 green plastic canteens, 6,000 kneepads, 4,000 elbow pads, and 1,000 complete sets of Army Universal Camouflage Pattern (UCP) load carrying equipment for a rifleman. CIF stocks 70 different types of gear ranging from goggles to Gore-Tex pants.

The goal of the CIF team, Nichols said, is to guarantee that every one of the 10,562 members of the New York Army National Guard has the most modern personnel equipment possible, especially when they are training to go to war.

"We know what a pain in the butt it was when we went through (deployment training) to get the right equipment to train in," Nichols said.

"These guys all care and that's the real thing," said Deborah Holser, Supply Management Officer for the United States Property and Fiscal Office for New York (USP&FO-NY), and Nichols' boss. "They work weekends, they work nights; they do everything it takes."

"The most important part is taking care of the Soldiers, and I am all about taking care of the Soldiers," said Spc. Turel McKinney, an Albany resident and member of the



Specialist Chris O'Rouke, from Amsterdam, N.Y. uses a lift built into the storage racks of the New York Army National Guard Central Issue Facility in Watervliet to move a bin of kneepads.

3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation and shipping Material Handler for New York CIF.

Each week the CIF crew processes 200 to 300 equipment issues for Soldiers. Most of those involve two or three items to replace damaged or missing gear, but about 35 percent are for complete issues of Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment (OCIE), the basic gear each Soldier receives.

CIF does about 14,000 equipment issues a year.

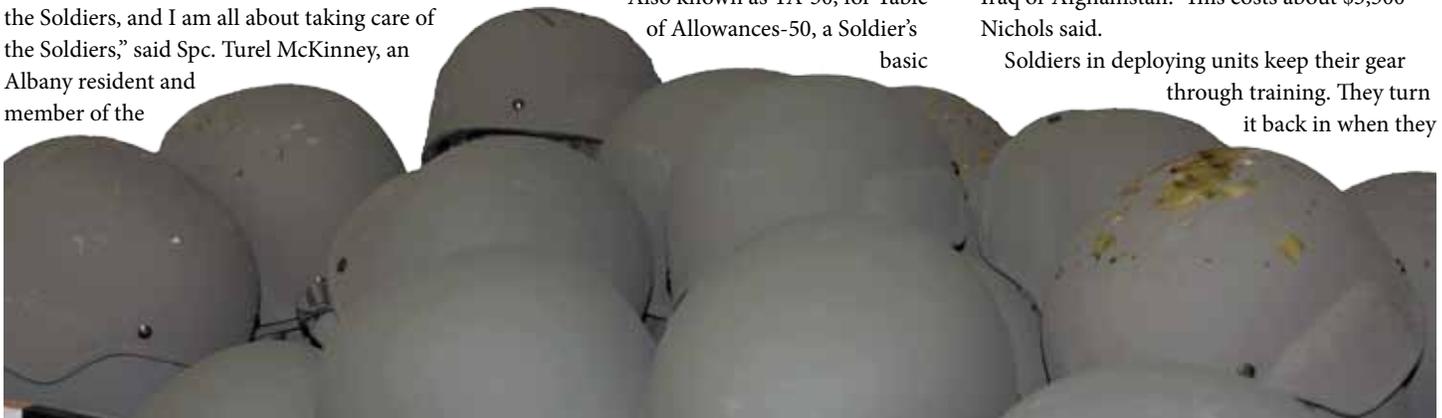
Also known as TA-50, for Table of Allowances-50, a Soldier's basic

issue costs \$1,500 or \$3,500, depending on what is issued.

Soldiers in units that are not scheduled for deployment get older gear, the old-style duffle bag and standard Kevlar K-pot helmet that costs \$1,500.

Soldiers in units slated to deploy get a standard set of UCP colored gear that includes the Army Combat Helmet and the Modular Lightweight Load-Carrying Equipment or MOLLE bag, along with other items being carried in Iraq or Afghanistan. This costs about \$3,500 Nichols said.

Soldiers in deploying units keep their gear through training. They turn it back in when they



leave for deployment because they'll get a full issue at their mobilization station, Nichols explained.

About 600,000 items of personal gear, ranging from ammo pouches to back packs and costing \$25 million are in the hands of New York Army National Guard Soldiers.

Currently about 65 percent of the gear in the hands of Soldiers is the latest equipment in the UCP pattern. Holser, Nichols and other CIF workers want to get that remaining 35 percent of gear in the old woodland, Battle Dress Uniform pattern, replaced as quickly as they can.

Prior to 2002, Central Issue Facilities existed only in the Active Army. One CIF at Fort Drum, for example, supplied each unit on the post. In the Army National Guard, every unit supply sergeant was responsible for ordering, stocking, replacing and exchanging the personal gear for the Soldiers in his or her unit.

The problem with that, said Holser, an employee of the Property and Fiscal Office for New York for 23 years, was the supply accountability was very poor and Soldiers suffered when the right gear was not on hand. Some units had too much equipment and other units had too little. It wasn't easy to identify who had what. Very often Soldiers got old equipment or none at all.

Seven years later, supply sergeants across the system understand it and don't have any problem working with it, Holser said.

In most cases, a Soldier's gear is picked up at CIF by their unit supply sergeants, but CIF will issue directly to individual Soldiers in cases where they need gear quickly. Gear is also mailed to units when they are too far away from Watervliet.

"All my people have deployed," Nichols said. "Everyone of them wants to take care of Soldiers. We as a team really, desperately, want to make sure that they have all the right equipment." **gt**



Staff Sergeant Anthony Burgess (center), a master gunner instructor with Company C, Warrior Training Center, Fort Benning, Ga., instructs Sgt. Peter Hyland, the unit administrator for 1st Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, on the new .50 caliber individual gunnery trainer Sept. 15, at the 27th's Infantry Brigade Combat Team armory in Syracuse.

Ma Deuce Range In A Box

Story and photo by Sgt. First Class Peter K. Towse, 42nd Infantry Division

SYRACUSE - Soldiers can now hone their M2 machine gun skills in the classroom before heading out for the range, thanks to a new training system called Individual Gunnery Training or IGT.

The new system brings the range to the Soldier and is similar to systems that have successfully trained tank and Bradley gunners for their armored vehicles.

The IGT is a computer training console with a simulated .50-caliber machine gun mounted on a stand. The gunner has to use a complex, but efficient system of switches and controls to maneuver the weapon, sight in using the head mounted display, and send massive amounts of cyber-rounds down range with precision.

The IGT was developed by the Raydon Corporation, and the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New York Army National Guard, is the first to field this new equipment.

"The system is a lot more advanced than most virtual battlefield trainers," said Staff Sgt. Anthony Burgess, a master gunner instructor with Charlie company, Warrior Training Center, Fort Benning, Ga. "It is the first of its kind with voice recognition."

Through a head mounted display and microphone, a Soldier can see 360 degrees of the battlefield while verbally bringing up visual displays, changing to night vision or thermal sight or even stopping the vehicle, to name a few. The computer also takes into consideration the possibility of multiple enemy targets from the side and rear of the vehicle.

"It teaches the Soldier situational awareness since the enemy can come from any direction," Burgess added. "The Soldier can virtually see everything around him."

Three interactive programs of instruction are included with the .50-caliber IGT system. The first is the basic .50-caliber for new users to give the Soldier familiarization with the capabilities of the system and second and third being more advanced, taking the Soldier through a matrix progression, designed for sustainment in the Combat Service Support and Heavy Brigade Combat Team gunnery tables.

"The tutorial and hands-on training takes an average of 60-80 hours to complete," Burgess said. "Once the initial training is complete, sustainment training can be done each time the Soldier uses the system."

The computer remembers where the Soldier left off and will adjust the tutorials based on the amount of time since the last class in order to keep the Soldier up to date and efficient. Targets moving across the screen can be anything from enemy troops, trucks and armored vehicles to helicopters.

Civilians are also brought into the scenario to help Soldiers distinguish between enemy targets and civilians in order to make the right decisions while firing.

"All the different situations that a Soldier could be put through during an actual live fire gunnery, are replicated on the IGT," Burgess said. "It queues you up for what you could face on a range or in the real world...this trainer is a gate to live fire." **gt**



Colonel Douglas Tamilio, program manager for Soldier weapons, said fielding of the new sniper rifle, called the XM2010 -- the name is a departure from the Army's formally two- or three- digit weapon naming scheme -- has come quickly.

Upgrade Kits for M4 Coming In 2011

Story and photo by C. Todd Lopez, Army News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Army expects to field the new sniper rifle, the XM2010, by January. And conversion kits for the M4 rifle will come next year.

A panel of program managers met Oct. 14 at the Pentagon to discuss the status of several weapons programs. Included in the discussion was the status of the new sniper rifle and the improvement program for the M4 carbine.

Col. Douglas Tamilio, program manager for Soldier Weapons, said the Army will submit a request for proposal this fall to complete the Army's acquisition objective for M4 rifles. That RFP will include more than 14,000 M4A1 rifles -- an improvement over the M4 Soldiers currently use.

"What the M4A1 gives our Soldiers is a heavy barrel and fully automatic -- that's what the field is asking for," Tamilio said. The M4A1 also features ambidextrous controls.

The Army has a contract with Colt to produce the rifles. Tamilio also said the Army will work a contract to procure some 65,000 kits in FY 2011 to convert M4s already in the field to the M4A1.

"I think we can get significant increases in reliability by looking at some new enhancements to bolts," Tamilio said. "Because a lot of companies have shown some bolts over the last year or so that have got, we think, improvement. We're going to ask industry to give us their best."

Tamilio also said fielding of the new sniper rifle, called the XM2010 -- the name is a departure from the Army's formally two- or three-digit weapon naming scheme -- has come quickly.

"In less than a year we're going to be fielding a piece of equipment that is going to add to the lethality of our Soldiers in the field," he said. The XM2010 is an improvement on the M24

sniper rifle system. A contract for production of the system was recently awarded to manufacturer Remington. Tamilio said it's expected fielding will happen in January.

The new rifle features a suppressor to allow Soldiers to fire the weapon in a suppressed environment and to also reduce muzzle flash. Also included, a fluted, free-floating barrel to give Soldiers more accuracy and heat dissipation. The weapon also sits on an improved bipod, Tamilio said, and features a modular rail system.

The scope also features a reticle that will adjust based on the scope's zoom factor to maintain accuracy, is magazine-fed, has a 1,200 meter range, and a fully adjustable and collapsible butt stock.

"The key developments and improvements were built on what snipers asked for," Tamilio said. **gt**



Brigadier General Steven Wickstrom, 42nd Infantry Division Commander, acknowledges support provided by regional public safety and emergency operations managers from across the Capital Region in upstate New York during a tabletop exercise on Aug. 31. Photo by Sgt. Chris Connelly, 42nd Infantry Division

Rainbow Ramps Up for Disaster Response

By Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, 42nd Infantry Division

TROY - Even as Hurricane Earl swept up from the Caribbean towards the east coast of the United States, leaders and staff of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters hosted an emergency response exercise here on Aug. 31.

The National Guard Soldiers trained alongside public safety and emergency management officials from across the Capital District for a tabletop exercise to discuss plans and procedures to improve the National Guard's response capabilities in the region.

Brigadier General Steven Wickstrom, commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, led the effort to generate dialogue and discussion between military planners and civilian authorities to improve the coordination and response of National Guard members following a disaster.

"You're only good at what you practice," Wickstrom told the attendees, including approximately 16 members of the 42nd Infantry Division senior staff, and participants or observers from the Emergency Operations or Public Safety offices from the Town of Colonie,

Albany County, Schenectady County, Rensselaer County, Essex County, Hamilton County, Warren County, Schoharie County, the NYS Department of Homeland Security and State Emergency Management Office.

"We take the mission to support our civil authorities seriously here in the division," Wickstrom said.

The New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division, the famous "Rainbow Division" leads the National Guard's local response forces in times of crisis as a Joint Task Force Headquarters. It is capable of commanding Army National Guard, Air National Guard, New York Guard and New York Naval Militia forces in support of local civil authorities.

"Most importantly, we've had a very warm welcome from our civilian counterparts in training together for disaster response," said Maj. Sean Garry, an Air National Guard planner from New York's Joint Force Headquarters. "This is the really important part where we interact together and learn together."

The Tabletop exercise focused on four major

themes of discussion: the command and control of response forces, managing their flow to an incident site, establishing communications plans and integrating federal assistance.

The dialogue and discussion generated at the training exercise provides for a common understanding of when, how and with what forces the National Guard is employed by the governor in response to local authorities need for support.

Bringing the training to a close was Brig. Gen. Renwick Payne, the Director of the Joint Staff for the New York National Guard, responsible for the training and preparedness of Guard forces to support local authorities in time of crisis.

"It is important to get a clear understanding of operational plans at all the counties," Payne said. "We must attempt not to duplicate at the macro level all these missions and capabilities, it's simply way too expensive to do that."

"Our business is to corral all these military capabilities in New York State as a clearing-house for the State Emergency Management Office," he said. **gt**

Guard Gets Colbert to the Report in Style



NEW YORK--New York Army National Guard Soldiers pose with comedian Stephen Colbert on Wednesday, Sept. 8 at the studios of Comedy Central in Manhattan in front of an M117 Armored Security Vehicle which was used in the opening of Colbert's Sept. 8 program saluting US troops. From left, Capt. Shawn Tabankin, Staff Sgt. Kent Theobald, Colbert, Sgt. Josuha Flint, and Spec. Jeffrey Vucich. Theobald, Flint, and Vucich participated with Colbert in a segment which opened his Sept. 8 program saluting troops who served in Iraq. Tabankin also appeared on the program. Courtesy Photo.



WW II Vet Receives Overdue Medals

LOUDONVILLE - John Sidur, a lifelong Cohoes native and former member of the National Guard's 27th Infantry Division received his Purple Heart and New York State Conspicuous Service Star for actions on Okinawa during an award ceremony here Aug. 15. Staff Sergeant Sidur joined the New York National Guard in Cohoes in 1940. He mobilized with the 105th Infantry Regiment, went to California after the attack on Pearl Harbor and in March 1942 went to the Pacific. He served as a rifleman from 1940 through 1945 with Company B, 1st Battalion, 105th Infantry from Cohoes. Known as the "Appleknockers," the 105th Infantry was an upstate regiment, drawing Soldiers from across the Capital Region. Sidur was wounded on Okinawa on April 21, 1945, as a platoon sergeant for 39 men in Company B's 3rd platoon. While operating within the heavily fortified Shuri Line, an artillery fragment lodged in John's hand and he spent 10 days in the field hospital before returning to his unit.

"A lot of us, we didn't make it," Sidur said to news reporters at the award presentation. "We're the lucky ones that we're here."



Soldiers wearing red ribbons indicate those who volunteered to donate blood. Forty-five Soldiers made appointments for Saturday to make a donation. Others donated in the days leading up to and after the march.

Guard Soldiers Commemorate 9/11 and Give a Gift of Life

Story and photos by Maj. Kathy Oliver, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

BUFFALO – Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry; Company D, 427th Brigade Support Battalion; and the 105th Military Police Company marched in a parade of remembrance here on the ninth anniversary of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

Other marchers in the parade included members of the Grand Island Volunteer Fire Department and the Buffalo Police Department.

Memories of the events following the 9/11 attacks in 2001 remain vivid for Soldiers in Western New York as many of them mobilized for recovery operations to Ground Zero following the attacks. Over the past several years, many of the Soldiers have served on deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Over 300 Soldiers, Firemen, Police Officers and Veterans marched the route from the Masten Avenue Armory to the Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) where 45 Soldiers were

scheduled to donate blood. The marchers were greeted by the President and Chief Executive Officer of RPCI, Doctor Donald L. Trump. Doctor Trump thanked the marchers and their family members for their selfless actions in donating blood. Trump said, “Donating blood is a fitting way to commemorate the terrorist attacks nine years ago. You are demonstrating a commitment to service, a commitment to life and a commitment to focus on facing challenges together.” Trump also stated that the selfless act of

blood donation will help Roswell patients now and in the future.

Captain Matthew Ryan, Commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, organized the march and blood drive after a Soldier in his command, Spc. Mike Anderson, developed leukemia. During his remarks, Ryan told the marchers “we remember those that we have lost that must never be forgotten.”

Ryan talked of the struggle for Mike Anderson and his family and how important it is to serve others, to be a selfless citizen and care for others in need who cannot help themselves.

“Today is the day that we reinvent the idea of being American and remember our obligation to commitment, to pride in being American and to selfless service to our nation and to our communities,” Ryan said.

The blood donors were in high spirits. Many were optimistic for their friend Mike to recover from his illness. Private First Class Brinindune Taylor of Tonawanda who joined the National Guard in April of this year shared, “I’m here, healthy and available. This is a good cause, and I just can’t say no to something like that.” **gt**



Specialist Brinindune Taylor, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, makes his blood donation.

Air Crews Keep Goods Moving in Polar Mission

Story and photos by Fred W. Baker III, American Forces Press Service

KANGERLUSSUAQ, Greenland – It takes more than a skilled pilot experienced in flying in polar conditions to deliver millions of tons of fuel, food, people and cargo to the remote science outposts both here and in Antarctica.

The Airmen of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing deliver that annually as they support the National Science Foundation's research efforts in both polar regions.

The polar pilots face some of the harshest weather conditions on Earth as they travel to places where no other pilots have gone, taking off and landing in planes equipped with skis instead of wheels. But they acknowledge that while they guide the nose of the plane, it takes a team to deliver the goods. It's up to the crews to get the cargo on, off and keep the planes flying.

It's a mission that nearly always puts the plane at maximum load, and the weather conditions place a heavy strain on its components. Crew chiefs, avionics specialists, electricians, engine and hydraulic mechanics, loadmasters and engineers, to name just a few, all work in sync to keep the planes flying.

Many of the skills are passed down from the decades of experience of the older crewmembers. Some have spent more than 25 years working on the same aircraft.

"It's a constant passing down of experience and knowledge," said Senior Master Sgt. Brian Bik, supervisor of maintenance on a recent rotation to Greenland. The crews learn each aircraft's personalities, Bik said. They know

what to look for based on their years of experience.

Bik has been traveling to Greenland since the early 1990s, and said he can't remember how many trips he's actually made to the Arctic Circle.

On a two-week rotation, there are more than 20 maintenance troops on the ground, working two shifts to accommodate the planes coming and going. They bring all of their own parts, and are sometimes forced to fix the planes in the harshest conditions. There are no heated hangars to work out of. All work is done outdoors, sometimes in temperatures that drop well below zero.

The cold weather strains the planes' components, Bik said. And the open snow landings beat up the skis' hydraulics. The unit keeps desk-sized heaters to warm the plane's parts to



First Lieutenant Drew Brewer navigates the skies over Greenland, July 28. Brewer is assigned to the New York National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing. The unit flies the only military aircraft in the world equipped with landing skis ferrying scientists and supplies to remote science research sites in Greenland.

allow crews to work on them.

In the air, the load masters and crew provide extra eyes to help in talking the pilot down when visibility is poor.

"It's almost kind of like an orchestra when you hear our approach to landings," said Senior Master Sgt. Shad Gray, a flight engineer



Scientists and others supporting the National Science Foundation research mission in Greenland stack their supplies on a waiting sled at the North Greenland Eemian ice drilling site, July 28, 2010. "NEEM" is an international ice core research project aimed at retrieving an ice core from northwestern Greenland



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kevin Byrns walks around the ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules cargo plane following a mission to one of the remote science outposts in Greenland, July 29. Byrns, a crew chief is assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard.

who has been flying here with the unit since 1985. On approach, everyone in the crew is scanning for signs of the runway and chiming in on altitude, glide path and wing level, he said.

Gray compared working in the icy environment to the “Wild West.”

“We’re up here on our own, so everything we do, we have to do with what we have in our backpack, what we have on the airplane,” he said. “There are times when we’re out on the ice cap and something goes wrong and we have to fix it. You don’t call in a specialized team to come in and take care of it.”

On the ground, almost all loading and unloading is done with the plane’s engines running. This makes a dangerous job a little more chaotic. Because of the deafening roar of the engines, all communication is through hand signals.

Leaders, though, attribute the unit’s experi-

ence to the ability to get the job done safely and quickly. “After time, you know what needs to be done,” said Master Sgt. Carmelo Modesto, a load master who has been flying missions to Greenland since 1998.

On the ice at thousands of feet above sea level, hypoxia becomes the enemy. The crew exerts energy just to stay warm, and when loading the planes, the problem is exacerbated.

“You’re in the moment, so there’s a lot of adrenaline,” Modesto said. “Sometimes you have to tap your buddy on the shoulder and say, ‘Your lips are purple, you’re gray, go get some oxygen. You just don’t realize it. You start to gray out.’”

Modesto said the crews enjoy the freedom of their job, traveling to places where they have only their skills to rely on.

Because of their experience, the crews know what things they need to bring to get them through a mission. For example, they keep

kits on the planes with nearly every size of hydraulic line. But sometimes, they have to create fixes. Tin cans stripped of the top and bottom can be used to seal damaged duct work, Modesto said.

“You’re only relying on yourself. It’s very infectious,” Modesto said. “You don’t see a lot of people leaving here and going to other missions. It’s part of our life.”

Modesto said a good day on the job ends “sleeping in your own bed -- not on the ice cap in a tent in a bag somewhere.” But that speaks more to the crew’s desire to see each mission through. Nothing is more disappointing for them than going through all of the efforts to drop supplies and fuel at a remote outpost and having to turn back because of weather.

“That’s definitely one of the bummers,” he said. “If we go out to do a mission and we can’t do it, they’re not calling somebody else. It’s us or it’s nobody.” **gt**



Pine Bush High School Aviation Academy students tour a C-5A in Newburgh, July 14.

Pine Bush Aviation Academy at Stewart

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh - How do you capture High School students' interest? Let them try something they've never experienced before.

"When I enrolled in this academy I had no idea what I was going to have the opportunity to do," said a Pine Bush High School senior. "Not many High School kids get the chance to tour a C-5A never the less get to fly a simulator."

Seventeen students did that and more during a week long Aviation Academy held here, July 12-15. The course of studies exposed the students to the world of military aviation and the varied careers involved in keeping strategic air lifters flying.

While the Pine Bush Academy program has been around since 2002, the Aviation Academy is the newest addition to the curriculum. Master Sgt. Michael Antinucci approached Principle Aaron Hopmayer with the idea of hosting an additional academy based on military aviation in conjunction with a program on civil aviation at Wurtsboro airport.

"The best leadership training in the world comes from the men and women serving in the United States military. So when the idea was discussed about starting an Aviation Academy, the natural choice for me was to partner with the Air National Guard, and expose our students to the numerous opportunities, career fields, and leadership training that the military offers." Hopmayer said.

The job of establishing the military curriculum was given over to Tech. Sgt. Jenny Sanchez, 105th Airlift Wing Production Recruiter. Sanchez, the sole instructor, created the course of study and coordinated class vis-

its with supervisors of many areas of the base. The academy begins with an introduction to what Airmen do on a daily basis and familiarize the students with military life and base policies. During the week, students learned what it takes to fly and maintain aircraft with visits to operations, maintenance and support shops while receiving tours of a C-5 led by pilots and flight crew.

The students' academy experience was topped off by actually flying a C-5 in the simulator. Many students wrote thank you letters to Sanchez for the week long training with remarks such as "thank you so much for whipping us into military style. Discipline isn't fun, but you taught us it necessary and how to properly respect the establishment."

Their experience closed with students, teachers and Airmen having lunch in the base dining facility followed by a meet and greet with Brig. Gen Verle L. Johnston Jr., commander of the 105th. Johnston spoke to the class as a whole, answered their questions and then asked each student about their experience and what they planned to do after graduation. "What a tremendous opportunity for students," Johnston said.

The first Academy program established at Pine Bush was on Leadership and Law. Currently, they run five Academies: Leadership and Law, Literacy and Education, Science, Aviation, and Performing Arts. The aviation academy program is voluntary and along with the experience, students earn math credit and hours towards a private pilot's license. The academy was such a success that enrollment has doubled for next year's session, said Principal Hopmayer. **gt**

Super Galaxy Check Up



STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - The first production C-5M Super Galaxy is towed into a hangar here early Thursday morning Oct. 7. Aircraft maintainers of the 105th Airlift Wing are performing an annual inspection that incorporates restoration work to the inspection program. This Total Force effort consisting of Air Guard, Reserves, Active Duty and contractors will result in interior standardization and a new look for this aircraft and eventually for the entire C-5 fleet. Photo by Staff Sgt. Robivar Atienza, 105th Airlift Wing

Syracuse Firing Team Continues Success at 2010 TAG Match



HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse - 174th Fighter Wing Rifle Team members Master Sgt. Paul Cowan, Technical Sgt. Christopher Ashley, Senior Airman Tonya Ward and Senior Airman Andrew LaFave pose with Awards they earned as a team participating in the Annual TAG match held at Camp Smith, Peekskill, New York in April. A selected four person team earned the 174th an overall Team Rifle Champion Cup. Photo by Staff Sgt. James N. Faso, 107th Fighter Wing.

F-86 Jet Dedicated to Base Air Park

Syracuse Honors Rich Fighter Aircraft History

By 1st Lt. Greta Lewis, 174th Fighter Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse - Current and former members of the 174th Fighter Wing dedicated the first aircraft to be displayed in the newly-established Hancock Field Air Park here on Sept. 12.

The wing dedicated a refurbished F-86B Sabre jet, flown during the unit call up and deployment to West Germany for the Berlin crisis of 1961.

The names of retired Brig. Gen. Curtis Irwin, former 174th Fighter Wing Commander, and retired Senior Master Sgt. Charles Poehlman, former crew chief, were unveiled on the left and right sides of the F-86B Sabre. The aircraft was painted to the same likeness of the jets flown by the 138th Fighter Squadron from 1957 to 1970.

Poehlman and Irwin's daughters, Sheila Austin and Senior Master Sgt. Lisa Damon, helped dedicate the plane in honor of former wing members.

Irwin assisted in organizing the 138th Fighter Squadron shortly after World War II and served as commander of the unit from 1950 to 1973 and 1975 to 1977. During World War II, Irwin was a fighter pilot in the Army Air Force.

Poehlman was a member of the unit from 1948 until 1973, and served as a crew chief on the F-86 and A-47 aircraft until his retirement.



Retired Senior Master Sgt. Charlie Poehlman and other retired members of the 174th Fighter Wing gather for the dedication of the F-86 Sabre at Hancock Field on Sept. 12. The crew chief side of the aircraft was dedicated to Senior Master Sgt. Poehlman for his years of hard work with the F-86 and the 174th. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ricky Best, 174th Fighter Wing.



Director of the Air National Guard, Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, shakes hands with former 174th Fighter Wing Commander, retired Brig. Gen. Curtis Irwin as Congressman Dan Maffei applauds following the official ribbon cutting ceremony that opened the only MQ-9 Reaper Maintenance Field Training Detachment for the U.S. Air Force, Reserve and Air National Guard on Oct. 2, 2009. Archive photo by Staff Sgt. James N. Faso II, 174th Fighter Wing.

New York Air Guard commander Maj. Gen. James Kwiatkowski spoke about the importance of heritage and history, and how it plays such a vital role in today's current operations. Those words were echoed by current 174th Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Kevin Bradley, who also thanked the family members in attendance.

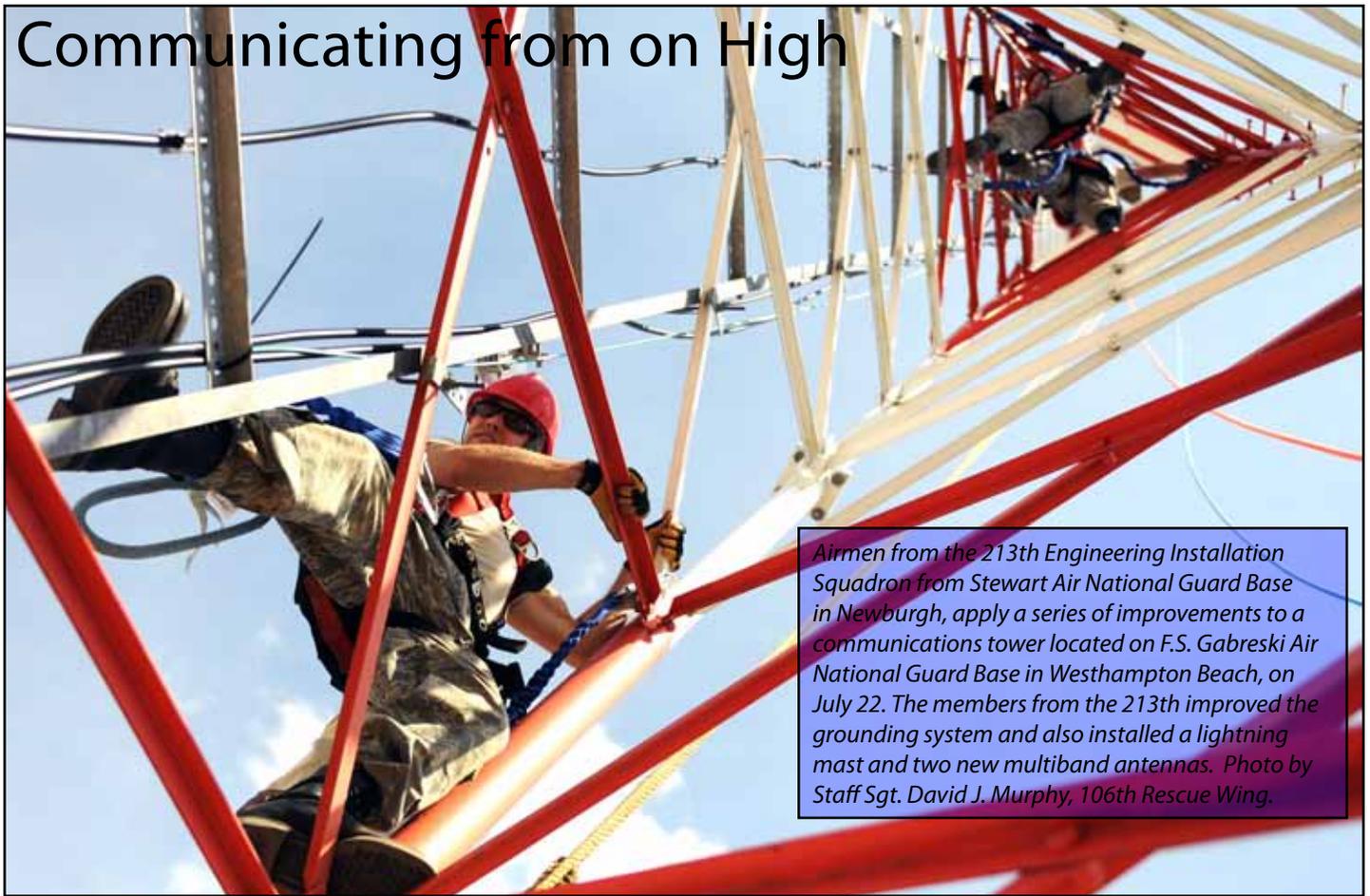
"We certainly wouldn't be able to do our jobs without the support of our families," Bradley said.

Two awards, a safety award and distinguished flying plaque, were also presented to the 174th Fighter Wing during the ceremony. Lieutenant Colonel Dan Tester, Wing Safety Officer, accepted the Maj. Gen. John J. Pesch Safety Trophy, awarded annually to two Air National Guard flying units that demonstrated the highest standards of flight safety at the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) conference.

Colonel John Balbierer, 174th Maintenance Group Commander, and Lt. Col Scott Brenton, 174th Operations Group Vice-Commander, accepted the NGAUS Distinguished Flying Plaque, recognizing outstanding Air National Guard flying units. The distinction is based on overall combat readiness, weighted on several factors including flying safety, aircraft operation readiness, weapons firing, skill level qualifications, outstanding accomplishments, and special missions and exercises. **gt**

Contributions to this article were made by Maj. Jeffrey Brown, 174th Fighter Wing.

Communicating from on High



Airmen from the 213th Engineering Installation Squadron from Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, apply a series of improvements to a communications tower located on F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach, on July 22. The members from the 213th improved the grounding system and also installed a lightning mast and two new multiband antennas. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing.

Watered-Down Training



NIAGARA FALLS--Members of the New York Air National Guard's 136th Airlift Squadron, 107th Airlift Wing, float in the waters of Lake Ontario during a biannual training exercise that teaches air crew water survival skills in the event of an in-water-emergency. Air crew members practiced deploying signal devices, such as

smoke flares, beacons and flare guns and then took a short ride compliments of the United States Coast Guard, Station Niagara, to deploy their life vests and swim to the awaiting life raft where they mastered entry techniques and deployment of the protective canopy. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Derrick Harris.



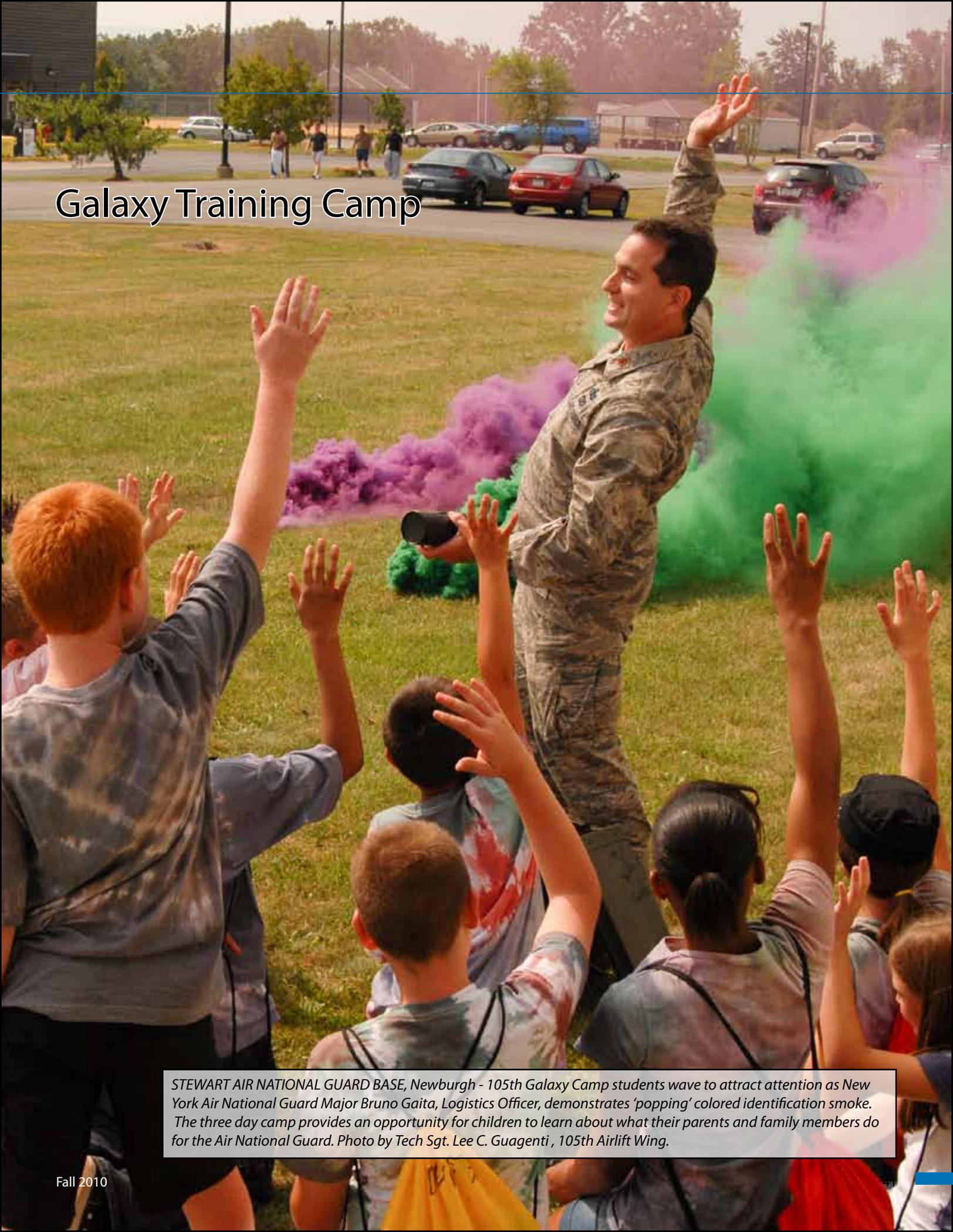
Getting Down and Dirty for a Cause

MCGHEE TYSON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Tenn. - Senior Airmen Sharon Gouchie (center) from the 107th Airlift Wing is among students at the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center's Airman Leadership School Class who helped raise more than \$20,000 for the Epilepsy Foundation of East Tennessee during the organization's annual Mud Volleyball Tournament at Chilhowee Park in Knoxville, June 26. Photo by Master Sgt. Michael Moore.

Fleet-Footed Airmen Run at Wright for Air Force Marathon

WRIGHT PATERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio - Eight New York Air National Guard members were among 12,000 runners in the 14th annual Air Force Marathon at Wright Paterson on Sept. 18. Pictured from left after competing in half and full marathons are, first row: Master Sgt. Kristy Stearns, Esperance; Master Sgt. Shannon Pingitore, Fort Edward; Master Sgt. Linda Peters, West Monroe, and Senior Master Sgt. Ann Miller, Greenwich. In the back row, from left: Senior Master Sgt. Donna Roper, Mechanicville; Lt. Col. Tammy Street, Clifton Park; Master Sgt. Kimberly Bowman, Universal City, Texas; and Senior Master Sgt. Terry Potter, Fort Edward. All but Peters and Bowman are assigned to the New York Air National Guard Headquarters in Latham. Peters is assigned to the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse and Bowman is on active duty in Texas. Not pictured is Lt. Col. Emily Derosier a member of the 106th Rescue Wing from Westhampton Beach.



A man in a military uniform is standing in a grassy field, demonstrating 'popping' colored identification smoke. He is holding a black smoke canister in his right hand and has his left arm raised. Several children in the foreground have their hands raised, waving to attract attention. The background shows a parking lot with several cars and a building. The scene is outdoors during the day.

Galaxy Training Camp

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh - 105th Galaxy Camp students wave to attract attention as New York Air National Guard Major Bruno Gaita, Logistics Officer, demonstrates 'popping' colored identification smoke. The three day camp provides an opportunity for children to learn about what their parents and family members do for the Air National Guard. Photo by Tech Sgt. Lee C. Guagenti , 105th Airlift Wing.

New York Guard Gets New Utility Uniform

Guard Times Staff

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham -- The New York Guard has a new look. The Adjutant General has authorized members of the New York Guard to wear the digital camouflage Army Combat Uniform (ACU), with some specific modifications, as a utility uniform when in an authorized duty status.

The current Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) worn by the New York Guard can be worn by members until Sept. 30, 2013.

“The long awaited switch to the Army Combat Uniform for Soldiers of the New York Guard became a necessity this year, due to the dwindling availability of the old Battle Dress Uniform,” according to New York Guard Deputy Chief of Staff, Col. David Molik.

The U.S. Army phased out the Battle Dress Uniform when they went to the new Army Combat Uniform (ACU) starting in 2005. Our New York Guard (NYG) members continued to wear the legacy BDU as their utility uniform until BDU’s were getting harder to procure as replacements for uniforms that were wearing out,” explained New York National Guard Command Sgt. Major Robert Van Pelt.

It was decided that the New York Guard would be outfitted with the newer ACU with some modifications as, by regulation, the New York Guard needs to be readily identifiable from U.S. Army members,” he explained.

“I feel that with the modifications that we authorized

for wear, like the black hat, the New York state flag, etc, we have met the intent of the regula-

tion and at the same time, we have solved the uniform issue for the future,” Van Pelt said. **gt**

DIFFERENCES

- New York Guard members will wear a black patrol cap with shiny rank brass; not an ACU cap with subdued cloth rank and a name tape on the back.
 - New York Guard members must remove the Infrared identification spot from the uniform.
 - New York Guard members must wear sewn on name Air Force grey name tapes. They cannot be affixed to the uniform with Velcro like an Army uniform.
 - New York Guard members will wear a subdued New York Guard patch on the left sleeve.
 - New York Guard members will wear a blue—not subdued—New York flag where the American flag is worn on the right sleeve of the Army uniform.
 - New York Guard members will wear subdued Velcro rank with an ACU background on the front of their uniform.
 - The New York Guard utility uniform will be worn with tan boots, a tan belt and gray colored undershirt.
 - Wear of the black beret is not authorized with the New York Guard utility uniform.
 - Pin-on qualification badges must be black.
 - New York Guard members entitled to wear a combat patch are authorized to do so below the New York flag patch.
- New York Guard directive 1334.2 specifies uniform policy and explains where items can be obtained.



Staff Sergeant Jonathon Peebles, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, New York Guard demonstrates proper wear of the new utility uniform. Photos by Pfc. Ubon Mendie, New York Guard.

Guard Training for Life Saving

Story and photo by Pfc. Ubon Mendie, New York Guard Headquarters

CAMP SMITH – Members of the New York Guard Initial Entry Training Class 2010 were front and center, learning first aid training here Oct. 2.

The training was conducted by four instructors from the Academy of Medical and Public Health Services (AMPHS).

“We are trying to promote better response to life threatening emergencies,” said Hewett Chu, AMPHS President, and lead instructor. “We want to integrate into training a health and safety focus in a basic training environment.” Chu also explained how the training received can be utilized both in the Guard and in everyday living.

“The lessons learned can help in everyday life and while on duty,” Chu added. “With the wide range of work that the New York Guard provides, Soldiers can be in areas where responding to emergencies can be crucial to a patients’ survival.

The class of 26 New York Guard volunteers represented different brigades from every section of the state. The class was broken into

five detailed parts, instructed by lecture, video tutorials and hands on implementation with instructor supervision.

Topics covered included recognizing and responding to emergencies, where members trained on correctly identifying an emergency response situation.

The sections taught included patient assessment to identify ailments; medical emergency cases that directly relate to internal body functions, including heart attack, diabetic induced attacks or stroke; trauma emergencies which are fractures, broken bones and other related injuries and environmental emergencies which are heat and cold related ailments.

“This was great training,” said Pvt. David Kyzer, from Buffalo’s 65th Brigade. “What I learned could help me save a life. I have a mother with a lot of ailments, so I really paid close attention.

All attendees were awarded the American Heart Association Heart Saver First Aid Certification. **gt**



Specialist Diana Sapeg, a medic in the 88th Brigade practices First Aid on Pfc. Lester Torres, another New York Guard member. Both graduated from the New York Guard’s Initial Entry Training Oct. 3.

The NY Guard Resonates With VA Residents

Story and photo by Pfc. Ubon Mendie, New York Guard

BRONX - New York Guard Soldier’s banded together to create therapeutic music at the James J. Peters Veterans Administration Medical Center, July 20.

The New York Guard presented the hospital with about 36 restored musical instruments during a morning ceremony held in the facilities chapel.

“It’s a pleasure to be a part of an effort to give an opportunity to those who have sacrificed the same for all Americans,” said Maj. Gen. Fergal Foley, commander for the New York Guard as he addressed a crowd of veterans and others viewing a live broadcast in various parts of the hospital grounds via closed circuit television.

The presentation of instruments closed a long drive spearheaded by the 56th Brigade’s Maj. Bob Coulombe. In a conversation with Betsy Faden, a Bronx VA recreation therapist, Coulombe found out there was a need he could help facilitate.

“I heard there were volunteers willing to

teach veterans, but they didn’t have any instruments,” Coulombe said. “At drill, I asked everyone to take part in the drive and they did”.

After publishing an article on the New Castle Now News website about the drive, more instruments came in from the surrounding area of Chappaqua. After collecting the instruments, minor repairs and adjustments were needed.

“One of the Soldier’s in our brigade convinced her boyfriend Mark Hitt, a professional musician, to come to Camp Smith to tune and repair some of the string instruments that had been donated,” Coulombe added.

During the ceremony, Hitt performed an improve selection on his guitar.

“This was a wonderful and generous undertaking,” said Medical Center Director, MaryAnn Musumeci. “We are grateful to the Guard and our friends in the community for their efforts on behalf of our veterans. We look forward to some beautiful music resulting from this project.” **gt**



Marie Crooke, the J. Peters VA Medical Center patient care director, Maj. Gen. Fergal Foley, commander, New York Guard, Betsy Faden, VA recreation therapist, and Maj. Bob Coulombe, 65th Brigade during a presentation ceremony of musical instruments, July 30.

Trojan Horse 2010 Tests Radiological Detection

By Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters

COEYMANS -- The New York Naval Militia teamed up with law enforcement agents from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to test Weapons of Mass Destruction/Radiation detection capabilities, Aug. 4 on the Hudson River.

A DEC boat, equipped with a mobile radiation detection system, used the Naval Militia's Patrol Boat 230 as a target during the exercise. The DEC boat repeatedly passed the patrol boat to get readings from a radiation source onboard.

The detection system used by the DEC locates radioactive sources, radiological contamination, and potential radiological weapons.

DEC Law Enforcement is an extra set of eyes and ears, ready to help federal agencies deter and react to homeland threats or emergencies.

The New York Naval Militia is the naval component of the New York State defense forces. Its Military Emergency Boat Service operates a fleet of ten boats on New York waters in support of federal and state agencies and local law enforcement.

"The Naval Militia was key to providing a maritime training platform. They provided an opportunity to interdict in an open water scenario, which helps us determine how close is close based on the level of radiation threat," said Walter Maloney, Tech. Sgt. for DEC's Homeland Security Unit in Albany.

The exercise was part of "Trojan Horse 2010" an annual maritime security training exercise sponsored by State University of New York Maritime College. The exercise joined New York Naval Militia personnel with state, federal and law enforcement agencies while accessing homeland security threats and testing security plans. The exercise mimics major maritime incidents directly impacting port security.

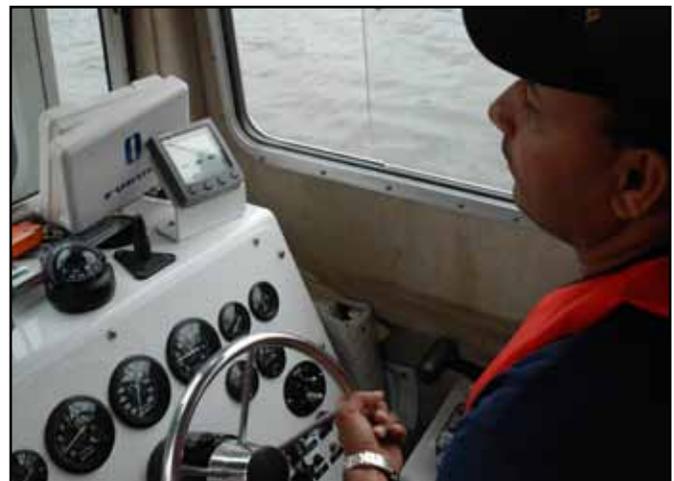
While PB 230 worked with DEC, the Naval Militia's PB 300 assisted the Ossining Police Department in a Maritime Industry Security Exercise north of the Tappan Zee Bridge and PB 440 was stationed at the United States Coast Guard station on Staten Island. All three missions were designed to test security plans, as required annually by federal regulations, and were in support of SUNY Maritime College exercises.



Lieutenant Jim Montague of the Ossining Police Department (OPD) is getting "arrested" aboard the Naval Militia's Patrol Boat 300 by other members of the OPD during Trojan Horse 2010 security training exercise on the Hudson River. Photo by Cmdr. Donald McKnight, N.Y. Naval Militia.

"The beauty of this exercise is the unique interagency cooperation and familiarity we establish. It allows us to work immediately and more effectively during a real world emergency," said Major General Robert Wolf, the commander of the New York Naval Militia and SUNY Maritime College's executive director of Trojan Horse.

After September 11, 2001, the New York Naval Militia established its role in defense support to civilian authorities through the creation of the Military Emergency Boat Service (MEBS) whose state-wide missions include support to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and border protection on Lake Champlain and support to the U.S. Coast Guard inspections of commercial shipping in New York Harbor.



New York Naval Militia member Bharath Bhola, an Aviation Boatswain Mate, pilots Patrol Boat 230 during joint operation Trojan Horse 2010 with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on the Hudson River, Aug. 4. Bhola is a Cohoes resident who works for the Capital District Transportation Authority as a bus driver. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.

The MEBS provides port security, support of law enforcement, surveillance, evacuations, maritime transport and vessel escort, critical infrastructure protection and participates in joint maritime operations. **gt**



Civil Support Trains on the Waterfront

NEW YORK - A member of the New York National Guard's 24th Civil Support Team boards the State University of New York Maritime Academy's training vessel Empire State from New York Naval Militia Patrol Boat PB 400 during a training exercise on Tuesday, Sept. 28. The members of the Civil Support Team, or CST, are trained to identify the presence of chemical, radiological, or biological weapons or materials.

The exercise tested the ability of the CST to work with the Naval Militia and accomplish a mission on the New York City Waterfront. Photo Courtesy of 24th Civil Support Team.



Lifetime Naval Officer Retires

WEST POINT -- Captain Robert H. Pouch receives the New York State Conspicuous Service Medal from Maj. Gen. Robert Wolf, commander of the New York Naval Militia during a retirement ceremony here Oct. 10. Pouch was awarded the service medal after 45 years of service with the New York Naval Militia. He had served as Deputy Commander for Operations. Courtesy photo.



Naval Militiaman of the Year

WEST POINT -- Petty Officer Robert Quinones was recognized as the 2010 Naval Militiaman of the Year with the presentation of the Josephthal Award, by the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, Oct. 10. Quinones serves with the Military Emergency Boat Service, on duty with Joint Task Force Empire Shield protecting the federal safety and security zone in the Hudson River at Indian Point Energy Center. Courtesy photo.

GUARD NEWS BRIEFS AND PHOTOS



Troops Take Aim for South Africa Training

GUILDERLAND -- Sergeant First Class Ronald W. Spanton Jr., Company C, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry demonstrates a proper firing stance from a standing position to Sgt. Thomas Myers, 108th Infantry during weapons training at the Guilderland Rifle Range, Oct. 15. Myers is preparing for a South African Military Skills Competition in Potchefstroom, South Africa, Nov. 8-14. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters.



Yellow Ribbon for 206th MP Company

ALBANY -- Specialists Tim Moore and James Graves of the 206th Military Police Company visit the Veterans Associations information table at their unit's 30-day Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event at the Desmond Hotel in Albany on July 31. Photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Joint Force Headquarters.



A Guardsman Goes Over the Edge

ALBANY -- First Sergeant James Meltz repels down the side of the 18-floor Crowne Plaza Hotel in Albany during a fund raiser for Special Olympics on Aug. 20. The New York Army National Guard combat veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan joined with his fellow State Trooper Bill Maverick to raise more than \$1,000 from friends and family to qualify. Maverick's late brother-in-law was committed to Special Olympics and asked Meltz to join him in the effort as a tribute to Gary George, Jr. They formed "Team Gossamer" in his

memory and took time off from work to support the program. Meltz and Maverick came down together to a cheering crowd and music performed by a local band. More than \$53,000 was raised for the nearly 48,000 Special Olympians in New York state. Meltz is also a featured warrior in the New York State Museum's "Citizen Soldier" exhibit at the Empire State Plaza. To learn more about "Over the Edge" go to <http://otealbany.kintera.org>. Photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Joint Force Headquarters.



Putting the 'Leap' into Leapfest, 2010

KINGSTON, R.I. -- Soldiers jump from a New York Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter here on Aug. 7, during Leapfest 2010, an annual training exercise and airborne competition hosted by the Rhode Island Army National Guard. Detachment 1, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation has provided aviation support for this event for the past two years. Now in its 28th year, Leapfest draws teams from throughout the U.S. military as well as from the United Kingdom, Canada and the Dominican Republic and other locations. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy, National Guard Bureau.



Air Force Recognizes Maintenance Excellence

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force Chief of Staff recognized excellence in the New York Air National Guard Sept. 22, when the 105th Airlift Wing's maintenance flight received an Air Force Best Practice Award for the unit's impact on the C-5 Fleet and the Total Mobility Air Force.

The recognition results from the hard work and achievement of the wing receiving two Air National Guard-level Chief of Staff Team Excellence Awards and five designations from the Air Force and the Air National Guard for Best Practices in C-5 maintenance management.

General Gary L. North, Commander, Pacific Air Forces poses with the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing Maintenance Steering Group at the Air Force Association Conference, Sept. 15. From left are: Capt. Ed Defalcon, Gen. North, Staff Sgt. Robivar Atienza, Senior Master Sgt. Robert Pritchard and Senior Master Sgt. Robert Diresta. Courtesy photo.

'Operation Log Jam'

City Soldiers, Airmen Tackle Severe Weather Aftermath

By Capt. Al Phillips, Joint Task Force Empire Shield



Army National Guard Sgt. Aaron Hess reviews local maps as he prepares an assessment team for operations in New York City following the impact of severe weather, including two tornados in Brooklyn on Sept. 16. Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus Calliste, Joint Task Force Empire Shield.

NEW YORK – Members of the New York National Guard’s Joint Task Force Empire Shield lived up to the motto to be “always ready, always there” when severe weather struck parts of Queens in late September.

In the aftermath of several tornados touching down in several parts of Queens near Flushing and Brooklyn near Park Slope, Governor David Paterson ordered the task force to support to the City Office of Emergency Management.

“We are eager to perform (this mission) because it gives us face time to show the community that we are here not just for security against terrorism, but security against all disasters,” Sgt. Abismael Gonzalez said as the Soldiers from Company A arrived on scene to assess storm damage. “At the end of the day,

this is our home and community,” he said.

Soldiers and Airmen canvassed damage zones and provided situational updates to help local authorities. The troops collected current information regarding debris, forestry and sidewalk damage throughout the impacted area, improving the removal and recovery process by agency partners with the Fire, Parks and Recreation and Sanitation Departments.

The teams divided into sections of two personnel with maps, Global Position Systems and digital cameras to document the location of damaged debris. They reported the data gathered to the city Office of Emergency Management who then planned a more expedited response for utility crews and recreation workers to verify and collect the damaged debris.

“Any time I can help the community by doing my part, there is a sense of pride. This is why I joined the Guard six years ago and why I am still serving,” said Spc. Regan Smith, also of Company A.

In just two weeks, more than 10,000 calls were placed to the 311 information hot line. Task force members responded to 90% of those calls within six days. Joint Task Force Empire Shield inspected and surveyed 38 out of 45 designated damage disaster zones. In Queens, 62 parks received photographic assessments and inspections to include grid data on all damage.

“When called in support of our agency partners –we answer,” Lt. Col. Greg Dreisbach, task force commander, said. “Our Soldiers and Airmen performed exemplary.” **gt**

The Handwriting on the Wall

WALL
- 2 metal JARS
1 inside 1 Jar (Digger)
1 Ziplock w/ sterile H₂O & Pipette
1 inside smaller jar
1 small glass w/ powder (greyish white)
vial
1 TRAY CLEAN
1 Table w/ Disinfectant
Ceiling
1 Tile missing
1 STAPLED Paper Together ON VENT

NEW YORK -- A Guardsman from the Fort Hamilton-based 24th Civil Support Team looks at a makeshift planning board scribbled on a hull window onboard the ship Empire State on Sept. 30 during a sampling mission to retrieve simulated hazardous materials. The Weapons of Mass Destruction response team conducted training on the decommissioned ship belonging to the State University of New York Maritime College to learn how to identify and contain various substances, without much knowledge of where the simulated hazardous material weapon would be. Photo by Ubon Mendie, New York Guard.

1-6-01:
- Table w/ glasses and
- flask w/ FILTER Bieze powder
- green liquid, yellowish brown
- possible PLASTIC EVAL

Upstate Community Meets its Citizen Soldiers

Story and photo by Spc. Melissa Anderson, 42nd Infantry Division

MALTA – Soldiers from New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division participated in the Malta Community Day here Sept. 11, 2010 by marching in the Veterans Parade and set up a Humvee and UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter for static display.

"This raises the community's spirit and their sensitivity to the military," said Paul J. Sausville, Malta Town Supervisor.

The big event of the "Patriot's Day" celebration was the landing of a UH-60 Blackhawk aircraft for the citizens of Malta to explore the aircraft and talk to its crew from the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade based in Latham. Pilots and crew members explained the role of the Blackhawk for multiple National Guard missions all over the state.

"Bringing the Blackhawk gives the community the ability to see some of the equipment here in the region," said Maj. Kevin Ferreira, flight facility commander of Army Aviation Support Facility 3. "It gives them an idea of our military mission and our domestic response mission."

Guard members also set up information displays in the Malta Town Hall that included photos of service at the World Trade Center in 2001, other emergencies, and recent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"September 11th was a pretty significant event and the wars had a lot of civilian support," Ferreira said. "This gives them a chance to see



Air crews from the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade provide a static display of the Firehawk fire fighting system during the Malta Community Day on Sept. 11.

everything in a civilian setting."

The event allowed military members a chance to interact with the community, give them a better understanding of what the National Guard does, and share their experiences with the people they defend.

"People take things for granted," Sausville said. "Unless they see the people that sacrifice their lives, they won't understand it. **gt**

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--Paul J. Sausville, Malta Town Supervisor



General Overview of New York's MATES

FORT DRUM -- Brigadier General Timothy Kadavy (right), the Deputy Army National Guard Director, takes a tour of the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site (MATES), being hosted by Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the New York State Adjutant General and Col. Reginald Sanders, commander of the 153rd Troop Command in Buffalo. Kadavy received an overview of the capabilities and potential of the New York Army National Guard's facilities at Fort Drum on Oct. 18. He went on to visit National Guard facilities at Camp Smith and met with security forces from Joint Task Force Empire Shield in New York City. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division.

Family Volunteers Meet in Saratoga

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters



Children attending the New York National Guard Family and Youth Symposium visited the "Citizen-Soldier" display at the State Museum in Albany, Sep 18. From left, Tyler Raymond, Kelly Stroh, Family Assistance Specialist, Gabriel Hayes, Jeremy Meili and Alex Smith, Saratoga County 4-H volunteer.



Rescue Wing Gets New Facility

WESTHAMPTON BEACH - Colonel Thomas J. Owens, 106th Rescue Wing Commander, local officials, leaders and members of the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing cut the ribbon to open the Wing's new 38,000 square foot armory housing the Guardian Angel para-rescue team here on Sept. 12.

The ribbon cutting ceremony at F.S. Gabreski Airport was also attended by Congressman Tim Bishop. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing.

SARATOGA SPRINGS - Nearly 300 New York National Guard family readiness volunteers, unit representatives and youth leaders spent the weekend of Sept. 17-19 sharing experiences and learning how to strengthen military families.

"This workshop is an extremely useful tool. It provides family readiness groups (FRGs), from all levels, training from both the state and the National Guard Bureau, and useful tools to improve their FRGs and expand their network of support available to them within their communities", said Colonel Curtis Williamson, Human Resource Officer for the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

The weekend was designed to provide new and innovative training, such as the Joint Support System, a computer based online service, which allows volunteers to communicate, schedule meetings, locate templates to assist in individual training programs and most importantly interact with other family members, explained Lt. Col. Kelly Hilland, Director of the New York National Guard Family Program.

According to Hilland, it is important to have full time National Guard personnel ready to assist our families. Each unit now has a military point of contact or MPOC, available to facilitate on behalf of the commander, assist in resolving issues, or relay information between Soldiers overseas and families at home. "It's imperative that our family readiness groups are getting the most up to date information about a units' status, especially if they are deployed, since we rely on the FRG to pass this information to individual families,"

Hilland said. "Sometimes it's as simple as giving assistance getting into the armory or access to a computer, no matter the problem, having a dedicated Soldier available will greatly help."

Another focus of the weekend was to ensure family readiness volunteers know how to access the significant network of government agencies; employers; veteran & volunteer service organizations, and private businesses throughout New York state available to military service members and their families.

"This training was a great opportunity to learn about all the resources specifically geared towards family members and Soldiers," said 2nd Lt. Avery Schneider, a newly appointed MPOC for the 152nd Engineer Support Co. in Buffalo. "Meeting with families and other volunteers helped me understand the family's needs a little better. It also gave me a look at what other MPOCs do and some of the issues they have dealt with previously," Schneider said.

While the adult leaders discussed the program's finer points, nearly 100 children, ages 5-18, shared a weekend of leadership and team building with Red Cross certified junior counselor and baby sitting training courses, various crafts and physical fitness activities, communication skills training and a day at the State Museum visiting exhibits, to include the recent addition of the Citizen-Soldier exhibit.

"It's great to have all these kids come together, because they realize they are not alone, there are a lot of kids dealing with the same issues or circumstances, whether one parent is deployed or just returned," said Colleen Casey, N.Y. National Guard Youth Program Director. **gt**

