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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Communication Includes Listening

We all think we are great communicators, however we all need to work on our communication skills, including listening.

As I settle into the job of adjutant general, one of the things I want to stress across our force — the Army and Air National Guard, as well as the Naval Militia, the New York Guard and our civilian workforce — is the need to communicate effectively.

Communicating with each other — making sure that we understand what is going on, what the mission is and what the commander's vision is — is one of the most important things leaders and the led do.

One of my first tasks as adjutant general has been to get out to our Army National Guard armories and readiness centers scattered around New York from Ogdensburg, to Jamestown, to Binghamton. My initial visits have been about gaining a better understanding of what the New York Army National Guard brings to the table in a domestic response.

I plan on going back to all these armories again to talk to the people who work there.

My goal is to meet all the people who interact with our Soldiers and Airmen around the State so they can hear from me and understand what I expect from them.

On my recent trip to Fort Polk in July to see the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in action at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), it was very apparent to me how much communication is required when leading complex missions. From the brigade commander through all of the ranks to the foot Soldier, everyone needs to understand the plan. The Soldiers at JRTC learned how important communication is to accomplish the mission at hand.

To me, one of our biggest hindrances to effective communication is an over reliance on e-mail. It's convenient, but it isn't the best way to communicate.

Too many leaders, that is most of us, stay in our offices and fire off e-mails and expect people to understand what it is we are trying to communicate. I like to leave the office and walk down the hall to talk to the person face-to-face to see if I really have communicated effectively. I have been amused many times talking to folks and hearing, "TAG said..." It is amazing how the words we say are translated through the ranks.

Whether you work in a squad, flight, battalion, squadron, group or bri-

gade, words mean different things to different people. Our language is full of words with multiple meanings. So much of our communication and understanding comes from body language and tone of voice. That all gets lost in an e-mail.

Some of us can't type or write well, and often our e-mails read like they are shouting, or angry, when they are not.

A message successfully sent is not always a message successfully received.

When I write a message I have the full knowledge of a situation. But the person reading that message may only have some of that knowledge. That makes it likely the message gets misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Just because something may be eloquently written doesn't mean it will be read eloquently. We should all keep our written communications simple and to the point.

Finally, we've all seen people who are often too quick to respond to e-mails.

Perhaps we have all been conditioned by cell phone text messages and social media to respond immediately. Often we don't take the time to really read the message and consider what our response should be.

I realize that for our Army National Guard companies and battalions drilling miles apart, face-to-face communication can be impossible on a regular basis and the tools of email or text messaging can be helpful to cover that distance.

I would encourage you, if real communication is needed, to pick up the phone. More information — with less misunderstanding — can be relayed in a phone call than in an e-mail.

E-mail can be very useful for sending facts and figures, but when it comes to real communication, it lacks the human touch.

As a leader, I believe in taking care of your people, and that human touch in communication makes a difference.

That doesn't mean giving everyone a free ride. It means praising them when they do well and letting them know when they haven't done well and coaching them to improve.

Most importantly it means talking to them about what is going on in the organization, what is going on in their life and what is expected of them.

Communication is a two way street. We have two ears and one mouth for a reason...we should spend twice as much time listening.

So when you see me at an airbase or armory, don't be surprised if I corner you and start talking. I want to know what is going on in our organization. And you need to make sure you know what's going on in your piece of it.

So let's all start doing a better job of communicating with one another. I look forward to meeting all of you and listening to you in the months ahead. **gt**



**Maj. Gen.
Anthony German**



Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the adjutant general, and Sgt. Cameron Trinkle, of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (right) discuss the brigade's training at Fort Polk in July. (see story and photos, pages 14 to 17).





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ORISKANY, N.Y. — New York National Guard troops of the Region II Homeland Response Force (HRF) bore through reinforced concrete during their training and validation exercise at the New York State Preparedness Center here in June (see story, page 11). A disaster-response force of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, the HRF certified their readiness by successfully completing the exercise with Department of Defense experts and observers here. Photo by Maj. Robert Romano, 42nd Infantry Division.

FRONT COVER: Sgt. Alexis Bruno, a sniper from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, provides security at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Ft. Polk, La., in July (see story and photos, pages 14 to 17).
BACK COVER: As part of Saber Strike 16, Senior Airman John Kosequat, 103rd Rescue Squadron Red Team Senior NCOIC, parachutes into a drop zone at Amari Air Base in Estonia in June (see story, page 25).

NY Soldier Named Top Reserve Dentist for 2016

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times* Staff

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. — New York Army National Guard Maj. Joel Bachman, a dentist from Lido Beach, N.Y., is the best dentist in the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, according to Major General Thomas Tempel Jr., the Chief of the Army Dental Corps.

Bachman, a 60-year old who first donned his uniform at age 54, is the recipient of the Dental Corps Award of Excellence for 2016 for Reserve component dental officers.

The Reserve components of the Army consist of the 350,000-strong Army National Guard and the 195,000 members of the Army Reserve.

The award recognizes “significant and exemplary contributions to the Dental Corps of the United States Army Reserves or Army National Guard, and the greater Army community, while best exemplifying the Army values, emphasizing leadership and service,” according to Tempel.

“Everyone likes to be recognized and I’m humbled by this honor, but I haven’t done anything so special,” Bachman said. He’s just worked hard since 2010 to ensure that the 10,300 members of the New York Army National Guard have good dental care, he added.

Lt. Col. Arthur Bilenker, the head of the New York Army National Guard’s dental program, said Bachman was nominated for the award because of the “tremendous positive impact” he’s had on the dental readiness of the New York National Guard’s 10,300 Soldiers since he joined in 2010.

Bachman has a dental practice in Oceanside, N.Y.

As a National Guard dentist, Bachman oversees civilian contract dentists and dental technicians who conduct dental checkups of Soldiers, and the voucher program the Army uses to pay civilian dentists who care for National Guard Soldiers’ teeth, Bilenker said.

“Bachman has really embraced this and spends a tremendous amount of time, on his personal time, giving us the statistics that we need so we can make intelligent recommendations to the units about their readiness and what needs to be done,” Bilenker said. Bachman developed systems for ensuring that vouchers Soldiers are given for civilian dental work are accurate and fulfilled, he added.

Dental health is a major issue for the military. Service members who deploy and then cannot perform their duties because of dental health issues are as out of the fight as a Soldier wounded in battle, Bilenker said.

Ensuring the dental health of reserve component Soldiers, who are not based where Army dentists are available and who often do not have dental health coverage through their civilian jobs, has been a major issue of the National Guard and Army Reserve, he explained.

Bachman got involved in the military dental program in 2007. His wife showed him an ad seeking contract dentists to work with deploying National Guard Soldiers and he decided to sign up.

“Three days later I am at Fort Dix doing contract dentistry,” he recalled. “I loved it from day one.” He enjoyed working with Soldiers so much that it got him to thinking about putting on a uniform himself, he added.

He had never served, but his father joined the Navy during World War II, served as a hospitalist mate, landed on Iwo Jima with the Marines and earned the Purple Heart there.

So in 2008 Bachman joined the New York Guard, New York’s uniformed, volunteer, state-defense force; one of 26 State Guards in the country. The New York Guard has a medical section that helped Army National Guard doctors conduct Soldier-readiness checks.

“The guys there were great. They made me feel comfortable about putting on the uniform and gave me my initial exposure to the military,” he said.

Wearing a uniform felt right, Bachman said, and he was encouraged to join the New York Army National Guard. Although he was 54 when he joined — a time when most people are thinking of leaving the military — he was anxious to serve, Bachman said.

Joining the military at that age, while taking time away from his civilian practice, shows his selflessness, Bilenker said.

“He made a commitment to the Guard, to the state, and to his country knowing full well that he could deploy,” Bilenker said. “At this



point in his life he felt he could make a positive commitment. He came in, he saw a need, he wants to be part of our team,” he added.

Bachman’s experience as a contract dentist working for the Army has made him more effective at evaluating the work contractors do for the New York Army National Guard, Bilenker said.

Bachman has also invested hours of his own time in following up on Soldier dental treatments and crunching numbers that they use to evaluate the effectiveness of New York’s dental program.

While he’s honored to be selected as the top dental officer in the Army’s reserve components, he is just part of a team of New York Army National Guard dentists who work well together, Bachman said. The right systems are in place, and New York has one of the best rates of dental readiness in the National Guard, he added.

“I like to do real dentistry,” he said. “I love fixing Soldiers and the Soldiers are great people to work with. My piece is one little bolt on the bottom of the Army’s big machine,” Bachman said. “But my bolt is not going to be the one that gets loose. I try to keep a tight grip on my lane.” **gt**

NY Soldier to Represent U.S. in Taekwondo Event

Story by Master Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 42nd Infantry Division

LATHAM, N.Y. — A New York Army National Guard Soldier with the persistence to win has kicked and punched her way into an international Taekwondo completion.

Spc. Nashayla Harper, a 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade flight-operations specialist, beat a Virginia resident in the welter-weight class for 18 to 32-year old women at the 2016 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Taekwondo National Championships held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, from July 4 to 9.

Her victory clinched her a spot on the national women's team, and she'll be representing the United States in her weight class during an international competition — possibly the German open — in 2017, said Joe Hasan, the Adirondack AAU Taekwondo district director.

Harper, who joined the New York Army National Guard in 2014, also hopes to someday qualify for the United States Olympics team, like her aunt and coach, Mechelle Smith. Both women reside in Schenectady, New York.

Though her niece won national victories at the teenage level, her recent national adult win was the result of long, hard effort, according to Mechelle, who won a gold medal for Taekwondo in the 1992 Pan American Games, served as an alternate on the 1988 United States Olympic Taekwondo team and was inducted into the National Martial Arts Hall of Fame twice.

"It gets harder at the adult level," Mechelle said. "It's taken her a long time."

A Korean martial art, Taekwondo was developed in the 40s and 50s by combining and incorporating elements of older Korean martial-arts traditions and other martial-arts practices. Harper said the sport is a "family thing" that she took up when she was just three years old. Her mother Shaunelle Smith also competes in the sport, and her father Michael Harper racked up seven national championships, she said.

Then as now, competitions require her to practice Taekwondo and work out daily, she said. Along with maintaining her peak physical condition and fighting weight, Taekwondo prepared her for the rigorous physical demands of Army basic training and Army life, she explained.

"I'm a lot more conditioned for Taekwondo," she explained. "But Taekwondo got me in more

'Army shape' even before basic (training)."

Harper feels that Taekwondo requires more skill than boxing. During three 2-minute rounds, competitors score points by kicking and punching their opponents. Along with padding, competitors wear pressure-sensitive electronic sensors on their hands and feet that register hits and points, she explained.

"As precise as boxers are with their hands, we have to be with our feet," she said. "You have tons of gear on."

In addition to being geared up, she's usually psyched up — and more than a little nervous — before matches, Harper said.

"Usually, the first and second round, you get all that adrenaline out," she said. "The second and third round, it's a battle of who wants to win the most. Anything can happen."

Harper's nerves may have played a part in her previous adult matches, according to Mechelle.

Though her niece began competing when she was eight years old and won two junior-level National AAU Championships in her teens, she suffered defeats in the adult matches for the past several years — in some by only a point, she recalled.

"It's a win-or-lose situation," Mechelle said. "The loser goes home." But after every loss and disappointing trip home, she would console her niece and encourage her to try again, she added.

She competed against eight opponents in 2015, but only had to contend with one opponent this year, Harper said. Still it wasn't easy, she added.

"She made me fight for it," Harper said. "It's pretty cool, but stressful. It was really emotion-



Spc. Nashayla Harper (right) poses with her aunt and coach Mechelle Smith after winning at the 2016 AAU Taekwondo National Championships. (courtesy photo).

al. I worked really hard for it."

Mechelle and fans matched Harper's mood by screaming and cheering her on, she recalled, and Mechelle cried when she won.

"I was so happy for her," Mechelle said. "I know how much it meant to her. Finally, she was on the winning side of it."

Mechelle believes that her niece's National Guard experience, along with her numerous wins this year, gave her the maturity and confidence to win the national match. But the international competition is ahead, so it's not over yet, Mechelle stressed.

"She has a lot of training ahead of her," she said.

According to Hasan, Harper will take part in team training with other national team members and the national coaching staff.

Competing in the Olympics remains her "top dream of all time," Harper said.

"It doesn't get any higher than that," she said.

Mechelle shares her niece's hopes.

"It's a long drawn-out process," she said. "It takes a lot of mental toughness. But if she wants that, I'll be right there by her side." **gt**

Legacy of Patriotism is Leg-up For NY Soldier

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y. — A first-generation American who's excelled at home and abroad has turned her drive and patriotism into a New York Army National Guard career.

As a fourth-grader in her native Brooklyn, Spc. Michelle Truong (pictured at right) saw the aftermath of the 9-11 attacks on TV — and New York National Guard Soldiers responding.

"It made me want to join the Army," she recalled.

Her father — a Vietnamese refugee — always talked about how proud he is to be an American and how grateful he is to America, Truong recalled. She learned patriotism from him, she added.

Truong excelled in college, received the Spellman Academic Award at the State University of New York at Albany and was picked for the New York State Assembly intern program. Though she learned Cantonese Chinese from her Chinese mother, she did well while studying Mandarin Chinese in Shanghai, and took first place in a language contest.

Then her other life-threads — her patriotic upbringing and the desire to be a Soldier — came together when she met an Army National Guard recruiter at a career fair.

She considered joining the Active Army, but her parents wanted her to continue her education, Truong said. The Army National Guard lets her serve, and helps fund her education.

While her father was a bit concerned about her joining the Army, her mother was supportive from the start, Truong said. She enlisted in 2015, and her hard-charging ways shone during Recruit Sustainment Program drills.

"She always had the highest (Army Physical Fitness Test) score during the drill, and she kept pushing herself to score higher," said Master Sgt. Behnke, the recruiting command section chief. "She was consistently striving to better herself and prep for training. She would ask questions and look for ways to better herself and those around her."

Truong didn't let up at Military

Police School in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, where she became the Distinguished Honor Graduate for her training company. Her time in China, which included being part of a 20-person dragon boat team, helped her during her military training.

"It takes a lot of precision," she said. "Everybody has to do the same thing at the same time." The ability to work seamlessly with others is valuable when a platoon of trainees learns to function together, she explained.

Though she enjoyed her training, her most valuable take-away was learning that sometimes you do not have to know everything, or have all the answers, Truong said.

"When you have good leadership it is okay not to know everything," she said. "Sometimes it is okay not to know, because there are people you can trust."

Now a 442nd Military Police Company member, Truong is thinking about enrolling in Officer Candidate School. She got high marks on her LSAT law school admission exam, and now she's



enrolled in Syracuse Law School.

A part-time military career in the Military Police Corps will nicely supplement her dream civilian job: FBI agent, Truong said.

While she's the first in her family to join the military, she's looking forward to what the National Guard has to offer, Truong said. So going forward, she's resolved to continue following her mother's oft-repeated advice: "If you decide to do something, then you have to face all the obstacles and challenges and do it well." **gt**

Female Soldier Meets Artillery Gunline Challenge

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

QUEENS, N.Y. — Spc. Ashley Diaz likes doing physical things, like playing volleyball and softball. She also works as a youth volleyball and street hockey coach.

Diaz (pictured at right) found another physical challenge as the first female cannon crewman in the New York Army National Guard. The West Hempstead, N.Y. resident belongs to the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery.

"The duties of a (cannon crewman) are rigorous to say the least," said Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Peter Mehling, "These Soldiers are required to be ready to execute a fire mission with little to no notice, 24 hours a day." But Diaz is one of four women in the unit, "so having a

female on the gunline is a familiar sight in this battalion," he added.

In the cannon-crewman world, the biggest challenge for women is hefting the Paladin's 155mm rounds or 105mm rounds, Diaz admitted.

Diaz enlisted in 2015 and was with the battalion at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana in July. While she has a criminal justice degree and aspires to become a police officer, she's considering becoming an officer or a drill sergeant.

"I want to be in a higher position," she said. "I do not just want to stay at this one place." **gt**



Former NY Officer Inducted into ROTC Hall of Fame

By Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

FORT KNOX, Ky. — Retired New York Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Thomas Principe was inducted into the Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadet (ROTC) Hall of Fame during a ceremony held at the U.S. Army Cadet Command here on June 10.

“Army ROTC has had, and continues to have, an exceptionally positive impact on our nation, not just in our defense, but in the development of our citizenry,” said Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, commander of U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox, “and much of that credit belongs to the men and women who stand before us today on this field.”

More than 120 of the initial 326 former ROTC cadets to be honored by Cadet Command were present for the induction ceremony, including Principe, the former Judge Advocate General officer.

“A number of the inaugural class of inductees were posthumous awards, which is hardly surprising since ROTC goes back 100 years,” Principe said.

The first named inductee for the ROTC Hall of Fame was George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army under two presidents during WWII, later serving as Secretary of State, then President of the American Red Cross, and finally Secretary of Defense.

Hughes said it was humbling to learn about the history of each inductee and what they had done with the training they had received at their respective ROTC programs — starting with that well-known alumni.

“When I opened the first folder, I was awestruck as I sat back in the chair,” he said. “It was then that it dawned on me the significance of today...I was about to sign the certificate to induct General George C. Marshall into the ROTC National Hall of Fame. I didn’t feel qualified.”

“When I heard that first name, General George C. Marshall, called out, I really thought to myself, ‘What am I doing here?’” Principe said.

Principe began his ROTC service upon admission to St. John’s University School of Law in Queens, N.Y.

“I was reminded that 46 years ago this summer I was here at Fort Knox doing my officer basic training,” Principe said. “It really meant a



Maj. Gen. Christopher Hughes, commander of U.S. Army Cadet Command (left), congratulates retired Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Principe after presenting the medal of the inaugural ROTC Hall of Fame to him on June 10 at Fort Knox, Ky. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army Cadet Command.

lot to me to be there for the ceremony.”

After graduating law school in 1973, Principe went on active duty for qualification training and then commanded the 237th Maintenance Company at Fort Totten, N.Y. as an Army Reserve Officer. He joined the New York Army National Guard in 1976, serving as a Judge Advocate with the 42nd Infantry Division.

Principe went on to serve in further Staff Judge Advocate positions, including the 53rd Troop Command Headquarters during the initial response efforts after the terror attacks of 9/11 in New York City, until his retirement from service in June 2006.

Throughout his time in the Army Reserve and National Guard, Principe worked as an attorney, first as Assistant District Attorney in Queens serving the Homicide Bureau as a trial attorney, rising to the position of Deputy Bureau Chief of the Supreme Court Bureau, before leaving to enter private practice in 1979 as a civil trial lawyer. He now represents injured parties in medical malpractice and personal injury lawsuits.

In his keynote remarks, retired Gen. Carter Ham, former commander of U.S. Africa Command, said it was an honor to serve his country and be part of the first group inducted into the ROTC Hall of Fame.

“We are simply 326 representatives of 650,000 Army ROTC graduates — examples of what ROTC has done for our Army and for our nation for 100 years,” Ham said. “Officers commissioned through ROTC bring a depth and breadth of experiences to the ranks which make the Army stronger.”

Principe said the event brought him “a sense of overwhelming honor” to be selected into the inaugural class and he looks forward to future success for his ROTC unit, the Red Storm Battalion ROTC at St. John’s University in Queens, N.Y.

“I’m proud that I’m not just a representative of my university, St. John’s, but of all the ROTC graduates of the New York Army National Guard,” Principe said. **gt**



Army Guard Promotions



Sergeant Promoted to Staff Sergeant



ALVAREZ, MELVIN
ANDERSEN, JOEL
BROWNING, ROGER
COLE, ERIC
DAVIS, QUENTIN
DIAZ, ISMAEL
FORDHAM, JEFREY
HAUN, CHRISTOPHER
JADE, COLA
KECKLEY, ZACHARY
LIN, XUEZENG
MARIANO, ANGIE
MARTINEZ, DANNY
MCINTIRE, PHILIP
OLIVENCIA, JUAL
POLANCO, ISABEL
RODRIGUEZ, ROSALBA
STORMM, JONATHAN
VARELA, RUDY
WETHERINGTON, JAMES
WILLIAMS, RESINE

HHC 1-69TH INFANTRY
HHC 2-108TH INFANTRY
HHC BSTB 27TH IN BDE (-) (BCT)
DET 1 CO A 642D SUPPORT BN
HHC COMBAT AVN BDE 42D IN DIV
CO A 1-69TH INFANTRY
TROOP C 2-101 CAV (RSTA)
1156TH ENGR CO VERTICAL
145TH MAINTENANCE CO
CO B 1-69TH INFANTRY
145TH MAINTENANCE CO
B CO (MI)BSTB 27TH IN BDE (-)
HQ 53D TRP CMD
CO B 1-69TH INFANTRY
719 TRANS CO (-) (MDM TRK CGO)
ARNG STAFF ELEMENT JFHQ-NY
HHC 369TH SUST BDE
CO B (-) 642D SUPPORT BN
145TH MAINTENANCE CO
CO A 1-69TH INFANTRY
CO B 101ST SIGNAL BN



2nd Lieutenant Promoted to 1st Lieutenant



BOTVINIK, JORDAN
CARL, DANIELLE HHD
ENYIEMA, ASUMOH
PRICE, LONDON

CO C 642D SUPPORT BN
501ST ORDNANCE BN EOD
HHD 104TH MILITARY POLICE BN
A CO(ENG)BSTB 27TH IN BDE(BCT)



First Lieutenant Promoted to Captain



BOUTROS, PHILLIP
BURKHART, CHRIS
DIAZ, PHILIP
FENNER, HOLDEN
HALPIN, PATRICK
LAURENTIUS, JAMES
LINGO, ROBINSON

OPS CO 42ND ID (-)
HHC 101ST SIGNAL BN
27TH INF (BCT)
27TH INF (BCT)
27TH INF (BCT)
HHD RECRUITING & RETENTION BN
27TH INF (BCT)



Captain Promoted to Major



BENSON, TERRY
CAMPBELL, AARON
CASTILLO, RAFAEL
HUJER, PAUL
JEREMIE, CARL
JOYCE, SHAUN
MANS, MICHAEL
PIDKAMINY, BRIAN

DET 1 OPS CO 42ND ID
27TH INF (BCT)
HQ & SPT CO 42ND ID (-)
DET 1 OPS CO 42ND ID (-)
INTEL & SUST CO 42ND ID (-)
HQ 153RD TRP CMD (BDE)
HHC 369TH SUST BDE
HHC COMBAT AVN BDE 42D IN DIV



Major Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel



CHODNICKI, JOSEPH
CURRIER, LYNN
JENKELMENDOZA, BEATRIZ
KELLERMAN, CHRISTOPHER
NITKA, JOHN
RAY, DUSTIN

ARNG STAFF ELEMENT JFHQ-NY
53D DIGITAL LIAISON DETACH



Lieutenant Colonel Promoted to Colonel



MACKLIN, PATRICK
ORTIZ, MARTIN

53D DIGITAL LIAISON DET
MEDICAL COMMAND



Staff Sergeant Promoted to Sergeant 1st Class



ALEXANDER, MAYANA
GOODSPEED, CORY
MCGHEE, TERENCE
YEAGER, STEVEN

727TH MP DET LAW AND ORDER
ARNG STAFF ELEMENT JFHQ-NY
CO B 1-69TH INFANTRY
2ND CIVIL SUPPORT TEAM (WMD)



Sergeant 1st Class Promoted to Master Sergeant



BENNETT, HORRELL
KAIER, JUSTIN
MARTINEZ, EDUARDO
PORTER, JACKSON
SANTANA, JAVIER

369TH HHC REAR
152ND ENGINEER SUPPORT CO
HHB 1-258TH FIELD ARTILLERY
HQ & SPT CO 42ND ID (-)
ARNG STAFF ELEMENT JFHQ-NY



Master Sergeant Promoted to Sergeant Major



BRUNNER, DANIEL
COLLING, JEFFREY

HQ & SPT CO 42ND ID (-)
HHD, RECRUITING & RETENTION BN



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Promoted to Chief Warrant Officer 5



VAHEY, MARK

OPS CO 42ND ID (-)



Newly Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant



CARSON, GREGORY
CONSTE, DONALD
CORONADO, ALONDRA
GAGNON, RYAN
JAMIESON, JOHN
KASKEL, SARAVUT
MICHELE, JORDAN
MOSESBAILEY, ADRIE
OETTINGER, WILLIAM
QUINN, JAMES
ROBERTI, DANIEL
SCAGGS, RHYAN
SLUTZKY, MICHAEL
TAPIA, ADRIAN
TRIBBEY, CHEYNE

A CO(ENG)BSTB 27TH IN BDE(BCT)
CO B 101ST SIGNAL BN
107TH MP COMPANY
DET 1 DIV SIGNAL CO 42ND ID
DET 1 CO B 2-108TH INFANTRY
CO E (-) 3-142D AVIATION
CO A (DISTRO) 427TH BSB
7TH FINANCE DET REAR
204TH ENGINEER DETACHMENT
HHC 2-108TH INFANTRY
DET 1 DIV SIGNAL CO 42ND ID
B CO (MI)BSTB 27TH IN BDE (-)
CO A 2-108TH INFANTRY
HHC 101ST SIGNAL BN
C CO(SIG)BSTB 27TH IN BDE(BCT)



Air Guard Promotions



Staff Sergeant Promoted to Technical Sergeant



ANDERSON, PHILIP NATHANAEL 174TH ATTACK WING
 BAUER, ELYSE P 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 BAVARO, JAMES JESS 106TH RESCUE WING
 BROWER, CLINT B 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 CACOPERDO, JOSEPH MICHAEL 106TH RESCUE WING
 CADE, MATTHEW H 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 CORSO, BRIAN VINCENT 106TH RESCUE WING
 CUMMINGS, PAUL NICHOLAS 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 DERASMO, MICHAEL J 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 DESOUZA, FABIANY RIBEIRO 106TH RESCUE WING
 EMPETT, BRIAN PAUL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 ENCARNACION, LIAM R 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 FAEGER, JOSHUA ROBERT 106TH RESCUE WING
 FLYNN, JOSHUA JAMES 106TH RESCUE WING
 FORD, KATHLEEN THERESA 106TH RESCUE WING
 GEORGE, DAMON CHRISTOPHE 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 HUDSON, TRAVIS STEWART 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 JAVIERHERNANDEZ, ALEXANDER E 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 KINDER, JEFFREY AARON JR 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 KING, NICHOLAS T 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 LABOUNTY, ERNEST PAUL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 LEONARD, ASHLEY LYNN HQ NEW YORK ANG
 LODER, DAVID M 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 LOPEZ, PENNY RODRIGUEZ 106TH RESCUE WING
 LYNCH, ERIC C 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 MARTIN, STEFFAN PAUL 174TH ATTACK WING
 MAZZAFERRO, JEFFREY PAUL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 MCMULLEN, GREGORY MATTHEW 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 NELSON, ABBY NICOLE 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 OKEEFE, SEAN M 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 OLDEN, CHRISTOPHER THOMAS 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 ONEIL, NICHOLAS ANTHONY 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 PETERSEN, CHRISTOPHER DAVID 106TH RESCUE WING
 PROETTA, JOHN THADDEUS 106TH RESCUE WING
 RUNEY, BRANDON EDUARDO 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 SANABRIA, JOESELYN JR 106TH RESCUE WING
 SANDOVAL, LUIS G 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 SANTIAGO, PEDRO R 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 SCHWARTZ, CORY JOSEPH 106TH RESCUE WING
 SIMMONS, JEFFREY P 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 SMITH, BRIAN N 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 ST CLAIR, JORDAN KNEPLEY 106TH RESCUE WING
 THOMPSON, ANDREW JOSEPH 107TH AIRLIFT WING



Technical Sergeant Promoted to Master Sergeant



ARGY, ROBERT P 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 BARRETT, JOSHUA JAMES 174TH ATTACK WING
 BAUER, CHRISTOPHER M 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 CHERY, GODWIN 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 CLOIDT, ERIC J 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 COOK, DAVID STEVEN 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 COPE, JOHNNY NEIL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 DARGAN, MICHELLE L 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 GASIEWICZ, ARTHUR A 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 GREEN, JAMES F JR 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 HASSIS, DYLAN ERIK 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 HIGLEY, KYMBERLY V 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 HOAG, ROBERT A 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 HOSTEN, RYAN BRENDON 106TH RESCUE WING
 MACAULAY, TIMOTHY JOHN 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 MARTINEZ, TANYA MARIE 174TH ATTACK WING
 MEINCKE, MATTHEW D 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 NORDQUIST, GREGORY RAYMOND 106TH RESCUE WING
 POWELL, RANDY GLENN 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 PRATT, ALICIA LYNN 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 REID, SHANE ANDREW 174TH ATTACK WING
 ROE, WILLIAM DAVID 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 ROSSI, JANINE 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 RUPERT, DENNIS EDWARD II 174TH ATTACK WING
 RUST, MICHAEL GREGORY 174TH ATTACK WING
 SCHMIDT, CATHARINE ANN ELLIOT 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 SCUDERI, ANTHONY MICHAEL 174TH ATTACK WING
 SMITH, GREGORY MICHAEL 174TH ATTACK WING
 SPIEWAK, DANIEL KERRY 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 TAVAREZ, JOSELITO 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 ZELIPH, COLLEEN THERESA 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 ZIMMERMAN, MICHAEL EDWARD 174TH ATTACK WING



Sr. Master Sergeant Promoted to Chief Master Sgt.



STEFIK, EDWARD J 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 TOAPHA, MARY E 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 TROTTIER, JEFFREY JOSEPH 109TH AIRLIFT WING



Master Sgt. Promoted to Sr. Master Sergeant



BARRETT, TIMOTHY J 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 FARRELL, ROBERT E 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 FLATEAU, STEPHEN J 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 FRONDEEN, JASON M 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 GEMSHEIM, TIMOTHY S 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 GONZALEZ, PATRICK JOHN 106TH RESCUE WING
 GREGORY, ROBERT RAYMOND 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 KUCHERA, DAVID MATHEW 174TH ATTACK WING
 MURPHY, DANIEL P 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 OWCZARZAK, DANIEL E 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 RONDASH, ROBERT A 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 SCHOFIELD, KENNETH M 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 SHENEFIELD, RANDALL A 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 VADEN, MICKIE PERSONA 106TH RESCUE WING



Newly Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant



BESCH, DUSTIN NICHOLAS 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 COMER, STEPHEN EDWARD JR 174TH ATTACK WING
 DESJARDIN, TRACY LYNN 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 GRANT, RACHAEL Y 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 JACOBS, BRIAN C 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 JAMES, DAN MICHAEL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 LAVIN, SHAWN A 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 LOPEZ, AMANDA LYNN 174TH ATTACK WING
 MOLLIGAN, KEVIN J HQ NEW YORK ANG
 RIVERA, AUSTIN MICHAEL 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 SHANAHAN, NICHOLAS A 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 TIFFANY, JASON MARK 174TH ATTACK WING



2nd Lieutenant Promoted to 1st Lieutenant



ALEXANDER, BRIAN DAVID 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 ANDERSEN, TRACY ANN 174TH ATTACK WING
 BOYD, TAALIB R 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 COONEY, BRIAN MATHIAS 152ND AIR OPS GRP
 DECKER, BRETT SHANNON 174TH ATTACK WING
 DURRANT, GREGORY IAN 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 JOSELOFF, MARK CALEB 106TH RESCUE WING
 MADIGAN, THOMAS MARTIN 106TH RESCUE WING
 MILLER, MATTHEW DAVID 174TH ATTACK WING
 SAVARESE, CHRISTOPHER PATRICK 106TH RESCUE WING
 SCHENCK, ERIC WOLFGANG 174TH ATTACK WING
 SPADAFORA, MARIA M 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 TORCIVIA, NICHOLAS ERIC 106TH RESCUE WING



1st Lieutenant Promoted to Captain



CHAN, ERIC HEI LIK 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 PINGITORE, SANNING MAR IE 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 RINALDI, ADAM DAVID 174TH ATTACK WING
 SEMERAD, JARED NICHOLAS 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 TOSI, MICHAEL CHRISTIAN 106TH RESCUE WING
 WOLFE, DAVID HUGUS 106TH RESCUE WING



Captain Promoted to Major



BIRO, SINAN GEOFFREY 106TH RESCUE WING
 CARTER, ANTHONY JERRARD 106TH RESCUE WING
 CHAPMAN, BENJAMIN L 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 CHYBOWSKI, JOHN A 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 KOHN, CHRISTOPHER W 107TH AIRLIFT WING
 OSTROSKI, CHRISTOPHER 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 PATTON, JOHN FRANCIS 109TH AIRLIFT WING



Major Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel



FILOSA, SALVATORE M 105TH AIRLIFT WING
 MACGREGOR, IAN ELIOT 174TH ATTACK WING
 MARVEL, JACOB GRANDIA 109TH AIRLIFT WING
 THEISEN, NEIL MICHAEL 106TH RESCUE WING

THE JOINT FORCE

Soldiers, Airmen Compete for Top Shot Honors

Story and photo by Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. — In the U.S. military, your weapon is your lifeblood, and proficiency with it is critical not only to the success of the mission, but also to the lives of those depending on you. From your first day of initial training to the day you retire, every military career is replete with firing, and cleaning of your weapon to ensure readiness and proficiency.

This year's New York National Guard Adjutant General Marksmanship Competition, known as the "TAG Match," took that to the next level. An elite number of New York National Guard members showcased their skills during the match, which was held at Camp Smith Training Site here from June 3 to 5.

One hundred and nine New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, along with members of the New York State Guard took part in the TAG Match.

The Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry walked off with team competition honors and numerous individual awards. Capt.

Michael Sicinski took honors in the combat pistol competition with the battalion scoring highest as a team for the combat pistol shoot while Staff Sgt. Matt Melendez received the top slot in the combat rifle competition. Melendez scored highest for the overall individual award as well.

The TAG Match is a three-day shooting competition that is comprised of four advanced marksmanship events: The Sgt. Henry Johnson Individual Combat Rifle Match, the Sgt. Reidar Waaler Team Combat Rifle Match, the Sgt. Thomas Baker Individual Combat Pistol Match, and the Lt. Col. William Donovan Team Combat Pistol Match.

"We've had more competitors this year than in the last few years," said New York Army National Guard Capt. Stephen Totter, a member of the 53rd Troop Command and the TAG Match officer-in-charge.

This year's total registration was up over 20 percent from last year, while the New York State Guard's participation in the TAG Match nearly doubled.

"It's a great opportunity for us to have face time with guys that we work with, said New York State Guard Col. Ray Mechmann, commander of the 56th Brigade. "Getting familiarity with those that we could potentially be serving with during a domestic event will be a big help."

Registration numbers weren't the only big change this year; competitors also faced a much different, and more tactical, course than last year.

"We listened to the feedback from last year and increased the complexity of the event with more non-standard courses of fire," said Totter. "There's a 100-yard run and wooden hurdles on the course; we're trying to simulate tactical maneuvers that would be used during a deployment."

New York Army National Guard Spc. Wellington Escofet, from the Bronx, was excited to compete in his first TAG Match this year and was hopeful to not only win, but to learn new tips and techniques to improve marksmanship.

"Getting tips from other competitors will make us better in the long run, said Escofet. "Win or lose, I know I'm going to get better just from being here."

New skill sets go beyond the solidarity of the Soldier. Once their own proficiency level improves, they can share that knowledge with their home units and, in turn, increase proficiency at the unit, company, battalion, brigade levels and beyond.

"Competitors get a chance to learn from their peers and take that knowledge back to their units," said New York Army National Guard Maj. Joseph Chodnicki, the TAG Match director. "For us, that is the definition of success." **gt**



New York Army National Guard Sgt. Corey Goodman, of Seneca Falls, N.Y., fires his 9mm pistol during the Sgt. Thomas Baker Individual Combat Pistol Match during the TAG Match. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

Troops Hone Disaster, Terror-attack response skills

Story by Staff Sgt. Ryan Campbell, 107th Airlift Wing

Photos by Tech Sgt. Jeremy Call, 174th Attack Wing

ORISKANY, N.Y. — More than 700 New York National Guard troops of the FEMA Region II Homeland Response Force (HRF) certified their disaster-response skills during an intense exercise at the New York State Preparedness Training Center June 12 to 18.

The drill certified Airmen and Soldiers in their roles during an actual chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incident. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region II HRF supports New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands but can respond anywhere.

Though the HRF elements had been preparing for a year, this was the first time they trained together.

“Looking at each piece and how it comes together, it’s amazing,” said Master Sgt. Tammy Freeman, of the 107th Airlift Wing. “You understand the whole process and see just how much goes into it.”

The HRF integrates Soldiers and Airmen who are trained to extract victims from rubble, decontaminate them and provide basic medical triage for further medical care. The HRF includes a mission-command element from the 42nd Infantry Division headquarters.

The major headquarters allows additional National Guard or even federal CBRN-response elements to respond to an incident while providing logistical, administrative, and security support that large numbers of troops require, said Brig. Gen. Gary Yaple, the 42nd Infantry Division deputy commander and senior officer of the HRF element for the exercise.



Troops of the HRF treat a mock disaster victim.

The preparedness center has unique training facilities, including a rubble pile that simulates collapsed buildings.

The New York Air National Guard’s Mobile Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) from the 174th Attack Wing was a key component of the exercise. A civilian incident commander establishes the incident command post at the MEOC to provide directives and orders to the HRF elements on the ground to prioritize, plan and complete their tasks, said Tech. Sgt. Joe Hernon of the 174th Attack Wing.

“A MEOC provides a complete office space and working environment for emergency responders in the event of a disaster,” he said. “Basically in a half an hour you have a fully operational office with phone, computers and internet.”

The HRF-response units set up their own facilities, to include decontamination tents and medical tents. They tested work locations for contamination, searched for casualties, extricated them, decontaminated them and triaged them for further medical treatment.

Clad in protective hazmat suits, the HRF’s search and extraction teams do much of the heavy lifting — literally — by evacuating victims from the incident site.

“We do rope-rescue missions, confined-space rescue missions, lifting and hauling, and breaching in order to get to a casualty that is trapped and get them out,” said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Gump, the NCO-in-charge of the search and extraction team, the mission of the 206th Military Police Company, from Latham, N.Y.

Search and extraction team members work in contaminated zones — called “hot zones” — and face the risk of falling objects, contamination and secondary explosives, said Gump. Once they come out of a contaminated zone, they must be decontaminated and undergo a full medical evaluation to ensure they can perform more missions.



Troops of a HRF rope-rescue team assist a mock disaster victim.

Decontamination is the task of the 222nd Chemical Company.

“If they’re contaminated, clothes are cut off extremely quickly and then they are transported to the wash,” said Staff Sgt. Dean Lucas of the 222nd Chemical Company. “The contaminants are washed off and they are then moved to a monitoring station to see if there are any residual contaminants remaining.” Then casualties are moved to receive medical evaluation and treatment, he explained.

“We can see anything from crush injuries to blast injuries, depending on the scenario they give us,” said Maj. Edward Roden, a critical-care medical officer from the 105th Airlift Wing. “We have to do full assessments. We can see everyone from pediatric patients and pregnant patients.”

Once the medical staff on site sees them, casualties are transported off site to receive any further care and treatment they need, Roden said. Though it’s just a training event, all the medical professionals never lose sight that in the real world, they would be saving lives, he stressed.

Gump agreed.

“You never know what’s going to happen,” Gump said. “There’s disasters that happen and they need people with the knowledge and skills to be able to go rescue people.” **gt**

CST Joins Forces with Naval, Aviation Assets

Story and photos by Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. — The New York National Guard's 2nd Civil Support Team (CST) was all over the map during late July, taking part in exercises that showcased their detection and mobility skills.

On July 22, the team — which is trained to find chemical, biological, and radiological weapons — searched for dirty-bomb materials in and around Lake Champlain in Operation Clear Passage, a homeland-security exercise involving more than 75 personnel from 17 federal, state and international agencies.

Less than a week later, the team took to the air in a New York Army National Guard CH-47F Chinook helicopter for Vigilant Guard, a disaster-response exercise involving bio-chemical terrorism, cyber terrorism and virus-outbreak scenarios in Vermont.

The team is one of two in the New York National Guard. The teams are manned by full-time National Guard members and are prepared to deploy throughout New York or northeast.

"The team trains constantly and we have to be prepared for many different scenarios,"



Members of the 2nd CST check for contaminants at Burlington Air National Guard Base in Vermont.

explained Army National Guard Maj. Amy Benedetto, deputy team commander. "The strong bond and trust our team has towards one another allows us to accomplish our missions successfully."

During Operation Clear Passage, the team was tasked with helping law-enforcement agencies by finding radioactive material.

"All we do is train to respond to (chemical, biological, and radiological) incidents," said Benedetto. "Law enforcement has this as an additional duty. We're the subject-matter experts for them. They rely on us for knowledge."

After rallying at Treadwall Bay Marina in Plattsburgh, N.Y., the team, New York Naval Militia personnel and law-enforcement officers agencies set off for the watery border between the U.S. and Canada, which is near Rouses Point and an old railroad trestle that forms a choke point for boats entering the United States.

Aboard the Naval Militia boat operated by militia members Chief Petty Officer Wayne Hurlburt and Petty Officer 1st Class Robert Hill, the four team members didn't have to wait long before the Clinton County Sheriff's boat called them to search a boat they'd stopped.

"All of a sudden you get a hit, and you have to spring into action," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Willit, a 2nd CST reconnaissance non-commissioned officer. "Anything that jumps higher than background (radiation) is something that should be investigated."

Hill maneuvered alongside the suspect boat and Hurlburt fastened a line to it so team members could board and locate the radioactive material. As New York Army National Guard



New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. David Hansen, a survey chief from the 2nd CST, uses an Identifinder to check for radioactive materials aboard a suspect boat during Operation Clear Passage.

Staff Sgt. David Hansen used an Identifinder detector to find radioactive material on the suspect boat, Hill worked with the sheriff's boat to keep all three craft from drifting in the mild chop.

"Once we both got together, it was easy," recalled Hill.

Though Hansen found the material relatively quickly, the boat's limited space made it hard to isolate the suspect material from other suspected radiation sources so it could be confirmed, Willit said.

"We're not on boats a lot," he said. "It kind of limits the way we react."

Trainers also varied scenarios to test the troops, like using a stronger radiation source to mask a weaker one, forcing team members to use multiple pieces of equipment to get an accurate reading, Benedetto said. Nonetheless, team members found three radiation sources in parked cars and helped officers search Valcour Island.

The exercise gave team members a chance to work with a greater number of their interagency partners, and forced them to operate well outside their comfort zones, Benedetto said.

"We got a unique opportunity to work with law enforcement agencies in a maritime opera-

Counterdrug Task Force Sets Up Drug-Disposal Point

by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing

SCOTIA, N.Y. — Soldiers and Airmen who work at Stratton Air National Guard Base now have a way to get rid of unneeded and unwanted prescription medications before a friend or family member abuses them.

The New York National Guard Counterdrug Task Force unveiled Stratton's first prescription medication drop box July 11, located in the 109th Security Forces Squadron building.

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse, the drop box program manager, said the intent is to give people an avenue to dispose of medications without affecting the environment, and keep them out of circulation to prevent drug abuse.

"According to the National Institute for drug abuse, over 70 percent of prescription medications which end up being abused are taken, bought or received by friends or family members," Crouse said.

The National Guard Bureau reported that there were 538 cases of prescription drug abuse or misuse throughout the Air National Guard in fiscal year 2015.

"This indicates that it's not just a problem in our communities but our very own backyard," Crouse said.

"The Center for Disease Control states that overdose deaths involving prescription opioids

have quadrupled since 1999," Crouse said. "In 2014, almost 2 million Americans abused or were dependent on prescription opioids. Every day, over 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments for misusing prescription opioids."

"I'm fully confident that with this initiative here on our base we will be successful and raise awareness resulting in the installation of other prescription medication drop boxes on military installations," he added.

"We're happy to have this asset here on base," said Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander.

"It's just another tool in our toolbox to keep our Airmen safe, especially from the unintended consequences of expired prescription drugs," Ross said. "I think having this here will entice people to go ahead and clean out the medicine cabinets to get the expired prescription drugs out of there so there is no inadvertent use."

The Counterdrug Task Force assists community-based anti-drug groups and police agencies fighting drug trafficking,

These "civil operators" work with local groups to put up similar boxes and "reduce the availability of prescription pills to possibly abuse or accidentally consume," Crouse said.

Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the New York Air National Guard commander and adjutant general of New York, challenged everyone to take a look in their medicine cabinets and clean out unneeded prescription drugs.

"How many prescription drugs do you have in there that are outdated?" German asked rhetorically. "Because it's probably more than what you think." **gt**



Brig.Gen. Timothy LaBarge, New York Air National Guard chief of staff (right) demonstrates the prescription drop box placed at Stratton Air National Guard Base. Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.

tion," she said. "It really did give our guys a challenge."

Willit agreed.

"I learned a lot about borders and the lake," he said. "Having us there was extremely important."

Five days later, in the early morning hours of July 27, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Soldiers flew a dozen team members from Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, N.Y. to Burlington Air National Guard Base in Vermont for Vigilant Guard.

The team arrived at sunrise and coordinated

with the incident commander. By late morning, Soldiers and Airmen had established a decontamination site while two team members, clad in bulky hazardous-material protective suits, searched a vacant building for suspected hazardous materials.

Though the July heat pushed temperatures inside the suits to over a hundred degrees, the team gave an all-clear assessment to the incident commander less than six hours after their arrival.

By participating in Vigilant Guard, the team met two of their annual training requirements:

deploying by helicopter, and supporting Maine and Vermont CSTs. The aviators also practiced one of their routine missions: deploying the CST from Stratton Air National Guard Base.

"It was a great opportunity for us to provide the 2nd Civil Support Team with unique CH-47F aviation assets," said Maj. Eric Fritz, one of the pilots for the flight. "This also gave us an opportunity to develop a team relationship and understanding of how we can assist in their mission." **gt**

Orion Troops Sweat and Succeed at JRTC

Story by Staff Sgt. Patrician Austin, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

FORT POLK, La. — They fought heat, humidity, and an enemy force, but more than 5,000 Soldiers from across the country who deployed with the New York Army National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat and Task Force Hunter found success at the Joint Readiness Training Center here in July.

"The biggest thing (I) personally gained was a realistic understanding of the capabilities of our unit," said Capt. Adam Connolly, a Montrose, N.Y. resident and commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment. "My biggest concern as a commander was safety. I wanted them to get through this training exercise without wasting time or succumbing to injuries we could have prevented."

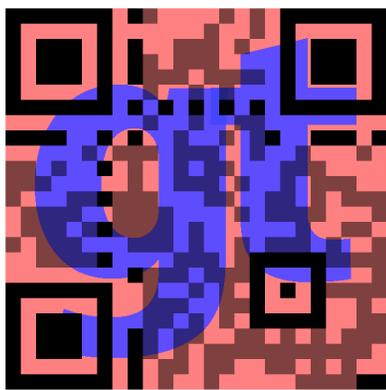
The Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) is designed to place units in realistic battle scenarios to evaluate and fine-tune the way they operate and handle stressful environments. It's made to prepare them for possible deployments and help leaders learn about areas of focus for future training.

Soldiers relied on their skills and discipline for the Fort Polk battlefield, set in the fictitious country of Atropia. Not only did they focus on completing missions and battling the opposing force (OPFOR), but they also battled the intense summer heat and high humidity of central Louisiana.

This meant a severe lack of sleep, no showers, no take-out food, and no grocery store runs — troops had to employ fieldcraft and accomplish missions in austere environments.

"I've been in for almost five years," said Spc. David Austin, a multi-channel transmission systems operator-maintainer with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment. "It's been a lot more training than I've ever had in my military career." This was the first time he had to eat MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) for three weeks straight, he added.

"JRTC was a demanding training event, both



To see more stories and photos of the New York Army National Guard at JRTC, scan the QR code above or visit <http://dmna.ny.gov/jrtc>



physically and mentally,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Ciampolillo, the brigade command sergeant major and senior enlisted Soldier in the unit. “Every Soldier took something away from this. It was a gut check for the entire task force. That’s what Soldiering in an (Infantry Brigade Combat Team) is all about.”

The brigade also learned to use the many Army and joint-force “enablers” — those augmentation elements that added realism to the scenario. These ranged from supporting Joint Tactical Air Controllers who direct close-air support from the New York Air National Guard’s 27th Air Support Operations Squadron, to U.S. Marines employing naval gunfire.

Working alongside host nation-military role players and interacting with Atropian civilian role players were the biggest challenges the infantry brigade faced.

But the troops succeeded, despite the strains, said Capt. Walker Logos, a civil affairs officer with the 443rd Civil Affairs Company, based in Newport, R.I., an augmentation element for the brigade. He described the role players as “a fantastic group of people” who created a dynamic scenario and challenging situations to react to.

“They were very realistic,” Logos said. “Day in and day out, it gets very hard to work with people. Despite all of it, the thing that led us to be suc-

cessful came from our ability to get past all of our gripes and to continue to work together so that we could complete the mission.”

All weapon systems, vehicles and personnel — including Soldiers, OPFOR and civilian role players — were equipped with the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) to add realism to the training. When fired with blank munitions, MILES-equipped weapon systems sent laser signals at MILES-equipped personnel and vehicles, setting off alarms that indicated a hit or near-miss, and simulated battle losses.

Though the conditions were tough and the days strenuous, the primary objective of JRTC was to determine the brigade’s effectiveness and combat readiness to help the leadership refine future training.

The Joint Readiness Training Center is a learning environment, said 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Freyn.

“A lot of Soldiers were asked to do a lot of things outside of what they thought they were going to do,” Freyn said. “I thought they rose up to the challenge and performed remarkably well. They stayed flexible and adaptive. In a real-world deployment that’s something you must have.” ⁹

(Editor’s note: Maj. Al Phillips and Spc. Alexander Rector also contributed to this article)



Double Threat at JRTC: OPFOR and Triple Digit Heat



Soldiers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry assault an objective during a live-fire exercise at Fort Polk in July. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



LEFT: Maryland National Guard Sgt. DaShaun Hood, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter crew chief, monitors operations during a flight at Fort Polk in July. Photo by Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.
RIGHT: Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery fire their M119 howitzer at Fort Polk in July. Photo by Sgt. Maj. Corine Lombardo.



TOP LEFT: A Soldier of the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry rests after a firefight to defend a town at JRTC at Fort Polk in July. **TOP RIGHT:** A Soldier from the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry holds his IV fluid bag during a mass casualty exercise at Fort Polk in July. Photos by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



A Soldier of the New York Army National Guard's 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry provides supporting fires against an opposing force at Fort Polk in July. Photo courtesy of the JRTC Operations Group.

EOD Experts Meet Raven's Challenge

Story and photos by Sgt. J.P. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division

ORISKANY, N.Y. — The robot bumped across the the grassy field until it reached the mock explosive device in a Taylor Swift lunch box, tethered to a downed toy drone.

Though this situation was a new one for the New York Army National Guard Soldiers controlling the robot, the scenario and others during the annual Raven's Challenge exercise here gave them a chance to try new techniques — and the freedom to fail.

More than two-dozen troops from the New York National Guard's 501st Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), its 1108th Ordnance Company (EOD) and the 914th EOD Flight trained with bomb squads from New York, other states, the federal government, and Canada as part of the exercise here from May 16 to 20.

Raven's Challenge is a multi-phase federal exercise designed to increase interoperability between public safety bomb squads and military EOD units in the United States. Over a dozen EOD teams trained to rescue women with bombs strapped to their necks, searched cabins for simulated bombs, and sweated in green bulky bomb suits.

The teams weren't graded — just encouraged to think outside the box.

"You're not under the pressure of passing or failing, so you're willing to try new things and see what works," said Lt. Col. Jason Souza, 501st Ordnance Battalion commander. Stopping a bomb is like a game of chess, with moves and

countermoves, -- it's you versus the bomber, he explained.

Training can teach concepts, but since each real-life mission is so unpredictable, he wants his soldiers to learn the basic concepts and then to think about different perspectives, Souza said.

"It may not be exactly what you did in training, but you understand how things work, what does what," he said.

Controllers supervised each scenario and added new quirks to the exercise.

"There's no win or lose," said controller Scott Bialy, of Florida Division of State Fire Marshal. "Try something new, learn something new. Even if you fail, you learn something."

Military EOD teams and civilian agency teams team were matched together in each scenario. Roles and regulations vary in each organization, so merging law-enforcement and military approaches in training is important for good communication in the real world, said controller Brent Ray.

"Let's step outside the box," he said. "Let's try it and law enforcement way. Then, let's try it the military way."

During the exercise, law-enforcement and military EOD teams discussed their differing approaches to scenarios. Civilian agency EOD teams and military EOD teams have each changed since the 9-11 attacks, Ray said.

"There's adjustments on both sides," he said. "Civilians haven't even had a chance to work with the military."

Learning these differences in training, however, is important to know for missions in the real world.

"Everyone has their own way," Jeff Ingerick of the Rochester Bomb Squad said. "You look at some of



Staff Sgt. Adam Russ, 1108th EOD Company, pilots a bomb-disposal robot during the Raven's Challenge.

what other people are doing and absorb what they're doing well."

The intense training resulted in a more efficient, streamlined and cohesive EOD community, participants said.

"New York continues to remain vigilant and enhance our preparedness in the aftermath of recent terrorist attacks in Brussels, San Bernardino and Paris," said New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. "The Raven's Challenge is critical to ensuring that New York's bomb technicians remain among the most skilled in the nation, and this knowledge makes this state safer for all New Yorkers."

The lunch-box scenario was new for the 914th EOD team, who said they weren't just replicating old techniques, but creating new ones.

"No one has encountered these before," said Tech Sgt. Adam Clement, a team leader. "Our team is good enough to come up with something to defeat it." Not having the pressure of being graded meant he could give more time to Senior Airman Justin Devantier, his newest team member, he added.

Before the Ravens Challenge, Devantier only had an hour of robot-driving experience. But in just one morning of the exercise, he drove the robot for two hours, wore the bomb suit and operated the x-ray.

"You don't get that everyday, and it's nice to get that done here," he said. 



A bomb-disposal robot approaches to heft a 150-pound package during the "robot rodeo" part of the exercise.

NY Soldiers Learn Life-Saving Skills for Deployment

Story and photos by Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. — Around the perimeter of a small building nestled in the back of Camp Smith here, Soldiers could be seen carrying litters, applying tourniquets, bandaging simulated limbs, opening blocked airways and sealing mock chest wounds.

Then they went inside and did it all over again.

About 80 New York Army National Guard troops graduated from the 106th Infantry Regional Training Institute's 30-hour Combat Lifesaver (CLS) course here on June 10. Half of the troops belonged to the 369th Sustainment Brigade, which is deploying to Kuwait this fall.

Medical preparation and confidence are important for CLS Soldiers during a deployment. These uniquely-trained Soldiers play a vital role in not only being first responders, but also acting as extensions of the Combat Medics to help treat the wounded.

Soldiers who are CLS-qualified know how to stop massive bleeding, assess labored breathing and apply basic bandages. The course is taught by four primary instructors and three junior medics.

These instructors and medics have a combined four decades of teaching and real-world experience — including several deployments as combat medics.

"All of our instructors are BLS [Basic Life Support] certified," said New York Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Cammayo, the medical course manager for the 106th

Infantry Regional Training Institute. "We're here with the expertise and equipment to help train Soldiers."

The course combines smart medical Soldiers with smart technology in the form of MATT and SAMMY, state-of-the-art mannequins that instructors operate with a hand-held controller or a laptop to mimic combat wounds and injuries.

With built-in technology that delivers incredibly realistic visual and tactical-treatment scenarios, MATT, the Multiple Amputation Trauma Trainer, creates life-like responses to treatment, compelling students to pinpoint areas where they can best regulate and control the flow from arterial bleeding.

"Since bleeding from extremities causes most battlefield deaths," said Cammayo. "One of the main takeaways from the course is the use of a tourniquet — that can save lives."

The ribs of SAMMY, the latest newest upgrade of the SimMan medical-training mannequin, move asymmetrically to denote rib



To prepare for their upcoming deployment, Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade practice first-aid techniques on a mannequin with a mock chest wound during the Combat Lifesaver course at Camp Smith in June.

fractures, and allows trainers to talk through him as students work to identify all the simulated injuries.

"MATT and SAMMY help bring the real-world environment into the classroom and their responsiveness helps us better identify where Soldiers are having difficulties," said Cammayo. "The more realistic the training, the better prepared the Soldiers are." 🇺🇸

New Star in New York Army National Guard



LATHAM, N.Y. — Newly-promoted Brig. Gen. Patrick Center poses with his wife Michelle (middle left) and his daughters Kayla (far left) and Meg (far right) after his promotion ceremony here on July 1. Center serves as director of Joint Staff for the 16,000-member New York National Guard, and is now one of five brigadier generals in the New York Army National Guard. Center's last assignment was chief of staff of the 10,300-member New York Army National Guard, where he was responsible to the adjutant general of New York for the day-to-day administrative management of the force. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.



Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division HHB take part in a combat lifesaver practical exercise during the unit's annual training in June. Photo by Staff Sgt. Diahann Adepegba, 42nd Infantry Division HHB.

Annual Training Times Two for Rainbow Troops

by *Guard Times Staff*

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. — This past June, troops of the 42nd Infantry Division's Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion (HHB) checked the readiness box twice during their annual training period.

That's because these troops had to undergo a Homeland Response Force (HRF) exercise evaluation to prove they're ready for their disaster-response role (see story, page 11), then change gears to sharpen their individual Soldier readiness at Camp Smith Training Site here.

This battalion's annual training took place from June 11 to 25. During the first week, 180 battalion troops were involved in the HRF exercise in Oriskany, N.Y., while 250 battalion troops were at Camp Smith, conducting the Soldier readiness training, including weapons qualification, driver qualification, combat lifesaver qualification, map reading and land navigation.

After passing the HRF exercise evaluation, the 180 HRF Soldiers promptly headed south for Camp Smith, where they joined 250 other battalion troops and undertook the Soldier readiness training.

Rotating troops through all the training sites,

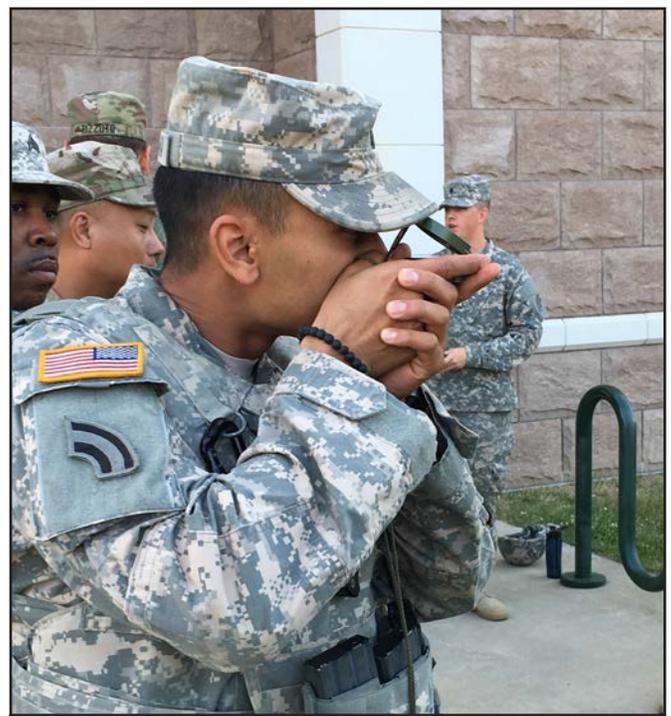
keeping those sites active, then integrating the newly-arrived HRF troops into the training took a great deal of coordination, said Sgt. 1st Class Frank DeThomasis, the battalion operations NCO.

"Everything was times two," he said. "We had to go back and do everything we did the first week."

But the staff at Camp Smith was very accommodating, DeThomasis said.

"The training was very effective," he said. "We achieved everything we wanted to, with everyone who was there."

They received good feedback from the troops, said Lt. Col. Mark Frank, the battalion commander. "The Soldiers said it was great training," Frank said. **gt**



Sgt. Alex Dukharan, of the 42nd Infantry Division HHB, uses a compass to plot a point during the unit's annual training in June. Photo by Sgt. Michael Burdick, 42nd HHB.

Engineer Unit Crushes It During Annual Training

Story by Master Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT DRUM, N.Y. — Fast repair work on their crusher here in spring set the New York Army National Guard's 204th Engineer Detachment (Quarry) for success during annual training.

In five 8-hour work days during their annual training (AT) period here in July, about two dozen detachment troops turned huge rocks into 11,000 yards of crushed stone construction material to be used in road repairs and drainage at Fort Drum, according to 1st Lt. Matthew Mansfield, the detachment commander.

"We crushed more rock than last year, in half the time, with two-thirds of the personnel we had last year," said Mansfield, of Horseheads, N.Y. Last year about 33 to 34 detachment personnel ran the crusher during AT, he explained.

The detachment is part of the 204th Engineer Battalion, which is based in Binghamton, N.Y. During the latter half of their AT, detachment troops conducted demolition training with the rest of the battalion at Fort Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania.

Running their crusher is the main mission of the detachment, which is one of about a dozen such units in the entire U.S. Army, according to Mansfield. The crusher is actually a sprawling array of several crushing machines, conveyer belts, screens, a washing unit, five diesel engines, three 480-volt generators and other machinery.

"If all the components were being used, we could actually make sand out of a rock the size of a footlocker," said Staff Sgt. Charles Mann, the detachment quarry foreman and resident of Montrose, Pennsylvania.

They're like a civilian quarry operation, but with a crucial difference, Mansfield said. Civilian quarry operations conduct maintenance over the winter, and are only active in the spring, summer and fall — a time that's called the "crushing season," he explained.

The detachment doesn't have a winter maintenance period, so they use spring training days to conduct maintenance, Mansfield said.

During May drill, the unit drew bulldozers, front-end loaders, dump trucks, and other vehicles from the National Guard Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site (MATES) at Fort Drum, and headed out to repair the crusher, which sits in the roughly 3-acre space of training area 14A in the post's southeast corner, Mansfield said.

They focused on a "laundry list of repairs" that they'd identified last AT — including malfunctioning motors, failing conveyor belts and faulty screens, which filter stones by size so they can go through the crusher, Mansfield said.

The conveyor belts were "worn,

not tracking right," said Mann, and the primary crusher's conveyor belt — which is made of about 70 feet of unwieldy, three-ply rubber — was the most challenging to fix.

"It literally took everybody to get it in and around the rollers," Mann said. Nonetheless, the troops completed the repairs by 9:45 p.m., "working in the dark," said Mansfield.

That repair work paid dividends during AT, ensuring the detachment met their objective of having the crusher up and running within two days, Mansfield said. Last year, it took them four days, he recalled.

"48 hours after getting on the ground, we we're running rock through the crusher," he said.

Starting next summer, battalion troops will use the crushed stone to improve drainage around the New York Army National Guard MATES at Fort Drum, which will yield more training benefits, said Maj. Chad Clark, the 204th Engineer Battalion operations officer.

About a dozen detachment troops are drivers who haul rock and other material for the crusher, but most of the Soldiers operate the crusher, which is a "pretty unique" mission, Mansfield said. The specific military occupational skill (MOS) is 12G, "quarrying specialist."

"Not a lot of people go through that training," he said.

Mansfield said he enjoys the mission. He described it as "a unique opportunity to lead a group of people with highly-specialized skill sets." Many of them work as drivers and heavy-equipment operators in the civilian sector, he said, so they've kept their skills honed on their own.

"Most of the troops that I have, what they do in the National Guard is what they do on the civilian side," he said. "They've found ways to keep trained and qualified on the civilian side with their jobs. It really helps out when we go to produce material for other units in the battalion." **gt**



204th Engineer Detachment (Quarry) troops pose with crushed stone construction material they produced during their AT in July. Photo courtesy of the 204th Engineer Detachment (Quarry).

42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Preps for Warfighter

Story by Sgt. Jonathan Monfiletto, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. — Soldiers of the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) Headquarters used their two weeks of annual training here to rehearse for their Warfighter exercise scheduled at the National Guard training center in November.

Other company Soldiers who are part of the brigade staff spent their annual training at the

Mission Commander Training Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. in August.

After taking their annual Army Physical Fitness Test on the first day, the soldiers spent the next four days setting up and taking down a tactical operations center with a standardized integrated command post system, and conducting a unit set-fielding exercise.

In the second week of training, soldiers went to ranges to qualify on their M9 pistols, M249 squad automatic weapons and M4 carbines, while also performing range-control duties for their fellow soldiers and troops of the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion. **g**



RIGHT: Sgt. Major Robert Ravert (right), the non-commissioned officer in charge of operations, speaks with Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company during their annual training at Fort Indiantown Gap in June. Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Monfiletto.

LEFT: Chief Warrant Officer 5 Victor Figliuolo, a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot, trains 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) staff members during their annual training at the Mission Commander Training Center at Fort Leonard Wood in August. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, 42nd CAB.

Chinook Crews Give Troops a Lift for Leapfest 2016



U.S. and partner nation paratroopers board a New York Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter (left) then later parachute from it (right) as they participate in Leapfest 2016, an international parachute training event, in Rhode Island on Aug. 6. The Rhode Island Army National Guard's 56th Troop Command hosted the event to promote high-level technical training and esprit de corps within the international airborne community. The Chinook and its crew belong to the New York Army National Guard's Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation. Photo by Staff Sgt. Quentin Davis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

TAG Tags 109th AW Member for Top Enlisted Job

by *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, NY — New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, a Ballston Spa resident, became the top enlisted Airman in the 5,800-member New York Air National Guard during a change-of-authority ceremony at the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs here July 25.

Giaquinto, who first served in the Army in 1984, had been serving command chief master sergeant for the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia.

She replaced Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard D. King, who has been the command chief of the New York Air National Guard since 2010. King has been named to serve as the command chief of the 1st Air Force, a three-star general officer command responsible for the air defense of the United States.

As the command chief of the New York Air National Guard, Giaquinto will be the senior enlisted advisor on training and morale of the enlisted force to Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the commander of the New York Air National Guard and the Adjutant General (TAG) of New York.

During the ceremony, Giaquinto praised her husband, New York Air National Guard Chief Master Sgt. Mark Giaquinto, for supporting her career, as well as her children: Alyssa Giaquinto, a senior Airman in the Air National Guard; Ashlyn Giaquinto, a college student; and her son Aidan Giaquinto, a middle school student.

“When you serve in the military, your family serves with you,” she said.

Giaquinto thanked German for “having the trust and confidence in me to lead the men and women of the New York Air National Guard.” She also praised the senior Air National Guard non-commissioned officers at the five air wings across the state.

Giaquinto joined the New York Air National Guard in 1997 as an information manager for the 109th Airlift Wing. She served seven years in the Logistics Readiness Squadron, managing



Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto (right) accepts the New York Air National Guard colors from Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the New York Air National Guard commander and adjutant general of New York, during the change-of-authority ceremony.

the orderly room and as a member of the base honor guard.

In 2004 Giaquinto was selected to be the Communications Flight’s information resource manager, where she became the focal point for all information-management related issues (including training 27 information managers), served as the webmaster, and Freedom of Information Act manager.

In 2006 Giaquinto was selected to be the wing command staff’s office manager, administering executive support for the wing commander, vice commander and executive officer. During this time she also served on the Air National Guard Portal Advisory Council, Region 1 portal content manager and unit deployment manager.

In 2009, Giaquinto deployed to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom, and in 2010 she was selected as a human resource specialist at the New York State Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ), New York Air National Guard.

She retrained into the personnel career field and handled all officer personnel programs, including administrative support for both the commander and the New York Air National Guard’s chief of staff.

She’s been actively involved with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, both as a victim advocate and a bystander intervention trainer at JFHQ and the 109th Airlift Wing.

In 2011, she was selected as the personnel superintendent and became the JFHQ sexual assault response coordinator-air, providing training, guidance and administrative support to the JFHQ and New York Air National Guard.

She was selected as the 109th Airlift Wing command chief in 2013. Her awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. 

174th Attack Wing Starts Daily MQ-9 Operations

by *Guard Times Staff*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The New York Air National Guard's 174th Attack Wing began conducting daily MQ-9 training-flight operations from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base and Syracuse Hancock International Airport here on June 15.

The initial first launch and recovery of the MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft took place from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base and Syracuse Hancock International Airport in December 2015.

At that time, Col. Greg Semmel, then the 174th Attack Wing commander, had stated that the wing would take a "crawl, walk, run" progression towards achieving daily flying operations from Hancock Field and the Syracuse International Airport.

After successfully achieving the initial first flight or "crawl" phase in December, daily flying had been delayed, as the wing worked with Syracuse Air Traffic Control on a local operating agreement.

When daily flight operations began, an aircraft flown by the Civil Air Patrol relayed information to the MQ-9 pilots in connection to the location of other aircraft in the surrounding airspace.

Prior to the launching of the MQ-9, the CAP-piloted aircraft took flight. Once the MQ-9 was airborne, the CAP aircraft trailed a few hundred feet behind the MQ-9, staying with it until it reached the military's restricted airspace.

When the MQ-9 completed its training mission, the CAP aircraft met up with it in the restricted airspace and followed it back to the Syracuse International Airport's runway.

This process is expected to remain in place until sometime next year, when new radar technology will be available to relay the same information that the CAP pilots will be providing to the MQ-9 pilots.

The 174th Attack Wing will be conducting the same types of training mission members have conducted for over 60 years in order to continually train service members to be prepared to support the wing's federal and state missions.

Flight operations will take place over approved airspace and will follow established



An MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) operated by the 174th Attack Wing flies from the Syracuse Hancock International Airport in December 2015. The wing began regular flights at Syracuse this summer.

operating procedures and instructions.

Prior to December, all flight operations of the MQ-9 aircraft were conducted at Wheeler Sack Army Airfield at Fort Drum.

The FAA approval follows a technical and operational review for the safe and effective takeoff and recovery of MQ-9 aircraft at Hancock Field, home to operator and maintenance training of MQ-9 crews.

In 2013, the FAA modified airspace around Hancock Field to expand available training areas and provide transition from high altitude down to Hancock Field.

The 174th Attack Wing is the first Air Force organization in the United States to fly the remotely piloted aircraft in class "C" airspace, the common airspace around commercial airports.

Class "C" Airspace is generally that airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation surrounding airports that have an operational control tower, are serviced by a radar approach control, and have instrument flight operations or passenger terminals.

"Having the ability to fly from Hancock Field on a daily basis is two-fold," said Col. Michael Smith, 174th wing commander. "It will not only allow us to increase our student production by up to 50 percent, it will also help save over \$1 million in taxpayer costs."

The wing will continue to use Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield during adverse weather conditions, and when flying with live ordnance. 



As part of Saber Strike 16, 103rd Rescue Squadron pararescue jumpers exit an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter to pick up two isolated personnel at Amari Air Base in June.

106th Rescue Wing Supports Saber Strike 16

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Blake Mize, 106th RQW

HARJUMAA, ESTONIA — The 106th Rescue Wing took part Saber Strike 16 at Amari Air Base here from June 8 to 25.

Saber Strike is a multinational exercise meant to increase the interoperability of NATO allies and complete tactical training objectives while integrating force enablers.

“It was great for our wing to participate in Saber Strike 16,” said Col. Nicholas Broccoli, the vice commander of the wing, which is based at F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach. “I was impressed with the professionalism and hospitality of the Estonian Air Force and the critical support they provided when called upon. Our members were able to take advantage of opportunities to train with them as a flexible force, building upon trusted relationships that will increase our level of interoperability in the future.”

Using their HC-130 airplanes, HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters, combat rescue officers and pararescuemen, the 106th was tasked to perform rescue simulations and integrate A-10 Thunderbolt II fighters into the rescue scenarios — all while working hand-in-hand with the Estonian air force.

The Estonians provided a variety of support, such as using a unique tow bar to tow aircraft to proper spots on the flight line, and facilitating 106th members’ jump from a 1959 AN2 aircraft.

The jump gave 106th rescue team members a chance to adapt to a variety of conditions, hone their skills, and work with an allied nation so they can accomplish missions in any environment.

“It was a new experience for me,” said Maj. Glyn Weir, a combat rescue officer with the 103rd Rescue Squadron.

Weir has more than 400 jumps.

“The plane was kind of slow, like a helicopter, but very stable for a 1959 aircraft,” he said. “The weather was amazing and the view was incredible over Estonia and out over the Gulf of Finland.”

The 106th portion of the exercise was an overall success, Broccoli said, and highlighted the capabilities the Air National Guard — and specifically the 106th — bring to the table.

“In the end, we improved interoperability, built relationships and accomplished our tactical objectives” Weir said. 



Senior Airman Mitchell Jacobs, a 103rd Rescue Squadron pararescue jumper, parachutes into Amari Air Base in June.

Airmen Use Greenland to Warm Up for South Pole

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

KANGERLUSSUAQ, GREENLAND — Two hundred members of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing deployed here this summer to support National Science Foundation (NSF) ice cap research and prepare for South Pole deployments in the fall.

With the airport serving as a base, the wing flew scientists and supplies to research stations across Greenland. The ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft flown by the 109th is the only U.S. military aircraft able to land on both snow and ice. The wing transports fuel, equipment, supplies and passengers in and out of various National Science Foundation (NSF) camps on the Ice Shelf in Greenland throughout the entire season.

During a typical season, the wing logs 600 to 1,000 flight hours transporting 1.5 to 2.5 million pounds of cargo, 50,000 pounds of fuel and 1,500 to 2,000 passengers.

The wing flies mission missions as part of Operation Deep Freeze, the U.S. military support for Antarctica research. Those missions take place when it's winter in New York.

"The training we do in Greenland directly prepares us for our South Pole missions," said Lt. Col. Thomas Esposito, a 109th pilot and deployment commander for Greenland missions. "Just about everything we do here, from moving cargo and passengers to practicing ski landing and airdrops, we do in Antarctica," added Esposito, a resident of Ballston Spa, N.Y.

Along with sub-zero temperatures, the extreme wind and weather conditions in Antarctica are unforgiving, so having the opportunity to train in Greenland during the summer months allows unit members to better prepare for working in the South Pole, explained Esposito.

Some Airmen make a couple of trips a season.

According to Esposito, one of the biggest challenges landing the ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules is the drastic and sometimes unforeseen changes in surface definition based on weather conditions and the potential for deep cracks or fractures found on an ice sheet or glacier.

"We rely on navigation more to land in Antarctica because the dangers of crevasses," Esposito said.

For maintenance personnel and cargo handlers, one of the major advantages to training in Greenland is that the warmer climate allows them time to become more proficient in their duties.

"Although we're still supporting NSF researchers, our mission here is primarily training, but it's important because it sets the stage for Antarctica," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Jones, a loadmaster who lives in Albany, N.Y. "Once we're down south it's a much faster pace, everything is time critical because it's too cold to shut down engines. We have to move cargo and passengers as fast as possible because the weather and conditions change so quickly."

With over two dozen missions to Greenland and six to Antarctica under his wing, Jones' primary responsibilities as a loadmaster is load-planning, which includes determining fuel consumption based on projected travel distances and cargo weight, as well as computing the aircraft's center of gravity by evenly distributing cargo and passengers.

The 109th deploys aircraft between April and August each year with an average of six flight periods lasting from one to two weeks each, depending on the needs of the NSF. During each rotation, two to four aircraft and roughly 75 Airmen are deployed.

The NSF is an independent federal agency that funds basic scientific research with most proposals coming from Academic Research Institutions, universities and colleges.

"We really rely on the 109th Airlift Wing for taking cargo for both research and to support life at our research stations, the fuel, food and all the essential things we need," said NSF Logistics Program Manager Renee Crain.



Staff Sgt. Matthew Jones, a 109th Airlift Wing LC-130 "Skibird" Loadmaster watches weather conditions during a flight between Kangerlussuaq and Camp Raven, Greenland, in June.

According to Crain, the 109th is the lifeline for the research programs overseen by the NSF's Division of Polar Programs in Greenland because it flies equipment and people where they are needed.

The NSF's Arctic Sciences section funds about one-third of the research projects in Greenland, so any given year 30 to 40 research projects are underway, including Viking site archeology, atmospheric sciences, hydrology, glaciology and basic Arctic ecology, Crain explained.

"The partnership between the NSF and 109th has really grown over the decades that the 109th has been providing support for our research program in Greenland, so we work together regularly, always communicating, developing schedules, working with changes that come up throughout the season, so it's a really strong and essential partnership for NSF and our research portfolio," Crain said. **gt**



Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe, Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Valk (left) compete in the swim portion of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition.

Airmen Take Dive to Earn German Proficiency Badge

Story by Tech. Sgt. Katherine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing

Photos by Staff Sgt. Ben German, 109th Airlift Wing

GLENVILLE, N.Y. — Airmen with the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing dove right into the swim portion of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition at the nearby Glenville, N.Y. YMCA on June 16, uniform and all.

The German military award tests physical fitness, marksmanship skills, and swimming ability. The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge is one of the few approved foreign awards American service members can wear.

The Airmen completed the first part of the test—a physical fitness—on June 4.

The goal for this portion of the competition was to swim 100 meters, while wearing the Airman Battle Uniform, in under 4 minutes.

“To be honest, I haven’t swam in a lap pool since I was probably 10, so I was a little nervous coming into it,” said Staff Sgt. Amanda Cimorelli, 109th Operations Support Squadron. “The first couple laps were OK, but by Round 2, I started to get a little fatigued in the shoulders. The uniform wears you down. It was definitely a challenge.”

According to Airmen with the 109th Security Forces Squadron who have competed for the badge previously, the swim portion always seems to be the toughest part of the competition, and many don’t make it to the next phase.

This time, six out of the eight swimmers were able to accomplish the feat and will move on to the pistol qualification portion at Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh, New York. The competition will end with a ruck march; participants will need to march between 3.75 and 7.5 miles while carrying 33 pounds.

The first phase, the basic fitness test, required the Airmen to complete 11x10 meter sprints, a flexed arm hang and finish off with a 1,000 meter run.

“I think it’s excellent for us. It gets us out of our element and pushes us to do something different other than just the yearly PT test,” Cimorelli said.

“This event fosters individual achievement and at the same time unit cohesion,” said Maj. William Furmanski, 109th Security Forces Squadron commander. “Although it’s an individual award, it really is a team effort; you can see that

everyone is pushing each other.”

The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge is a military decoration of the Bundeswehr, the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany.

109th participants were scored in all phases of the competition and competed for the gold, silver or bronze award. **gt**



Staff Sgt. Amanda Cimorelli completes her swim.



Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe and Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Valk dive into the water during the swim portion of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition.

Projects and Exercises Highlight NY Guard Training

By Guard Times Staff

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. — About three hundred volunteers of the New York Guard, the state defense force, conducted week-long annual training program at Camp Smith Training Site here from Aug. 15 to 20.

In addition to working on engineer projects to improve Camp Smith, the New York Guard members took part in communications, staff coordination, recruit and retention, and individual skills training.

The training was designed to replicate the alert and mobilization of state defense-force volunteers for a disaster response. The volunteers also trained to perform a variety of support missions, such as emergency communications, staging base support operations, chainsaw use and food service support.

The training led up to a supply-point exercise on Aug. 19. The exercise replicated distributing aid supplies during a state disaster response.

About 40 New York Guard members also received initial entry training, covering fundamentals of military drill and ceremony, customs and courtesies and basic skills. Another 20 current troops finished their officer basic course, received officer ranks and positions and greater responsibilities within the New York Guard.

These troops took part in a graduation pass and review ceremony on the parade field on Aug. 20. 



During their annual training in August, New York Guard troops level an area in front of Baker Hall so concrete can be poured. The work was one of the engineer projects New York Guard troops performed to improve Camp Smith. Photo by Capt. Mark Getman, New York Guard.

New York Naval Militia

Naval Militia Stays Fit in Waterway Exercises

By *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y. — New York Naval Militia personnel showed their prowess on land and water during exercises upstate and downstate this past summer.

In addition to supporting Operation Clear Passage near the United States-Canada border on Lake Champlain (see story on page 12), Naval Militia personnel took part in Exercise Rapid Gunwale '16 in the Hudson Valley, and – for the first time – provided support for the Oswego Harbor Fest on Lake Ontario in July.

In June, 85 Naval Militia personnel took part in Exercise Rapid Gunwale, a maritime emergency response training event on the Hudson River and at Camp Smith Training Site, which is located in Cortlandt Manor, N.Y. This is the second year in a row the Naval Militia conducted the exercise.

The water portion of the exercise involved almost a dozen boats, including four Naval Militia patrol boats, as well as boats and watercraft from the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Hastings on Hudson, Irvington, Ossining, Port Chester, Rye, Putnam County, Westchester County and Yonkers law-enforcement agencies.

This part of the exercise took place on the Hudson River south of Verplanck, in the vicinity of George's Island County Park. It tested the ability of the Naval Militia and agencies to establish a cordon to form an exclusion zone around a mock oil spill on the river.

An exclusion zone prevents civilian boats from straying into the area of hazard, while allowing emergency responders to effectively deal with the hazard, according to Commander Ed Balaban, a Naval Militia public affairs officer.

Meanwhile, other Naval Militia members conducted logistics, command and control, and medical training at Camp Smith Training Site.



A New York Naval Militia boat patrols the Hudson River during Exercise Rapid Gunwale '16 in June. Photo by NY Guard.

Like its predecessor, Exercise Rapid Gunwale '16 “demonstrated that the (New York Naval Militia) can provide rapid response when called, across a broad spectrum of missions, and integrate seamlessly with other state and local forces, while providing valuable skill training that translates to our Reserve communities,” said Rear Admiral (LH) Ten Eyck B. Powell, III, the Naval Militia commander.

The Naval Militia's rapid response capabilities include its logistics arm, which delivers supplies during emergency situations. During the exercise, the Naval Militia strengthened its logistics arm by training 14 of its members to operate forklifts.

Although it was technically a training mission, four Naval Militia personnel aboard two boats supported Oswego Harbor Fest by establishing an exclusion zone around fireworks and multiple jet ski demonstration shows at the request of the United States Coast Guard Station in Oswego, according to Naval Militia Military Emergency Boat Service Commander Don McKnight.

The New York Naval Militia is the naval component of New York's Military Forces, and operates a fleet of nine patrol boats that can support federal, state, and local agencies.

Most of the 3,000 members of the Naval Militia are also members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Reserve who volunteer to perform state missions during security or weather emergencies. Five percent of the members are retired military personnel who serve in state mission status only, and members also serve in other capacities when required.

Members of the Naval Militia have been part of New York State emergency responses to Hurricanes Lee, Irene and Sandy. 



New York Naval Militia personnel conduct fork lift training at Camp Smith Training Site during Exercise Rapid Gunwale '16 in June. Photo by Spc. Zach Perkins, New York Guard.

Retirement Pay: Start Planning Now

By Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

WATERVLIET, N.Y. — So you served 20 or more years in the New York Army National Guard, turned 60 a month ago, but your long-awaited Guard retirement pay hasn't arrived. Where's that promised payday?

Soldiers — even retired ones — must take steps to collect retirement pay, according to Staff Sgt. Brooke Leavitt, the New York Army National Guard's Retirement Points Accounting Manager and Retirement Services Officer (RSO).

The Reserve Component retirement plan that affects current Army National Guard retirees and Soldiers soon to retire allows them to collect a pension after 20 years of service in the Guard, when they turn age 60. That pension — depending on a Soldier's mix of Guard and Active duty service — normally works out to about a quarter of active duty pay for the Soldier's rank, or half an Active Army pension.

Soldiers who deployed to combat zones after Jan. 29, 2008 can collect their pension sooner, based on total deployment days.

Most Army National Guard Soldiers awaiting retirement pay are in the "gray area retiree" category. They're no longer serving, hold a retired reserve ID card, but they're not collecting a pension yet.

The process of applying for pension payments begins when a retired Soldier turns 59. Soldiers need to gather the vital documents they received when they left the service, either in paper copy form or printed out from the digital Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) or Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System (iPERMS).

First, the Soldier needs his "Notification of Eligibility for Retired Pay at Age 60" — better known as the 20-Year Letter — the document that certifies that a Soldier gets retirement pay when he turns 60.

The next vital document is the NGB Form 23B, "Army National Guard Retirement Points History Statement," the form that records the Soldier's total number of service points. In order to get a "good year" — one that counts towards one of those 20 years for retirement — a Soldier must earn at least 50 points during her Annual Year Ending (AYE).

Typically, each National Guard Soldier earns

78 retirement points per year. More points are earned based on additional duty days performed.

Hopefully, before the Soldier retired, he made sure his retirement points were correct, covering all periods of service performed and not missing any time performed from perhaps another service component, Leavitt said.

More points in each good year means more money at retirement. A calculator on the Army Human Resources Command (HRC) website allows troops to use their points and years of service to ascertain their monthly retirement pay. Generally, that's about a quarter of Active Army retirement pay for the grade you retired at, or the highest grade you held in the Guard.

Finally, the Soldier needs a copy of her Separation or Discharge Order that transferred her from the New York Army National Guard to the Retired Reserve of the Army. That's the official document that indicates when you left the Guard, Leavitt said.

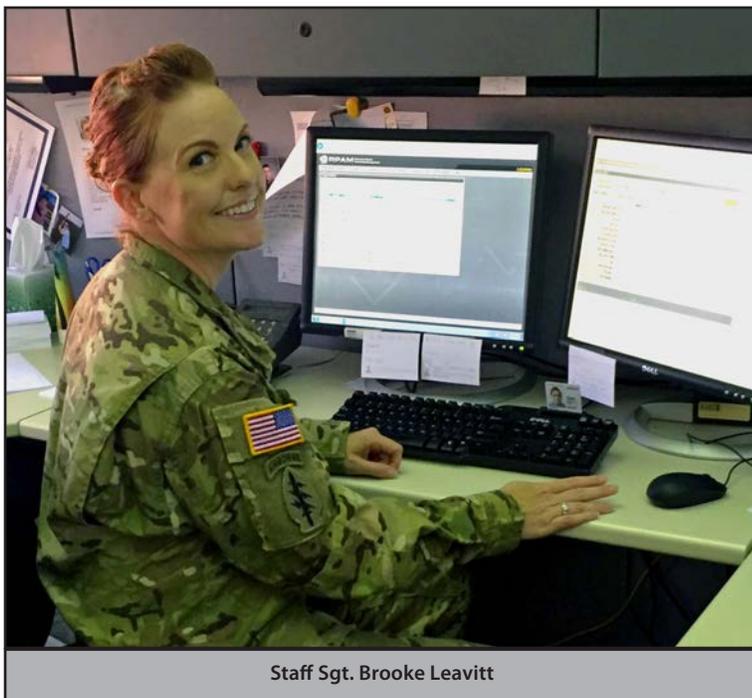
Stephen Essex, the inactive/active records officer for the New York Army National Guard personnel office, can help Soldiers locate missing records (see "Personnel Expert Tracks Records For Troops," page 31).

The next step is to complete the following forms as part of a retirement packet: DD Form 108, Application for Retired Pay Benefits; DD Form 2656, Data for Payment of Retired Personnel; SF 1199A Direct Deposit Form, which can be obtained from the bank; and perhaps DD Form 2656-6, which changes benefit payments based dependent changes, marital status

changes, or family deaths since the time the form was originally completed.

Leavitt can help Soldiers complete these forms, which are available from the Army HRC website at www.hrc.army.mil/content/Reserve%20Component%20Retirements.

The Army Human Resources Command says



Staff Sgt. Brooke Leavitt

that all documents should be submitted at least nine months ahead of a Soldier's 60th birthday, so it's important not to delay in submitting your application to HRC at Fort Knox, KY, Leavitt said. Once the packet is submitted, retired Guard Soldiers should start receiving retirement pay after that 60th birthday, she added.

In January 2018, the current 20 years-or-nothing retirement program will change to a new blended retirement system that provides payments to Soldiers who leave with fewer than 20 years service. Soldiers who are active with fewer than 12 years of service or reservists with fewer than 4,320 points as of Dec. 31 2017 can choose between the current retirement program or the new blended retirement system, Leavitt said.

Leavitt can be reached by e-mail at brooke.a.leavitt@mail.mil by phone at (518)272-3528. 

Personnel Expert Tracks Records For Troops

Story and photo by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

WATERVLIET, N.Y. — If you served in the New York Army National Guard after 1950, Stephen Essex has your number — along with lots of other information about you.

Essex, the inactive/active records officer for the New York Army National Guard personnel office since 2006, locates records for Soldiers in the Guard and those who left service years ago.

He fields 40 to 60 requests for records each week.

Some old Soldiers want proof of their service for a veterans home loan or store discount, while other troops just want to prove they served, Essex said. Still other requests come from employers, like police departments or businesses, that want to verify a job applicant's military background, or from federal agents conducting security-clearance investigations, he added.

Essex once went to Fort Eustis to testify at the court marital of a Soldier who was accused of falsifying records to show he'd earned Air Assault, Pathfinder, and Air Crewman Badges while serving in the New York Army National Guard. The Soldier's New York National Guard records included no orders awarding those badges, Essex testified.

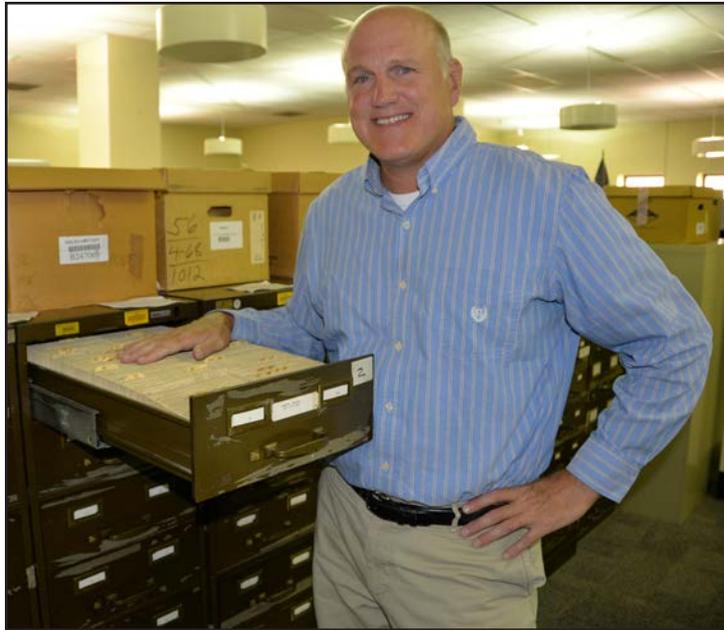
In one instance he's particularly proud of, Essex's hunt for military records enabled a 71-year old former National Guard Soldier to qualify for subsidized housing based on his military service. That, the gentleman told him in a heartfelt letter, meant \$250 more in his pocket each month to care for two disabled people he helps, and to "take my Frannie out to dinner once a month."

When he responds to a query, Essex accesses several sets of records, including paper documents, microfilm, and two different computer databases. Records for Guard Soldiers who served from 1950 to 1984 are in paper.

The New York State Archives, located at the New York State Records Center on the Harri-man State Office Campus in Albany, maintains

the actual records — 5,000 boxes of New York Army National Guard records dating back to the 1950s.

The main archives building of the New York State Cultural Education Center holds other state records on New York military personnel



Stephen Essex poses with card files that show where records are stored.

— covering about 1.8 million people, ranging from muster rolls of militias that fought in the French and Indian War to World War II records.

Essex has 3 by 5 cards, stored in file cases, that show where the records are stored at the State Records Center. When he gets a records request, Essex pulls the card with the requestor's name, submits a request to the center and makes a weekly or bi-weekly trip over to bring back records for review.

Some of the more recent paper records are complete in folders, known as 201 files, Essex said. Older records are often simply a sheet of paper. Sometimes they are stapled together and sometimes not.

These factors make tracking down paper records much more time-consuming than records created since 1984, when the Army began photographing those paper records and turning them into microfilm and microfiche records.

The microfilm and microfiche — a flat transparent plastic sheet with the miniaturized photos of paper records embedded in it — were easier to store than paper 201 files. Soldiers could also easily carry all their records on one or two microfiche cards.

Essex has a microfilm reader which allows him to access and print those New York Army National Guard personnel files. He doesn't have a microfiche reader.

Microfilm and microfiche were state of the art until 1995, when the New York Army National Guard began turning the records into computerized images and data, Essex said.

Those files, maintained in a system called Metafile, cover the records of Guardsmen and women who served from 1995 until the Army began computerizing records in 2006.

Now the digital Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System (iPERMS) allows Soldiers' records to be stored in OMPF — Official Military Personnel File — in computerized form.

The Army began providing records in those formats to Soldiers who left service in 2006, Essex said. Since then, more of the older digital records have been transferred into these systems, records dating back to 2002 are available on iPERMS, he added.

The advantages of iPERMS digital records are that Soldiers can access them over the internet, ensure they're accurate and up-to-date and make copies, he said. One thing he's learned is that all Soldiers — whether they're retiring after serving 20 years of service, or leaving after a six-year enlistment — should hold onto every military record they have, he added.

"I would save everything the military gives you," Essex said. "Make a file and drop it in there. Because unfortunately things get lost... forever." 

