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



FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Our Service too Often Comes with Sacrifice

Whether we are part-time Soldiers and Airmen, or full-time members of our force, it's easy to forget --in our day-to-day routine-- that service in the New York National Guard is often about sacrifice.

Usually we're sacrificing our time.

We give up weekends, evenings, and family events for all kinds of reasons. We end up spending a week in an armory or at the base on snow storm duty. All of us have done more 12 day weeks than we can count.

We forget that sometimes the sacrifice is even more.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, 39 members of our New York Army and Air Guard have sacrificed their lives doing their duty in combat.

Our most recent losses were March 15 when four members of the 106th Rescue Wing died in Iraq when the HH-60 they were flying crashed. They were part of our nation's effort to battle the ISIS terrorist network and they gave their lives trying to keep our citizens, as well as the citizens of Iraq, safe from this death cult.

These Airmen were highly trained. They knew their jobs. And they knew the risks as well. But their loss is still bitter to all of us who wear a uniform and to those who knew and served with them.

Lost are:

-- Capt. Christopher "Tripp" Zanetis, 37, of Long Island City, who was an HH-60G pilot. He joined the Rescue Wing in 2008 and was assigned to the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron. Zanetis was a member of the New York City Fire Department in civilian life and had recently joined the law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton in New York City as an associate.

He previously deployed to Iraq in 2011, supporting another HH-60G squadron, and

Afghanistan with the 101st.

-- Capt. Andreas O'Keeffe, 37, of Center Moriches, who was also a Pave Hawk pilot. He was a full-time federal technician with the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron. He joined the 106th in 2013, after serving as an armament systems specialist with the 113th Wing, District of Columbia Air National Guard, and RC-26 pilot with our 174th Attack Wing in Syracuse. He deployed to Iraq three times, to Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and Texas for Hurricane Harvey.

-- Master Sgt. Christopher Raguso, 39, a resident of Commack, who was an HH-60G special missions aviation flight engineer. He joined the 106th Rescue Wing in 2001 and was a member of the New York City Fire Department. He was assigned to the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron. He previously deployed to Iraq as a fire protection specialist with the 106th Civil Engineering Squadron, twice to Afghanistan with the 101st, once to the Horn of Africa, and to Texas and the Caribbean for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

-- Staff Sgt. Dashan Briggs, 30, a resident of Port Jefferson Station, who was also a Pave Hawk flight engineer. He joined the 106th Rescue Wing in 2010. He was a full time military member with the wing and assigned to the 101st Rescue Squadron. He previously deployed to Afghanistan as a munitions system specialist with the 106th Maintenance Group, and to Texas and the Caribbean for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

The 106th Rescue Wing community has risen to the challenge to ensure the passing of these four was marked with honor and respect and their families were cared for. The loss is still hard.

But loss and sacrifice also comes outside of combat. Soldiers and Airmen die in training accidents and sometimes just by surprise while they are on duty.

Most recently, we lost Army National Guard Spc. Joseph Nelk. Nelk was a cavalry scout in the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry serving in Ukraine with the 27th Brigade Combat Team element training the Ukrainian Army.

Joseph, a 21-year old from Pittsford, was visiting the town of Lviv near the training center where our Army Guard troops are stationed. He and his friends were in a store when he collapsed and died of natural causes December 10, 2017.

We had Army Guard Capt. Steve Ramlakhan, who worked at National Guard Bureau, pass away from natural causes as well.

Just turn the page here in the Guard Times and you'll read about Pfc. Emmanuel Mensah, who died December 28, 2017 while saving lives in a Bronx apartment fire.

The 106th Rescue Wing lost another member in a car accident on February 24. Tech. Sgt. Michael Austin was a maintenance technician serving full time at Gabreski.

These four deaths may not have been in combat, but they were unexpected and tragic. All were serving their country and doing their jobs.

What we do can be risky. We need to remember that as we go



**Maj. Gen.
Anthony German**

about our business.

Appreciate your fellow service members because we all share these risks together.

Our service has a purpose that can put all of us in harm's way. We must never forget that.

I would ask that you remember each of these Guardsman and their families and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. I ask you to support each other as we mourn these Soldiers and Airman. Share their stories and grieve with one another. I am thankful that I was able to serve with each of these distinguished Soldiers and Airman.



DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. -- A U.S. Air Force carry team transfers the remains of Master Sgt. Christopher J. Raguso, of Commack, N.Y., March 18, 2018, at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Raguso was assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Davis, Dover Air Force Base.

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guardtimes

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Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, COMMANDER IN CHIEF
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New York Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer 5 Michael Johnson greets his grandson Gabe at the completion of his "Final Flight" at Army Aviation Support Facility #3 in Latham, N.Y. on Jan. 25, 2018. Johnson celebrated his final flight after 35 years of service. Photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff. .



FRONT COVER: New York Army National Guard Soldiers, Spc. Joshua Gonzalez (back) and Spc. Myles Ferguson with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade compete in the brigade level Best Warrior Competition at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs in Latham, N.Y., on March 2-3, 2018. Photo by Capt. Marco Juan, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade. BACK COVER: Airmen from the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing move debris from a road in the town of Carmel, N.Y. on Monday, March 5. Twenty Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing deployed to Putnam County, New York, to help town and county workers clear debris from roadways. The county was hit hard with a winter storm knocking down trees and causing widespread power outages. Photo by Staff Sgt. Julio A. Olivencia Jr., 105th Airlift Wing.

Soldier Dies Rescuing Residents from Fire

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

NEW YORK -- Army National Guard leaders came together to honor a New York Soldier who died in a massive fire in the Bronx on Dec. 28, 2017, with the Army's highest award for bravery outside of a combat zone.

Pfc. Emmanuel Mensah, the Soldier who died in a massive apartment house fire, posthumously received two medals for valor in a ceremony for the family on Feb. 16 at Fordham University in the Bronx.

Mensah is credited with saving four lives, rescuing people three times before he returned to the building and did not come out.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Kadavy, director of the Army National Guard, presented the Army's Soldier's Medal to Kwabena Mensah, father of Emmanuel Mensah.

"Difficult though it may be," Kadavy said, "please think of this ceremony as an opportunity not to mourn, but to celebrate Private First Class Mensah, an unselfish Soldier of incredible bravery, who sacrificed his own life to save several others, and while attempting to save more."

"The Soldier's Medal is an award that no one sets out to receive," Kadavy said. "If any of us could change the circumstances that bring us together this morning, we certainly would do so."

Thirteen New York City residents died in the fire, which quickly engulfed the entire apartment building.

"After quickly escaping the fire, Private First Class Mensah could have remained safely outside," Kadavy said. "But, knowing that residents were still inside, it was not in his nature to stand by without doing whatever he could to help them escape the deadly inferno that was raging through their homes."

When firefighters were able to enter the building, they discovered Mensah's remains and believe that based on the location of the body, he was still seeking to rescue people, according to statements provided to the Guard.

"Today is about the recognition of a family's sacrifice and the military recognizing their own," said Command Sgt. Maj. Javier Lugo of the 104th Military Police Battalion, the higher headquarters of Mensah's intended unit.

The family said that Emmanuel's lifelong dream was to join the military.

"He fulfilled his dream, what he wanted to

do," Kwabena Mensah said. "He was proud of being (in) the American military. He was so proud of that."

"People will remember him for this bravery and that's what this ceremony stands for," Gloria Addo Nuamah, his sister, said.

Mensah, who enlisted in December 2016, had recently completed training to serve as a wheeled vehicle mechanic.

He was slated to begin drilling with the 107th Military Police Company at Fort Hamilton in January 2018. Mensah was still assigned to the Recruiting and Retention Battalion.

Mensah was an excellent Soldier, said Staff Sgt. Ruben Martinez-Ortiz, who recruited him.

"I knew from the moment I met him his heart was as big as our National Guard family," Martinez-Ortiz said. "He was ready to serve our nation and community. Pfc. Mensah was the embodiment of what our Army Values stand for."

Pfc. Mensah was buried with full military honors Feb. 17, 2018, at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx.

"Every Soldier has a story," Lugo said, "this just goes to show how all of our Soldiers are special." *gt*



Pfc. Emmanuel Mensah, who died during a apartment building fire in the Bronx on Dec. 28, 2017. Mensah died seeking to save other residents. Courtesy photo.



At top, Pfc. Emmanuel Mensah, courtesy photo. At center, the casket of Mensah rests in front of the altar during his funeral mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Bronx, N.Y. Above, Honor Guard Soldiers carry his casket during funeral honors at Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, N.Y., Feb. 17, 2018. New York City fire officials credit Mensah with saving four lives during an apartment building fire Dec. 28, 2017. Photos by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

Brothers Retire with more than 60 Years of Service

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

LATHAM, N.Y. – Two brothers who deployed to Iraq together in 2005 marked the end of their service in the New York Army National Guard during a joint retirement ceremony Dec. 2, 2017 at the Joint Force Headquarters.

Lt. Col. Joseph Claus, 47, a Cropseyville, New York resident, ended his military service after 30 years Dec. 15, 2017.

His brother, Master Sgt. Leonard Claus, age 50, from Grafton, New York, ended his military service on Nov. 15, 2017 after 33 years.

The two brothers were both awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by Col. David Martinez, the director of intelligence for the New York National Guard.

Both brothers started their careers in the active Army and worked in Military Intelligence units during the Cold War before they joined the Army National Guard. Both men worked in the intelligence operation of the 42nd Division in Tikrit Iraq; Len Claus as intelligence fusion cell non-commissioned officer in charge and Joe Claus as the intelligence collection management officer.

“We’ve been through a lot in thirty years,” Joe Claus said.

“And it’s good to know that no matter what, you always have somebody who has got your back,” Len Claus added.

The fact that they deployed together to Iraq caused some worry for their families but “being there together we were able to lean on each other a little bit and use that to calm not just ourselves but our families as well,” Len Claus added.

“This is pretty amazing that between the two of them they have 63 years of service,” Martinez said.

Both brothers have had “magnificent careers,” he added.

It’s not that unusual to have family members serving together in the National Guard, Joe Claus said.

“I think the New York Army National Guard is a family business. There are been a lot of families that have worked with us, so it is not that we are that unusual,” he said.

The National Guard itself often feels like one big extended family, Joe Claus added. Soldiers get to know each other well through exercises, deployments, and state emergency call ups, he explained.

Len Claus enlisted in the Army as a signals intelligence specialist in 1984 and attended the Defense Language Institute where he learned German. After completing his military education he served in Wildflecken, Germany, where he monitored East German communications.

“Here I was straight off the farm in Grafton, 17 years old, and 12 weeks later I’m doing PT under the Golden Gate Bridge (at the Presidio of San Francisco), Len Claus said. “You couldn’t get any better than that. I may have peaked early.”

Len joined the National Guard in 1991, assigned to the intelligence section of the 42nd Infantry Division in Troy. In 2001, after another break in service due to his civilian job, he joined the 642nd Military Intelligence Battalion.

He deployed with the 642nd to Iraq where he worked as an intelligence analyst in the division’s intelligence collection center.

Len Claus was assigned to the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion in 2011 and served as the signals intelligence platoon sergeant.

In 2012 he deployed to Afghanistan a Security Force Assistance Team, a special unit to train



Lt. Col. Joseph Claus and Master Sgt. Leonard Claus, stand together after their joint retirement ceremony in Latham, N.Y., Dec. 2, 2017. The brothers had served for a combined 63 years in the New York Army National Guard, and Active Duty Army, enlisting in the late 80’s.

Afghan security forces.

After returning from Afghanistan he was assigned to the intelligence directorate where he served as senior intelligence and security non-commissioned officer.

Len Claus currently works as the Rensselaer County Department of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

Lt. Col. Joe Claus joined the Army in 1987 and served in military intelligence like his brother. He left active duty in 1991 and joined the 42nd Infantry Division intelligence section.

In 1995 Joe decided to go back on active duty. He served another three years, including a deployment to Saudi Arabia in 1997-98 as a military intelligence instructor for the Royal Saudi Land Forces.

After leaving active duty he rejoined the Army National Guard and received a direct commission as a second lieutenant.

One of his first missions was the response to the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks which destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City.

Joe Claus and the division assisted in the recovery operation in lower Manhattan.

In 2005, Joe served as the 42nd Infantry Division intelligence collection cell manager in Iraq.

He did great work, according to Lt. Col. Christopher Ciccone, deputy director of intelligence.

“I can tell you story after story of Joe Claus interdicting bad guys on the battlefield, and collecting information that had operators maneuver on them to take them off the battlefield,” Ciccone said.

From 2010 to 2013, Claus commanded the headquarters detachment of the Joint Force Headquarters. He’s also served as a logistics planner and mobilization officer.

In civilian life Joe Claus serves as Emergency Services Chief at the Watervliet Arsenal.

“The Army has been great to me. It is pretty much everything I wanted,” Joe Claus said. “I walked straight out of high school into the military. It has given me opportunities you can’t find anywhere else.” **gt**

New Top Enlisted Leader for NY Air National Guard

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

"Taking care of our Airmen is priority one to me by guiding and mentoring them through successful careers, and eliminating barriers to their progression,"

-- *Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, NY Air National Guard Senior Enlisted Advisor*

LATHAM, N.Y. --New York Air National Guard Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, a Rome resident, is now the top enlisted Airman for the 5,600-member New York Air National Guard.

Dooley previously served as the Senior Enlisted Leader and Group Superintendent for the 224th Air Defense Group in Rome. Dooley served in the active Air Force from 1979 to 1987 and has served in the Air National Guard since 1995.

As Command Chief Master Sergeant for the New York Air National Guard, Dooley will serve as the advisor to Major General Anthony German, commander of the New York Air National Guard, on issues affecting enlisted Airmen.

"I'm excited to have been selected as the next Command Chief Master Sergeant for the New York Air National Guard," Dooley said. "Taking care of our Airmen is priority one to me by guiding and mentoring them through successful careers, and eliminating barriers to their progression."

Dooley replaces Chief Master Sergeant Amy Giaquinto, a Ballston Spa resident, who now serves at the top enlisted leader for both the New York Army and Air National Guard.

The New York Air National Guard is located at five bases across New York and operates the MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft, the C-17 Globemaster III strategic transport, the LC-130 ski-equipped Hercules transport, and the HH-60 search and rescue helicopter and the HC-130 search and rescue aircraft.

Most of the force consists of traditional Air Guardsmen who serve on a part-time basis, but others serve full-time to ensure readiness.

The New York Air National Guard also includes the Eastern Air Defense Sector, where Dooley served, responsible for the air defense of the United States east of the Mississippi.

Dooley is a native of Danielson, Connecticut. After joining the Air Force in 1979 she served as an aircraft maintenance specialists on the

F-4E and then the F-15 fighter and the T-33 training aircraft before leaving the Air Force.

In December 1995, Dooley enlisted in the New York Air National Guard and joined what was then the Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS), part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, and is responsible for identifying and tracking aircraft flying over the United States and Canada. The unit directs fighters to defend North American airspace.

Dooley worked in tracking and identification positions and also served in weapons director, air surveillance, mission crew controller and non-commissioned officer positions at NEADS and now EADs.

She served as Flight Superintendent and Operations Superintendent before becoming the Chief Enlisted Manager of the 224th Support Squadron in 2014. She served as the senior enlisted leader at the 224th Air Defense Group from 2016 until January 2018.

Dooley is a Distinguished Graduate of the Air Force Senior NCO Academy and holds a degree in Space Technology from the Commu-



Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, senior enlisted leader for the New York Air National Guard. Courtesy Photo.

nity College of Air Force.

A formal ceremony was held at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters on Feb. 26 to mark the transition from Command Chief Master Sergeant Amy Giaquinto to Dooley.📧

Soldiers, Airmen and Sailors attend NY State of the State



ALBANY, N.Y. -- National Guard troops attend Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's annual State-of-the-State Address in the Empire State Convention Center here on January 3rd, 2018. The governor traditionally lays out his agenda in the speech before state legislators and other officials which is televised across the state. 50 members of the New York National Guard were in the audience and recognized for their service. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, *Guard Times Staff*.



Sgt. Joseph Selchick, left, with the 727th Law and Order Detachment, and Maj. Steven Perry, a team chief with the 173 Cyber Security Team, receive military service awards from the Rockland County Policemen's Benevolent Association at the Pearl River Hilton, in Pearl River, N.Y., Dec. 7, 2017. The annual award is presented by the RCPBA to civilian police officers who also have military service.. Courtesy photo.

MPs Receive Award

By Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. - New York Army National Guard Sgt. Joseph Selchick and Maj. Steven Perry received military service awards from the Rockland County Patrolmen's Benevolent Association in recognition of their dual employment with both the Rockland County Sheriffs and National Guard during a December 7, 2017 dinner.

The award is presented annually to members of the association with military service.

"This is something that distinguishes you," said Selchick, an assistant squad leader with the 727 Law and Order Detachment.

The award is both a certificate presented during the award ceremony and a ribbon that is worn above the sheriff's shield on their duty uniform.

"I'm honored to receive this award because it's a way to carry your military service with you," Selchick said.

The benefits of receiving this award are two-fold: recognition from your peers and a show of support from your employer, mentioned Perry, a fifteen-year veteran and team chief with the

newly formed 173 Cyber Security Team.

"Knowing that our department, our employer, supports our military service is invaluable," Perry said.

It's precisely that two-way support and recognition between a civilian employer and the National Guard that makes the relationship so beneficial and unique.

When Selchick is not wearing his civilian uniform he's training Soldiers in his Guard unit by sharing real-world experiences.

"From the streets of Rockland County to the grounds of West Point; patrols are patrols," Selchick said. "While the training is similar across the board, the day-to-day experience I gain in the civilian world I can share with my Guard peers; it definitely makes a difference."

While the awards, experience and training between the Guard and the sheriffs share several similarities and only subtle differences, it's how they work well together and complement each other that stands out. **gt**

NY Soldiers Receive Awards for Aiding Ukrainian Civilian

Story and photo by Sgt. Alexander Rector, 27th Infantry Brigade

YAVORIV, UKRAINE - Three 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers assigned to the Joint Multinational Training Group - Ukraine (JMTG-U) received Army Commendation Medals here December 16, 2017.

The three awardees are:

1st Lt. Brandon Hall, Delta Company executive officer, from Lewiston, New York;

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Harper, Delta Company first sergeant, from Appleton, New York; and

Sgt. James Rude, Golf Company combat medic, from Parish, New York.

Col. Dennis Deeley, the JMTG-U commander, presented the awards at the Yavoriv Combat Training Center.

The three Soldiers were awarded the medals for their actions during a trip to the city of Lviv earlier in the month.

During a scheduled trip to Lviv, the Soldiers came across a man unconscious. The three Soldiers quickly assessed the situation and took action. While Hall and Rude administered CPR to the incapacitated man, Harper managed the scene and kept back the gathering crowd of onlookers.

The three Soldiers continued to render aid until an ambulance crew arrived and took over the patient's care. **gt**



Lt. Brandon Hall, the Delta Company executive officer, Sgt. 1st Class Peter Harper, Delta Company first sergeant and Sgt. James Rude, a combat medic assigned to Golf Company, received Army Commendation Medals on December 16, 2017.

Editor's Note: The story "Passing the Torch of Service in Niagara Falls" in our Fall 2017 issue contained several errors of fact.

Daniel Hertel was mistakenly identified as an Airman and not an Airman Basic; the 2nd Air Commando Group, in which Col. Laverne Donner served during World War II, operated over Thailand, not Burma. The ancestor unit of the 107th was not organized at Niagara Falls in 1948. The unit was assigned to the National Guard in 1946 and then recognized and activated in 1948. Niagara Falls Air Base did not exist until the 1950s and the 136th Squadron moved between the Niagara Falls Municipal International Airport, a Naval Air Station and other locations. Also, when the unit deployed to Vietnam it was the 136th Tactical Fighter Squadron, not the 136th Fighter Group. These errors were the fault of the editors, not the writer.

AROUND THE STATE

Army Guard has New Command Chief Warrant

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y.- Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jacqueline "Jackie" O'Keefe became the Command Chief Warrant Officer for the New York Army National Guard during a ceremony at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs here on Wednesday, Feb. 28.

As Command Chief Warrant Officer, O'Keefe is responsible for implementing the New York Army National Guard's Warrant Officer Program. Warrant Officers are technical experts who fall between sergeants and commissioned officers in the Army's command structure.

She will report to Major General Anthony German, the Adjutant General of New York.

O'Keefe replaces Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeffrey Schirmer, a Rochester resident, who retires after 36 years in the Army.

In his remarks German thanked Schirmer for his service and said he was looking forward to working with O'Keefe.

"I am proud, grateful and honored beyond words to be here today," O'Keefe said. "I'm looking forward to what the future will bring."

Warrant officers, O'Keefe told her listeners, are charged by the Army with fixing problems, not making problems. She looks forward to keeping that tradition going, she said.

During the short ceremony a sword was transferred from Schirmer, the warrant officer leaving the position, to German. He then handed the sword to O'Keefe, symbolizing her assumption of the duties.

The officer's sword has traditionally been the mark of a leader.

The sword used in the Feb. 28 ceremony was the one issued to O'Keefe's son,

Army 1st Lt. Bradley O'Keefe, when he was a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

O'Keefe has served in the Army National Guard since 1983 when she enlisted as a personnel specialist. She advanced to the rank of Sgt. 1st Class and entered the Warrant Officer Corps in 1995.

She's served in a number of New York Army National Guard units to include the 27th Rear Area Operations Center, the 53rd Troop Command, the 42nd Infantry Division, and Joint Force Headquarters. She has served as Officer Personnel Management Branch Chief, Active Guard and Reserve Branch Chief, and Warrant Officer Strength Manager.

O'Keefe is a graduate of the Warrant Officer Senior Service Education Course, the Warrant Officer Intermediate Level Education Course, and the Adjutant General Warrant Officer Basic and Advanced Courses.

O'Keefe resides in Berne, N.Y. with her husband Brian, a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army Reserve.

She has three sons: Master Sgt. Brian O'Keefe Jr., who serves in the Army's Special Operations Command; 1st Lt. Bradley O'Keefe, who serves in the 101st Air Assault Division; and Cpl. Brenden O'Keefe, who is assigned to the New York National Guard's 173rd Cyber Protection Team.

Her daughter Brooke attends Greenville Central High School. **gt**



Air Force Major General Anthony German (left) the Adjutant General of New York, congratulates Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jacquelin "Jackie" O'Keefe on becoming the Command Chief Warrant Officer for the New York Army National Guard during a ceremony at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters in Latham, N. Y. on Wednesday, Feb. 28. Photo by William Albrecht, *Guard Times Staff*.



New York Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeffrey Schirmer (left) and Air Force Major General Anthony German (right) the Adjutant General of New York, display the Meritorious Service Medal Schirmer was awarded to mark his retirement after 36 years in the Army and Army National Guard during a ceremony on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters in Latham, N.Y. Photo by William Albrecht, *Guard Times Staff*.

"I'm looking forward to what the future will bring." \

-- Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jackie O'Keefe, State Command Chief Warrant Officer



1st Lt. Sean Tong presents the ESGR Patriot Award to his supervisor February 16 at NYU Langone Health. From left, Dr. Bar-Sagi, Senior Vice President at Langone Health, Dr. Keith Micoli, Assistant Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs, 1st Lt. Sean Tong, Tong's parents and Gene Westmoreland from the Department of Defense ESGR. Courtesy photo.

NYC Soldier Recognizes NYU Employer

Story courtesy NYU Office of Communications

NEW YORK – New York Army National Guard 1st Lt. Sean Tong of the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion took time February 21 to present his employer, Dr. Keith Micoli with the Department of Defense with the 'Patriotic Employer Award.'

Tong, a staff member in the NYU Langone Health School of Medicine postdoctoral training program for the past four years, thanked Micoli for his continued support and for recognizing the unique skill set that comes with a military background.

Micoli is assistant dean for Postdoctoral Affairs at NYU.

The Patriot Award reflects efforts made by supervisors to support Citizen Soldiers through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment and caring for families.

Gene Westmoreland, local representative for the Employer

Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) in New York, joined Tong for the award presentation.

Tong presented Dr. Micoli with an ESGR lapel pin, signifying his welcoming into the military family.

"I'm deeply honored by this recognition," Micoli said. "It never occurred to me that there would be an award for supporting active military members in the workplace, but nonetheless, I am very excited to receive it."

"This honor could not have been given to a more caring member of our community," said Dafna Bar-Sagi, PhD, senior vice president and vice dean for science. "Keith has a true passion for supporting and promoting others, whether they are postdoctoral fellows, students, or members of his own team."

Military members may nominate their employers for the Patriot Award at www.esgr.mil. 



174th Recognizes Civilian Employees

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- Col. Michael Smith, commander of the 174th Attack Wing, recognizes state employees at Hancock Field Jan. 31, 2018. They are (from left) Tom Masterson, Jason Jansen, and Tony Napolitano. The three designed and installed five boilers, saving over seventy thousand dollars in labor and expenses. Courtesy photo.



Women's History Month in Syracuse

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- Women of the 174th Attack Wing pose for a photo during Women's History Month. During Women's History Month, women and their contributions to national defense are celebrated, regardless of different backgrounds, nations or creeds. Photo by Staff Sgt. Duane Morgan, 174th Attack Wing.



501st Soldiers Deploy to Afghanistan

GLENVILLE, N.Y. -- Command Sgt. Major Kevin Conklin (left) and Maj. Robert Crudden case the colors of the 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD) during a mobilization ceremony held Feb. 25, in Glenville, N.Y. The battalion is sending 19 Soldiers to Afghanistan. Photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff.

THE JOINT FORCE

Guard Soldiers Offer Aid for Mid-Winter Flooding

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

MALONE, N.Y.-One hundred and thirty New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen were called to state active duty in case rains and warmer weather caused ice jams and flooding on rivers in upstate and northern New York from Sunday, Jan 21 to Saturday, Jan. 28.

Extremely low temperatures had resulted in ice building up on the rivers that flow into Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River in northern New York, as well as the Mohawk River, which runs from Utica, N.Y. to the Hudson River just north of Albany.

Higher temperatures were expected to increase river water levels due to melting snow and precipitation. The ice left on the rivers can cause natural dams leading to flood, according to Chief Master Sgt. Shawn Peno, an Air Force meteorologist and the chief enlisted advisor to the New York National Guard's Joint Operations Section.

New York State emergency officials asked that the National Guard put Soldiers and Airmen on duty with high-axle trucks and Humvees who were prepared to aid local governments if required. Soldiers and Airmen were also directed to be prepared to act as observers to report on river conditions.

On Sunday, Jan. 21, small teams were assigned to Malone, N.Y. in Franklin County; Plattsburgh, N.Y. in Clinton County, and emergency response forces were stationed at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse, N.Y.; and the Glenville Armed Forces Reserve Center near Schenectady, N.Y. and at the Binghamton, N.Y. Armory.

There were 12 Soldiers and four vehicles in Malone, 13 Soldiers and four vehicles in Plattsburgh, 25 Airmen and five vehicles at Hancock Field, 25 Soldiers and five vehicles at the Thompson Road Armory which is also on Hancock Field Air National Guard Base, and 25 Soldiers and five vehicles at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Scotia. A small maintenance team was on call at the Utica Armory.

The Soldiers and Airmen remained on duty all week, but did not deploy. 



The threat of ice jams on the Mohawk River near Schenectady, N.Y. on Jan. 21, 2018, prompted the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services to ask the NY National Guard to put Soldiers and Airmen on state active duty, courtesy photo. At top, Master Sgt. David Taylor inspects a humvee as Airmen from the 174th Attack Wing prepare for domestic operations missions at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse, N.Y. on Jan. 22, 2018. Photo by Master Sgt. Lillique Ford, 174th Attack Wing. Above, Master Sgt. David Taylor, discusses humvee maintenance with members of the 174th Attack Wing as they prepare to execute domestic operations missions at Hancock Field on Jan. 22, 2018. Photo by Master Sgt. Lillique Ford, 174th Attack Wing. At left, ice jams along the Mohawk River create local flooding January 21. Courtesy photo.



Twenty Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing deployed to Putnam County, New York, in early March to help town and county workers clear debris from roadways. The county was hit hard with a winter storm knocking down trees and causing widespread power outages. Photos by Staff Sgt. Julio A. Olivencia Jr., 105th Airlift Wing.

400 Troops on Duty Following Nor'easter Snow

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

CAMP SMITH, N.Y. Four hundred members of the New York National Guard were called to state active duty March 8 after two nor'easter snowstorms that left as many as 323,000 homes and businesses without power at one point.

The members deployed in Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Sullivan counties for debris clearance missions, health and wellness checks, and assisted power crews in restoring lines by conducting “wire guard” missions.

“This is an all-hands-on-deck situation and the people of the Hudson Valley should know that New York State is doing everything we can to restore power and help them recover as quickly as possible,” said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo about response efforts on March 4 following the first storm.

The first storm hit New York on March 2, dumping as much as two feet of snow in places.

The governor initially called for 100 Guard troops March 3 to assist local governments but then increased that number to 200 on March 4.

60 Soldiers from the 53rd Troop Command moved to Sullivan County to assist in clearing roads there, while 20 Airmen from the 105th Airlift Wing deployed to Putnam County to help clear roads. Other Army Guard troops and New York Guard members moved to Camp Smith as a reserve and logistical support.

On March 7-8 a second nor'easter storm hit, dumping another foot of snow on the Hudson

Valley where power crews were still working to bring power back on line for almost 100,000 customers.

The governor then increased the number of Guard troops to 400. More Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division came on duty, with additional members of the New York Naval Militia volunteers. Twenty Airmen from the 174th Attack Wing and 20 Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing moved to the New Windsor Armed Forces Reserve Center for missions.

More than 100 members of Joint Task Force Empire Shield also moved north to assist in the Hudson Valley.

Guard troops moved into Rockland County to provide assistance and more elements deployed in Westchester County. In Westchester Guard Soldiers teamed up with the Red Cross to provide blankets and a presence at senior center when the staff was unable to get to work because of heavy snowfall.

New York Naval Militia members conducted debris clearance and wire guard missions while also running the dining facility at Camp Smith. This was especially challenging because power was out at Camp Smith for a time.

New York Guard members conducted chainsaw training classes for troops heading out on debris clearance missions and provided logistical and mission command support at Camp Smith.

“The more the merrier—blue, green—working together to accomplish the same mission for the community,” said Major David Myones, the executive officer of the 369th Special Troops Battalion, in describing the mission.

By March 12 the bulk of the troops had been sent back to home station but a handful of Naval Militia members remained on duty as a third storm, and less snow intensive, storm hit March 13. They were released by March 14.

Overall, said Tech. Sgt. Bryan Wolf, a heavy equipment operator from the 105th Airlift Wing, the exercise was typical of what the National Guard does.

“It’s part of being in the Guard, it’s our duty,” Wolf said. “It’s nice to help out.”



42nd Infantry Division Spcs. Xavier Dixon (left) and Cody Patenaude conduct chainsaw maintenance in Rockland County, N.Y. on March 9. Photo by Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowarski, Joint Force Headquarters.

Honors for WWII Veteran Knighted by Dutch Queen

Story and photo by Master Sgt Lillique Ford, 17th Attack Wing

SYRACUSE, N.Y. - A New York Army National Guard Honor Guard joined Dutch officials and the Dutch Air Force in providing funeral honors for a 98-year old Syracuse man who was a knight of the Netherlands--one of the last four living holders of the Netherlands' highest military honor.

Former U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Edward Fulmer was recognized by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands in 1946 as a tribute to his heroism during Operation Market-Garden in Holland in September 1944.

Sir Edward Fulmer – he gets the honorific because of his membership in the Military Order of William,--died Dec. 31 at the Veteran Administration Hospital in Syracuse. Three New York National Guard Soldiers provided military honors for the family during a ceremony held at the Butler-Badman Funeral Home.

"I feel much honored to be part of it," said Spec. Joseph Bianchi. "It's a once in a lifetime experience and a great way to honor a hero from World War II."

Dutch Ambassador Henne Schuwer praised Fulmer as one of the "bravest people."

"The Americans and the Canadians were the ones to liberate the Netherlands," Schuwer said. "It was exceptional what he did and what he suffered afterwards."

Ambassador Schuwer and 19 other Dutch dignitaries and military representatives attended Fulmer's military funeral.

The New York Army National Guard Honor Guard members folded the American flag which covered Fulmer's coffin and presented the flag to son, Randy Fulmer.

Members of the Royal Netherlands Air Force provided an honor guard for the casket during the ceremony and Ambassador Schuwer presented a message from the king of the Netherlands to the family.

The Order of William is a brotherhood, the ambassador explained, and "if you are a member of the list of brothers the people of the Netherlands have a duty towards you and this is one of our final duties. We have to help him on his last way home."

Fulmer was the co-pilot of a C-47 transport plane towing a glider filled with troops and cargo destined to reinforce the 82nd Airborne



Dutch Air Force Honor Guard members provide honors for U.S. Army Air Forces Lt. Edward Fulmer during memorial services on January 5, 2018 in Syracuse, N.Y. Fulmer was one of the last four living members of the Military Order of William, the Netherlands highest military award. He was honored by the Dutch for his heroism during the WWII Operation Market-Garden airborne invasion of Holland in September, 1944.

Division on the second day of the battle on Sept. 18, 1944.

His plane was hit by German anti-aircraft fire, the pilot was knocked out, and the plane was set afire. Fulmer took over, keeping the plane level so that the glider crew could drop the tow cable and land and other crew members could parachute out. He then crash landed the plane so the pilot had a chance to survive.

Fulmer suffered burns over two-thirds of his body. And broke a vertebrae in his back.

He lived with pain for the rest of this life, Schuwer said.

Fulmer was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal by the Army.

In 1946 Fulmer and 18 other American veterans of the Market-Garden attack were honored by being knighted by the queen and made members of the Military Order of William.

The order is the Netherlands highest military award and is presented for feats of bravery on the battlefield and to leaders to mark meritorious service. The order, created in 1815, is named for King William of the Netherlands.

Since 1947 two Dutch military officers have been knighted, both for actions in Afghanistan. Currently there are three living holders of the Military Order of William.

Major Gijs Tuinman, the most recent recipient of the order visited with Fulmer six weeks ago, the ambassador said. A military liaison officer from the Dutch embassy visited him regularly, he added.

The Chancellery of the Orders of the Netherlands, Major-General Retired Henk Morsink, also praised Fulmer.

"I had the honor to meet him three times in recent years, and I would like to repeat the words of General Patton: We should not cry for the loss of this man, but we may thank God for the honor and privilege of this great man, Edward Simons Fulmer. We will never forget Ed, Morsink said.

Having the Dutch Airmen present made the experience memorable, Bianchi said.

"It is a great honor and experience to meet service members from the Netherlands that are here to pay their last respects to someone that was recognized by their country," he added. 🇳🇱

New Family Leave Policy

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y.- National Guard families in New York whose Soldier or Airman is deployed outside the United States can take advantage of a new Paid Family Leave benefit that took effect on January 1.

Family members can use this paid leave to attend military events and activities related to the deployment. The leave can be used by a Soldier or Airman's spouse, domestic partner, child or parent.

For example, time can be used to attend an official farewell or welcome home ceremony or family readiness group functions.

Paid Family Leave can be used for 90 days after the end of deployment in order to allow a family member to attend official post deployment family readiness group events. Leave time can also be used to arrange childcare, attend school events, provide urgent or temporary childcare, or attend meetings with childcare providers.

Eligible employees can also take Paid Family Leave to attend counseling if necessary, or to reconnect when a spouse or family member is home on rest & recuperation leave.

Most employees of private employers in New York State are eligible. Employees who work 20 or more hours a week can take Paid Family Leave after 26 consecutive weeks of employment. Part-time employees who work less than 20 hours per week are eligible for the benefit after they have worked 175 days, which do not need to be consecutive.

For 2018, eligible employees can take up to eight weeks of Paid Family Leave and the weekly benefit is 50 percent of the employee's average weekly wage, capped at \$652.96 per week.

For complete details, visit ny.gov/PaidFamilyLeave. You can also call the Paid Family Leave Helpline for information and assistance at 844-337-6303. 



Above left, Maj. Keith Casserly gets pinned by his daughter Emma during his promotion ceremony at the Joint Force Headquarters in Latham, N.Y., February 2, 2018. Casserly is an Afghanistan veteran and a full time employee of the New York Army National Guard. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff. Above, a Soldier attached to Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment greets his son at a unit ceremony in Rochester, N.Y., Feb. 10, 2018. The unit returned home in November of 2017 from a nine month deployment to Afghanistan. This was the first time the entire crew was back together since then. Photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters.



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Troops in Ukraine Conduct MASCAL Exercise

Story and photo by Sgt. Alexander Rector, 27th Infantry Brigade

YAVORIV, UKRAINE - Medics assigned to the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine (JMTG-U) honed their life-saving skills while participating a massive casualty, or MASCAL, exercise on January 12.

The exercise was implemented and organized by the training group Medical Section as a way to test Soldiers' capabilities and identify any weaknesses or deficiencies.

"We conduct MASCAL exercises to test our abilities while being medically overwhelmed," said Staff Sgt. Dennis Sincebaugh, the Medical Section platoon sergeant. "We also use them to test how non-medical Soldiers react in emergency situations."

The MASCAL exercise, which is planned months in advance, was designed to simulate an actual scenario that the medics assigned to the JMTG-U might encounter.

"For this exercise, we simulated a car accident," Sincebaugh said. "We loaded two vans with Soldiers and they were then staged to simulate a rollover accident, which resulted in multiple injuries."

Though the bulk of the planning was done by the Medical Section, Soldiers from all across training group participated.

"We reached out to each of the companies for non-medical Soldiers to act as role-players," Sincebaugh said. "We then did research online regarding different types of injuries you would sustain in a vehicle rollover and we tried to replicate that."

Each of the role-players was issued a casualty card. These cards described the injury that the role-player sustained.

"We also instruct the role players how to act with whatever injury they are assigned," Sincebaugh said.

"We were on our way to the range when we encountered a simulated car wreck involving two vehicles and approximately 10 people," said Spc. Caleb Bailey, a combat medic assigned to JMTG-U. "Myself and Spc. Robert Graber responded to the scene, and I took over as lead medic as Graber began triaging the patients in the vehicles."

"We had two patients that we had to notionally evacuate to higher care in Lviv," said Bailey. "We loaded the rest in the ambulance and came back to the medical clinic."

The MASCAL not only provided the medics with a scenario to test their medical skills, but it also allowed them to test their leadership skills.

"As a medic, when you show up at a scene there is usually a sergeant or officer there who takes charge," Bailey said. "As a specialist, I was the highest ranking one there and had to take charge."

Every time a MASCAL is conducted, the Soldiers assigned to the joint training group work alongside our allied and partner nations. "The Canadian armed forces are in charge of the unit medical clinic here, and we are guests in their facility," Sincebaugh said. "It's not just us and the Canadians though, the Ukrainians assist with some treatment and transportation, and provide linguist support."

"MASCAL exercises are meant to stress your abilities and show where your weaknesses (are). We identified that we are medically sound, but we do have some weak areas we are going to work on," Sincebaugh said. "Our senior leadership is on board with giving us the tools to fill in those gaps and strengthen those weaknesses." 



Top and Bottom: Spc. Caleb Bailey and Spc. Robert Graber, two combat medic assigned to the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine (JMTG-U) participates in a MASCAL exercise on January 12. The exercise, which was designed to resemble a vehicle collision, was used to test the JMTG-U Medical Section's readiness and capabilities. During the exercise the medics that responded had to triage and treat simulated casualties before transporting them to the Troop Medical Clinic for further care.

Honor Guard Members Learn Ceremonial Skills

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

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. - Soldiers always want to train on the newest weapon systems, ride in the most modern vehicles, and learn the latest tactics.

But 16 New York Army National Guard Soldiers volunteered to spend a week firing wooden-stocked rifles developed sixty years ago, and practicing a ceremony composed of drill movements dating back over two-hundred years.

The Soldiers, who came from units across the state, were learning the basics of conducting military funerals.

They successfully completed the 40-hour Level One Military Funeral Honors (MFH) Course at Camp Smith Training Site, Cortlandt Manor, N.Y., from Feb. 26 through Mar. 1, 2018, taught by members of the New York Army National Guard Honor Guard.

This physically demanding course is designed to train and test Soldiers' abilities at the nine unique positions of the modified funeral honors.

The Soldiers learn to execute the manual of arms with M-14 rifles which equipped the Army in the 1960s and also learn the proper way to fire a funeral salute.

The 18-hour training days start with early morning physical training and lead into weight-

ed casket carries, drill and ceremony, uniform inspections and non-stop rehearsals for all of the funeral detail positions.

"The units only recommend Soldiers to participate in the program who stand out from their peers," said Staff Sgt. Tomas Couvertier.

Couvertier, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Honor Guard program that spans the entire state, has been in the program for over eight years and is a graduate of this course as well.

"It's challenging because we expect perfection in a wide range of positions within a short amount of time," Couvertier said.

Soldiers who are able to show proficiency at these positions will graduate from the course and are able to perform all military funeral honors details except for the full military honors detail, which is reserved for level two graduates and above.

The New York Honor Guard has been performing over 700 military funerals a month and expects to surpass 9,000 by the year's end.

Any former service member who was not dishonorably discharged is entitled to funeral honors consisting of at least two honor guard members, the playing of Taps, and the presentation of a flag during services. New York Army National Guard Soldiers perform these duties across the state.

Pfc. Luis Rodriguez, an infantry Soldier with C. Co., 69th Infantry Regiment, has only been in the military for a little over two years and has served almost half of that time in the Honor Guard.

"This is our family," Rodriguez said when talking about the Soldiers whose funerals he's worked as part of the Honor Guard. "It gives me a sense of pride to put in the long training hours and be able to give something back."

The course is especially demanding because of the long training day, said Sgt. Josh Sanzo, a military police officer with the 206th Military Police Co.

"It teaches you time management," Sanzo explained. "You're aware that you're always graded and evaluated; you are putting in 100% effort the entire time."

The rigorous standards of the course not only instill the precise movements required of the ceremony, but reinforce fundamental military lessons as well.

"Honor Guard training teaches Soldiers valuable military knowledge that they can take back to their units," Couvertier said. "We're helping to develop future leaders, not just for the Honor Guard but for the National Guard as well." **gt**



New York Army National Guard Soldiers practice carrying drills during in the 40-hour Level One Honor Guard Training Course at Camp Smith Training Site, Cortlandt Manor, N.Y., Mar. 1, 2018. This physically demanding course is designed to train and test Soldiers' abilities at the nine unique positions of the modified military funeral honors detail.

Aviation Team Gives Lift to Reserves for Training

Story and photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters



Two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation prepare to depart a landing zone after delivering Soldiers of the U.S. Army Reserve's 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion during training in Cooperstown, N.Y. March 3rd, 2018.

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. - Aircrews of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation teamed up with U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers for air assault training on a snowy morning here March 3.

The mission let both units practice their military skills, while also letting local community members know more about their missions.

Aircrews from the Guard's Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation based in Latham, N.Y. conducted the air assault training with Reserve Soldiers from Charlie Company, 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion, based in Utica. The Reservists are part of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command.

The training allowed the Guard aviation crews to support the tactical training of the civil affairs troops, while accomplishing unit training for multi-ship and air assault operations.

New York Army National Guard Sgt. Ryan Couture, an aircraft mechanic and crew chief during the mission, said the training with other components adds both realism and complexity for their unit training.

The training scenario for the Army Reservists called for the civil affairs Soldiers to be airlifted to a museum in a war zone so they could secure a collection, explained Major Robert Crawford, the commander of Charlie Company.

The exercise replicated transporting key civilian experts and civil affairs Soldiers into a hot spot, Crawford explained.

"It was awesome to work with another unit," Couture said. "The guys were great, they all worked hard, and they made our jobs easier."

The four helicopters arrived at the intended pickup zone near Cooperstown Elementary School to pick up the Reserve Soldiers and conduct training on safety and boarding procedures. With local residents there to watch, the Guard Soldiers created a community outreach event on the spot to explain their mission.

Three of the aircrews conducted cold load training with the reserve unit, while the fourth talked with the assembled families and community members about their work in the National Guard. They let the children, ranging in age from four to ten, get up close to the aircraft.

Two brothers, Sean and Ben Braswell, were able to get inside the Black Hawk. Their grandfather had been a pilot in the Army, they said.

"It's really cool... It'd be cool to be a pilot (when I'm older)," Sean Braswell said.

After the brief static training, the Reserve Soldiers loaded the aircraft and were off on their mission, carrying them to a landing zone with nearly eighteen inches of recent snow.

Having prepared for the conditions, the troops safely exited the Black Hawk helicopters and formed a security perimeter. The flight of four departed with swirls of snow encircling the Reserve Soldiers as they prepared to move off

the landing zone to their training objective.

Working with outside units helps sharpen the skills for the battalion staff and air mission commanders, said Lt. Col. Jason Lefton, the commander of 3-142nd Aviation.

Crews get the benefit of the challenging multiship mission and gain the ability to adapt to work with Soldiers they haven't worked with before, Lefton said, developing relationships and trust for future operations.

"They're relying on us as Soldiers. There's trust," Lefton said. "We want to make sure they understand that our guys want to be trusted at a high level, and that they can do it." **gt**



With landing gear buried in nearly 18 inches of snow, Chief Warrant Officer 3 John Delsignore talks to local Cooperstown families about the UH-60 Black Hawk and what his unit does during air assault training. The crews allowed locals to meet them and inspect the aircraft during static training.

10th Mountain Division deploys with Guard Soldiers

Story and photos by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff

FORT DRUM, N.Y. - When the Army's 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) headquarters deploys to Iraq this winter, 91 New York Army National Guard Soldiers will be going with them, wearing the Mountain Division shoulder insignia.

They are members of the New York Army National Guard's newest unit, activated in 2016 in Syracuse, N.Y. Called a Main Command Post Operational Detachment, the detachment is designed to augment the 10th Mountain Division during combat deployments with staff officers and NCOs that bring added skills to a headquarters.

The Army created these detachments to reinforce active Army headquarters elements that were cut from about 700 personnel down to 500. Deploying National Guard Soldiers as part of these divisions helps make up the difference for unit deployments and also reduces the need for active-duty Soldiers to deploy as frequently.

The New York detachment mobilized on January 5th to conduct its predeployment training at Fort Drum.

When they deployed in February, the Soldiers will be spread out, serving at several different division locations in Iraq and Kuwait.

At full strength the detachment will have 96 Soldiers. This includes five civil affairs Soldiers from the Army Reserve. Civil affairs is an Army Reserve specialty.

"The morale of our Soldiers is incredibly high," said 1st Lt. Victoria Lovett, a Latham, N.Y. resident who commands the detachment's Headquarters and Support Company. "Our unit has a mix of first time deployers

and those service members who have had numerous deployments, who have been taking the time to mentor."

The "mcpod" includes Soldiers with military intelligence, engineering, logisticians, civil affairs and signal operations backgrounds, added Lovett.

The detachment normally comes under the command of the 42nd Infantry Division.

"Over the past year we have had to maintain equipment, establish a training plan that met the needs of the 10th Mountain Division, and still resemble a traditional National Guard schedule," said Lt. Col. Michael Bice, the detachment commander, from Watertown, N.Y. resident.

Bice will serve as a 10th Mountain Division staff officer when the detachment deploys.

The Soldiers have so far participated in three 10th Mountain Division Command Post exercises and a 10th Mountain Division Warfighter command post combat simulation exercise.

The detachment Soldiers were recognized for their outstanding dedication and performance, Bice said.

"At this point, I have Soldiers with the best equipment, best training and leaving with the most deployed division in our modern history," Bice said. "As a Soldier, does it really get any better?"

"As a commander, any chance you get to lead Soldiers is a great day, the more time I spend with these Soldiers the better this deployment gets," Bice added.

"Myself and the Soldiers of the command post detachment have already been playing a key role for the 10th Mountain Division



New York Army National Guard Soldier 1st. Lt. Victoria Lovett, detachment commander of the Headquarters and Support Company for the Main Command Post Operational Detachment (MCPD), organizes supplies for Soldiers within the detachment at Fort Drum, N.Y., January 9, 2018. The unit deploys overseas with 10th Mountain this winter.



Staff Sgt. Daniel Messina, the operations non-commissioned officer for the Main Command Post Operational Detachment (MCPD), organizes supplies for Soldiers within the detachment at Fort Drum, N.Y., January 9, 2018. Unit members augment the 10th Mountain Division Headquarters with staff functions for overseas deployments.

headquarters," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Messina, a Brooklyn resident serving as the detachment operations non-commissioned officer. "Every day we are living the active duty lifestyle and cross training with them."

"I am ready to experience this new endeavor, working with the active-duty component and working in operations will be a completely different than my first deployment as an infantryman," Messina added. **gt**



"It's something that most people see in movies and on TV. Actually getting to do it is pretty fulfilling, especially as an infantryman,"

-- Sgt. Michael Wheeler, Team Leader, Charlie Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry

Cav Troopers Brave Winter Skies for Recon Training

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Ryan Campbell, 107th Attack Wing

JAVA CENTER, N.Y., — More than 40 Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 101st Cavalry Regiment of the New York Army National Guard endured harsh winter weather to conduct reconnaissance training with CH-47 Chinook helicopters in Beaver Hollows, March 10-11, 2018.

The Chinooks, belonging to Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment from Rochester, inserted the troopers into more than 20 inches of snow. With temperatures below freezing, the Soldiers setup various observation points throughout the weekend in order to sharpen their tactics and techniques.

"The purpose of our insertion here is to conduct reconnaissance," said Sgt. Michael Wheeler, a team leader assigned to Charlie Troop. "It's to facilitate follow on movement for the commander because essentially we are the eyes and ears of the cavalry."

These types of operations allow commanders to make informed decisions on enemy activity so friendly forces can safely move into position. Being able to conduct this training with aviation support has come as an added bonus for the Soldiers, Wheeler said.

It's pretty rare to get aviation support, maybe once or twice a year, said Wheeler. It's always weather dependent and it tends to cancel these operations, Wheeler said.

With a recent winter storm still covering Western New York in snow, Charlie Troop was dropped off into an area where the snow was at least knee deep. They then had to contend with a blinding mix of wind and snow as they disembarked their Chinook and established security in the landing zone.

"We got lucky today, the whiteout was a little bit bad," Wheeler said. "But the operations were successful and everyone was safe and it was a huge learning experience for most of the guys."

Undertaking not just any ordinary walk through the snow, in the infantry the Soldiers bear heavy loads. The weight of which makes trudging through the uneven, snow-covered terrain even more difficult.

"Typically an infantryman has 35 to 50 pounds of gear. In reconnaissance we are sustaining for 72 hours, on foot, so now it's around 70 to 100 pounds," Wheeler said. "We're sinking

pretty hard and it's definitely adding to the slowing of our movement."

As difficult as it may be, this is the kind of training that motivates the Soldiers from Buffalo. Morale and the enthusiasm to train no matter the conditions runs high in the troop.

"It's great you know, we're out here teaching the younger guys, the less experienced guys like myself," said Spc. Cory Dawson, a senior scout assigned to Charlie Troop. "Everybody needs to know the job of the man above them and below them, and when your leaders are out here letting you take their spot it helps you get a bigger picture on the whole mission."

Being out in the freezing weather is part of what they all signed up for. Nothing can seemingly dampen the excitement for the unique training opportunities at hand.

"I wanted to do fun stuff and it's cool sneaking around the woods," said Dawson. "We don't do typical infantry things, we do more recon

and we get to spy on people that don't even know we're there and we will leave without ever being seen."

Though for many in Charlie Troop, this was the first time they were able to get experience using aviation to get in and out of a battlefield.

"I've had some training with aviation once before, but this is the first time I've done an air insertion," said Dawson. "Today went really well and it was actually pretty cool flying in through the snow and then helicopter hovering and blowing it off the landing zone," he said.

The Soldiers remained in the area of their landing zone in Beaver Hollows conducting reconnaissance missions into the late hours of the night. They returned 48 hours later, with a sense of accomplishment, Wheeler said.

"It's something that most people see in movies and on TV," Wheeler said. "Actually getting to do it is pretty fulfilling, especially as an infantryman." **gt**

"It's great you know, we're out here teaching the younger guys, the less experienced guys like myself,"

--Spc. Cory Dawson, senior scout, Charlie Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry



Army Spc. Andrew Niedzielski, an assistant team leader, and Sgt. Michael Wheeler, a team leader, assigned to Charlie Troop, 2nd Battalion, 101st Cavalry Regiment, prepare to move out after they were inserted by a CH-47 Chinook helicopter near Java Center, N.Y., March 10, 2018. Opposite page: A CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment from Rochester prepares to land and insert Soldiers of Charlie Troop in a landing zone. The more than 40 infantrymen spent two days for drill training in harsh conditions on reconnaissance tactics, utilizing infiltration and exfiltration techniques by helicopter.



New York Team Competes in Guard Biathlon

Story and photos by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff

MIDWAY, UTAH -- Five New York National Guard Soldiers tested their skiing and shooting abilities against competitors from around the country February 25 to March 1, during the National Guard's annual biathlon championship at Soldier Hollow.

Soldiers from 20 states competed for the top 15 men's and top 5 women finishers and became part of the All-Guard team in the National Guard Biathlon Championships. The winners compete against other militaries in Europe and South America.

Biathlon combines two sports, target shooting and cross country skiing. Participants have to ski fast and hit their targets when they stop to shoot.

During the competition, ranges have clocks running as each racer fires five shots at bulls eyes placed 50 meters away, using a bolt action rifle with iron sights.

The New York team consisted Lt. Col. John Studiner, team coach; Capts. Katy and Joe Moryl, a married couple from Hudson; Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Brunick; and Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer.

The New Yorkers didn't place,

but had a chance to refine their skills, Studiner said.

"I am new to the sport. This is my first year competing," Brunick said. "I came unprepared, and never realized how hard this sport is. I learned so much this week."

"It's not for everyone," he said. "It's definitely one of the more challenging sports. I've done eight marathons and the physical pain of cross country skiing for two hours is far more grueling."

The active Army ran the military biathlon program until 1973 and then turned it over to the National Guard. Thirty states send teams to the competitions and the Guard program has produced 24 Olympic biathlon competitors.

The military continues to value the combination of skiing and marksmanship, Studiner said.

Joe Moryl perfectly shot every one of his 50 meters target.

"This week was great for the state of New York: for the first time since 2003 we were able to have a relay team," Studiner said.

Four participants are required for the relay, in which each athlete skis 7.5 kilometers and engage

targets. Katy Moryl skied twice to allow New York to take part.

"We are always looking for new athletes that can cross country ski," Studiner said.

To qualify for Utah, the New York Soldiers participated in the eastern regional competition at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho, Jan. 24-28.

The New York team has had past success. Two former members, Air National Guard Master Sgt. Deborah Nordyke and her husband, retired Army Guard Maj. Curt Schreiner, both competed on Olympic biathlon teams.

Along with the camaraderie

--there are not many biathletes-- he appreciates the fact that biathlon has made him a better Soldier, Studiner said.

"The sport is extremely humbling, each time you go out and do a race you get better and stronger," Joe Moryl added. **gt**



Members of the New York National Guard biathlon team in Midway, Utah pose for a photo on March 1 in Soldier Hollow. They are, from left, Capt. Joe Moryl, Capt. Katy Moryl, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Brunick, Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, and Lt. Col. John Studiner.



Capt. Joe Moryl engages target during a relay race at the 2018 National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships held at the Soldier Hollow, in Midway Utah, February, 28 2018.



Heavy Lift for Howitzers

CAMP EDWARDS, Mass. -- Crews from Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation conduct sling-load training with the Massachusetts Army Guard's 1st Battalion, 101st Artillery March 8. The New Yorkers returned from deployment to Afghanistan in 2017 and trained in the latest CH-47 sling-load techniques for the M777 howitzers. Photo by Spc. Theodore Courtney, 3-126th Aviation.



Northeast Regional Partnership Conference

TROY, N.Y. -- Representatives from the New York, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey and Ohio Army National Guards, the New York Air National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, and the 10th Mountain Division gather for a Northeast Regional Partnership meeting here February 7, 2018. The partnership focuses on shared training opportunities to enhance unit readiness. The event was hosted by 42nd Infantry Division. Photo by Lt. Col. Roberta Comerford, 42nd Infantry Division.



CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. -- Soldiers with the 369th Sustainment Brigade compete in their brigade level Best Warrior Competition here Feb. 23-25, 2018. Soldiers were tested on physical fitness, military knowledge and appearance, and endurance. Two competitors, Sgt. Caitlin Johnson, pictured below right, assigned to the 104th Military Police Battalion and Spc. Robert Marino of the 107th Military Police Company, will advance to the state level competition in April. Courtesy photos.

369th Sustainment Brigade's Best Warriors



Hellfighter Soldiers Deployed to Fight in WWI

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. --When the African American Soldiers of New York's 15th Infantry Regiment arrived in France in December 1917, they expected to conduct combat training and enter the trenches of the Western Front right away.

They could not have been more wrong.

The black troops were ordered to unload ships at the docks in France, joining the mass of supply troops known as stevedores, working long hours in the port at St. Nazaire.

More than 380,000 African Americans served in the Army during World War I, according to the national archives. Approximately 200,000 of these were sent to Europe.

But more than half who deployed served in labor battalions, assigned to tasks that many Army leaders saw as most appropriate.

These troops performed essential duties for the American Expeditionary Force, building roads, bridges, and trenches.

In St. Nazaire, the New York Soldiers learned they would prepare the docks and rail lines to be a major port of entry for the hundreds of thousands of forces yet to arrive in France.

The African American unit was an easy source of labor, according to Stephen Harris in his 2003 book, "Harlem's Hell Fighters."

"First, Pershing would have a source of cheap labor," Harris wrote. "Second, he wouldn't have to worry about what to do with black Soldiers, particularly when he might have to mix them in with white troops."

But officers, leaders and combat Soldiers had not signed up for labor. They were committed to

fighting the Germans and winning the war.

"They had no place to put the regiment," said infantry Capt. Hamilton Fish, according to the Harris book. "They weren't going to put us in a white division, not in 1917, anyway; so our troops were sent in to the supply and services as laborers to lay railroad tracks. This naturally upset our men tremendously."

The regiment's best advocate was their commander, Col. William Hayward.

"We had come to France as combat troops, and, apparently, we were in danger of becoming labor troops," Hayward said, according to Jeffrey Sammons in his 2014 book "Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War."

Hayward argued his case in a letter to General Pershing, outlining the regiments' mobilization and training, and followed up immediately with a personal visit to Pershing's headquarters.

He would bring with him the unit's most formidable weapon in swaying opinion: the regimental band, lauded as one of the finest in the entire Expeditionary Force.

While the regiment literally laid the tracks for the arrival of the two million troops deploying to France, the band toured the region, performing for French and American audiences at rest centers and hospitals. The 369th Band was unlike any other performance audiences had seen or heard before, noted Harris. The regimental band is credited with introducing jazz music to France during the war.

After three months of labor, the Soldiers learned they had orders to join the French 16th Division for three weeks of combat training.

They also learned they had a



At top, Soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment man a trench in France during World War I. Above, members of the 369th Regimental Band perform in France. Courtesy photos.

new regimental number as the now-renamed 369th Infantry Regiment. Not that it mattered much to the Soldiers; they still carried their nickname from New York, the Black Rattlers, and carried their regimental flag of the 15th New York Infantry everywhere they went in France.

The black troops would see combat, but alongside French forces, who were already accustomed to the many races and ethnicities already serving in the ranks of their colonial troops.

"The French army instructors literally welcomed their African American trainees as comrades in arms," Sammons wrote. "To the pragmatic French army instructors, the Soldiers were Americans,

black Americans, to be trained for combat within their ranks."

After learning valuable lessons in trench warfare from their French partners, the Soldiers of the 369th finally had their chance to prove their worth as combat troops when they entered the front lines, holding their line against the last German spring offensive near Chateau-Thierry.

Their value was not lost on the French and the regiment continued to fight alongside French forces, participating in the Aisne-Marne counter offensive in the summer of 1918 alongside the French 162nd Infantry Division.

The Hell Fighters from Harlem had come into their own, in spite of their difficult start. **gt**



Airmen with the 139th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron load cargo onto an LC-130 "Skibird" at Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Antarctica, Nov. 9, 2017. The Airmen are deployed to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze (ODF), the logistical support provided by the Department of Defense to the U.S. Antarctic Program. Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing.

Airmen Head Home After 30th South Pole Season

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing

SCOTIA, N.Y. --Airmen and aircraft with the 109th Airlift Wing returned home February 28, 2018 to Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, New York, from McMurdo Station, Antarctica, after another successful Operation Deep Freeze season.

During this season--which marked the 30th year the wing has provided support--crews completed 120 missions within Antarctica. They flew an estimated 2,300 researchers and support staff and carried about 2.7 million pounds of cargo and 135,000 gallons of fuel to research stations across the continent.

Operation Deep Freeze, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, is managed by the National Science Foundation. The 109th Airlift Wing operates in Antarctica from October to March, when it is summer at the South Pole.

The unique capabilities of the ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft make it the only one of its kind in the U.S. military, able to land on snow and ice.

Col. Michele Kilgore, who took command of the wing in October, took her first trip to

the ice earlier this month, and said she was impressed by the job her Airmen do on a regular basis.

"I was able to see first-hand the amazing mission I get to be a part of now," she said. "The work the Airmen of this wing do makes me proud to be their leader, and to see them doing it in such austere conditions is just astounding."

Col. Alan Ross, the 109th vice commander, who took his last trip to the ice this season as he prepares for retirement in the coming months, said he was still impressed by the job the wing does from October to March.

"After almost two decades of being part of this mission, it still amazes me that this wing does what it does. We extend air power from our home in Scotia, New York to literally the ends of the earth, in this case Antarctica and the South Pole," he said.

"Each year, after flying our aircraft 11,000 miles to reach Antarctica, our Airmen set up operations on an ice shelf with no hangars or permanent facilities, perform maintenance

operations while exposed to the elements, and conduct flying operations to remote locations on the harshest, most unforgiving continent in the world."

"It's been my privilege to be a part of it for so long, and I will maintain a sense of pride for Airmen and this mission long after my retirement," Ross said.

Crews won't have much time to rest though as they've already started planning for the annual Greenland mission which begins in April, Ross added. **gt**



Pararescue Crew Killed in Iraq Crash



Guard Times Staff

F.S. GABRESKI AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, WESTHAMPTON BEACH, N.Y. -- Four New York Air National Guard members assigned here to the 106th Rescue Wing died in Iraq on Thursday, March 15.

The four Airmen were part of a seven-member team who died when their HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopter crashed near the city of Al-Qa'im in western Iraq. There is no evidence of enemy action involved in the crash and the incident is under investigation.

Killed were:

- Capt. Christopher Zanetis, age 37, a resident of Long Island City, N.Y., who was an HH-60G Pave Hawk pilot. He joined the wing in 2008 and was assigned to the 101st Rescue Squadron. Zanetis was a member of the New York City Fire Department in civilian life and had recently joined the law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton in New York City as an associate. He previously deployed to Iraq in 2011, supporting another HH-60G squadron, and Afghanistan with the 101st.

- Capt. Andreas O'Keeffe, age 37, from Center Moriches, N.Y., who was an HH-60G Pave Hawk pilot. He was a full-time federal technician with the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron. He joined the wing in 2013, after serving as an armament systems specialist with the 113th Wing, District of Columbia Air Guard, and RC-26 pilot with the 174th Attack Wing in Syracuse, N.Y. He deployed to Iraq three times,

to Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and Texas for Hurricane Harvey.

- Master Sgt. Christopher Raguso, 39, a resident of Commack, N.Y., who was an HH-60G special missions aviation flight engineer. He joined the wing in 2001 and was a member of the New York City Fire Department. He was assigned to the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron. He previously deployed to Iraq as a fire protection specialist with the 106th Civil Engineering Squadron, twice to Afghanistan with the 101st, once to the Horn of Africa, and to Texas and the Caribbean for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

- Staff Sgt. Dashan Briggs, age 30, a resident of Port Jefferson Station, N.Y., who was an HH-60G special missions aviation flight engineer. He joined the wing in 2010. He was a full time military member with the wing and assigned to the 101st Rescue Squadron. He previously deployed to Afghanistan as a munitions system specialist with the 106th Maintenance Group, and to Texas and the Caribbean for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma as a member of the 101st.

The 106th Rescue Wing specializes in personnel recovery of pilots, military personnel and civilians, by air, land and sea, during combat and peacetime. The Airmen were operating in Iraq supporting Operation Inherent Resolve, the American-led coalition operation to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

"All four of these heroes served their nation and community," said Col. Michael Bank,

106th Rescue Wing

Commander. "Our sincerest condolences and sympathies to the families and friends that have been touched by this tragic event," he added.

"Our National Guard family mourns the loss of the seven combat search and rescue Airmen in the HH-60 crash, including four members from the 106th Rescue Wing," said Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the Adjutant General of New York. "This loss reminds us of the tremendous risks we take in serving our nation every day."

"We honor their service, their professionalism, and their sacrifice as we mourn their loss," German added.

Airmen from the 106th Rescue Wing have deployed regularly to Afghanistan and Iraq and other areas in support of American and coalition combat missions since Sept. 11, 2001.

Airmen from the wing recently responded to Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Irma in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in 2017. The members of the 106th are credited with rescuing 546 Houston area residents from flood waters with boats and their HH-60 Pave Hawks. They played a key role in evacuating 1,500 Americans from the Dutch Island of St. Maarten following Hurricane Irma.

The four Airmen killed March 15 brings the total New York National Guard members who have died in a combat zone since 9/11 to 39. Of those, seven have been members of the New York Air National Guard.

The Airmen were returned to the states on March 18 with funerals scheduled later in March. **gt**

"This loss reminds us of the tremendous risks we take in serving our nation every day,"

-- Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the Adjutant General of New York



New York Air National Guard Airmen killed during a HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter crash in Iraq on March 15 include, from left, Capt. Christopher "Tripp" Zanetis, Capt. Andreas O'Keeffe, Master Sgt. Christopher Raguso and Staff Sgt. Dashan Briggs. All belonged to the 106th Rescue Wing at F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach, N.Y. Courtesy photos.



Mr. Sonepith Keoviengsamay receives the Outstanding Civilian award. An information technology specialist with the 224th Support Squadron, Keoviengsamay engineered a technical fix for a classified computer system that saved an estimated \$550,000. He oversaw the separation of live and training missions on the operations floor.



Tech. Sgt. Robert Raymond receives the Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer award. An interface control technician at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, Raymond reduced his section's data network down time by 25 percent. Raymond also developed and published a monthly tactics bulletin provided to 125 personnel.



1st Lt. Eric Schenck receives the Outstanding Company Grade Officer award. Schenck spearheaded planning for more than 30 Presidential movements, briefing and coordinating with more than 150 fighter and tanker aircraft. Schenck also served as air weapons officer with the 224th Air Defense Squadron.

EADS Airmen Recognized for Performance

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Lillique Ford, 174th Attack Wing

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, M.D. - Five Airmen and one civilian were recognized for outstanding service in 2017 at the Eastern Air Defense Sector and 224th Air Defense Group's annual dinner on Jan. 20.

Nearly 200 New York Air National Guardsmen, Canadian Forces members and guests attended the event.

"The EADS air defense mission requires engaged and consistent excellence from all of our members," said Col. Emil Filkorn, EADS Com-

mander at the awards presentation.

"This year's winners distinguished themselves by going above and beyond our high standards. I congratulate them on their outstanding accomplishments and thank them for their efforts," Filkorn said.

The unit recognized outstanding performers in six categories: company grade officer, senior noncommissioned officer, noncommissioned officer, junior enlisted airman, Honor Guard member, and civilian. **gt**



Sr. Airman Nicholas Spine receives the Outstanding Junior Enlisted Airman award. A cyber systems journeyman with the 224th Support Squadron, Spine organized more than 80 computer terminals and 16,000 feet of cable as part of a critical re-design project that separated live operations from training.



Staff Sgt. Nino Camuglia receives the Outstanding Honor Guard Member award. A tracking technician with the 224th Air Defense Squadron, Camuglia participated in 11 military funerals, four high-profile color details and four parades. Camuglia provided 45 volunteer hours to Honor Guard activities.



Master Sgt. Bernard Jowers receives the Outstanding Senior NCO award. The Security Forces training chief at the 224th Support Squadron helped develop and supervise a 216-hour annual training plan for Security Forces members and excelled in reviewing and updating critical emergency procedures.

Airmen Work to Refine Medical Evacuation Skills

Story and Photo by Senior Airman Terrence Clyburn, 105th Airlift Wing

GULFPORT, MISS. --Six Airmen from the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing spent the week of Feb. 12-15 refining techniques used to evacuate injured people from disaster areas as part of Patriot South 2018, an annual exercise that trains federal, state and local emergency responders.

The Airmen crewed a C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane from the wing's 137th Airlift Squadron, which was used to transport simulated casualties and medical evacuees to Nashville, Tennessee; Tampa, Florida; and Jackson, Mississippi working alongside aeromedical evacuation Airmen from several squadrons.

The missions were flown from the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center here.

Staff Sgt. Jaron Brown, one of the crew's loadmasters, said he was impressed with the teamwork the exercise developed.

"You learn that everyone is willing to put in the effort to make sure they're ready for the next natural disaster, because "mother nature" waits for no one," Brown said.

This year's focus was on dealing with a simulated earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone, according to Capt. Robert McDonald, executive officer with the 105th Operations Group.

An earthquake which hit New Madrid, Missouri in December 1811—with aftershocks in 1812—is considered the most destructive earthquake ever recorded in North America. It had 10 times the destructive power of the quake which leveled San Francisco in 1906.

The exercise occurs every year to prepare multiple areas across the United States for disaster relief response and validates the training for Federal Coordinating Centers, which are activated to organize mass evacuations from disaster locations to safety, McDonald explained.

"Planning begins a year prior to the start of the exercise," McDonald said. "There were approximately 900 civilian and military personnel involved in this year's exercise."

FCCs are divided into regions composed of multiple states. The centers have Patient Receptions Areas staffed with nurses, doctors, litter bearers, transportation teams, joint patient tracking teams, and additional medical team members for oversight.



Airmen from multiple aeromedical evacuation squadrons treat a patient during a mock emergency scenario en route to Jackson, Mississippi, Feb 15, 2018. Airmen from multiple squadrons formed teams to coordinate and work together for the PATRIOT South 2018 exercise.

Victims are triaged and sent to hospitals for more comprehensive care.

Sonja L. Stokes-Sumrall, the Area Emergency Manager for the Veteran Health Administration's Office of Emergency Management liaison, said the exercise is crucial to preparing for the hurricane season in Jackson, Mississippi.

"This particular exercise was setup to identify any short falls or deficiencies prior to the upcoming hurricane season on one June," Stokes-Sumrall said.

As the C-17 landed, the aeromedical evacuation squadron members on board would work with the civilians at the FCCs to move the victims into the reception areas, evacuating the most critical victims first.

Victims for the exercise were both mannequins and live volunteers from the military. Mid-flight volunteer victims would act out emergency scenarios, such as heart attacks, concussions, and mental breakdowns.

Aeromedical evacuation squadron members are trained to react and stabilize patients in flight.

Airman 1st Class Codi Norman, an aeromedical evacuation technician with the 156th

Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, from the North Carolina Air National Guard said he was happy to participate in the exercise.

"I became a paramedic to save lives and I joined the military for the same reason," Norman said. "There is no greater thing that we can do than to serve mankind."

While at the FCCs, the aeromedical evacuation squadron members would talk with the civilian staff showing them proper procedures to get the patients off the jet safely.

"We've already seen [domestic operations] in action with Hurricane Katrina, Harvey and Maria," Norman said. "This is us perfecting the process, so that each subsequent operation runs even smoother than the last and we can move the most people in the safest and most efficient way possible." **gt**

"You learn that everyone is willing to put in the effort to make sure they're ready for the next natural disaster, because "mother nature" waits for no one,"

-- Staff Sgt. Jaron Brown, 105th Airlift Wing

MQ-9 operators deploy to assist in California Fires

Story by Eric Dur, Guard Times Staff



A remotely piloted MQ-9 Reaper operated by the New York Air National Guard's 174th Attack Wing flies a routine training mission over Central New York on October 23, 2016. Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Miller, 174th Attack Wing. Inset photo: California Air National Guardsmen of the 195th Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Group analyze full-motion video of the Thomas Fire at Beale Air Force Base, Calif., and relay their findings to fire crews on the ground, Dec. 11, 2017. The team is using imagery from the MQ-9 Reaper to map the fire lines and look at fire expansion and progression. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Tristan D. Viglianco, 163rd Attack Wing.

SYRACUSE, N.Y.-- Nine members of the 174th Attack Wing were dispatched to California December 13, 2017 to assist the California Air National Guard's 163rd Attack Wing in flying MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft which have been assisting local authorities in fighting the massive Thomas Fire.

The Airmen, based at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base, are trained to fly and operate the MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft, used for surveillance and combat air patrol missions.

The California Air National Guard has been employing the MQ-9 as an eye-in-the-sky supporting Cal Fire, the statewide firefighting agency, responding to the wildfires which burned 234,000 acres and destroyed more than 1,000 buildings.

The New York Airmen will assist California Air Guardsmen who have been stretched thin during this domestic response operation.

"That's a horrible incident they are dealing with and we're glad to help in any way we can," said Col. Michael Smith, 174th Attack Wing

Commander.

"As California works day and night to stop these fires, New York is proud to provide reinforcements and the use of advanced technology to help identify where to dispatch firefighting efforts to end this tragic event," New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo said.

The MQ-9s have been providing overhead video to fire managers using sensors that can see through smoke. The aircraft fly at high altitudes and are not effected by high winds which can keep helicopters from operating over fire areas.

This ability to orbit continuously over a geographic area provides the incident commander a much clearer picture of the situation and enables them to make better response decisions, Air National Guard officials said.

"Having an asset in the air providing persistent observation is key to fulfilling the incident commander's needs and crucial in identifying emerging active fire behavior," said Air Force Master Sgt. Jason Tyler, chief of incident

awareness and assessment for the California Air National Guard's 234th Intelligence Squadron. "It allows fire departments to get ahead of it and take appropriate actions such as evacuating areas which the fire may affect."

"We help out with damage assessment by getting the number of destroyed structures out quickly using satellite imagery and comparing it to imagery from the sensed aircraft," he said.

The wing deployed three MQ-9 pilots, three sensor operators – the Airmen responsible for operating the state of the art cameras and other sensor systems—and three imagery analysts. The Airmen returned to New York on Dec. 22.

By December 26, CalFire reported that the fires had been 88 percent contained

The 174th Attack Wing has been operating the MQ-9 since 2009. The wing's Airmen also fly MQ-9s on combat and training missions from a control center at Hancock Field.

This was the first time the wing deployed its MQ-9 personnel for missions in support of civil authorities. **gt**



Airmen of the 152nd Air Operations Group man work stations during Virtual Flag, a computer wargame held Feb. 18-26 from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse. The computer hookup allowed the air planners of the 152nd to interact with other Air Force units around the country and in Europe. Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Miller, 174th Attack Wing.

Air Ops Group Teaches Total Force

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Julio Olivencia, 105th Airlift Wing

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, M.D. - Six instructors from the 152nd Air Operations Group qualified 24 Air National Guard officers from across the country to serve as members of a Joint Air Component Coordination Element (JACCE) during a two-day class January 9-10.

JACCE teams work in support of Joint Air Force Component Commanders to integrate Air Force capabilities in joint operations.

While part of the 174th Attack Wing, the 152nd is aligned with the 603rd Air Operations Center in Ramstein, Germany and routinely deploys Airmen to Europe in support of exercises, contingencies and day to day operations.

"Our experience with the 603rd Air Operations Center Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance Division allows us to give detailed briefs to JACCE team members that are new or unfamiliar with Air Forces Europe and European Command exercises and operations," said 1st Lt. Brian Cooney, one of the 152nd's Intelligence Officers.

The Air Force typically deploys a JACCE team to other service components and to Joint Force Commanders for joint operations and exercises. Teams range from 5 to 15 Airmen, normally led by a senior officer who serves as the team's representative to other service commanders and the Joint Force Commander.

Col James Muscatello, the deputy command-

er of the 152nd, led the training team of six 152nd members as they conducted this third JACCE training session for fiscal year 2018.

The 152nd members have taken the lead in conducting total force training in order to create a pool of qualified Airmen able to deploy as JACCE team members, according to Muscatello.

Previous classes were held for field grade officers in Syracuse October 24-26, 2017 and 7-8 November 7-8, 2017 for general officers prior to this recent class at Joint Base Andrews, Muscatello said.

Classes were taught on a variety of Air Force command and control doctrine and procedures, the Air Operations Center, Theater Air-Ground Systems in addition to the duties and responsibilities of JACCE members.

Teams are expected to deploy this spring in support of Exercise BLUE FLAG 18 and EPIC GUARDIAN/JUDICIOUS RESPONSE at Weisbaden and Stuttgart in Germany, Vicenza in Italy and in San Diego, California.

"Having served on JACCE teams in multiple combatant commands, our group is well positioned to provide this instruction to the total force in support of our active duty partners," said Lt. Col. Nick Welly, the 152nd Space Duty Officer. **gt**

105th Airlift Wing Aids in Storm Cleanup

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Julio Olivencia, 105th Airlift Wing

PUTNAM VALLEY, N.Y.--The buzz of chainsaws and rumble of diesel engines echoed on Barger Street, a rural road in Putnam Valley, New York, as members of the 105th Airlift Wing joined with Putnam County and Town of Putnam Valley highway department workers.

The team worked to clear the road of fallen trees from three nor'easter storms to strike the Hudson Valley in early March.

Twenty Guardsmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing were part of the state's response that deployed to Putnam County.

Some of the Guardsmen on Barger Street used chainsaws and a skid steer to cut up and haul away large trees while others directed traffic and hand-carried debris from the road.

Tech. Sgt. Anthony Galioto, a C-17 loadmaster, said the Guardsmen were there to augment the workers.

"We are backfilling the need for extra manpower because of the amount of trees that came down and are blocking roadways and stopping power lines from being repaired," Galioto said.



An Airman from the 105th Airlift Wing clears debris from a road in the town of Carmel, N.Y. on March 5.

County and town employees worked side-by-side with the Guardsman, cutting trees, carrying branches, and operating machinery.

Keith Havilland, a driver with the county, said the Guardsmen were a great help.

"It's that much less we have to do here so we can work other places," Havilland said.

"It's part of being in the Guard, it's our duty," said Tech. Sgt. Bryan Wolf, a heavy equipment operator. "It's nice to help out." **gt**

Medical Command Welcomes Neurologist

Story and photo by Spc. Richard Mayfield, New York Guard

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y.

--Dr. Robert Duarte, a medical doctor and Certified neurologist, was welcomed as the newest commissioned officer of the all-volunteer uniformed support element of the New York National Guard during a swearing-in ceremony held during the New York Guard drill assembly February 3.

Duarte, from Whitestone, N.Y., will serve with the 244th Medical Clinic at the rank of Captain, providing medical evaluations for New York Guard soldiers and be the primary physician for the Long Island region.

"It is truly an honor to be selected as a New York Guard volunteer," Duarte said. "As a physician, I give back to our community by caring for patients. As an American, I feel an insatiable desire to give back to our country by providing my services to the members of the New York Guard."

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. Duarte to our ranks, his medical knowledge and experience will be a great benefit to the Guard and the people of New York," said Col. David Warager, the acting commander of the New York Guard.

Duarte is director of Northwell Health's Pain Center in Great Neck, NY and president of the New York State Pain Society. Duarte will provide medical evaluations for the New York Guard and be active in emergency response activities and disaster relief efforts.

The New York Guard is the state's volunteer uniformed defense force which augments the New York Army and Air National Guard with manpower and skills during state emergencies. It assists the National Guard in planning, training for and executing state emergency support and disaster missions, and provides legal and medical pre-deployment



Dr. Robert Duarte of the New York Guard receives his oath of commissioning on February 3 at the Camp Smith Training Site, Cortlandt Manor, NY.

assistance to the National Guard units and other reserve components as needed. During state emergencies, New York Guard members - many of whom are retired from the National Guard or active duty military with many years of experience provide National Guard units with logistical and administrative support and undertake missions in the field. **gt**

NYG Collect Supplies for Deployed Soldiers

Story by Spc. Richard Mayfield, New York Guard

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y.

--Members of the New York Guard and local citizens recently banded together to collect over six pallets of care packages to support the mission of the New York Air National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve's 417th Engineer Company.

The drive, coordinated by Sgt. Jim Loughran of the New York Guard's 56th Area Command, based out of Stewart Air National Guard Base, collected much needed items that are often difficult for members of the military to obtain when deployed overseas. From protein bars and personal care items to books and magazines each item that was collected was specifically chosen to help meet a particular need.

"This was a great opportunity to show members of our military family that our New York Guard appreciates their sacrifices but also that

members of the greater community understand the sacrifices they are making on our behalf," Loughran said.

"Serving and protecting our nation is our honor but when our service men and women are far from home it is important to stay connected and know that the American people support what we are doing," said Maj. Steven Hartov, Commander of Task Force 105 in the 56th Area Command. "I would to thank Sgt. Loughran for organizing this supply drive and know that the material collected will be put to good use."

Loughran said he believes in the important work of the New York Guard and appreciates the various opportunities for training he has received across many specialties during his years of service. **gt**



Army Reservists pose with care packages organized by Sgt. Jim Loughran of the New York Guard. Courtesy photo.

New York Naval Militia



CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. -- The New York Naval Militia supported local emergency services with debris clearance and traffic control. At top, 1st Sgt. Robert Rathbun, a member of the NY Guard's 102nd Engineers, delivers a block of instruction on chainsaw operation and safety at Camp Smith on March 6. Bottom left, Naval Militia members work with chainsaws to clear debris in the Hudson Valley March 6. Bottom right, A member of the Naval Militia Southern Command uses a chainsaw to clear debris as part of a class on chainsaw operations and safety March 6. Two hundred members of the N.Y. Army and Air Guard, Naval Militia, and N.Y. Guard were activated following two nor'easter snowstorms in early March to assist local emergency services with debris clearance and traffic control. Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

