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Fall 2013

# guardtimes

<http://dmna.ny.gov>

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





# FROM THE LEADERSHIP

**I**n a perfect world every one of our 12,000 traditional National Guard Soldiers and Airmen that need a job would have full-time employment.

Drilling Soldiers and Airmen who are employed have the opportunity to support themselves and their families. This better enables our Soldiers and Airmen to participate in unit assemblies, Annual Training and either domestic or even overseas deployments.

It is gratifying to report we've made significant progress this year in helping our traditional drilling Soldiers and Airmen -- you dedicated Service Members -- that all of us full-timers, who wear the uniform every day, are here to support.

Partnering with the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, NBC News, the American Legion, the New York State Department of Labor, and other local sponsors, we have hosted eight Hiring our Heroes job fairs at our armories around the state (see "Job Fair Attracts Hundreds of Vets, Service Members," page 47).

We held events in New York City, Syracuse, Rochester, Binghamton, Buffalo, Farmingdale, Peekskill and Albany during 2013.

At these eight job fairs, 493 employers talked with more than 1,800 Guard members, veterans, military spouses, and Reservists about the job opportunities they had available.

Our best information indicates 344 of those job seekers were members of the New York National Guard. Of those 334 Guard members who visited the job fair, 74 found new jobs or better jobs with participating companies.

The numbers may not be dramatic, but we look at them as a good start towards meeting our goal, which is to have every member of our organization employed in their communities.

These job fairs have also helped expose recruiters to our Citizen Soldiers and Airmen and discover first-hand the quality of the men and women who serve in the New York National Guard.

These Hiring our Heroes events have also gotten a great deal of attention from media outlets in the communities in which they have been held. The New York City event at Lexington Avenue was even broadcast live on network TV.

This publicity has helped spread the word about the advantages of hiring a Guard Soldier or Airman—that you are experienced, disciplined, hard-working and drug-free – to employers in the local community who did not participate in the job fair process.

Retired Com-

mand Sergeants Major Bob Van Pelt and John Willsey will continue to work with Soldiers and companies to help open opportunities for National Guard members and their families. They maintain the New York National Guard Job Zone page on the DMNA website to help our Soldiers and Airmen find jobs. The site announces between 150 and 250 jobs daily and averages 300 hits a day.

And thanks to the volunteer efforts of Major Alexander Prezioso there is a smart phone App that allows Soldiers to check the website from their Iphone.

In the coming year our team will continue to work with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to bring employers together with National Guard members interested in employment opportunities. To continue this momentum six more Hiring our Heroes Job Fairs are being planned for 2014.

These events will be at the Lexington Avenue Armory in New



**Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy**

York City, the Patriot Way Armory in Rochester, the Connecticut Street Armory in Buffalo, the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Farmingdale, the Kingston Armory and at Yankee Stadium.

I'm optimistic that qualified members of our organization who want a job will be able to find employment.



*LATHAM – Tim Dooley, a representative from General Electric Global Research (left), speaks with 1st Lt. Joshua German, a New York Air National Guard pilot (right), at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "Hiring Our Heroes" job fair held at the New York National Guard armory here on Oct. 16. Over 200 veterans and service members took the opportunity to meet with about 70 potential employers and organizations, including Northwestern Mutual Financial Network, Federal Express, Time Warner Cable and National Grid. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters.*







# guardtimes

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Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
Eric Durr, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Col. Richard Goldenberg, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
Maj. Alvin Phillips, COMMAND INFORMATION OFFICER  
Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, NYARNG, EDITOR

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<http://dmna.ny.gov>

## This Issue's Highlights:

### The Joint Force

- 14 New York National Guard Tests Homeland Response Force
- 16 High-flying Troops Help Keep Streets Drug-free
- 17 Eyes Over Lake Ontario
- 18 Soldier's 9/11 Walk Gives Vets a Leg Up
- 19 New York National Guard Experiences Part of 9/11 Exhibit

### Army National Guard

- 20 Army Guard Instructors Qualify Infantry Soldiers
- 22 Aviation Soldiers Prepare for Desert Deployment
- 24 New York Army National Guard Aviators Deploy to Africa
- 24 Army National Guard CSM Praises New York National Guard
- 25 New York Army National Guard Chaplain Retires
- 26 Military Police Commander Reflects on Units' Successes
- 28 42nd CAB Soldiers Aid in Rescues Reflects on Units' Successes

### Air National Guard

- 30 Fallen Airman Staff Sgt. Todd J. Lobraico, Jr. Honored
- 32 Airmen of 106th Rescue Wing Honored for Valor
- 33 105th Airwing Members Receive Excellence Award
- 34 109th Airlift Wing Participates in Medical Exercise
- 36 Air National Guard Captain Serves for Community
- 37 174th Attack Wing Member Awarded Bronze Star
- 38 New York Air Guardsmen Keep Commo Lines Open
- 39 NY Air Guard's 109th Airlift Wing Heads to Antarctica
- 40 107th Airlift Wing Unit Gets New Commander

### New York Guard

- 42 New York Guard Tunes into Commo Training

### New York Naval Militia

- 43 NY Naval Militia Crews Conducts Boat Training

### Guard News Briefs and Photos

- 47 Job Fair Attracts Hundreds of Vets, Service Members



FORT DRUM-- New York National Guard leaders cut a ribbon to officially open a \$5.1 million Launch and Recovery Hangar at Wheeler Sack Army Airfield here on Nov. 5. The hangar will house two MQ-9 aircraft and provide a permanent base for 174th Attack Wing operations at Fort Drum.

FORT DRUM -- Troops of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade crawl under concertina wire during pre-mobilization training here in August. Soldiers of the brigade are deploying to Kuwait to provide aviation support for U.S. military forces in that country. Photo by Spc Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

BACK COVER: New York Army National Guard Captains Amy and Brian Bonanno cross the finish line with their son Brian and daughter Grace ( in stroller) during the New York National Guard Family Readiness Council 5K Saturday morning, October 19 at Crossings of Colonie Park. 150 runners took part in the event, which raises money for the council, a non-profit that helps Guard Soldiers, Airmen and their families. Photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times.



# GUARD NOTES

## USO Honors 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Guardian Angel

By Eric Durr, *Guard Times*

WASHINGTON -- A seasoned combat veteran who left a Wall Street analyst job to join the New York Air National Guard is the USO's National Guardsman of the Year for 2013.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen, a Commack, N.Y. resident and full-time member of the 106th Rescue Wing's 103rd Rescue Squadron, was recognized during the USO's annual Washington Gala on Oct. 25.

Petersen is also among six 103rd Rescue Squadron Airmen who've received the Bronze Star for Valor in Afghanistan. While under enemy fire, the Airmen saved the lives of two Americans Soldiers and an Afghan soldier (see "Airmen of 106th Rescue Wing to be Honored, for Valor" page 32). Petersen was also selected as the New York Air National Guard Airman of the Year.

Recognition from the USO, which has provided services to American troops worldwide since 1941, is a great honor, Petersen said.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo praised Petersen.

"On behalf of all New Yorkers, I congratulate Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen for his recognition by the USO as National Guardsman of the Year," Cuomo said. "During his service in Afghanistan, he put his own life on the line to save three fellow Americans in the face of enemy fire. He is wholly deserving of this award and he has truly made New York proud. His



New York Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen (second from left) receives a plaque recognizing him as the USO's National Guardsman of the Year for 2013 from National Guard Vice Chief Lt. Gen. Joseph Lengyel during the USO's annual Gala. Petersen was honored for his heroism in Afghanistan and outstanding performance in training and on the job. Also pictured are General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers, USAF (Ret.) and USO CEO and President Sloan Gibson.

selection by an organization like the USO is also a salute to all members of the New York National Guard. I thank him for his dedication to our state and country."

"I just did my job," Petersen said. "There are a lot of other people who are just as deserving."

Petersen graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a bachelor's degree in business administration, a major in finance and a minor in theology in 2007. He joined Ernst & Young as a financial analyst but left that job in August 2008 to join the Air National Guard as a pararescue Airman.

Known as Guardian Angels, pararescuemen are trained to rescue downed airmen on sea or land by parachuting in or rappelling out of a helicopter. They are also trained to provide medical support and are skilled in survival and ground combat skills.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, Air National Guard pararescuemen like Petersen are often called on to conduct medical evacuation missions while under fire. During two deployments to Afghanistan, Petersen served on more than 85 combat

missions.

"Because of Staff Sgt. Petersen's bravery while serving in Afghanistan, three Soldiers are alive today," said USO Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff John I. Pray, Jr. "In those crucial moments he made it possible for three of his comrades to share many more special moments with their friends and family members. Not surprisingly, the USO is immensely proud to be able to thank Staff Sgt. Petersen on behalf of all Americans for his selfless service and heroism."

He'd always been interested in military service, Petersen said, and wanted to be a pararescueman because "this was a program where you could push yourself physically and mentally." He also wanted to be involved in a military program where he could learn medical skills, he added.

He chose to serve as a full-time member of the Air National Guard because he wants to develop the military skills he's honed as a pararescueman, Petersen said.

"I enlisted in a time of war and it would be wrong for me to shy away," he explained. "Knowing that the people we pick up or treat come back home to their family and friends is pretty meaningful." **gt**



Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen aboard an HH-60 Pavehawk Rescue helicopter in Afghanistan. Courtesy photo.



## Chaplain's Corner

# Thanks for the Memories

Commentary by Chaplain (Col., Ret..) Eric W. Olsen



Retired New York National Guard State Chaplain (Col.) Eric W. Olsen.

As I write my last article for *Guard Times* as a member of the New York National Guard, I can look with fondness and gratitude on the men and women whom I've had the privilege to work and serve with. My last words are few, but from the heart.

First, I wish to say thank you to both God and you my brothers and sisters for the many opportunities and sacred moments we have shared together. We have laughed, cried, celebrated and grieved these past years of conflict and service, and I'm honored to have spent them with you.

Secondly, I wish to apologize for whatever mistakes and missed moments that I know I am guilty of. I am glad that many of you have looked past my errors and stupidity and given me second chances to prove my worth and show my better self. If I have offended anyone,

I am truly sorry — forgive me. It was never my intention to do so, but I am certain that I have, and I apologize.

Thirdly, I wish you well in your continued mission to serve our state and nation. I hope that each of you will take time to reflect on your lives and the contributions and sacrifices you have made. This has been a long run for me, and I know, for many of you as well. As I have prayed for you and your success, please continue to do so for those we serve with and those that support them. Remember that the Lord is never further than a thought away.

Finally, May God Bless and keep you safe in the lives you live. May they be fruitful and joyous and never leave you wanting. And if I can ever be of service to you or yours I can be found on my porch in Saranac Lake, N.Y. Pro Deo, et Patria: For God and country.

## Full-time Chaplain Administrator Appointed

*Guard Times*



Chaplain (Major) Brian Murphy.

**LATHAM -- Chaplain (Major) Brian Murphy is now the full-time chaplain administrator for the New York Army National Guard.**

A native of Cato, N.Y., Murphy is an ordained minister of the Church of Christ and Christian Church. He joined the Army in 1989 and served for nine years, initially as a combat engineer and later as an infantryman.

He was commissioned by direct appointment as a second lieutenant in the Chaplain Corps, New York Army National Guard in 2003. He entered onto active duty in 2006 and returned to the Army National Guard in 2011.

Murphy received his bachelor of arts degree in religious studies and counseling from Kentucky Christian University, and his master of divinity degree from Northeastern Theological Seminary.

He's served as a chaplain for various units around the world. He was the installation chaplain for Camp Virginia, Kuwait and the wounded warrior battalion chaplain at Fort Bragg, N.C. He's served as a chaplain on the battalion and brigade level in the 3rd Infantry Division, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and the 101st Airborne Division.

Murphy's awards and decorations include the bronze star medal, meritorious service medal, joint service medal, Iraq campaign medal, the Combat Action Badge and the Expert Infantry Badge.



# IMCOM Takes on Domestic Violence in 2013

Robert Dozier, FMWRC

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS -- The Family Advocacy Program is taking the lead this year in the Army's campaign to give Soldiers and their families the tools they need to avoid and prevent the occurrence of intimate partner violence.

The U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) is making a concerted effort during Domestic Violence Awareness month to highlight their resources and strike a chord of resiliency on Army garrisons.

"We'll have a campaign this year, activated at each garrison to highlight our programs to our Soldiers and family members," said Col. Anthony Cox, director of the IMCOM Family Advocacy Program, or FAP. "Our goal is to help them capitalize on their strengths to make their domestic situation a success."

The Family Advocacy Program is a congressionally mandated program intended to prevent and reduce the occurrence of family violence and create an environment of intolerance for such behavior.

"Family advocacy is the art of bringing public awareness about family violence and prevention techniques to our Soldiers and spouses," said Novella Magwood, IMCOM family advocacy specialist and program manager for domestic violence awareness month. "We have in our program the ability to help before a situation escalates into violence."

For Soldiers and family members involved in domestic violence, early referral and intervention reduces risk, establishes safety plans and provides treatment for victims and offenders. The program manager is trained to be proactive in their efforts to provide the skills the Soldier needs most.

"We offer classes, such as anger management, financial counseling and new parent training," said Magwood. "Many times we'll get a request from the commander to go directly to the unit to conduct FAP training. This puts us in a position to meet the Soldiers and get the feedback we need to assist one-on-one."

Referrals work both ways. Family advocates work through outreach to assess a situation and refer the Soldier or couple to an Army Community Service- or chaplain-led class, or to professional licensed therapists at the on-post

medical treatment facility.

"Post-traumatic stress is a problem and it can become a heavy burden on the family," said Magwood. "Soldiers are encouraged to seek out help through their chain of command, but many times we see it in family advocacy first. We are an extra pair of eyes that can steer a Soldier in the right direction for the help they need."

Family advocacy works best when the Soldiers or family members come to the counselors early -- before things get out of hand, and the police or command has to get involved. Programs include home visits, couples communication and/or parenting classes, anger management, parent support, child classes and education.

The Chaplain Family Life Centers and Family Advocacy treatment providers at the on-post medical treatment facilities offer marital and family therapy. These voluntary programs are designed to help the families cope with stress, isolation, deployment issues and parenthood.

"One of our best customers is the expectant mother before she gives birth," said Magwood. "This is the time to get her and the father into a class together and teach them what they will face when baby comes home. Through the New Parent Support Program, often we can help set the mood and the tempo in the home and really engage the father in the parenting process."

"I remember when I was first married and, frankly, we had the usual growing pains," said Cox. "We actually did some counseling and learned to identify our own differences in communication. We realized that often tears or words spoken in frustration don't need to be taken personally. This type of counseling helped me and my wife early in our marriage."

Two issues that often contribute to domestic violence is finances and communication. For example, a young Soldier who has just PCS'd to their new permanent assignment can get into financial trouble quickly.

"They're young and maybe have money in their account for the first time in their lives. The temptation to spend on recreation or vanity items is too great for many," said Magwood. "If the couple is not communicating directly about managing money and credit cards, often the

Here are some facts about Domestic Violence as provided by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence:

## Did You Know...?

- 1** in every **4** women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.
- An estimated **1.3 million** women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.
- Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police.
- 85%** of domestic violence victims are women.
- Females who are **20-24** years of age are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence.
- Historically, females have been most often victimized by **someone they knew**.

## Children who Witness

- Witnessing violence between one's parents or caretakers is the **strongest risk factor** of transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next.
- 30% to 60%** of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household.
- Boys who witness domestic violence are **twice as likely** to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.

## Economic Impact

- Victims of intimate partner violence lost almost **8 million days of paid work** because of the violence perpetrated against them by current or former husbands, boyfriends and dates.
- This loss is the equivalent of **more than 32,000 full-time jobs** and almost **5.6 million days** of household productivity as a result of violence.
- The cost of intimate partner violence exceeds **\$5.8 billion** each year, **\$4.1 billion** of which is for direct medical and mental health services.
- There are **16,800 homicides** and **\$2.2 million** (medically treated) injuries due to intimate partner violence annually, which costs \$37 billion.

Fort Gordon Family and MWR  
**FYI**<sup>+</sup>  
 www.fortgordonfyi.com

SOURCE: www.ncadv.org  
 DESIGNER: Nathan Hoeller



discussion turns to shouting. We can teach how to prioritize the money and find ways to save.”

One major barrier to effective communication is when frustration turns to anger, and anger may lead to domestic violence. The Parenting and Healthy Marriage Program utilizes the ScreamFree Parenting and Marriage classes and training to provide education and awareness on effective parenting strategies, enhancing interpersonal relationships within the family and anxiety and stress reduction.

“ScreamFree training is designed to help identify the triggers for elevated communication failures,” said Magwood. “ScreamFree helps make better parents and healthier

couples. We’ve received such positive feedback that we are expanding the classes to include teenagers.”

Whether a Soldier asks first, or the commander instigates the contact, family advocacy is a stigma-free zone.

“No one is judged here because we are here to help,” said Magwood. “All I want is for that family to be successful. We can be the glue that helps get a family together to figure it all out.”

“Soldiers fear that others will think badly of them or that their commander will take action against them,” said Cox. “In fact, the biggest stigma is seeing themselves as broken or dam-

aged. Sometimes it takes a buddy to tell us ‘you guys are having problems and need to get help.’ If you hear that from your buddy, my advice is to go see the chaplain or go to ACS to get the help you need.”

The nation’s support for this campaign starts in the hollows and plains and rises to the top of the hill.

“In our military families, we see the best our country has to offer,” said President Barack Obama. “They demonstrate the virtues that have made America great for more than two centuries and the values that will preserve our greatness for centuries to come.” **gt**

## Recognize, Report, Prevent Domestic Violence

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence defines domestic violence as “the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another. It is an epidemic affecting individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion, nationality or educational background.”

Violence against women is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior, and thus is part of a systematic pattern of dominance and control. Domestic violence results in physical injury, psychological trauma, and sometimes death. The consequences of domestic violence can cross generations and truly last a lifetime.”

Every October, Army communities review their commitment to prevent domestic violence. Educational efforts are renewed, and campaigns roll out to inform the Army community about the variety of ways to strengthen families and prevent the abuse that has the potential to affect women and men from childhood to their elder years.

The long-term effects of domestic violence, as well as the short-term and immediate suffering, still afflict thousands each year. The strength of the U.S. Army relies heavily on the strength of its Army Families. By using the resources provided, to include educational resources

and counseling services, we lessen the impact caused by domestic violence; fewer situations develop to the point of critical; and relationships are more mature, healthy and supportive.

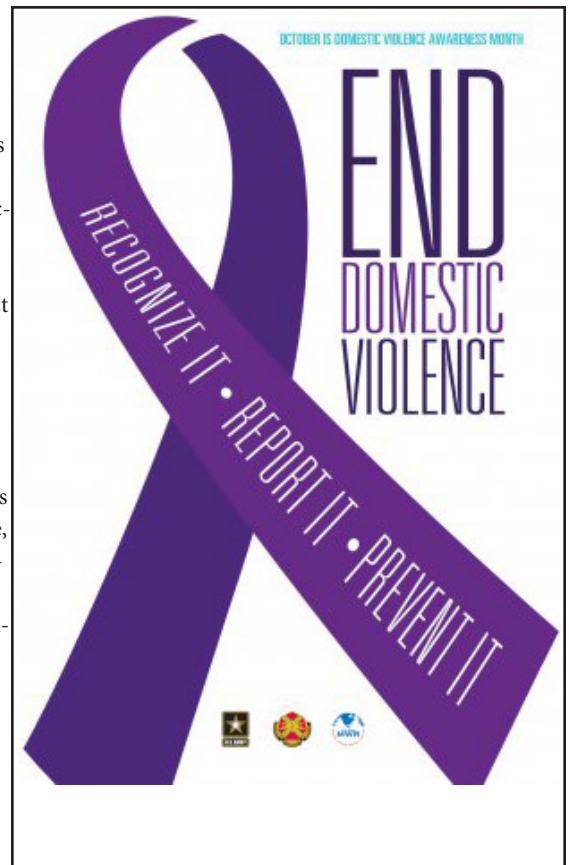
“Family advocacy is the art of bringing public awareness about family violence and prevention techniques to our Soldiers and spouses. We have in our program the ability to help before a situation escalates into violence.”

-- Novella Magwood, IMCOM family advocacy specialist --

Utilizing available resources often depends on a family’s willingness to examine their beliefs about their respective roles in the family, their commitment to save their relationship, an acceptance of their responsibility to provide a happy and safe childhood for their children, and a willingness to work within the limitations imposed by their physical and mental health status.

Call 706-791-4380 to report domestic violence. Restricted reports can be made to

victim advocates, health care professionals and chaplains. Other contacts: National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-7233; National Sexual Assault Hotline, 800-656-4673; National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline: 866-331-9474.





## Inspector General's Corner

# Leaders Must Own Processes and Problems

Commentary By Col. Darren Sears, Inspector General

As we close out the Fiscal Year 2013 Inspector General (IG) case files, I want to summarize some of the main issues we've seen.

I'd like you to think about potential solutions that will help move us forward as an organization. I'm not advocating for a single solution, and I think it's important for our smart New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen to figure out the answers. However, one thing I'd ask you to consider is ownership, and I'll get to that shortly.

For Fiscal Year 2013, the Joint Force Headquarters Inspector General Office worked 383 Army National Guard cases and 40 Air National Guard cases; that's a 38 percent increase from the previous year on the Army side, and no change on the Air side. The over one-third increase on the Army is due to a spike in issues related to Hurricane Sandy, some issues during Afghanistan deployments and a rise in problems adjudicating programs like the Student Loan Repayment Program, the State Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Repayment Program, and various bonus programs. We also saw a consistently high number of cases related to Line of Duty (LOD) determination processing and medical board issues. The one com-

mon thread in most of these issues was that a process broke down. There was no single point of failure, but instead, there was a breakdown at some point in the process that caused an action to not get fully completed.

Whether the topic is promotions, bonuses, LODs, or state active-duty pay, it's not a bad process that is the problem. It's that somewhere along the line the process breaks down and doesn't get back on track until someone gets involved in correcting the problem. Too often, when we look into an issue that involves process, we hear, "it's not us who is responsible for making the process work, it's those guys;" or "it's not us, the problem is with the Soldier or Airman;" or "it's a directorate or NGB's fault." There is no ownership of the process. It's always someone else's fault or problem. That's not a good thing when you think about what makes a process run smoothly. The best run processes have someone or a group of some ones who are responsible for seeing that process through to completion.

Ownership may exist at multiple levels. A Soldier or Airman may be responsible for making sure their records are up-to-date, and

for getting required documents to a unit in a complete and timely manner. The unit may be responsible for owning tracking of the process, and when a unit representative sees a problem, that representative engages in an appropriate fix action. Ownership may also exist at a single level; a directorate, as an example. In that case, that single entity is responsible for ensuring initiation, tracking, thoroughness, timeliness, and completion of the process. We need to stop pointing fingers and do away with the thought that action passed equals action complete. We need to take ownership. This probably applies to a lot more than processes, but I'll leave that for another time. In the meantime, think about how to make our processes run smoothly. Our organization and our Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians will be better off for it. Take ownership.

As always, the IG is your resource to adjudicate your issues. However, please make sure that the chain of command is aware of the issue, and give your chain the opportunity to resolve it. Lastly, keep doing the right thing. The New York National Guard has a reputation for dedicated and professional service to our State and Nation. Let's make sure we keep that going strong.

## Fiscal 2013 was Army's Safest Year

By Julie Shelley, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

Fiscal year 2013 was the Army's safest year to date, according to end-of-year data recently released by the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center.

Accidental fatalities declined nine percent between fiscal years 2012 and 2013, falling to an all-time low of 137 losses. The previous benchmark was set in fiscal year 1997, when 150 Soldiers were killed in accidents.

"This is an outstanding accomplishment for our leaders and Soldiers," said Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Edens, director of Army Safety and commanding general, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. "It not only testifies to their safety commitment and leadership at all levels across the Army, but also strengthens evidence that we are moving in the right direction."

On duty, accidental losses fell six percent from 2012, continuing a years-long downward trend in

work-related deaths. The drop in off-duty fatalities was even more impressive, with a 17 percent reduction that was more than double last year's decline. A marked drop in fatal private motor vehicle accidents, historically the leading accidental killer of Soldiers, was largely responsible for this success.

The 40 percent decline in sedan deaths and 15 percent decrease in motorcycle fatalities, the latter coming after a three-year upward trend, validates steps the Army has taken in recent years to combat these losses, said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Stidley, USACR/Safety Center.

"We can't overstate how important this is for our PMV safety programs," Stidley said. "More Soldiers are home now than in at least the previous 10 years, so that means greater exposure to the hazards of driving and riding. Engaged leadership, Soldiers looking out for one another

and better training opportunities are making a real difference."

While most accident categories experienced double-digit reductions throughout fiscal year 2013, water-related fatalities were up 225 percent from the previous year. Seven Soldiers drowned during the last quarter alone.

"Boating and drowning deaths tend to rise during the third and fourth quarters every year because that's when Soldiers are on the water most," Edens said. "While this isolated cluster of incidents doesn't necessarily indicate a trend, it and the rash of ATV accidents we experienced earlier this year show we can't let down our guard, no matter how well we're doing in the big picture."

While 2013 was a banner year for safety, senior Army leaders called for a further 10 percent reduction in fatal accidents in the 2014 Army Safety and Occupational Health Objectives.





## Aviation Brigade Training

*FORT DRUM -- Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) conduct dismounted exercises here in August. The exercises were part of the training brigade troops completed for their deployment to Kuwait (see "Aviation Soldiers Prepare for Desert Deployment," page 22). Photo by 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs.*





# Military Personnel News: the MILPO Corner

## Administrative News

**MILPO Change.** Col. Theresa VanCort, who served as the director of military personnel since 2010, has been selected as Deputy G-1 for the Army National Guard and leaves the MILPO position to bring her experience to the National Guard Bureau. Lt. Col. Steven M. Rowe, the former New York Army National Guard recruiting and retention manager, is the new MILPO.

**Hazing.** The physical and mental injuries of hazing damages the force's medical readiness, destroys trust and cohesion among Soldiers, and erodes the foundation of Army Values and Warrior Ethos. More information can be found at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-120666>

**Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) guidebook.** The SHARP guidebook is a company-level reference tool for company commanders, Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, and family members to use in sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention and response efforts. The guidebook consolidates current Army and DoD policy and recent SHARP program directives. It is asked that S1s and leaders assist in disseminating this guidebook to all company-level leaders. The guidebook can be found online at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-120165>.

## Soldier Support, Resiliency and Readiness

**New Comprehensive Resilience Modules.** Two new Comprehensive Resilience Modules -- Resilience and the Army Profession and Concerned About a Friend -- can be accessed from the Soldier Fitness Tracker. More information can be found online at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-121559>.

**Give an Hour: Improving Personnel Readiness One Hour at a Time.** The Army National Guard G1's office has identified the need to focus on all aspects of readiness, including emotional readiness. Give an Hour, a counseling resource, encourages the well-being of those seeking support services, helps Soldiers and their families develop healthy coping mechanisms and assists with referrals to other needed medical services. The program also offers them free counseling services in places where they feel they can safely discuss their fears, troubles

and issues. Founded in 2005, Give an Hour is a non-profit national network of nearly 7,000 volunteer licensed health professionals, based in all states, plus Washington, D.C., Guam, and Puerto Rico. It's currently geared to meeting the needs of those affected by the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. For more information, visit [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org). If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the Military Crisis Line at (800) 273-8255 and press 1.

**Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) Duties.** The NYARNG Guidance Pertaining to Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) Duty Roster memorandum was published Sept. 18, 2013. This memorandum placed a policy and duty roster into effect on the first of October.

A CNO has four hours or less to prepare his or her uniform, meet with the Chaplain, memorize the script, and notify the next of kin. It is imperative that primary and secondary CNOs are ready to do this at any time. CNOs must stay within a 50-mile radius of their coverage area, have their Army Service Uniform available, and answer their phones 24/7. Soldiers with any upcoming conflicts (leave, TDY, going out of town, etc.) should let Casualty Affairs Coordinator 1st Lt. Katie Kurtz know as soon as possible. Soldiers on the duty roster are designated by their unit for a specific area of coverage. On the first duty day of the month, Kurtz will contact primary and secondary CNOs to verify contact numbers and availability. For questions about the new policy and duty roster, contact Kurtz at (518) 270-1542 or [katie.l.kurtz.mil@mail.mil](mailto:katie.l.kurtz.mil@mail.mil).

**Survivor Outreach Services (SOS).** Nothing reflects the Army's dedication to those who have given the ultimate sacrifice more than the service and care provided to families they've left behind. The SOS program is a "One Army" Program that serves as the long-term support portion of the overall Army casualty continuum of care. Active Army, United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard support coordinators and financial counselors work as a team to provide dedicated and comprehensive support services to all surviving family members. The branch chief for the SOS program is 1st Lt. Katie Kurtz, and she's available at (518) 270-1542. The regional SOS coordinators are Bonnie Deiter, Albany, (518) 270-1541; Dan

Arena, Syracuse, (315) 438-3301; Raul Lopez, lower Hudson Valley, New York City and Long Island region, based at Camp Smith, (914) 944-6580.

## Medical Readiness

**State Surgeons Office Update.** The flu vaccine is expected by the end of October, so units should be planning vaccinations for mid October through December Drills. Vaccine requests should be coordinated through GO-COMs to Staff Sgt. Bibeau and Staff Sgt. Herbst at MEDCOM Supply. All AGR Soldiers should get their flu vaccination through a TRICARE provider, military treatment facility or participating pharmacy. Flu documentation should be scanned to [Michael.t.herbst@mail.mil](mailto:Michael.t.herbst@mail.mil).

**Returning Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) Soldiers.** All returning WTU Soldiers shall report and turn in all their medical documentation, profiles and medical dispositions to their unit case manager when released from active duty.

Robin Hampel (Machattie), [robin.j.hampel.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:robin.j.hampel.ctr@mail.mil), is the case manager for the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade and JFHQ.

Patricia Hopson, [patricia.a.hopson10.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:patricia.a.hopson10.ctr@mail.mil), is the case manager for the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Tindara Marcklinger, [tindara.p.marcklinger.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:tindara.p.marcklinger.ctr@mail.mil), is the case manager for the 53rd Troop Command.

For questions about Behavioral Health, contact Emily Colton, [emily.l.colton.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:emily.l.colton.ctr@mail.mil).

All TRICARE Members covered under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Under the ACA, also known as the health care reform law, everyone is required to maintain basic health care coverage, or "minimum essential coverage." Beginning in 2014, those without minimum essential coverage will be required to pay a fee for each month that they lack coverage.

Service members covered under TRICARE meet the minimum essential coverage requirement. If you're using any of the TRICARE plans, including Prime/Remote, Standard, Overseas, Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP) or if you've purchased Reserve Select, Retired Reserve, Young Adult, or Continued Health Care Benefit Program, you have the coverage required by the health



care reform law.

Also, Service members enrolled in other Veteran's health care program or VA Civilian Health and Medical Programs are also covered under the health care law. Veterans may have dependents who are not eligible for a VA health care program, and these dependents may require additional coverage.

The Health Insurance Marketplace is a new way to ensure that you're getting the most affordable coverage that meets the need of you and your family. You can use the Health Insurance Marketplace to compare TRICARE's purchased plan options with other purchase plans that may be available to you. The Health Insurance Marketplace started open enrollment on Oct. 1, 2013 with coverage beginning as early as Jan. 1, 2014. Search online or call (800) 318-2596 to learn more.

If you are interested in purchasing a TRICARE plan, more information regarding open enrollment and costs can be found at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil), or by calling 877-TRICARE.

### Education and Promotions

**Post 9/11 GI Bill Transferability.** Effective August 1, 2013, Soldiers who wish to transfer Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits will incur a four-year service obligation. Temporary rules which allowed certain Soldiers to take advantage of reduced service obligations have now expired.

To transfer benefits, visit <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>.

**New FEDREC System.** Per NGB guidance, effective Oct. 9, 2013, OPM is using the new E-Tracker-HRP system to send federal recognition packets to NGB. The new system replaced the FEDREC Packet system through GKO. This

change will have minimal effect on units and officers. However, it will change the process for tracking FEDREC actions sent to NGB. Instead of the current status tracker system, NGB will post a report on GKO weekly showing the status of actions.

Fiscal Year 2014 DA Board Schedule					
Board	UVP to NGB	Zone	Deadline to OPM	Convene	Recess
MAJ CHPLN	6 Jul 13	31 Aug 08	1 Nov 13	3 Dec 13	6 Dec 13
LTC CHPLN	6 Jul 13	30 Jun 08	1 Nov 13	3 Dec 13	6 Dec 13
COL APL	12 Jul 13	30 Sep 08	1 Dec 13	8 Jan 14	28 Jan 13
LTC APL	16 Aug 13	31 Mar 09	6 Dec 13	13 Jan 14	30 Jan 14
CPT AMEDD	25 Aug 13	31 Aug 10	10 Dec 13	22 Jan 14	12 Feb 14
MAJ AMEDD	25 Aug 13	31 Aug 08	10 Dec 13	22 Jan 14	12 Feb 14
LTC AMEDD	8 Sep 13	31 Mar 09	9 Dec 13	5 Feb 14	19 Feb 14
MAJ APL	11 Oct 13	31 Aug 08	20 Jan 14	10 Mar 14	28 Mar 14
COL CHPLN	12 Sep 13	31 Mar 09	27 Jan 14	11 Mar 14	14 Mar 14
COL AMEDD	19 Sep 13	31 Jan 10	27 Jan 14	18 Mar 14	28 Mar 14



## Troops Up to Task for P90X Training

*NEW YORK -- New York Army National Guard Soldiers and some 40 members of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard take part in a P90X workout with Tony Horton from Beach Body Fitness aboard the Intrepid Air and Space Museum here Sept. 4. Horton also provided a healthy-living discussion for the troops. The Soldiers are (from left) Sgt. Phillip McIntire, Company B, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry; Sgt. Nyan Reynolds, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 369th Sustainment Brigade; and Capt. Osvoldo Lopez, 187th Signal Company. Photo by Master Sgt. Dean Welch, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs.*





**The discipline to  
give up your keys ...**

**Have a designated  
driver before you  
can't see the signs .**

**The signs are all around  
- it's up to YOU to recognize  
and act on them.**



U.S. ARMY

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<https://safety.army.mil>



# Preventing and Treating Cold Weather Injuries

By Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Austin, Joint Force Headquarters

Winter weather is just around the corner, and so is the potential for cold weather injuries like frostbite and hypothermia.

When working in cold weather, remember the C-O-L-D: keep it Clean, avoid Overheating, dress in Layers, keep clothing Dry. Dressing in layers preserves air space between the body and the outer layer of clothing, which in turn helps retain body heat.

Wetness greatly increases the chance of hypothermia, so always have extra clothing available if there's a chance you could get wet. Keep your feet and hands dry because they are very susceptible to frostbite.

A proper diet provides nutrients needed to withstand hypothermia, but a restrictive diet may prevent the body from working well in cold temperatures.

Frostbite occurs when cold temperatures freeze skin and other body tissues. Extremities, such as fingers, toes, nose and ears are most at risk. Frostbite accounts for the largest number of cold-weather related injuries in the Army, which suffered about 130 frostbite cases in each of the last five years. Frostbite symp-

toms include tingling – often called “pins and needles” sensations -- which may be followed by numbness and pain. The skin may look pale and become hard.

Rubbing or pouring water on frostbitten areas can damage them. Instead, move the frostbite patient to a warm, dry area and remove wet or tight clothing and dip affected limbs in warm water. Do not make the water hot; tissues should be warmed slowly. After normal feeling returns, lightly dry and cover the affected areas to keep them warm, and seek medical attention to ensure no further damage has been done.

Hypothermia, one of winter's deadliest hazards, creeps in under the right conditions. The body tries to warm itself by shivering, and constant shivering is a key sign of hypothermia. However, the body will eventually stop shivering as hypothermia sets in. Other symptoms of moderate to severe hypothermia include clumsiness, slurred speech, stumbling, confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness, weak pulse and slow, shallow breathing. A hypothermia victim may not be aware of it because of the confusion it causes, and because other

symptoms often begin gradually.

In case of hypothermia, call for emergency medical assistance immediately. While waiting for help to arrive, monitor the victim's breathing. If breathing stops or seems dangerously slow or shallow, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation immediately. Move the victim indoors and out of the cold. If that isn't possible, shield the victim from the wind, cover the head and insulate the individual from the cold ground. Replace wet clothing with warm, dry coverings.

Don't try to warm the victim with direct heat such as hot water, heating pads or heating lamps. Instead, apply warm compresses to the central body areas such as the head, neck, chest and groin. Don't attempt to warm the arms and legs -- that will force cold blood back toward the heart, lungs and brain, and cause body's core temperature to drop. This can be fatal.

Don't give the victim alcohol. Offer warm non-alcoholic drinks, unless the person is vomiting. Don't massage or rub the person. Handle people with hypothermia gently because their skin may be frostbitten.

Wind Chill Temperature Table

Wind Speed (mph) ↓	Air Temperature (°F)																	
	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
0	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77
20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81
25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	25	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84
30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87
35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89
40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91
45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93
50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95

LITTLE DANGER                      INCREASED DANGER                      GREAT DANGER

RISK OF FROSTBITE (see times on chart below)

- GREEN            LITTLE DANGER (frostbite occurs in >2 hours in dry, exposed skin)
- YELLOW        INCREASED DANGER (frostbite could occur in 45 minutes or less in dry, exposed skin)
- RED              GREAT DANGER (frostbite could occur in 5 minutes or less in dry, exposed skin)

## NY National Guard tests Homeland Response Force

Story by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters

Photos by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

VALHALLA -- Nearly 600 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from New York and New Jersey joined forces at the Westchester County Division of Emergency Services Fire Training Center here in August to practice techniques they would implement when called to assist first responders and health officials.

It was a simulated catastrophe, but it was taken seriously by the Homeland Response Force (HRF) Soldiers and Airmen whose mission is to detect, identify, assess and render-safe an area exposed to hazardous materials and decontaminate people and property exposed to chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) materials resulting from an attack or incident.

The HRF consists of troops with expertise in the search and extraction of disaster victims, incident site security, decontamination, medical



New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the search and extraction element of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) enterprise evaluate a simulated casualty during a disaster-response exercise at the Westchester County Fire Training Center, Valhalla in August.

treatment and command and control.

“The scenario is a train derailment with a chemical spill, but regardless of the type of incident, our team is ready to step in and assist local responders,” said Maj. Fred McCoy, the

New York National Guard’s CBRN deputy commander.

Past scenarios for training the emergency responders have included earthquakes, truck chemical spills, and terrorist attacks on buildings.

The individual scenario may vary but the skills the team’s Soldiers and Airmen use remain the same, McCoy said.

Each element of the team goes through

specialized training and conducts individual training exercises throughout the year. According to McCoy, the HRF exercise enabled all components of the team to come together and practice as one entity.

The exercise was designed to foster increased dialogue between regional firstresponders and other state and federal response agencies.

For members of the 1156th Engineer Company, located in Kingston, the exercise gave them an opportunity to exchange techniques and procedures for extracting and evacuating casualties with Westchester County firefighters, McCoy said.

“During a real incident it’s likely we will be working side-by-side local responders, so learning how they operate is as important as practicing what we do,” McCoy said.

Additional members of the HRF include:

- The 104th Military Police Battalion Headquarters based in Kingston, N.Y., who provide command of the CBRN response elements at



CBRN enterprise troops prepare their team members for duties on the decontamination line during the disaster-response exercise.



the incident site;

- A decontamination element from the 222nd Chemical Company, based at Fort Hamilton, N.Y., who are augmented by volunteer members of the New York Guard's 88th Brigade, based primarily in New York City;
- And Medical personnel from various New York Air National Guard units which handle the triage and transfer of casualties for civilian medical treatment.

The New Jersey National Guard's 328th Military Police Company from Cherry Hill, N.J. the 253rd Transportation Company from Cape May Court House, N.J., the 108th Air Refueling Wing from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. and the 177th Fighter Wing from Egg Harbor Township, N.J. provided the security forces for the Homeland Response Force.

Another 200 Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters, based in Troy, N.Y. handle mission command and logistics tasks for the force.

During the exercise, they set up a command post nearby at the New York National Guard's Camp Smith Training Site in Cortlandt Manor.

The HRF is aligned with Region II of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, supporting efforts in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The unit provides governors with a response capability to assist civilian first responders in saving lives and mitigating suffering in response to a chemical, radiological or biological incident.

"Training our Soldiers and first responders before a disaster strikes is a top priority when it

comes to keeping New Yorkers safe," Governor Andrew M. Cuomo said.

"Recent years have shown us the need to prepare for the unthinkable or unlikely, and exercises like this are an important step toward building a world-class emergency response network that is ready for any crisis," Cuomo added.

The National Guard sourced HRF is one of ten units established by the Department of Defense to assist or relieve state officials and local first responders in dealing CBRN attacks and incidents across the United States.

The team trains under Defense Department guidelines to respond within a 6-12 hour window to local authorities after a CBRNE or other hazardous materials incident requiring assistance from federal military resources. **gt**



Soldiers from the search and extraction element of the CBRN enterprise evacuate a simulated casualty during the disaster-response exercise.

# High-flying Troops Help Keep Streets Drug-free

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, New York Counterdrug Task Force Public Affairs

SCOTIA -- Aviation troops of Detachment 2, Company A, 1-224th Aviation Security and Support Battalion are using their flying skills to help police agencies shred the illicit drug trade in New York state.

Flying high in their UH-72A Lakota helicopters, the Latham-based troops, who are part of the New York Counterdrug Task Force, help law-enforcement agents (LEAs) find and eradicate illegal narcotics.

As of Aug. 23, the task force has supported the seizure of more than 8,300 pounds of drugs in the 2013 fiscal year, including cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, marijuana and methamphetamine. Counterdrug troops also helped destroy over 3,000 pounds of cultivated marijuana, which had a street value of more than \$12.5 million.

"We support local law enforcement, whether it be local county sheriffs, the Drug Enforcement Administration, state police...any type of law enforcement agency that gives a request through the Counterdrug office, we can sup-

port for a number of things," one of the unit pilots explained.

Their aircraft are well-suited for the job.

"The aircraft seats about five people in the back," said the pilot. "It also has a great open cockpit and cabin, so aerial reconnaissance is very easy in this aircraft because of the good panoramic view that we have."

The helicopter also has a search light capable of lighting up a football field, and forward-looking infrared cameras which allow pilots to see clearly day and night. While the troops support law enforcement agencies with a variety of aerial reconnaissance missions, their primary mission during Autumn harvest season is marijuana eradication.

"This is when you can really start to see the plants," said the pilot. "We'll pick up a law enforcement agent (LEA) and bring them up in their respective jurisdiction areas. We go around to either points they are familiar with, or points they have gotten tips from, and we basically just look on the ground for marijuana."

Crews use the cameras' infrared powers to spot marijuana plots, or zoom in close to confirm suspected marijuana plants.

"If we see it, we either mark it for eradication at a later time or we talk to LEAs on the ground and lead them to where it is. LEAs will then pull it and destroy it."

Some days yield nothing, but on other days, crews find exactly what they've been looking for, and sometimes more.

"A lot of people are moving their plants inside," said another pilot. "But when we do find fields of marijuana, just like that, someone's annual income is gone."

The troops' support to law enforcement agencies hasn't gone unnoticed.

"They really appreciate us coming out to aid in their role to keep their counties clean," said the pilot. "We're helping them keep drugs off the street and out of schools, and they love when we are able to come out. It's a very good relationship." **gt**



Counterdrug aviation Soldiers fly a UH-72A Lakota on a search for marijuana plants. A Rensselaer County law enforcement agent is also on board. If found, the marijuana is either marked for eradication at a later time, or ground support is called in to destroy it.



# Eyes Over Lake Ontario

By Lt. Col. Maureen Murphy and Master Sgt. Kevin Colbert, 174th Attack Wing

**HANCOCK FIELD, SYRACUSE -- In exercises involving U.S. and Canadian forces, New York National Guard Airmen have shown that MQ-9 Reaper remotely-piloted aircraft can play a key role in a variety of international or domestic emergency operations -- over land or water.**

The airmen, who belong to the Syracuse-based 174th Attack Wing and 274th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS), used the MQ-9 Reapers to provide critical scenario-based information to the U.S. Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Air Force during evacuation and anti-terrorist exercises in and around Lake Ontario last August.

In addition to demonstrating the MQ-9's capabilities in an interagency and international search-and-rescue environment, the exercises gave more maritime training to the Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) of the 274th ASOS.

"The integration of the MQ-9 into this scenario made perfect sense," said Master Sgt. Josh Dewese, chief JTAC instructor, 274th ASOS. "It provided the requisite guidance as to the disposition of both hostile and friendly forces,

greatly accelerating our ability to respond to the situation."

The evacuation exercise called for the movement of non-combatants from a ground site to a seaport site, simulated by Hancock Field and the Oswego Coast Guard Station on Lake Ontario. Rally Point contractors, who support the MQ-9 training program, acted as the evacuees.

Aircrews from the 174th Attack Wing flew MQ-9s to overwatch the evacuation route and keep the evacuees and ground forces apprised of potential threats. The exercise allowed the aircrews to patrol the expanded special-use airspace over and around Hancock Field, a more realistic environment for training.

At the seaport evacuation site, the evacuees and JTACs from 274th ASOS air-ground controllers boarded the Coast Guard's 47-foot motor lifeboat. As the Coast Guard transported the role players out onto Lake Ontario's waters to complete the evacuation, the air-ground controllers acted as liaisons between the Coast Guard crew and 174th aircrews, who were continuing their overwatch role.

New York Naval Militia crews provided the simulated seaborne threat to add realism to the

training.

The second scenario involved a simulated terrorist bomb attack at a public event. Role players, acting as terrorists, hijacked recreational boats, forced their owners overboard and tried to escape across Lake Ontario.

As civilian emergency medical and law enforcement personnel responded to save lives and capture the attackers, the incident commander asked the U.S. military for aerial imagery, to include full-motion video.

Using the MQ-9s' optics and extended flight time, 174th Attack Wing aircrews found the attackers and their escape route, then relayed that crucial information to Coast Guard and other law enforcement personnel. They also located the overboard boaters for the search-and-rescue (SAR) forces from the 424 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force, who responded with a hoist-equipped CH-146 Griffon helicopter and a C-130 Hercules. Leaping from the C-130, SAR technicians parachuted into Lake Ontario and quickly extracted the simulated victims.

During the exercises, the 174th Attack Wing's Mobile Emergency Operations Center captured MQ-9 video and sent it to the New York National Guard Joint Operations Center, showing the unit's ability to provide up-to-date information to incident commanders during natural disasters.

Sharing of real-time information to responders adds to their ability to coordinate their response, which was also demonstrated by the use of MQ-1 Predators during the response to California wild fires last summer.

The event was the brainchild of Lt. Col. Patrick Cox, 274th ASOS commander, who led a similar training event for the unit in 2012.

"The addition of the Canadian forces was a unique opportunity to further blend otherwise disparate units into a single mission-cohesive force," Cox said. "We have proven that the MQ-9 is an enormously valuable tool in support of maritime forces. Training like this demonstrates the evolving and indispensable role of Air Force JTACs and remotely-piloted aircraft across a broad spectrum of joint operations, from tactical operations to civil support operations."gt



Royal Canadian Air Force Search-and-Rescue technicians are hoisted back aboard a CH-146 Griffon helicopter during a joint-training exercise hosted by the New York Air National Guard's 174th Attack Wing in August. Photo by Lt. Col. Maureen Murphy, 174th Attack Wing.



# Soldier's 9/11 Walk Gives Vets a leg up

By Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta Joint Force Headquarters

FORT DRUM -- New York Army National Guard Sgt. Glenn Follett has served his country around the world, and now he's walked the distance to commemorate 9/11 and help his fellow veterans.

Follett, 44, of Baldwinsville, N.Y., raised about \$1,200 for the Wounded Warrior Project by walking from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse, N.Y. to Fort Drum -- roughly 85 miles -- from Sept. 7 to Sept. 11. The Wounded Warrior Project helps injured veterans.

Follett's five-day march fulfilled a commitment which began roughly a year before, when he was serving with B Company, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, in Afghanistan. The unit operates Shadow RQ-7 unmanned reconnaissance aircraft, and was deployed to south east Afghanistan from April to December, 2012.

A Fredonia, N.Y. native, Follett is also a veteran of the first Gulf War and Somalia, and was a volunteer firefighter for the Moyers Corners, N.Y., Fire Department. These things make him feel especially connected to the losses of 9/11, he said.

He usually spent 9/11 attending a memorial ceremony, and in recent years he found himself reminding young people about the significance of that day, Follett said. Those encounters

made him emotional, he added.

"That would break my heart, if we ever forgot that day," he said.

In Afghanistan, he and his fellow unit members chalked that date, and other 9/11 mottos like "FDNY," "let's roll" and "never forget," on the unit's Shadow RQ-7s. The tour went well, which is a testament to the unit members, Follett said.

But Sept. 11, 2012 found Follett out on the flight line at dawn, launching a Shadow, as usual. As the sun rose over the mountains and the Shadow took flight, Follett reflected on the date, and the fact that he was finally in Afghanistan, doing his part to fight terrorism.

Though it was the culmination of substantial training and effort, Follett felt oddly unfulfilled.

"I thought, 'OK, this is cool, but what the heck am I going to do next year?'" he recalled. The thought nagged at him during the rest of the deployment and beyond, he said.

Then one day he read about Adam Shatarsky and Chris Senopole, former U.S. Marines who are walking across America to pay homage to the country's service members and raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project.

Inspired, Follett decided to do his own walk. He established



New York Army National Guard Sgt. Glenn Follett pauses for a photo before pushing on to a memorial ceremony at Fort Drum, N.Y., Sept. 11. Follett walked about 85 miles from Syracuse N.Y. to commemorate the 9-11 attacks and raise money for the Wounded Warrior project. Photo courtesy of Sgt. Glenn Follett.

Facebook and donation pages on the internet, selected a route then scouted it by driving the entire way.

He compiled a risk assessment and reviewed the course with his commander, who approved it, Follett said. His goal was to arrive in time for a ceremony being held at the 9-11 memorial near Fort Drum's Clark Hall around 8 a.m., Sept. 11, he explained.

On Sept. 7, Follett picked up an American flag, shouldered his backpack, set out and, according to plan, reached Central Square, N.Y. that day. He surpassed his second-day goal and walked as far as Henderson, N.Y., the next day and reached Watertown, N.Y., the day after that, he said.

Drivers honked and cheered for him as he walked the course, Follett said.

He spent the fourth day with a friend in Watertown, recovering for the final 10-mile leg to Fort Drum on Sept. 11, he said. The next day he started out at about 3:40 a.m., and a Black River police officer he knew escorted him to the Fort Drum gate.

**"I think just serving isn't enough. Sometimes you've got to do a bit more. We're not only serving as soldiers. We're serving as community members."**

-- New York Army National Guard Sgt. Glenn Follett

On Sept. 7, Follett picked up an American flag, shouldered



Sgt. Glenn Follett poses for a photo while preparing to launch a Shadow RQ-7 unmanned reconnaissance aircraft in Afghanistan on Sept. 11, 2012.

**Continued on Page 29**



# NY National Guard Experiences Part of 9-11 Exhibit

Story and photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

NEW YORK -- The ground zero experiences of some New York National Guard Soldiers are featured in a new online exhibit, "The National Guard: Stories of September 11th told by those who were there."

The 9/11 Tribute Center released the exhibit as part of the commemoration of the 12th anniversary of the terror attacks of September 11th. This interactive web exhibit (<http://tributewtc.org/oralhistory/nationalguard>) documents the National Guard's response to the attacks.

The public, educators and students can now see and hear stories from five Soldiers who searched through the smoldering debris for survivors, a Soldier who secured the perimeter of the site, a Soldier who conducted biological testing of the area, Soldiers who protected nuclear power plants, bridges and roads, and Soldiers who went on to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I spent nine months working the recovery at the World Trade Center site, and National Guard Soldiers gave me a sense of comfort during times of great turmoil," said Lee Ielpi, president and co-founder of the Tribute Center. "The importance of the National Guard can be summed up in a few words: service, valor and patriotism. Tribute is proud to present a web exhibit that will help the public and students better understand the role of the National Guard on 9/11 and in the aftermath of the attacks."

The first members of the U.S. military to recognize that something was wrong the morning of Sept. 11, 2001 were members of the New York Air National Guard Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome, N.Y. By nightfall, hundreds of local Soldiers responded without formal orders to help first responders at ground zero while thousands of additional troops were in position throughout the city. By the end of the day, the governor had mobilized more than 8,000 members of the Army National Guard, and New York Air National Guard jets were flying combat air patrols over American cities.

Troops assisted with initial rescue efforts, security for first responders and law enforcement and provided additional expertise for logistics, security administration and recovery support. It was the single largest response mission



A New York Army National Guard Soldier from Co. C, 1st Bn., 105th Infantry helps provide security at Ground Zero Sep. 14, 2001 as part of the Guard response to 9/11.

for the state's military forces. In the following weeks, the troops responding to the emergency and recovery operations at Ground Zero transitioned into security augmentation duties alongside city, state and federal officials.

Retired New York Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, who commanded New York National Guard troops in the weeks following the Guard response and later led many of those Guardsmen and women in Iraq, is featured in the introductory segment.

"This interactive web exhibit helps tell the story of our New York National Guard men and women who put boots on the ground here at the World Trade Center and would go on to serve overseas, proving their value in serving their state and their nation," said Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of the New York National Guard. "I wish to thank the 9/11 Tribute Center for adding our unique stories and experiences to the educational programs that reach around our country and around the

globe."

"The National Guard made history on September 11, 2001, and I'm thrilled that our role in the response at Ground Zero can be part of the 9/11 Tribute Center education outreach," said Taluto. "That's our story, we're the homeland defense force for our nation, and for the hundreds of thousands of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who later deployed overseas to fight, it all started here."

The September 11th Families Association opened the 9/11 Tribute Center in 2006. Located across from the World Trade Center, the 9/11 Tribute Center shares personal histories and engages visitors in the authentic experiences of people directly impacted by the events of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001: family members of lost loved ones, survivors, first responders and people who live and work in Lower Manhattan. To learn about 9/11 Tribute Center programs, visit [tributewtc.org](http://tributewtc.org). **gt**



## Higher Ground, Higher Standards

### Army Guard Instructors Qualify Infantry Soldiers

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta Joint Force Headquarters

CAMP SMITH -- Combining steep learning curves with Camp Smith's steep terrain, Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 106th Regional Training Institute turn Army Reserve and National Guard clerks, quartermasters, and mechanics into infantrymen.

Institute instructors completed their annual Infantryman Transition Course here Aug. 10, graduating 19 Soldiers -- coming from as far away as Guam -- into fully qualified infantryman. The course is open to Soldiers from all Army components, and passing the course enables troops from other Army career backgrounds to complete their transition to infantry units.

By qualifying infantryman at Camp Smith, the New York Army National Guard saves travel funds, said Lt. Col. Chris Ciccone, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 106th Regional Training Institute.

Camp Smith's terrain makes it a perfect place for the hard work required to turn troops into infantrymen, added Ciccone, of East Greenbush, N.Y.

To earn the blue infantry cord, the students went through two weeks of rigorous classroom, weapons and field training. The training was capped with a three-day field-training exercise, where students put the mountain of infantry knowledge they'd learned to work in the mountainous terrain of Camp Smith.

Students worked many 12 to 14 hour days learning the way of the infantry, and they worked around the clock during the field-training exercise, Ciccone said.

"Coming to this course, I told them, day one, it's not going to be easy," said Sgt. 1st Class Shaun Butcher, the course manager, who is from Wallkill, N.Y. "It's going to challenge you physically, it's going to challenge you mentally, and it's going to challenge every bit of your will."

Being an infantry Soldier is the best job in the Army, said course instructor Staff Sgt. Michael Martin of Cobleskill, N.Y. Infantry Soldiers do more -- and carry more -- through challenging terrain, using their boots as their



Spc. John Daras, left, Spc. Benjamin Lewis and Spc. Joe Golonka, right, assault a simulated enemy position at the New York Army National Guard's annual Infantryman Transition Course at Camp Smith in August. The 106th Regional Training Institute held the course for Soldiers from all Army components.

"main mode of transportation."

"The bar is set high," he said. "It is high for a reason. You rely on the guy next to you. There's no bus picking you up and bringing you to chow. Chow is in your rucksack. That's your apartment. Everything you live on is in that bag."

The Army's Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga. sets the bar high for the instructors. In addition to being infantry-qualified, institute instructors have to pass several courses and be board-certified by the infantry school, Butcher said.

"Every instructor that comes here has relevant experience, either in Afghanistan or Iraq, and they

have squad leader and team leader experience that they can bring to the table and teach people," Butcher said.

Though the program of instruction is set by the Army's Infantry School at Fort Benning Ga.



Spc. John Daras, right, points out a sector of fire for Spc. Michael Aguon during the Infantryman Transition Course at Camp Smith.



New York RTI instructors have added other realistic, challenging things like road marches and air-assault operations in order to produce full-fledged infantrymen, he explained.

One of those air-assault operations kicked off the field training exercise on Aug. 7. Students boarded helicopters which flew them to a landing zone at Camp Smith. After securing the landing zone, students moved tactically up the rocky, tree-covered hills.

The action began immediately inside the tree line as instructors tossed artillery simulators so the students could practice reacting to indirect fire. As the simulators whistled, echoed shouts of “incoming!” as they sought cover.

As the sound of the explosions died away, the students got up and moved out quickly, lugging their weapons, 40-pound packs, ammunition and other equipment up the slanted landscape to areas designated by their student leaders.

“This is pretty rough...a lot more rockier than what I’m used to,” said student Spc. Robert Goss, of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 112th Infantry, Pennsylvania Army National Guard. “It’s pretty steep.”

From concealed positions among the trees and boulders farther up, mock enemy combatants -- played by other institute instructors -- fired at the approaching students, testing infantry skills such as engaging targets, moving as teams and squads and seizing objectives. The students assaulted three enemy positions the first day.



Spc. Tyler Farrar takes aim during the New York Army National Guard’s annual Infantryman Transition Course at Camp Smith.

The instructors didn’t let up either. They gave gentle critiques, shouted corrections and on occasion threatened to make the students repeat missions if they didn’t perform them to standard.

At one point Martin called out a student because he wasn’t lying in the proper prone position.

“It’s called discipline, gentlemen,” Martin announced evenly as the student corrected himself. “It’ll keep you alive. It’s doing the right thing when no one’s around.”

That wasn’t lost on Goss, who called it all part of the course.

“You know, if you screw up, you get yelled at,” he said. “Be a man about it, take it, fix what you did wrong and keep going.”

Goss belonged to an active component unit and served as an engineer Soldier in Iraq. The course took him back to another time in his life as a Soldier, he said.

“This makes it feel like you went through basic training, and you’re starting from the beginning,” he said of the course.

Turning back the clock -- and resetting it -- is also part of the course. The students come to the course from all kinds of Army-career backgrounds, so instructors try to break them of old habits while honing them into the infantry attitude and character, said senior instructor Sgt. 1st Class Sihoon Chung, of Richfield, N.J.

That requires discipline and hard work on the instructors’ part. They worked from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. almost every day, preparing course materials, planning training and coordinating logistical requirements, according to Butcher and assistant instructor Staff Sgt. Bryan Hart, of Dolgeville, N.Y.

They also consulted New York Army National Guard infantry units and used that feedback to help plan training, Butcher said.

“Our job isn’t just to train these Soldiers in infantry tactics, it’s to better the New York Army National Guard, and the only way to do that is to find out what the line units are lacking when they’re getting brand new Soldiers coming over,” Butcher said.



Pfc. Keith Gray, right, Pfc. Juquan Ford, and Spc. Joe Golonka, left, move tactically during the Infantryman Transition Course at Camp Smith.

Continued on Page 29



# Aviation Soldiers Prepare for Desert Deployment

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters

Photos by 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

LATHAM -- Though they've been down some rough roads in the last year, the Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade are expecting to fly -- and thrive -- in the deserts of Kuwait.

About 180 brigade troops and their loved ones kicked off their pending Kuwait deployment with a mobilization ceremony at Shaker High School here in September. The Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) troops are headed to Fort Hood for more training, and are expected to deploy to Kuwait around the end of the year.

Another 350 Soldiers assigned to the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, which will deploy with the headquarters, held farewell events the same month.

Brigade Soldiers will be providing aviation support for U.S. military forces deployed to Kuwait, and will take command of about 800 Army, Michigan Army National Guard and Delaware Army National Guard aviation and aviation support troops. The ceremony marked a milestone for the unit, which received notice of the deployment less than a year ago.

Brigade troops completed individual pre-mobilization training at Fort Drum in late summer, and have undergone new equipment, night-flying and other training in the past year. Despite short notice, the troops, their families and others have stepped up for the deployment, said CAB Commander Col. Albert Ricci, of Ballston Lake, N.Y.



42nd CAB troops crawl under concertina wire during pre-mobilization training in August.

"It's been rough," Ricci said at the ceremony. "It's been a lot of sacrifices."

The unit's mission in Kuwait will be complex and dynamic, and will include joint training and partnership opportunities with surrounding nations, Ricci said. The mission will build security, stability and mutual interest in the region, he added.

The unit has the apparatus, with its helicopters and support personnel, to make that happen, Ricci said. He's confident the unit will make the nation, New York state and the New York Army National Guard proud, he concluded.

The mission of Army aviation units is inherently difficult and dangerous, and Kuwait's harsh environment will increase the hazard slightly, Ricci remarked after the ceremony. But the CAB is used to these challenges.

"We're not a relaxed unit," he said. "We're always on the edge. We're just transferring what we do over here in the states already to Kuwait."

Almost half the unit's Soldiers have deployed at least once before, and some unit members have deployed up to three times, Ricci said. Their ranks represent a vast range of age and experience, he added.

"We're passing that knowledge down onto our younger Soldiers," Ricci said. "We have 18-year olds to almost 60-year olds, so we have a very diverse unit."

These young troops will have the chance to grow during the deployment, Ricci said. "That



42nd CAB troops conduct dismounted exercises during pre-mobilization training.



young Soldier will find out that he's going to have a lot more responsibility, and be counted on to perform a certain job," Ricci said.

That, in turn, will strengthen the unit, he explained.

"We'll always be able to take what we do on a deployment, bring it back home, to our state, to our country, as good experience," Ricci said.

The unit's range of expertise and experience is reflected in unit members: Spc. Jeffrey Houck, a communications specialist, and Capt. Adam Kemp, a Blackhawk pilot.

This is Kemp's first deployment, and he's benefited from some of the knowledge-sharing Ricci referred to.

"I've been able to get some good experience within the unit and fly with a lot of talented people who know their stuff," said Kemp, of Clifton Park, N.Y. "It's been fun."

Kemp, in turn, spoke to the harsh desert environment and hazards of flying there. While New York state has hills and trees, the desert has heat, sandstorms and lack of navigational reference points, he said.

"We'll be flying in a challenging environment, that's for sure," he said. "I'm definitely looking forward to the challenge."

Though his main role will be planning and

support, he hopes to fly as much as possible also, Kemp said. He gets an adrenaline rush from flying and controlling the aircraft, he added.

"Why wouldn't I love flying?" Kemp reflected. "It's just so much fun, you know, being in the sky."

Kemp has a wife and five-month old daughter. Being separated from them will be

**"We'll be flying in a challenging environment, that's for sure. I'm definitely looking forward to the challenge."**

-- Capt. Adam Kemp, pilot, 42nd CAB

a hardship, but he plans to stay in contact via computer and phone, he said.

"She'll be a year and half (years old) by the time I get back," he said. "So I'll be missing a lot of firsts, you know, the crawl-walk phase."

Families facing a long deployment should build a support network involving their friends, churches and extended families, Kemp advised.

"When family members reach out and embrace your family, it makes things a lot easier,"

he said.

Houck, who served with the U.S. Marines in Iraq, said he comes from a military family. His father is Command Sgt. Maj. (retired) John Houck, and his mother was Marine Corps sergeant, he explained. His father retired from the New York Army National Guard in October.

"They support me," said Houck, of Baldwin, N.Y. "They know that this is what I'm good at and what I love to do. They know this is where my heart and head are at, and that I'll do a good job."

The train-up for the deployment was rewarding and fun, Houck said.

"I took everything that they taught us to heart, because you train like you fight," he said. "I had a great time."

His job in Iraq was both stressful and rewarding, and he'll be performing similar duties in Kuwait, Houck said.

"I'm looking forward to the deployment, looking forward to working with everybody, and making everybody proud."

Houck's tips for the thriving on the deployment include staying in contact with loved ones, and other blunt advice.

"Stay hydrated," he said with a smile. "Stay active. Don't get bored, you'll get in trouble. **gt**



42nd CAB Soldiers assault a mock insurgent position during pre-mobilization training.

# NY Army National Guard Aviators Deploy to Africa

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times

LATHAM -- After preparations at Fort Hood Texas, eight New York Army National Guard Soldiers of Detachment 20, Operational Support Airlift Agency deployed to the Horn of Africa in November.

The aviators fly the C-12 transport plane to provide air transportation and cargo support for the United States Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which is based at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. Soldiers of the Latham-based detachment will be away from home for about 11 months.

"This is a small group, but it is a group of seasoned professionals," Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York, told the Soldiers' families during a short farewell ceremony here in October. "It's a great mission. It's an important mission."

The detachment consists of six warrant officer pilots and two administrative and operations sergeants. The most inexperienced pilot has 2,300 hours of flight time while the most experienced pilot has over 21,000 hours

of experience as a pilot, said Chief Warrant Officer Kent Wagner, the detachment commander.

The Operational Support Airlift Agency is a joint Active Army and Army National Guard entity which provides passenger transport for military passengers within the United States.

The C-12 is the military version of the Beechcraft Super King Air turboprop aircraft, capable of carrying up to 13 passengers, depending on the model and configuration.



Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's Detachment 20, Operation Support Airlift Agency stand in formation during their deployment ceremony on Oct. 25. Photo by William Albrecht, Guard Times.

The unit deployed to Afghanistan in 2009/2010 where the Soldiers flew C-12s which were configured to spot improvised explosive devices from the air. The detachment also deployed to Columbia in 2006 to support U.S. operations in that country. **gt**

## ARNG CSM Praises NY National Guard Troops

By Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters

SARATOGA SPRINGS -- It's all about the troops and their loved ones, according Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk W. Conley.

Conley stressed that to New York Army National Guard leaders gathered at the 5th Annual Capital District of New York AUSA Soldier Recognition Banquet here on Sept. 14. Conley also spoke at the 2013 Senior NCO Leadership Seminar here that day.

"It's all about the people," he said. "Tanks, helicopters, rifles, weapons systems...none of that really matters if you don't have the people."

Conley is a veteran of the 75th Ranger Regiment and former command sergeant major of the Oregon Army National Guard.

His relationship with the New York Army National Guard began when 1st Battalion, 108th Infantry troops were called up to fill out the ranks of his unit for its Iraq deployment, Conley recalled.

"And they were warriors," he said. "And they

went into combat with us. And that was the first group I met from New York, and they'll be Oregonians the rest of my life."

Conley said he worked with the New York National Guard on other occasions, and he called it "one of the finest organizations in the world." which does phenomenal things. Such achievements are only possible with the support of service members' loved ones, and in the end, it all comes down to the troops, he stressed.

"You can't take a full combat unit into harm's way without the Soldiers," he said. "If not for the part-time National Guard Soldiers, full-time National Guard Soldiers wouldn't be employed, he emphasized.

Those troops include the Best Buy employee who trades a blue polo shirt for a sand-colored T-shirt and Army Camouflage Uniform, and the New York City police officer who wears body armor and runs toward the sound of gun



Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk W. Conley (right) poses with former New York state Command Sgt. Maj. (retired) Robert Van Pelt at the banquet.

fire in both civilian and Soldier roles, he said.

"Without that lobster fisherman in Maine who takes off the rubber boots to put on the combat boots, the National Guard doesn't exist," he said. **gt**



# Through the Fire, Finding Peace

By Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters

LATHAM -- Though he's spent thirty years serving Soldiers and their loved ones in life and death, the last decade has been a period of great realization -- and revelation -- for New York Army National Guard Chaplain (Colonel) Eric Olsen.

Olsen, who retired from the Army National Guard on Sept. 30, stressed that while chaplains' duties involve helping others deal with death, the grieving process never truly

theran Church in Saranac Lake. He became an active-duty Army chaplain in 1992, and served with units such as the 1st Infantry Division, 3rd Infantry Division and 10th Mountain Division in places like South Carolina, Germany, Egypt and Fort Drum, N.Y.

He joined the New York Army National Guard in 1999, served extensively in New York City following the 9-11 attacks, and volunteered to deploy to Iraq with the 1st Battalion,

108th Infantry in 2003. He survived an IED attack, and was awarded the Combat Action Badge.

However, four battalion Soldiers, including Pvt. Nathan Brown, were killed in action during the deployment, Olsen said. Chaplains are integral

Sunday, 2004.

"We didn't have time to grieve that," Olsen recalled. "Some of the kids haven't gone through the whole process."

When faced with combat, Soldiers choose to ride their fear, aggression or anger, Olsen said. He was no different, he added.

"I came home angry," he said. "Most of us came home riding anger."

He was angry about the deaths and about missing things, like his family, he explained. He was also less patient -- unwilling to suffer small details, he added.

But later he came to appreciate the value of the experience, and with that came new wisdom, he recalled.

"It forced me to Soldier, and to admire the men and women I've served with much more," he said. He also became a better father, learned to value life more, and realized that grieving is a conscious, ongoing task, he added.

After serving as the 42nd Infantry Division chaplain, Olsen became chaplain of the New York Army National Guard in 2008 -- holding that position as a full-time officer. The global war on terror and the Soldiers' needs created a need for a full-time chaplain, Olsen explained.

"Moving from a strategic force to an operational force has put a strain on our Soldiers and their families," Olsen said.

Olsen helped establish the New York Army National Guard's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program, which helps service members and their families readjust after a deployment. What's more, he began using the phrase "the new normal" to help troops and their families adjust after a deployment.

Olsen said that phrase describes the new world free of past expectations that Soldiers and their loved ones should strive to live in after deployments. Soldiers often expect that things will be the same when they return from overseas, he explained.

"You have to live in the world as you find it," Olsen said. "You have to make peace with yourself"

He's leaving the National Guard with no regrets -- just gratitude for the Soldiers with whom he's shared "thousands and thousands of

Continued on Page 27



Chaplain (Col) Eric Olsen (left) stands at attention with Soldiers and families during their post-deployment yellow-ribbon event last year. Olsen, who retired in September, preaches "the new normal" -- a phrase which describes a new world, free of past expectations -- that Soldiers and their loved ones should strive to live in after deployments. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Petibone.

ends.

"That grief process goes on forever," said Olsen, an Iraq veteran and resident of Saranac Lake, N.Y. He'd helped others deal with death many times in his career, but his tour in Iraq and experiences afterward inspired his renewed outlook on grief and recovery, and informed his efforts to help Soldiers to reintegrate after deployment, he explained.

A native of Staten Island, N.Y., Olsen felt the call to Army chaplaincy when he was attending the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. He joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard as a chaplain candidate in 1983.

He was ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1988, and became the minister at the Holy Trinity Lu-

theran Church in Saranac Lake. He became an active-duty Army chaplain in 1992, and served with units such as the 1st Infantry Division, 3rd Infantry Division and 10th Mountain Division in places like South Carolina, Germany, Egypt and Fort Drum, N.Y.

"We broker death all the time," he said. "Everybody's life ends. Chaplains help people with that process."

But while deployed units honor fallen troops with things like "empty boots" ceremonies, combat duty leaves little time to grieve, he explained.

"Death in the field is different," he reflected. "If someone dies here, we can grieve. If someone dies there, we have to roll right back into the mission. Salute the boots, then it's back into the truck."

That was the case with Brown, Olsen said. A native of Glens Falls, N.Y., Brown was killed in a firefight on the outskirts of Samarra on Easter

# MP Commander Reflects on Units' Successes

By Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta Joint Force Headquarters

AUBURN -- Between duty abroad and natural disasters at home, New York Army National Guard military police Soldiers have accomplished a lot since 2010, according to Lt. Col. Arthur Zegers, the outgoing commander of the 102nd Military Police Battalion.

Zegers passed command to Maj. Mike Fowler in a change-of-command ceremony here Sept. 8. The battalion is the higher headquarters for the 206th, 105th, and 222nd Military Police Companies, and until earlier this year, the 107th MP Company.

In the last three years, those units were either preparing to deploy, serving overseas, or ramping down from a deployment, Zegers said.

"We've pretty much done it all in three years," said Zegers, of Malta, N.Y. "We were called upon by New York state and the nation, and we were able to do both missions successfully."

At different times in that period, the 206th and 105th MP Companies served in Iraq, and the 107th MP Company served in Cuba, Zegers said. The 222nd MP Company is now serving in Qatar, he added.

If they weren't deployed, Soldiers in those companies stepped up to help civilian authorities during Hurricane Irene, Hurricane Sandy and flood disasters, Zegers said.

"Back in the day, our main focus was training to prepare for annual training," he reflected, adding that their jobs are "300 percent harder" now compared to the 1990s.

Readying units to deploy while maintaining readiness for homeland disasters meant

extra work for everyone, from the battalion staff to the units, Zegers stressed.

In addition to helping train and equip these troops for overseas missions, the battalion had to screen Soldiers and shift them to strengthen deploying units, Zegers said -- a process he bluntly called "man up and train up."

"It has been a continuing process for us because every year, we've had units going out the door," he said.

To help deploy the troops, the battalion supported five Pre-Mobilization training (PMT) events at Fort Drum, N.Y., Zegers said.

And duty continued for the Soldiers who remained, Zegers stressed. Along with continuing training and staying ready to help with disasters, they had to rebuild their ranks, and often did the same jobs with fewer resources, he added.

But thanks to weekly conference calls, test alerts and the Soldiers' efforts, the units responded well to the disasters, said Zegers, who was effusive in his gratitude and praise for battalion staff, his superiors, unit commanders, non-commissioned officers, family readiness



Maj. Michael Fowler (left) hands the 102nd Military Police Battalion colors to Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Ciampolillo, the battalion sergeant major (middle) after assuming command of the battalion from outgoing commander Lt. Col. Arthur Zegers (right). Photo courtesy of the 102nd Military Police Battalion.

groups, his own family and friends, and the troops. The Soldiers, he said, are the "treasure of our nation."

"Soldiers of the 102nd MP Battalion, I am truly honored to have served with you," Zegers said at the ceremony. "You have brought great credit to our units, and yourselves. I know you will continue to do the same for Maj. Fowler."gt



## Senior Enlisted Advisor Visits

NEW YORK -- Chief Master Sergeant Mitchell O. Brush, senior enlisted advisor for the National Guard Bureau (right) shakes hands with Port Authority Police Officer Claudia Cardoza during his tour of the Freedom Tower and 9/11 Memorial here in September. Cardoza, who is also a specialist in the New York Army National Guard, acted as police escort for the tour, and Brush gave her one of his coins. Brush visited New York National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and units, including Joint Task Force Empire Shield, which is charged with detecting, deterring and preventing terrorist operations in the New York City metropolitan area. Photo by Staff Sgt. William Valenza, New York Army National Guard.



## A New Commander Upstate...

SYRACUSE -- Maj. Scott Jessop accepts the colors of the New York Army National Guard's 427th Brigade Support Battalion during change-of-command ceremonies here Aug. 9. A combat veteran from Fayette, N.Y., Jessop assumed command of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion from Lt. Col. Stephen M. Bousquet. Courtesy photo.



## ...and a New Commander Downstate

NEW YORK -- Lt. Col. Dan Harris, right, thanks his former senior non-commissioned officer, Command Sgt. Maj. Roland Wells, for his support of the command team following a change-of-command ceremony of the 369th Special Troops Battalion (Early Entry Element) here Oct. 17. Harris turned command over to Lt. Col. Seth Morgulas, and is tentatively taking an active-duty tour at National Guard Bureau. Photo by 1st Sgt. Michelle Lindsay, 369th Sustainment Brigade.

## Through the Fire, Continued from Page 25

sacred moments," Olsen said.

"I'm sure I'll miss the great men and women I've had the chance to work with," Olsen reflected. "I've been taught so much by good men and women. You can't buy that knowledge. I've been blessed."

One of those sacred moments Olsen speaks of occurred in Iraq, when an officer from another unit knocked on the door of his quarters around two in the morning, seeking comfort. The officer had survived two IED attacks in one day, Olsen recalled.

"He was scared to death," Olsen said. "Together we walked him through that and brought him out the other side. We found his sense of peace and belonging." He and the officer still stay in touch, he said.

He plans to return to prison chaplaincy following his retirement, Olsen said. The respective roles are similar, insofar they involve people are separated from their families in difficult circumstances, he explained.

"Working with men and women in the Army, you have people with goals and values and honor," he said. "in prison, you're helping people find those things."

Olsen also plans to spend more time with his wife and his sons, Garth and Evan. This is the "perfect time to retire," he said.

"I think if I don't go now, I'll miss opportunities with my kids," Olsen said. "I think I'm just ready."

Just the same, Army chaplaincy is facing its own "new normal," he stressed. Chaplains have to come to terms with a changing culture, and bring a sense of peace to a violent culture, Olsen said.

That challenge may not be as steep in the New York National Guard, where the chaplaincy is diverse, he said.

"We're very open, eclectic, and ecumenical," Olsen said.

Olsen encouraged Soldiers to pause and strive to find their inner voice. This voice, he said, is a conscience, muse and inspiration which can also help Soldiers get a sense of who God is to them, he explained.

"They need it," he said. "That's where real strength comes from. Along with that, you find your sense of belonging, community and, ultimately, a sense of intimacy." **gt.**

# 42nd CAB Soldiers Aid in Rescue

By Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta Joint Force Headquarters, and  
42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs.

**FORT DRUM – Two 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Soldiers helped lifeguards rescue a drowning service member at the Mcgrath Sports Complex Pool here last summer.**

Maj. Warren Sheprow, Chief Warrant Officer Milton Mercado and head lifeguard Jean Elizabeth Didas pulled the victim out of the pool, according to lifeguards' sworn statements. Sheprow, an aero-medical physician assistant, and Mercado, a UH-60 pilot, also assisted Didas and other lifeguards as they performed CPR, the documents said.

"We were both at the right place at the right time," said Sheprow, of Red Hook, N.Y. Mercado is from Garrison, N.Y.

On the morning of Aug. 14, Sheprow and Mercado were swimming while a service member in another lane seemed to be practicing holding his breath underwater in the pool's shallow end, according to the lifeguards' accounts. Noticing that the swimmer was on the bottom, Lifeguard Matthew Weaver asked Didas to check on the him.

Sheprow noticed something wrong, too. "Watching the service member in the shal-

low end, I became concerned with the length of time he was submerged under water," he said.

As Didas and her fellow head lifeguard Heather Mushtare approached, Sheprow and Mercado ducked under the lane lines, according to the accounts. The victim was face down on the bottom of the pool, Didas recalled, and he didn't respond when Sheprow kicked his foot.

"Maj. Warren Sheprow had gone underwater, grabbed him by the armpits and brought him to the surface," she said. She grabbed the victim's arms and with the Soldiers' assistance, pulled the victim from the pool and onto the deck.

The victim showed no signs of consciousness and was "foaming at the mouth," Didas and Mercado recalled. Didas and Sheprow rolled the victim onto his side, and she told him to give her room so she could assess the victim.

"He stated he was a doctor and by New York state laws, he could not back away until a person who had more medical training arrived on-scene," Didas recalled. "I advised him that I needed to check for a pulse."

She didn't find the victim's pulse and saw that he was gasping loudly, Didas said. She began administering CPR and called for an automated external defibrillator (AED), while Mushtare yelled for another lifeguard to call 911 and clear the pool area, according to the accounts.

As Didas performed CPR, Sheprow cleared the victim's airway and Mercado watched for signs of his chest rising, the reports said. Weaver applied the AED, which showed signs of a heartbeat, Mushtare recalled.

About the same time Didas, who was performing five cycles of CPR with rescue breaths, felt a pulse. They noticed the victim moving a little and breathing better, and they turned the victim on his side, according to the accounts.

"He did have his eyes open and was blinking, but again was unresponsive," Didas recalled. "His breathing was a constant in-and-out, but still was not normal." Ambulance personnel arrived a minute later and took over, she added.

The service member was flown to a Syracuse hospital and suffered no permanent injury, according to Mercado.



Maj. Warren Sheprow, 42nd CAB, of Red Hook, N.Y.



Chief Warrant Officer Milton Mercado, 42nd CAB, of Garrison, N.Y.



## Infantry training, Continued from Page 20

The weight of information students are expected to learn and retain also makes the course intense, Goss said. While trying to absorb all that knowledge is like “putting 10 gallons of water in a five-gallon bucket,” most of it sinks in, said Goss.

“With time, you end up retaining a lot of it, more than you thought you did,” he reflected.

That knowledge, discipline, toughness and understanding of sacrifice is part of winning battles and being an infantryman, said student Spc. Michael Aguon, of Aganaguam, Guam, who belongs to the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, United States Army Reserve. It takes a lot of heart and dedication, he stressed.

“You give all you got,” he said. “If you don’t, you won’t succeed.”



Spc. Benjamin Lewis, right, and other Soldiers move tactically over hilly terrain during the Infantryman Transition Course at Camp Smith. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters.

## 9-11 Walk, Continued from Page 18

With the police car’s lights flashing behind him, Follett jogged toward the gate, surprising the Soldiers guarding it. Trying to maintain his momentum and avoid muscle pain, he slowed to a fast walk and flashed his identification card, he recalled.

The Soldiers realized who he was and let him through without stopping, he said.

“After that, they were cheering and yelling, ‘hoo-rah!’” Follett said.

More drivers honked and cheered him as he closed in on this goal, he said.

“That helped because my feet were pretty blistered up at that point,” Follett said.

Soldiers and others at the memorial clapped him on the back and shook his hand, he recalled.

“It was kind of overwhelming,” Follett said. “I got kind of choked up.”

Though he was still hurting days later, Follett was already trying to come up with an idea for next year.

“I think just serving isn’t enough,” he reflected. “Sometimes you’ve got to do a bit more. We’re not only serving as Soldiers. We’re serving as community members.” **gt**



Sgt. Glenn Follett poses at the 9-11 memorial at Fort Drum, on Sept. 11. Follett walked from Syracuse to commemorate the 9-11 attacks and raise money for the Wounded Warrior project. Photo courtesy of Sgt. Glenn Follett.



## Fallen Airman Staff Sgt. Todd J. Lobraico, Jr. Honored

Guard Times Staff

**DANBURY, CONN. -- The first New York Air National Guard Airmen to die in combat zone since Sept. 11, 2001 was laid to rest with honors at North Cemetery here in September.**

Members of the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing gathered here with the loved ones of Staff Sgt. Todd J. Lobraico Jr., who died from wounds he suffered in Afghanistan on Sept. 5.

Known to his family and friends as "TJ," Lobraico was fatally wounded when enemy forces attacked his unit with small arms fire near Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. He was deployed to Afghanistan with a team of 105th Security Forces Squadron Airmen who deployed to Afghanistan at the end of June.

The unit is trained to secure air bases and trains and fights much like Army infantry.

Lobraico, 22, was on his second deployment since enlisting in the 105th Airlift Wing as a security forces apprentice in June 2008. He deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq from December 2010 to June 2011.

Lobraico joined the 105th Airlift Wing after graduating from New Fairfield High School in Fairfield, Connecticut. He attended the Air Force's Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, graduating in November

2008 and then entered Security Forces Apprentice School which he finished in February 2009.

Lobraico was a resident of Sherman, Connecticut. Lobraico's father Master Sgt. Todd Lobraico, is a member of the 105th Security Forces Squadron of the 105th Airlift Wing and his mother, Maj. Linda Rohatsch, commands the 105th Medical Group of the 105th Airlift Wing.

Lobraico's awards include the Meritorious Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Air Force Training Ribbon, and the New York State Humane Service Medal.

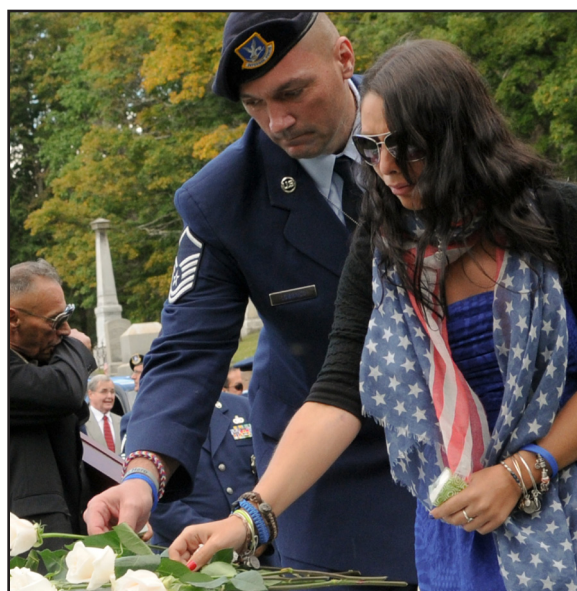
Thirty-two members of the New York Army National Guard have been killed in action or died in a combat zone since Sept. 11, 2001. **gt**



Staff Sgt. Todd J. "TJ" Lobraico Jr. died from wounds he suffered in Afghanistan on Sept. 5.



A member of the 105th Airlift Wing's Security Forces Squadron, 105th Airlift Wing pays his respects at the wake of Staff Sgt. Todd "TJ" Lobraico at Western Connecticut State University on Sept. 12. Photo by Tech Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.



Master Sgt. Todd Lobraico Sr. places a white rose on the coffin of his son, Staff Sgt. Todd "TJ" Lobraico, Jr. during burial services at North Cemetery on Sept. 13. He is accompanied by Jessica Germano, his son's girlfriend. Photo by Tech Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.





Pall bearers carry Staff Sgt. Todd "TJ" Lobraico's body to a hearse at the Western Connecticut State University- gymnasium in Danbury Conn. on Sept. 12. Lobraico was killed in action in Afghanistan on Sept. 5.



# Airmen of 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Honored for Valor

By Eric Durr, *Guard Times*

**WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- Six New York Air National Guard members have earned the Bronze Star for Valor.**

The members of the 106th Rescue Wing's 103rd Rescue Squadron are being honored for the courage they showed under fire during rescue mission in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The six men are Capt. Ronnie Maloney, of Middle Island; Senior Master Sgt. Erik Blom, of Hampton Bays; Technical Sgt. Anthony Yusup of Bloomsburg, Pa.; Staff Sgt. James Dougherty of Rocky Point; Staff Sgt. Matthew Zimmer of Westhampton; and Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen of Commack, N.Y. The group successfully treated and evacuated three American Soldiers and one Afghan who had all been critically injured by an when an improvised explosive device.

The combat rescue of ficer and five Pararescue-men, known collectively as Guardian Angels, flew into a landing zone and were under Taliban fire continuously. They called in helicopter gunship support and treated the wounded while shielding them with their own bodies.

Along with receiving the Bronze Star for Valor, their exploit was also honored as "The Rescue Mission of the Year" for 2012 by

the Jolly Green Association, the professional association of serving and retired members of Air Force Rescue.

The Bronze Star with V device for valor is the fourth highest ranking Air Force award for heroism.

"I'm extremely proud of these men," said Lt. Col. Shawn Fitzgerald, the commander of the 103rd Rescue Squadron. "Their actions validate the hard work they come in and do day-in and day-out. Being a Combat Rescue Officer and PJ (pararescue jumper) is unique. We ask an incredible amount of both our full-time and traditional Guardsmen. This is a validation of everything they work so hard to achieve."

Blom and Yusup are traditional Guard Airmen who serve part-time. Blom is a Suffolk County Police Officer, while Yusup is a college

student studying nursing. Maloney, Zimmer, Peterson, and Dougherty are full-time members of the 106th Rescue Wing.

On Dec. 12, 2012 the six men were the Guardian Angel team assigned to man two HH-60 Pavehawk rescue helicopters -- call-signs Pedro 61 and Pedro 62-- being flown by members of the 55th Rescue Squadron, an Active Air Force unit. Taliban forces ambushed a friendly platoon, critically injuring four Soldiers.

The friendly unit was still under Taliban fire as the two helicopters approached the scene. Pedro 62, the trail helicopter, moved into the area to put the three-man team of Yusup, Dougherty, and Petersen on the ground first.

As the helicopter moved in to off-load the three Airmen, it came under machinegun fire

which continued as the men moved to linkup with the American and Afghan infantrymen sheltering behind a mud wall. Two rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) hit the ground five meters away from the Air Guardsmen as they began to conduct triage on the wounded Soldiers.

Yusup, the leader of that three-man element, according to the official citation, elected to remain in the open while exposed to enemy fire so that he could

**Continued on page 40**



Members of the 106th Rescue Wing being honored for heroism under fire in Afghanistan on Dec. 10, 2012 are (back row from left to right): Staff Sgt. James Dougherty, Rocky Point; Senior Master Sgt. Erik Blom, Hampton Bays; Tech Sgt. Anthony Yusup, Bloomsburg; and Capt. Ronnie Maloney, Middle Island. In the front row from left are Staff Sgt. Matthew Zimmer, Westhampton and Staff Sgt. Christopher Petersen, Commack.



# 105<sup>th</sup> Airwing Members Receive Excellence Award

*Guard Times staff*

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURG -- The 105th Air and Ground Operations Response Team has been given the Air National Guard Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award.

The team, which belongs to the 105th Airwing, received the award at a ceremony here in August.

It was based on work team members performed during deployments to Afghanistan and the New York National Guard's response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012. The team is trained to coordinate air-cargo operations and quickly move supplies on and off of aircraft in combat.

During their 2012 Afghanistan deployment, the team played a major role in training Inter-

national Security Assistance Force personnel in loading and unloading cargo aircraft at forward operating locations. They also designed aerial port of debarkation loading and unloading procedures at Camp Bastion -- a major coalition forces installation -- which reduced air-cargo idle time by 45 percent.

Higher headquarters inspectors declared the Camp Bastion air cargo operation run by the 105th Airlift Wing members best in the area of operations, and estimated they saved almost \$20 million by reducing backlogs in the cargo handling system.

The team also kept 99 percent of the 122 airfield vehicles they managed operational, reduced safety violations, moved 13.6 million

pounds of cargo and 60,381 passengers in six months, and coordinated a swap of Spanish helicopters and 6.7 million pounds of cargo ahead of schedule.

The team put their Afghanistan experience to good use in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, when Stewart Air National Guard base became the hub of national-level efforts to ship utility repair equipment and vehicles to the northeast.

The team handled a 600 percent increase in normal cargo flow into the base without incident and oversaw the recovery and launch of 36 heavy cargo planes in less than 60 hours. They also unloaded 98 large utility vehicles, 2.6 million pounds of cargo and 800 civilian and military responders.<sup>gt</sup>



105th Airlift Wing Commander Col. Timothy LaBarge and National Guard Bureau management Analyst Brenda Asher (first and second from left) present the Air National Guard Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award to representatives of the 105th Airlift Wing Air and Ground Operations Recovery Team on Aug. 27. The team members are (from third left) Chief Master Sgt. Mark Cozzupoli, Staff Sgt. Immanuel Mainz, Master Sgt. Elizabeth Colton, Chief Master Sgt. Daniel Wessberg, 1st Lt. Patrick Gillen and Maj. Kimberly Cardona-Smith. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.



# 109<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Participates in Medical Exercise

By 2nd Lt. Colette Martin, 109th Airlift Wing

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA -- Members from several local agencies across the Capital District participated in a coordinated National Disaster Medical System Exercise here in August.

The agencies consisted of members from the 109th Airlift Wing (AW), 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron (AES), the Albany Stratton Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), the Civil Air Patrol and the Aplaus Volunteer Fire Department.

During this exercise, mock patients were stabilized for transport, loaded onto a LC-130 Hercules and evacuated by members of the 139th AES. The simulated patients, played by Civil Air Patrol cadets, were moved from the Aplaus Volunteer Fire Department to Stratton and loaded onto a C-130 for transport.

This exercise highlighted the vital function of the 109th AW and 139th AES in the NDMS and homeland defense mission, the cooperation and coordination between the 109th AW and local authorities and emergency medical personnel, and the instrumental role of aeromedical evacuation in the national emergencies.

It also showed the partnership between the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

NDMS is a federally-coordinated system which augments the nation's medical response capability by combining federal and non-federal medical resources into a unified response to meet natural and man-made disaster needs, as well as support patient treatment requirements from military contingencies.

Stratton Air National Guard Base acts as a federal coordinating center to recruit hospitals and maintain local non-federal hospital participation in the NDMS; coordinate exercise development and emergency plans with participating hospitals and other local authorities in order to develop patient reception, transportation, and communication plans; and during system activation, coordinate the reception and distribution of patients being evacuated to the area.



Civilian agencies, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, partnered with airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing during the exercise, which was designed to practice patient movement, treatment, and distribution to local hospitals for treatment. Photo by 2nd Lt. Colette D. Martin.



Airmen of the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 109th Airlift Wing work alongside civilian agencies to carry a simulated patient, to an LC-130 aircraft during the exercise. Photo by Senior Airman Benjamin P. German, 109th Airlift Wing.

The airmen of the 109th AW have responded to a number of state emergencies, including Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and Superstorm Sandy in 2012. In addition to supporting the

National Science Foundation with flights to Antarctica and Greenland, the unit has also flown C-130s in Iraq and Afghanistan. **gt**





An LC-130 aircraft takes off after being loaded with simulated patients as part of a National Defense Management System Exercise held at Stratton Air National Guard Base in August. Photo by Senior Airman Benjamin P. German, 109th Airlift Wing.





# Air National Guard Captain Serves for Community

By 1st Sgt. Mary L. Williams, Regional Command (South) Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN -- New York City native Michael Gielbeda believed his military days were behind him on the eve of Sept. 11, 2001. He got out of the Air Force in 1996, and wasn't planning on going back.

That all changed the next day -- when he witnessed the smoke and aftermath of the terrorist attacks. His immediate thought was how he could give back and help out right away.

"It was a feeling of anger, helplessness, and I was no longer in the military," he recalled.

For Gielbeda, that feeling was a call to action. Months later Gielbeda was an airman in the New York Air National Guard, deployed to the Middle East, supporting the war on terrorism.

Now he's a captain, in Afghanistan on his

fourth deployment. A member of the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing,

he's serving as a cyber operations officer and the project engineer of communications for Regional Command South,

Afghanistan (see "NY Air National Guardsmen Keep Commo Lines Open," page 38).

"There were times when I've said, 'What did I get myself into, I'm in this sandbox -- [no instant messaging] back then and limited contact

with family back at home,' but I wanted to help out," he said. "Later I felt this really big sense of accomplishment -- a sense of brother and sisterhood."

The chain of events that led Gielbeda to this place began right

after high school, when he joined the Air Force. He was living a dream -- he traveled extensively and didn't want for anything.

Though he was thankful for the education and travel, and wanted to come home after

his four-year commitment. He ended his military career, landed a job with a phone company as a telecommunication network engineer and settled into a comfortable life back home in Clifton, N.Y. -- just a stone's throw from Manhattan.

Later, following an ownership change, Gielbeda found himself living in a Queens, N.Y. apartment and working second shift -- primarily in the Twin Towers, the centerpieces of the World Trade Center complex.

"I still have my building identification badge, parking garage key and elevator keys," he explained. "I was working in the World Trade Center September 10th...got off at midnight. I was sound asleep when my phone went to ringing like crazy. At first, I ignored it and finally after so many calls, I answered. Everyone wanted to know if I was OK."

But others weren't.

"A few days go by and I get in touch with my company...my customers and some employees were lost," he recalled.

After watching the aftermath of the attacks, Gielbeda supported recovery efforts by doing what he does best -- working in an emergency fiber repair team to set up and stabilize commu-

**"People come into the military for different reasons. I make more money in my civilian job; here I'm away from my daughter. I do this because I'm doing something that is bigger than me, that's why I do it."**

*-- Capt. Michael Gielbeda, cyber operations officer, project engineer of communications for Regional Command South at Kandahar Airfield, and 105th Airlift Wing member*



Capt. Michael Gielbeda serves as a cyber operations officer and the project engineer of communications for Regional Command South at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Gielbeda is with the 105th Airlift Wing's 213th Engineering Installation Squadron, based at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh. Photo by Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer, 70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.



# 174<sup>th</sup> Attack Wing Member Awarded Bronze Star

By Guard Times staff

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SYRACUSE -- New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. Charles Hutson has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his service in Afghanistan earlier this year.

Hutson, was awarded the Bronze Star, which is awarded for either meritorious service or valor, during a ceremony here Sept. 7. Hutson, a member of the 174th Attack Wing and the commander of the wing's Comptroller Flight, served as chief of fiscal policy for the International Security Assistance Force's Reintegration Cell in Kabul during his six-month deployment.

Hutson played a critical role in the international community's effort to reduce the insurgency and enhance regional and community stability by advising and assisting senior Afghanistan government officials administer the Peace and Reintegration Program. He worked directly with the officials to administer a \$176 million financial assistance fund, enabling the internationally-funded campaign to weaken insurgent networks through the peaceful removal of over 900 insurgent fighters from the battlefield during his tenure.

"It was definitely a unique experience working with the Afghans. You had to learn not only some language and customs, but also their culture's unique set of socio-economic values," Hutson said.

Hutson was the first deployed finance officer to develop a multi-lateral financial improvement team, which included the United Nations

nication.

"I thought I was doing something by helping with communication, but for me it just wasn't enough," he said. "You couldn't be happy, you just couldn't. I remember for months just having a sense of misery."

Then he ran into a co-worker who suggested he consider joining the National Guard -- an option he hadn't thought of.

"So I said, 'I can help, and do what I do,'" Gielbeda recalled.

That sealed the deal, and it wasn't long after signing up he found himself deployed to the Middle East as an Air Force communications engineer in a special operation, supporting the



New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. Charles H. Hutson, Commander of the 174th Attack Wing Comptroller Flight, poses with a new member of the Afghan local police in the Kabul Green Zone .

Development Program, the International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan's High Peace Council, several Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's Ministries, and diplomats from multiple donor nations, to make sure international funds were getting where they were most needed.

During his deployment, Hutson filled the role of Force Reintegration Cell Programs

war on terrorism.

"We got our bags and we were gone, there was no preparation," he said, recalling how quickly they were mobilized and deployed. "Our mission was to set up [communication networks] so everyone else could do their mission."

Eventually, his sense of helplessness turned into mission accomplishment and a feeling of giving back.

"It felt like without us doing what we did, they couldn't do what they did," said Gielbeda, who is currently serving in Afghanistan on his fourth deployment. It was his second deployment to Iraq when he felt like he contributed a

Branch Chief, a one-star general equivalent, for a period of six weeks.

His fiscal leadership not only contributed to decreasing the number of insurgent fighters on the battlefield, but more importantly, strengthened the foundation of an enduring sovereign program advancing durable peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan, according to his award citation. **gt**

lot and solidified his commitment to continue serving.

Though he hadn't planned on making the military a career, Gielbeda, who spent eight years as a non-commissioned officer, is in a comfortable place managing his civilian career and military obligation. He now has a 15-year-military career under his belt.

It's gratifying feeling to be able to give back, he said.

"People come into the military for different reasons. I make more money in my civilian job; here I'm away from my daughter," Gielbeda said. "I do this because I'm doing something that is bigger than me, that's why I do it." **gt**



# New York Air Guardsmen Keep Commo Lines Open

Story and photos by Cpl. Clay Beyersdorfer, 70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Cold, dark mornings are part of life here for three members of the 213th Engineering Installation Squadron, 105th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard.

Capt. Michael Gielbeda, Staff Sgt. Hewitt Depass and Senior Airman Matthew Perry are responsible for the installation of communication systems throughout Regional Command South (RCS) so they're used to being up before the sun, packing up, moving out and being on call.

"It is extremely important that you are able to communicate, and that you have the technical support to do so," Gielbeda said. "Without it, missions are not able to be conducted, and our work as a task force here comes to a halt."

The team works with all types of units, including special operations personnel, who rely heavily on stable communication systems.

"When you work with those guys, communication is really important," Gielbeda said. "If smaller (Forward Operating Bases) cannot receive intelligence or mission updates, it becomes a concern. You cannot continue to conduct operations without it."

Fiber optic strands stretched across RCS provide internet and the ability to connect

communications systems and computer networks to smaller outposts and large bases. Those fiber strands form the "Afghan Fiber Ring," which is close to 850 miles around, and provides one gigabit per second capacity to each location on the ring.

But one small tear in the wiring causes the whole system to fail, and Depass spoke about how tedious and important thorough maintenance is.

"Sometimes it can be a lot of waiting around when you are testing the connections and the hours can build up," he said.

"There are a lot of moving pieces to this whole process, and it is important to get all of them right."

Systems are not always up and running, and when they arrived earlier in the year, many of those systems weren't even in place.

"We almost had to basically start over in some places, digging trenches and physically laying

cable and fiber optic strands in place," Depass said.

But their hard work has provided coalition forces with network access. Afghan government agencies and companies will be able to use the fiber ring in the future, Gielbeda said.

"What we have been able to accomplish here in RCS is incredible," Gielbeda said. "We have been on the go over the last six months and the amount of work needed to get where we are today was hard, but well worth it."

Before the ring of fiber strands was installed, each location had a capacity of 30 megabits per second. The speed the ring runs on now is up by 3400 percent.

For Perry, there is no better feeling than when systems checks go well.

"It is a big relief when communication is good to go across the board, when the strands haven't been compromised and have maintained working ability," Perry said.

It is the home stretch for these three, as they are nearing the end of their tour and ready to head home, and they want to ensure before they leave, things are running the right way.

"You take pride in your work and the things you do," Gielbeda said. **gt**



Senior Airman Matthew Perry, an engineer in the 213th Engineering Installation Squadron, 105th Airlift Wing, inspects wires at the base of a communications tower.



Staff Sgt. Greg Depass, an engineer in the 213th Engineering Installation Squadron, inspects an electrical box for faults or damage.



# NY Air Guard's 109<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Heads to Antarctica

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA --** The 109th Airlift Wing kicked off its 26th season in support of Operation Deep Freeze as Airmen and LC-130 Hercules aircraft began their journey to the South Pole on Oct. 18.

Despite the obstacles created by extreme weather conditions in Antarctica, crews are always prepared to complete the missions they have set out to do in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF).

A total of six ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft will be deployed this year from October to February, the typical on-continent Antarctic flying season. These aircraft will support the NSF's research by moving supplies and people to field camps across the continent and to the South Pole station.

About 120 Air National Guard members will be deployed at any one time to Operation Deep Freeze, with a total of about 700 personnel rotations over the entire season.

"We fully expect to meet all the mission

requirements NSF sets forth for us," said Maj. Steven Slosek, a navigator who will be part of this year's Operation Deep Freeze season, his fifth season on the ice. "It's an extremely remote and austere environment, but the best part about being a navigator in Antarctica is the sense of adventure."

Col. Shawn Clouthier, 109th Airlift Wing commander, said he is confident the Wing will once again provide outstanding support, no matter what the obstacles are.

"Due to fiscal constraints we have been tasked with fewer missions for this Antarctic season," he said. "However, the mission set is still one of the most demanding in the Air National Guard and the Air Force. Through all of the budget restrictions one constant remains, the dedicated and professional men and women of the 109th will serve the National Science Foundation in the outstanding manner to which they have become accustomed."

After the resolution of the government shutdown in October, the 109th quickly geared

back up to send down just as many aircraft as in previous seasons, and nearly the same number of personnel. As the season continues, additional guidance from the NSF will determine if the lowered mission tasking will continue.

The unit boasts the U.S. military's only ski-equipped aircraft, which has been supporting the NSF's South Pole research since 1988. Since 1999 the unit has been the sole provider of this type of airlift to the NSF and U.S. Antarctic research efforts.

In 1999 a crew from the 109th Airlift Wing made a daring rescue of Dr. Jerri Nielsen, a staff member at the Amundsen-Scott Station at the South Pole who was suffering from breast cancer. An LC-130 from the wing landed in bitter cold, far earlier in the season than they normally fly, to retrieve the doctor.

In 2008, another 109th LC-130 rescued an Australian researcher who had broken his leg in an accident and flew him to Hobart, Australia from Antarctica. **gt.**



An LC-130 aircraft, bound for Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze, takes off from Stratton Air National Guard Base Oct. 18. Photo by Master Sgt. William M. Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.



# 107<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Unit Gets New Commander

By Guard Times staff

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION, NIAGARA FALLS -- A New York Air National Guard Officer who spent nine years preparing to coordinate space shuttle rescue missions has taken command of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Medical Group of the 107th Airlift Wing.

Lt. Col. Emily Desrosier, a resident of Westhampton Beach on Long Island, assumed command on Sept. 14 from Col. Michael Torres, of Milton, Florida.

In his remarks, Torres, the outgoing commander, said that the job had been "the culmination of my career."

Desrosier, who joined the New York Air National Guard as a health services officer in 1994, was previously assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing, based at F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach.

She served as the wing executive officer from 2006 to 2008 and the wing medical administrative officer from 2008 to 2013.

Desrosier spent nine years as the 106th Rescue Wing's airfield support coordination officer supporting the Space Shuttle mission. During each launch, she in phone contact with Northern Command, supporting the NASA Space Center. She was part of a trained team tasked with coordinating rescue and recovery efforts in case of an emergency. The 106th Rescue Wing provided rescue capability for more than 100

space shuttle launches.

Desrosier also served as a logistics officer, coordinating the deployment of 106th Rescue Wing aircraft, supplies and personnel worldwide. She deployed to Turkey in support of Operation Northern Watch, enforcing the Iraqi no fly zone prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

She holds a masters of science degree in administration-health services from Central Michigan University, and she is a graduate of the Air War College and the Air Command and Staff College. She also completed Air Force schools in Logistics Plans and Programs, Contingency Wartime Planning, and Squadron Officer School.

Her military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Coast Guard Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

Desrosier praised the men and women of her new unit.

"I'm honored to be here and ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work," she said. "Our nation is still at war and it's my sincere promise I will give my all and lead the exceptional team of men and women of this medical group."

The group's mission is to provide medical support for the State of New York, Homeland Defense, and Air Expeditionary Forces.<sup>gt</sup>



Col. John Higgins, the commander of the 107th Airlift Wing, hands the Medical Group flag to Lt. Col. Emily Desrosier on Sept. 14. Photo by Senior Airmen Daniel Fravel, 107th Airlift Wing.

## Airmen Honored for Valor,

Continued from page 32

control the casualty collection point and direct timely casualty treatment.

Dougherty and Peterson ignored the enemy fire and began immediate treatment to save the lives of the injured men. When rocket propelled grenades hit nearby they covered the wounded with their own bodies.

Meanwhile, the lead helicopter Pedro 61, landed to allow the other three Guardsmen: Maloney, the Combat Rescue Officer; Blom, the team noncommissioned officer-in-charge, and Zimmer. Despite enemy fire, the three men ran across open ground to help and move the casualties.

Zimmer treated three patients with gunshot and shrapnel wounds and also stabilized a gravely wounded American Soldier who was missing his legs and an arm. Blom took charge of the casualty collection point and treatment process, while Maloney avoided an RPG, called in support from the HH-60 Pavehawk helicopters and two Army Kiowa Warrior OH-58 helicopter gunships, and accurately directed 50 caliber machinegun fire and rocket fire on the enemy.

With the helicopters suppressing the enemy, Blom transmitted the extraction plans, got the team ready to move and distributed his spare

ammunition to the ground troops. Blom and Maloney both took their places in the firing line to suppress the enemy while the other four Air Guardsmen helped the infantrymen move the wounded to a waiting HH-60 helicopter.

Zimmer saw that one of litter teams was having trouble moving over the rough terrain and ran back to help them, risking his own life to go into the open once more.

All four wounded Soldiers were evacuated to the combat surgical hospital at Kandahar Airfield. Unfortunately the triple amputee -- Staff Sgt. Wesley R. Williams, 25, of New Carlisle, Ohio -- died upon arriving there.<sup>gt</sup>





## Warrior Week

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA -- Staff Sgt. Michael Crisalli (left) and Staff Sgt. Ernesto Morales (right), of the 109th Security Forces Squadron of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing, begin the tactical obstacle course as part of warrior week training here in September. Photo by Master Sgt. William M. Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.



## Fire Training

YAPHANK, NY -- Firefighters with the 106th Rescue Wing conduct training at the Suffolk County Fire Academy on August 6. Photo by Senior Airman Christopher S. Muncy, 106th Rescue Wing.



# New York Guard

## New York Guard Tunes into Commo Training

Story and photo by New York Guard Spc. David Grate

CAMP SMITH -- Soldiers representing all brigades of the New York state defense force participated in a radio communications course during the annual training period here in August.

The training provided military equipment operation familiarization for the event of disaster declaration by the governor of New York.

“Communications are the backbone of any disaster recovery effort,” said Lt. Col. Barry Greene, the course administrator. “It is crucial that we be cognizant in procedures and regulations to support the citizens of New York, whenever called.”

The course focused on disaster preparedness radio communications and cohesion with the joint model.

Greene stated the importance of all response

agencies having the ability to openly communicate with timely information.

“If emergency responders cannot communicate, they cannot stage a coordinated effort to help victims in a disaster zone,” Greene said. “This course has prepared our soldiers to establish a communications network and assist emergency responders with conventional, and sometimes unconventional, network platforms.”

The training was developed by subject matter experts from the New York Guard and other state military forces, to include the New York Naval Militia and New York Air National Guard, ensuring confluence in operations in real world response.

The first two days of training included intensive classroom instruction and hands-on

examination of various radios, antennas, and transmitting microphones. The third day participants were able to apply lessons learned in the field, running tests and practice transmissions on the equipment.

The fourth and final day participants were tested in a field training exercise, which emulated a real disaster.

“We learned the value of communication in a disaster setting and the importance of moving resources during a disaster,” said Sgt. Adrian Ramos an 88th Brigade soldier who deployed to assist in citizen recovery following Super Storm Sandy.

“If given the call, our men and women are ready, willing and trained to assist as the governor directs,” said Maj. Gen. Fergal Foley, the New York Guard commander. **gt**



New York Guard Sgt. 1st Class David Moat observes Sgt. Adrian Ramos receive a radio transmission on the PRC 77 VHF frequency radio while taking part in a communications field-training exercise in August. New York Guard annual training is a week-long summer training period, organized to maximize troop efficiency by creating real-world scenarios to prepare for disaster response. The New York Guard is the state's volunteer force, which augments the New York National Guard.



# New York Naval Militia



## New York Naval Militia Operations

*NEW YORK -- New York Naval Militia (NYNM) Patrol Boat 440 (above) is underway for Naval Militia familiarization with the commanding officers of Navy Operational Support Center, Long Island and New York City in New York Harbor here Sept. 6. Patrol Boat 440 is based at the U.S. Coast Guard Station here and conducts regular missions in support of the station's security mission. Rear Admiral David Tucker, NYNM deputy commander, (below, left) is briefed on Patrol Boat 440 operations by NYNM Petty Officer Ken Stefandel during a patrol mission. Photos by Commander Don McKnight, NYNM.*





## Troops See Stanley Cup at Niagara Falls Air Base

NIAGARA FALLS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AIR RESERVE STATION -- Chicago Blackhawks right wing Patrick Kane visited the 107th Airlift Wing here in August, bringing with him the Stanley Cup and Conn Smythe trophies.

Kane, a south Buffalo native, was touring western New York displaying the Stanley Cup at various stops.

Members of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station had the opportunity to meet Kane, as well as have photographs taken with the Stanley Cup and the Conn Smythe trophy.

"My son was absolutely thrilled," said Lt. Col. Douglas C. Eoute, whose son Lucas is a longtime Patrick Kane fan. "He was able to meet Kane and walk with him as he carried the Stanley Cup to the display table, and Kane signed his jersey."

Welcomed on stage by New York Congressman Brian Higgins, 107th

Airlift Wing Commander Col. John J. Higgins, and 914th Airlift Wing Vice Commander Col. Walter O. Gordon, Kane took a moment to address the crowd, which included members and family of the 107th and 914th Airlift Wings, Army Reserve Soldiers, the Buffalo Sled Veteran Warriors and the Buffalo Warriors Hockey Team.

"I can carry around a Stanley Cup that's 35 pounds, or an MVP trophy that's brought along with us here today, but for what you do for our country, you carry our country on your back," Kane said. "It's purely amazing. I just want to express my gratitude for everything you do for this country,"

Kane and the Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup in June when they defeated the Boston Bruins for the National Hockey League championship. Kane earned the Conn Smythe Trophy, which is awarded to the most valuable player of the NHL's Stanley Cup Playoffs. **gt**



Chicago Blackhawks right wing Patrick Kane autographs a hat during his visit at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station in August. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Stephan Kovacs, 107th Airlift Wing.





## “Hammerhead” Comes Home

*ITHACA -- A restored M901 missile launching armored vehicle (above) like those used by New York Army National Guardsmen who served in Ithaca in the 1980s and 1990s, was put on display outside the New York State Armory here in October.*

*The M-901 “Hammerhead” Improved TOW Vehicle serves as a historical display to remind the Soldiers of today’s Army National Guard about the history of their unit. Though Company D, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry and New York Army National Guard Soldiers are based at the Ithaca armory, Company E of the 1st Battalion, 108th Infantry was assigned there before 2005. Company E was the anti-armor company of the battalion and trained to kill enemy tanks with the TOW (Tube-launched, Optically-tracked Wire-guided) antitank missile fired from the M901.*

*The M-901 Improved TOW Vehicle (ITV) was dubbed the “hammerhead” by the Soldiers who used it in the 1980s and 1990s because of the retractable missile launcher on top of the vehicle which looked like a hammer when it was locked in the firing position. While this feature made the vehicle higher when firing -- just under 10 feet tall -- it still allowed the crew to fire its weapon from a covered and concealed position.*

*The M-901 also allowed its four-man crew to travel with mechanized infantry and armor units, stop, erect the launcher, and fire two missiles without exposing themselves. The ITV could carry 10 more missiles which the crew could use as reloads. The vehicle is also equipped with smoke grenade launchers to provide some cover from enemy observation.*

*The New York State Military Museum has created and installed a series of exhibits in armories across the state which inform Soldiers and visitors about the history of the units which were located in that armory or in that locality. The Armory Enhancement Program is intended to create an awareness and knowledge of unit history, lineage and traditions and to cultivate and encourage esprit de corps among the unit members.*





## NY National Guard Hurricane, Storm Responses Remembered

ALBANY -- Governor Andrew Cuomo commemorates the National Guard's response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and Tropical Storms Lee and Irene in 2011 by presenting an award to a National Guard delegation during the Governor's Conference on Emergency Preparedness at the Empire State Convention Center on Oct. 28. Receiving the honor were (from right) Lt. Col. Arthur Zegers, commander of the 102nd MP Battalion during Hurricane Sandy; Command Sgt. Major Thomas Ciampolillo, the 102nd MP Battalion command sergeant major; 1st Sgt. Kevin Conklin from the 1108th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal); and Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York.



## Thumbs Up For Tandem Jump

WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major Frank Wicks (right) poses with a pararescue jumper assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing following a tandem parachute jump here on Sept. 24. Wicks and other senior Army and Air Guard non-commissioned officers visited the base to get a first hand look at the wing's operations. Photo by Airman Chris Muncy, 106th Rescue Wing.



# Job Fair Attracts Hundreds of Vets, Service Members

Story and photo by Sgt 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters

LATHAM, N.Y. - Opportunity rocked for American veterans and service members at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "Hiring Our Heroes" job fair held at the New York National Guard armory here Oct. 16.

Over 200 veterans and service members of all ranks, stripes and services took the opportunity to meet with scores of potential employers such as Federal Express, General Electric, Time Warner Cable, National Grid and CVS Pharmacy stores, who were stationed at tables arranged around the armory floor.

The fair was also designed to allow National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, military Reserve members, Active Duty service members, veterans and military spouses to learn how to use job-hunting tools. General Electric held workshops on resume writing and interviewing in an armory classroom.

Veterans who served in Vietnam, the Gulf Wars and Afghanistan worked the floor for several hours, spoke with company representatives, learned about job openings, filled out applications and submitted resumes.

The New York National Guard has also hosted "Hiring Our Heroes" events in across New York in Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, Farmingdale, Peekskill and Binghamton.

Veterans' job skills are almost too numerous to list, said Eric Eversole, executive director of the "Hiring Our Heroes" program and a U.S. Chamber of Commerce vice president.

Among other things, veterans have work discipline and – most importantly -- the ability to solve problems, he emphasized.

"Each of you, as members of our military, have done that, day in and day out," Eversole said to the veterans who were on hand for the fair's opening at 10 a.m.

Eversole thanked the New York National Guard and Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the



Kristen Cargill, a representative from Northwestern Mutual Financial Network, (left) speaks with New York Army Guard Soldier 1st Lt. John Scott (right) at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's "Hiring Our Heroes" job fair on Oct. 16. The New York National Guard has also hosted "Hiring Our Heroes" events across New York state in places like Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, Farmingdale, Peekskill and Binghamton.

Adjutant General of New York, for hosting the event.

"Without the support of the National Guard, events like this would not be as successful as they could be," he said. "The support of the Guard is integral to the events and the efforts to ensure vets and their spouses have meaningful job opportunities."

National Guard leaders also have the pulse of their communities, Eversole said.

"They understand, first hand, the sacrifices vets have made over the last decade," he stressed. "They also know that these vets make tremendous employees. They've solved problems in difficult situations. They know how to get the job done."

Thomas Lang, a Gulf War and navy veteran from Watervliet, N.Y., said he handed out 15 resumes, and he estimated that he spoke with about 30 company representatives.

"I lost count after five," he recalled.

The fair was a great opportunity, and a far

cry from the experiences of returning Vietnam veterans, Lang said.

"The community recognizes the sacrifices we made," he said. "Today, veterans have more of a chance to succeed."

But veterans and others must learn how to adapt to changes, recognize opportunities and seize them, Lang said.

"You have to go out there and talk to people," he said. "Be open-minded, learn new things, don't dwell on the past. If you take care of today, the future will be written."

The event was co-sponsored by the New York National Guard, New York State Department of Labor, Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR), NBC News, the US Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS), US Department of Veterans Affairs, and The American Legion.





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