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Volume 7, Number 3

Summer 2014

guardtimes

www.dmna.ny.gov

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



FROM THE LEADERSHIP

What We Measure Matters

*For want of a nail the shoe was lost.
For want of a shoe the horse was lost.
For want of a horse the rider was lost.
For want of a rider the message was lost.
For want of a message the battle was lost.
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.*

—Traditional

As Soldiers and Airmen, we each have individual readiness obligations to meet.

We take a physical fitness test each year. We get on a scale to show we meet height/weight standards. We get out to the range and qualify on our weapons.

We complete all the mandatory classes we must all take to ensure we are current on the latest information the Army and Air Force wants us to know—ranging from Operations Security to how to prevent sexual assault.

Our Army officers and NCOs need to ensure they have a Department of the Army photo in their file. Records have to be updated for retention boards.

If we change military jobs, we have to ensure we are qualified in the Army Military Occupational Specialty or the Air Force Specialty Code for the job.

We need to ensure our military physical is up to date and our dental health is in order.

And, of course, we have to ensure urinalysis tests occur in a timely manner.

And at the same time our units must inventory and ensure we account for all of our equipment. Unit commanders must make sure mobilization plans are up to date. The commander has to have somebody designated to run and handle their family readiness group.

The list of requirements can appear endless. And we manage to balance all this with our primary duties and responsibilities to train and be ready as an individual, as part of a team and as an entire unit.

Sometimes it feels like these administrative and educational requirements overwhelm a

drill period. Instead of doing maintenance or exciting tactical training, the unit might hold yet another physical fitness test, or conduct more classes, or check to find out why people haven't made time to go to school to get qualified in their military occupational specialty or for their professional development.

Soldiers, Airmen and their leaders can find this focus on administrative matters frustrating. We want to be out on the range, doing tactics at Fort Drum, or fixing our fighting machines, not filling out forms.

But these things matter. They matter because they ensure each of us is ready to deploy. We need to be in good health. We need to be qualified in our jobs. We need to ensure our family readiness group is ready if we head overseas or downstate for a hurricane.

We all need to know how to keep our finances in order, how to report sexual harassment or simply build up resiliency to ensure we can better focus on our military jobs.

And these metrics matter not just to your readiness as a Soldier or Airmen. Taken as a whole, they are a reflection of our entire state, and if you don't believe the Army, the Air Force and National Guard Bureau pay attention to how we rate for individual and unit readiness, think again.

It can be difficult to make comparisons between air wings, battalions or brigades based on a disaster response mission or a past deployment. Wildfires out West or hurricanes on the East coast can't easily distinguish the good units from the great ones. So at the senior levels, they look to the metrics of what all units, all leaders, all Soldiers and Airmen must do.

Units that take care of the little things can handle the bigger things. Showing achievement in the mandatory tasks for all Soldiers and Air-



Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy

men, from physical fitness tests to completing evaluations on time to getting our members to the right schools for their job and military careers all indicate how ready our units are for those more complex tasks.

We've got an excellent track record across the New York Army and Air National Guard in getting the mission done, both at home and overseas. We've proven we can take on those challenges and excel. By backing our reputation up with success in the things measured by the Guard, we validate what most military leaders know: New York State Military Forces are ready.

Gunnery? Maneuver training? Complex battle staff exercises? Combat Training Center rotations? Keep showing we can handle the routine stuff with proven readiness indicators and we're well on our way to taking our training, our resourcing, our Soldiers and Airmen and our units to the next level.

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Brand new sergeants in the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade, Sergeants Fabian Bishop, at left, and Jeffrey Houck, right, are congratulated by brigade Command Sgt. Major Jorge Vazquez during their promotion ceremony at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, June 30. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.



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 Steven Petibone, NYARNG, EDITOR

About Guard Times

The *Guard Times* is published quarterly using federal funds authorized under provisions of AR 360-1 and AFI 35-101 by the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs and the New York Army and Air National Guard Public Affairs Office.

Views which appear in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force or the National Guard Bureau.

The *Guard Times* has a circulation of 20,000 and is distributed free to members of the New York State Military Forces and employees of the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

Submissions

Articles, photos and letters are welcome. Please provide article submissions via email saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf) along with high resolution digital (jpg) photos. Submission deadlines are January 15 (winter issue), April 15 (spring issue), July 15 (summer issue), and October 15 (fall issue). Send your submissions to:

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CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait -- Soldiers from the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, conduct an AT-4 anti-tank weapon live fire May 19. The Soldiers are deployed to Kuwait with the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

FRONT COVER: Sgt. 1st Class Joann Duclose, a human resources sergeant with the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, gestures at a UH-60 Black Hawk to lift off during night sling load training with Aviators from 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, on June 5, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

BACK COVER: A newly refurbished O-2A Cessna Skymaster, a historical part of 105th Airlift Wing and New York Air National Guard history, is on display parked behind a C-5M Super Galaxy from Dover Air Force Base, undergoing interior refurbishment at the 105th restoration facility at Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh, on April 23. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.

Inspector General Corner

Trust in the Chain of Command

Commentary by Col. Darren Sears, Inspector General

LATHAM -- Do you trust your chain of command to assist you with issues you are having or do you trust your chain of command to do the right thing?

When the Joint Force Headquarters Inspector General Office is in the field performing sensing sessions, these are a couple of the questions we ask. Much of the time, we'll hear back from Soldiers and Airmen that they do indeed trust their chain of command. That's a good thing.

However, sometimes groups of Soldiers and Airmen will tell us that they do not trust their chain of command. Of course, we then ask the natural follow-on question, "Why not?" The number one answer that we hear when members say they don't trust their chain of command with their issues is that they will suffer some form of retribution for bringing issues to their chain.

Is this fear of retribution real or perceived? Many times when we press for reasons or examples as to why a member fears retribution, they have a hard time answering. They just feel that their chain of command will not be responsive or that they will respond negatively.

I say give the chain of command a chance. Most leaders understand that the success of a unit is underpinned by the success and well-being of the members that make up that unit.

This shouldn't be seen as a free pass to whine and complain about anything, but these fearful members might be surprised by the positive response they receive when they bring legitimate issues to their chain.

Soldiers and Airmen are part of the solution too. When you bring an issue to your chain of command; whether it is personal or having to do

with unit readiness, efficiency, or morale; make sure that you have tried to solve the issue at the lowest level possible. Be ready to articulate what steps you have already taken to solve the problem.

You'll find that most leaders are willing to listen and provide assistance if you can show that you have done your part in trying to reach a solution.


Make sure you also know what the official line from the Army, Air Force, or National Guard is on the matter. If you're trying to circumvent a policy or regulation, you should be ready for some push-back from your chain of command.

Leaders and supervisors, make sure you are a resource for your members. Listen to what your Soldiers and Airmen have to say and provide the necessary assistance, feedback, and/or expectation management.

Leadership is not easy and effort is needed to lead a successful unit or formation. Trust is an important part of any organization, but that trust must be earned. It is not a given.

The IG is and always will be a resource available to every Soldier and Airmen in the New York National Guard.

However, before you come to us with your issue, I hope you'll let your chain of command try to help resolve the matter. Trust them with your issues.

Lastly, leaders, make sure you work to earn the trust of your Soldiers and Airmen. We have worked hard to build the trust of our State and Nation. Let's make sure we continue to work hard solidifying the trust among us. 

Veterans Loan Program Helps Home Buyers

Guard Times Staff

LATHAM - New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who are buying their first home are eligible to participate in a low-interest home loan program for military veterans and service members offered through the State of New York Mortgage Agency.

The program allows Guard members to obtain mortgages for 3.75 percent interest and down payment assistant grants which can total as much as \$15,000 in some instances if they take advantage of the program before Veterans Day, Nov. 11, this year. The minimum for the down payment assistance grants is \$3000 or 3 percent of the cost of the home up to \$15,000.

The program also allows home buyers to purchase homes that need repairs, and fix them up using money made available through the state's Own It Fix It New York program or Remodel New York program at no addition to

the interest rate.

Homebuyers taking advantage of the program only have to put up one percent of the cost of their homes.

The \$50 million commitment of funds to help veterans and serving members of the active military, Guard and Reserve buy homes was announced by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo during his Military and Veterans Families Summit on March 20.

The loans are available through SONYMA participating lenders. The interest rates offered through the program are lower than the standard SONYMA interest rates.


In order to qualify for the Homes for Veterans Program, veterans or active service U.S. military personnel must supply the following documentation with their SONYMA mortgage application.

DD214 - Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty or NGB Form 22 - Report of Separation and Record of Service;

Military Veteran's Eligibility Affidavit (SONYMA Form 243) [Required only if an eligible veteran (or their spouse or co-borrower) is not a first-time homebuyer.]

Leave and Earning Statement (Required for all active duty U.S. military personnel)

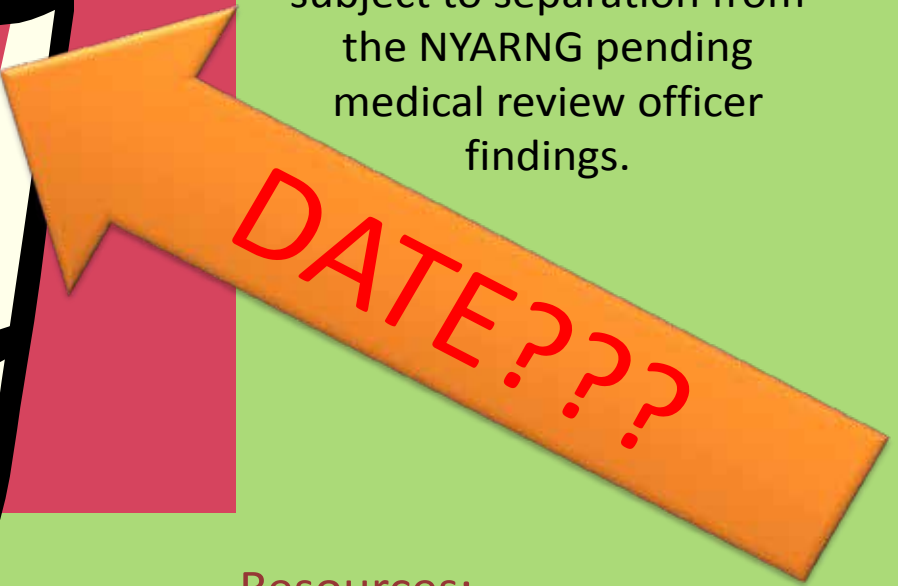
Military ID Card (Required for all active duty U.S. military personnel)

For more information on the program and to check out the latest interest rates go to the New York Housing and Community Renewal website here: www.nyshcr.org/Topics/HomeBuyers/SONYMA/HomesforVeteransProgram-TermSheet 



Controlled Prescription Medications **EXPIRE** 6 months after their last date prescribed.

If you are over medicating, using for the unintended purpose, and/or using expired or “borrowed” medications you may be subject to separation from the NYARNG pending medical review officer findings.



Resources:

MEDCOM Behavioral Health Staff
518-270-1566

NYARNG Director of Psychological Health, Puspita Sen
518-270-1567, 518-545-8753, puspita.sen.ctr@mail.mil

Joint Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator, SSG Broderick
518-344-3481, michael.f.broderick3.mil@mail.mil

NYARNG Alcohol & Drug Control Officer, Kim Akins
(518) 937-3271, kakins@accenturefederal.com

OASAS – NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services
<https://www.oasas.ny.gov/>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
1-800-662- HELP (4357), www.SAMHSA.gov



Have Questions?
Need Help?

The New York Honor Guard Wants You

LATHAM -- The New York Army National Guard's Military Funeral Honors program is looking for Soldiers who can look sharp, and master the intricacies of drill and ceremony.

In 2013 New York Army National Guard Soldiers provided military funeral services for 9,997 veterans and expects to perform at least that many in 2014.

The program is always looking for Soldiers interested in working as an honor guard member on both a full-time and part-time basis, said Lt. Col. Robert Epp, the Program Manager.

Under federal law, any American who has served in the Army National Guard, United States Army or Army Reserve and was not dishonorably discharged is eligible for military funeral honors during his or her burial. It's the National Guard honor guard teams that make this happen, Epp said. Rendering military funeral honors is a way to show the nation's deep gratitude to those who, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country, he added.

The funeral program is a highly visible activity, Epp said. It takes a strong commitment to our fallen Soldiers and their families and the ability to exemplify the highest standards of conduct, customs and courtesies, as well as dress and appearance, he emphasized.

An Honor Guard member represents every member of the Army, both past and present, and is required to attend a mandatory one-week initial training class to be conditioned to perfect all movements throughout every drill and ceremony. The seven-day training program requires Soldiers to work closely with their trainers through a process of teaching, monitoring, inspecting and testing, Epp said.

The tests are progressive, demanding quantifiable improvement and demonstrated performance. If the trainee completes the training cycle



and passes the tests, they will be able to flawlessly conduct funeral ceremonies, to meet the highest standards of uniform preparation, and flag folding abilities, he said.

Honor guard candidates also learn how to flawlessly maintain the Army Service Uniform which are worn at all funerals.

The duty as an honor guard member

is not for everyone, Epp said, but honor guard members describe their service as a privilege and an honor, and are undeniably proud of their service.

For more information contact Staff Sergeant Erwin Dominguez, Military Forces Honor Guard Operations NCO, at (518) 786-4906 or e-mail erwin.a.dominguez.mil@mail.mil. **gt**

Safety Corner

Army Modifies Risk Management Process

Story by Capt. Colt Brumm, Joint Force Headquarters

LATHAM – Soldiers understand the important role risk management plays in preparing for missions and training. Reducing risks increases the likelihood of mission success without injury or accident.

This spring the Army replaced the Composite Risk Management (CRM) process outlined in Field Manual 5-19 (now obsolete) with the Risk Management (RM) process in Army Techniques Publication 5-19.

The risk management process Soldiers know remains generally similar as leaders are tasked to identify hazards, assess the hazards, develop controls and make risk decisions, implement controls, supervise and evaluate.

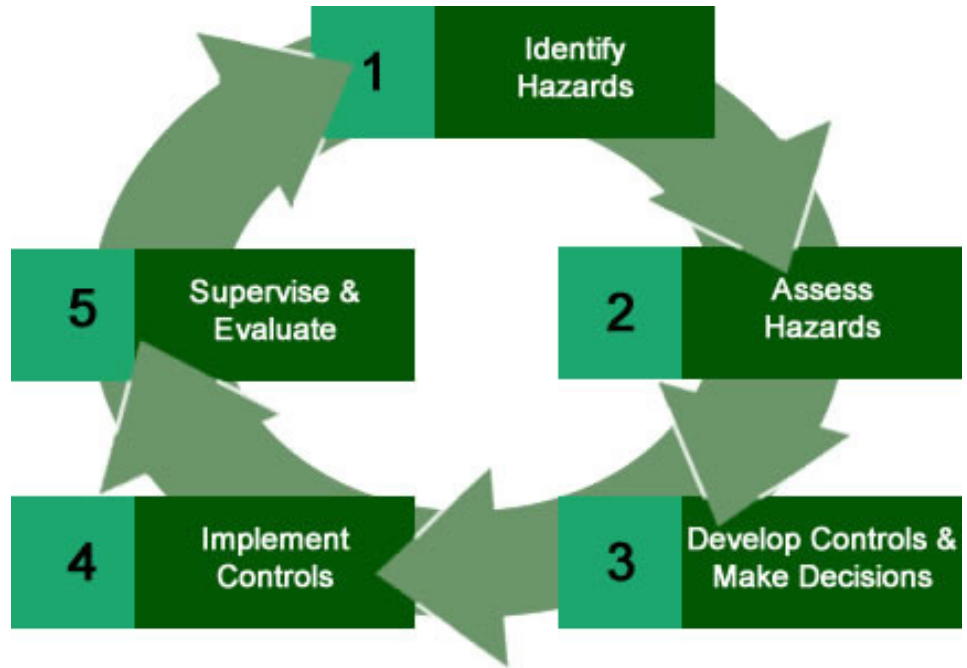
The new doctrine introduces concepts to better enable time-constrained leaders to include risk management as part of their troop-leading procedures to make sound risk decisions, known as real-time risk management. For many Soldiers who understand the limited time constraints to prepare for missions, the new procedures can assist in their planning.

The DD Form 2977 replaces the DA Form 7566 (now obsolete) as the deliberate risk assessment worksheet. It is easier to use and provides useful information on the form to assist with the risk assessment process. All Soldiers, especially leaders, should familiarize themselves with the updated concepts and integrate them into unit operations.

The risk management updates were generally made to streamline the process for Soldiers, align risk management steps with troop-leading procedures and military decision-making, and utilize joint concepts and terminology.

The new process outlines where specific steps of risk management should be executed. For example, the “supervise and evaluate” step of risk management, which has gained considerable emphasis in this update, occurs during the “issue the order” and “supervise and refine” steps in troop-leading procedures.

One notable new concept is “real-time risk assessment” conducted in situations where resources, time, or tactical constraints inhibit the ability to complete a DD 2977. The real-time risk assessment, however, would still be



developed and disseminated as part of a leader’s troop-leading procedures just as a written assessment would be.

New York Army National Guard leaders will begin receiving formal instruction on Army Risk Management revisions during safety qualification and refresher training or the Company Commanders and First Sergeants Course and Lieutenant Leaders Course.

Altering terminology helps achieve joint interoperability with other services. Many terms, such as “accident risk” or “residual risk” are now used according to their plain English meaning rather than a specified Army definition. Other updated terms are listed near the beginning of the Army Techniques Publication.

The DD 2977, as a Department of Defense form, also provides a common framework for joint risk management.

Training managers may already notice that the new DD 2977 risk assessment worksheet is required for Army Digital Training Management System, or DTMS, to accept training packages for units. The obsolete form DA 7566 is now rejected by the automated system.


Commander responsibilities in ATP 5-19 align with a broad mandate to ensure that Sol-

diers are able to perform duties to standard and minimize human error, materiel failure, or environmental effects. Among the tasks assigned, the most critical are the commander’s responsibilities to establish risk tolerance, make risk decisions, select and enforce hazard controls, and elevate risk decisions as appropriate.

Leader responsibilities include applying and promoting risk management integration into all activities, implementing and maintaining controls selected by the commander, and ensuring personnel are trained in the integration of risk management into all operations.

Individual responsibilities involve adherence to safety protocols and risk mitigation measures developed by leaders. Individuals are required to sustain self-discipline both for duty performance and personal conduct, observe risk management controls and request support of the chain of command to implement or maintain controls beyond personal capability.

Remember, all Soldiers are safety officers and have a responsibility to conduct operations safely to maintain individual and unit readiness.

The new publication can be found at <http://armypubs.army.mil>. 

Military Personnel News: The MILPO Corner

Administrative News

New Mobilization Authority. Mobilizations for the reserve component after September 13, 2014 will likely fall under 10 U.S.C. 12304b, a different authorization than prior unit call-ups. This is otherwise known as a Presidential Reserve Call up (PRC) designed specifically to augment the active force for operational missions.

In recent years, most of the mobilizations we have supported have fallen under 10 U.S.C. 12302, which allowed for additional benefits such as early TRICARE and reduction in eligibility age for retirement pay.

Going forward, mobilizations under 10 U.S.C. 12304b do not provide these benefits. For further information, please review the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Memorandum, dated May 1, 2014 entitled, "Guidance on Service Implementation of 10 U.S.C. 12304b Order to Active Duty for Preplanned Missions in Support of Combatant Commands."

[https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Featured%20News/Attachments/Signed%20ASD%20memo%20wrt%2012304b%201%20May%202014%20\(2\).pdf](https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Featured%20News/Attachments/Signed%20ASD%20memo%20wrt%2012304b%201%20May%202014%20(2).pdf)

Rescue Stand Down



WESTHAMPTON BEACH - Col. Thomas J. Owens, commander of the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing discusses sexual assault prevention and the findings of the various on-base workgroups during the SAPR stand down on July 13, 2014. Photo by Senior Airman Christopher S. Muncy.

Combat Call Center. VA's Vet Center Program operates a Combat Call Center 1-877-WAR-VETS for combat Veterans and their families. This is an around the clock confidential call center where combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issues they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life. The staff is comprised of combat Veterans from several eras as well as family members of combat Veterans. <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-149712>

MyArmyBenefits Helps Soldiers Plan For Life Changes. MyArmyBenefits, found at <http://MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil>, the Army's official benefits website, provides state and federal benefit fact sheets, benefit calculators, and a responsive help-desk to assist Soldiers with planning for all kinds of eventualities. Information and decision tools are also available to support planning for retirement, preparing for transition or deployment, starting a family, buying a home, planning for taxes or licensing a car in a new state.

For example: if you're moving to a new state after you leave the military, does the new state tax your retirement pay, provide relief from property taxes to Veterans, or provide interest free college loans for dependents? Many states do offer benefits to Veterans. MyArmyBenefits knows exactly what is offered by each state or territory.

Personnel News

Learn More about the new Evaluation Systems. Army Human Resources Command offers a new Officer Evaluation Report Training Packet which covers the Evaluation and Selection Systems to give both leaders and Soldiers a better understanding of how these systems work, and to explain rater and senior rater roles in the process. It is designed to be used for personal understanding, and if needed leader development. <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-150209>

Changes or Updates to Personnel Records. Soldiers all too often undergo significant life events/changes without notifying their chain of command or completing updates to their personnel records. Life events, such as addition of dependents, marriage, or divorce require updates to personnel databases and documents,

such as the DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data and SGLV 8286, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Election and Certificate. Soldier's should contact HR professionals when changes occur for assistance in updating their personnel records, to update personnel databases, and to ensure proper filing of supporting documentation in each Soldier's Official Military Personnel File within iPERMS. To review a file, go to <https://iperms.hrc.army.mil/rms/>

User Guide for Records Reviews. This guide, developed by the AG School, proposes guidelines for conducting Records Reviews. The objective of the guide is to standardize procedures for every Soldier to complete a personnel and finance records review during in-processing to a new duty station, annually thereafter, and prior to separation from the Army. The guide also provides a section by section explanation of entries on the ERB, ORB, LES and casualty documents, a very helpful tool for any Soldier reviewing their own documents. Download the guide: <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-153332>

Tattoo, branding, and body mutilation policy and validation memos. The release of AR 670-1 and DA Pam 670-1, March 31 implemented new guidance concerning the Army's Tattoo, Branding, and Body Mutilation Policy. All Soldiers are required to comply with Chapter 3, Appearance and Grooming Policies and meet the standards outlined in paragraph 3-3 concerning tattoos. Commanders of reserve component units must complete tattoo validation memos (with photos as enclosures) for all assigned Soldiers within 120 days of effective date of newly published AR 670-1 and DA Pam 670-1. Validation memos with photos must be uploaded by iPERMS record managers to individual Soldier personnel record not later than 150 days from the release of AR 670-1.

Overseas Leave Procedures. Taking vacation overseas this summer? Any Soldier traveling out of the continental United States, whether for personal travel, vacation, etc., must advise their commander and be in a leave status prior to travel. Full-time AGR/ADOS Soldiers will complete a DA Form 31 leave form and include the full leave address with phone number in block 6 and all countries to be visited, including those traveling through, in block 17.

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For traditional National Guard M-Day Soldiers, the company commander will sign a memorandum stating that they are aware their Soldier is traveling out of the country and will include full leave address, including phone number, and any countries they will be traveling through in the memorandum.

The state Military Personnel Officer requires this leave documentation or letter from the company commander, along with the Soldier's flight itinerary, copy of their civilian passport and certificate of completion for the Antiterrorism/Force Protection Training.

For further information please review MNP-Policy 11-05 which is located on our MNP AKO Webportal, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/553732>. Point of contact for overseas leave requests is Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Proctor who can be reached at (518) 270-1553 or via email jeffrey.l.proctor2.mil@mail.mil.

Soldier Support

Preparing For Retirement? The New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs (NYS DVA) has professional counselors knowledgeable in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) rules and regulations and will guide and advocate through the process from beginning to end.

The VA provides a wide range of benefits including, Disability, Education and Training, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, Home Loan Guaranty, Dependent and Survivor Benefits, Medical Treatment, Life Insurance and Burial Benefits.

When meeting a NYS DVA counselor Soldiers should have available DD214's, medical records and if applicable marriage certificates, divorce decrees, birth certificates, and death certificates. NYS DVA State Veterans Counselors can also assist in obtaining some of these documents. Veterans and family members who need to file a claim with the VA are encouraged to contact a NYS DVA State Veterans Counselor for assistance. For assistance, schedule an appointment with a NYS DVA State Veterans Counselor. For additional information go to: <http://veterans.ny.gov/content/starting-claim>

Casualty Affairs Coordinator change. On June 19, 2nd Lt. Manley replaced 1st Lt. Kurtz as the Casualty Affairs Coordinator. Lt. Manley can be reached at: Office: 518-270-1542, Blackberry: 518-527-3713, e-mail: cameron.r.manley.

mil@mail.mil

Central NY SOS Coordinator change.

Goodbye Mr. Arena, welcome to Mrs. Cynthia Roberson-Vanlaningham! Mr. Arena spent his last day as the Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Coordinator for the Syracuse region on April 21. On June 16, Roberson-Vanlaningham joined the SOS family. She can be reached at: Office: 315-438-3301, Blackberry: 315-373-6589, e-mail: cynthia.m.roberson-vanlaningham.ctr@mail.mil

SGLI Rates Increase. Notification has been received that the service members Group Life Insurance program is scheduled to increase monthly premium rates to service members with the maximum 400,000 dollars of life insurance coverage by two dollars. Soldiers with lower coverage will have smaller increases. For more information, visit <http://benefits.va.gov/insurance/sgli.asp>

Soldier for Life program. From Army Echoes, Jun-Sep 2014, the Army recently initiated a website; The Soldier For Life Program. This program is about the entire "lifecycle" of being a Soldier, from the moment a Soldier reports to basic training (Start Strong), to the day they arrive at their first command and begin their Army career (Serve Strong), to the moment they make the decision to transition to civilian life (Reintegrate Strong), to their final separation/retirement from the Army into the civilian community (Remain Strong). Please follow the below link for more information.

<http://www.soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/resources.html>

Education

New Education Services Officer. 1st Lt. Ryan Gonch replaced Capt. Ashley Coye as the Education Services Officer June 1 while she deploys. Gonch can be reached at: Office: 518-272-6349 e-mail: ryan.p.gonch.mil@mail.mil

FTA Policy Update: According to new Department of Defense policy effective July 23, 2014, Soldiers will reimburse the Army for any Tuition Assistance received if the Soldier does not successfully complete a class. A non-successful grade is defined as an "F" or "D" for undergraduate courses; and "F", "D", or "C" for graduate courses. Unsuccessful grades will result in recoupment of federal tuition assistance.

FTA/GoArmyEd USERS: the Tuition Assistance request window has changed. Tuition Assistance requests must be submitted 10 days prior to the class start date and approved by the State Certifying official BEFORE class start date!

Questions? Contact the education office at MNP-ED, 1 Buffington Street, Watervliet, NY 12189, telephone: (518)270-1555

Healthcare News

TRICARE Options When Moving. Changing health care providers during a permanent change of station (PCS) is becoming less difficult, according to a July article on military.com. The first step service members and families should take is to update their information with their new address and duty station in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Beneficiaries do not have to disenroll from TRICARE or TRICARE Prime. Beneficiaries should call their regional office or management support care contractor and let them know they are moving. For additional information, visit the TRICARE Moving webpage at www.tricare.mil/LifeEvents/Moving.aspx

New Boss for the 69th



TROY - New York Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Harry Miller, left, commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, congratulates newly promoted Lt. Col. Sean Flynn, commander of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, following a promotion ceremony in front of family, friends and the division leadership and staff July 18. Photo by Sgt. J.P. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division.

THE JOINT FORCE

35th TAG Match Brings Back Familiar Shooters

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Patricia Austin, Joint Force Headquarters

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor - For the fifth year in a row, a team from the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing has won the annual "TAG (The Adjutant General) Match," held here May 31 to June 1.

close-quarters combat, casualty, and nuclear biological chemical (NBC) drills.

Stefik, who has headed the 107th Airlift Wing team for the last five years, stressed that the match is mostly about training -- and winning in combat.



Staff Sgt. Joe Dee of the New York Guard, holds the award named after him, that was presented to Team Reaper from Syracuse during the award ceremony at The Adjutant General's match at Camp Smith on June 1. Brig. Gen. Michael Swezey presented the award to Staff Sgt. Trevor Hunter, Senior Airmen Zachary Taillie, Lt. Col. Kenneth Field and Master Sgt. Nathan McCloud from the 174th Attack Wing.

The winning team consisted of Senior Master Sgt. Edward Stefik, from Lewiston; Sgt. Ryan Mang, from Niagara Falls; Staff Sgt. Johnathan Wagner, from Buffalo and Tech Sgt. Warren Jones, from Rochester.

The four were among 125 New York Army and Air National Guard members who competed in the annual shooting event that tests service members' ability to fire the M-9 pistol, the M-4 carbine, and the M-249 squad automatic weapon.

The modern TAG Match requires participants to employ the weapons used on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The match consists of eight timed events that include the use of those weapons during

"We're in a real-world situation, we've been at war for over 10 years," Stefik said. "This isn't just a competition, it's a training experience." **gt**



Service members from the New York Army National Guard, New York Air National Guard and New York Guard competed in the Adjutant General's Match here from May 30 to June 1, 2014. Each competitor fired three different weapons systems, the M9 pistol, the M4 Carbine or M16A2, and the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. (Photo above) Soldiers must carry 180 pounds on a litter from the 300 yard line to the 200 yard line, and then again to the 100 yard line while shooting at each location respectfully.



Red flag's are raised around the weapons range perimeter during the Adjutant General's Match here from May 30 to June 1, 2014. When a red flag is raised, it means that live ammunition is being used on the firing range.



Army and Air Work on Joint Mission Needs

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph McKee, 914th Airlift Wing



New York National Guard 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry members are instructed by 914th Airlift Wing personnel on how to weigh, measure and secure deployable equipment for airlift during a joint training exercise, June 7, 2014, at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, N.Y.

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION
-- In an exchange of best practices, Air Force Reserve members of the 914th Airlift Wing trained the New York Army National Guard's 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry personnel on the proper techniques in preparing equipment to be loaded onto a C-130 Hercules aircraft on June 7.

The training familiarized the New York Army National Guard Soldiers how to weigh, measure and secure deployable equipment in the event it needs to be transported by aircraft, such as the C-130s stationed at Niagara Falls.

Exercises like this highlight the importance of interoperability between branches in a joint

environment.

"This is a joint mission; we need to work with the Air Force to get our stuff where it needs to be and working jointly with the Air Force is a win-win situation," said Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Timothy Jarmusz, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry. "We are here for the community - it is what our mission is all about, to help and protect the community."

Equipment can be as important as people, and the ability to deploy both in a timely manner can be the difference between life and death. National Guard members stationed at Niagara were one of the first responders to

9-11.

"We work with the firefighters and police departments, a joint effort all around, not only military but civilian as well," said Jarmusz. **gt**

"We work with the firefighters and police departments, a joint effort all around, not only military but civilian as well."

-- Staff Sgt. Timothy Jarmusz, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry

HRF Readies for Nightmare Scenarios

Story by Guard times Staff

ORISKANY -- More than 600 National Guardsmen from three states completed a five-day disaster exercise at the New York State Preparedness Training Center here May 2, and now serve as the new Region 2 Homeland Response Force (HRF).

The exercise tested all the capabilities of the HRF, which is made up of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico. In the days leading up to the final evaluation, HRF troops -- suited up in full protective suits, masks, boots and helmets -- located mock victims in a simulated disaster site, decontaminated them, treated their injuries and evacuated them for further treatment.

"Everyone trains in their lane and then they put all the pieces of the puzzle together properly, and we have this big machine that rolls on and accomplishes the mission," said New York Air National Guard Lt. Col Douglas Daeffler, the HRF deputy commander. "It's a beautiful thing when you see it all come together."

The HRF is composed of several specially-trained elements that are needed in a disaster: search and extraction, security, decontamination and medical. While these elements are drawn from New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico Army and Air National Guard units, the command and control element is the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), based in Syracuse, N.Y.

To prepare for missions in a contaminated environment, the troops donned protective gear before they entered the simulated disaster area -- a monstrous amalgamation of junked vehicles, concrete slabs and culverts referred to here as the "rubble pile." The HRF assistance and support element, composed of troops from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry, formed a security perimeter just near the disaster area to help prepare victims for decontamination.

Their mission was prevent people from crossing the line before they could safely process through decontamination and evaluation by medical troops, according to the 2-113th Infantry Soldier Sgt. Giovanni Toro, of Elizabeth, N.J. Their presence helps contain any potential hazardous material at the site of the incident.

Meanwhile, search and extraction teams from the New York Army National Guard's Company A, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, based in Rochester, N.Y., began to find and rescue simulated trapped victims.

Other mock victims -- made up with a vast array of simulated gruesome wounds and injuries -- emerged from the ruins and pressed the line, moaning and sometimes screaming for medical attention. Toro commended the role-players' acting abilities, and said they made the training more realistic.

"They were pretty rough," Toro said. "They were trying to push right through the line."

But the Garden State Soldiers held, controlling the line so troops could access the disaster area, move litter patients, decontaminate them and treat them. The troops tasked with decontamination are from the New York Army National Guard's Company D, 427th Brigade Support Battalion, the forward support company of the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, based in Buffalo, N.Y.



Members of the New York National Guard Search and Extraction Team assist simulated casualties during the Homeland Response Force validation exercise at the New York State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany May 1. Some 600 Soldiers and Airmen from the HRF validated their readiness to external evaluators during the training. Photo by Staff Sgt. Patricia Austin, Joint Force Headquarters.



New York National Guard Search and Extraction Team members conduct rubble pile extraction at the New York State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany May 1. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Raymond Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing.

The training was something new for Staff Sgt. Michael Rider, of Lancaster, N.Y., who works as a machinist in his civilian capacity.

"This is my first time doing this type of training and I have been in the Guard ten years," Rider said.

The medical element of the HRF is comprised of New York Air National Guard troops from the 105th, 107th and 109th Airlift Wings, 106th Rescue Wing and the 174th Attack Wing.

"Our team includes physicians, nurses and (medical technicians)," said New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. Linda Rohatsch, the medical element commander. "When the patients get to us, they've already been decontaminated, and our job is to triage and stabilize them so we can re-



A decontamination team from the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, New York National Guard Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear response enterprise cuts away clothing of a simulated victim during the Homeland Response Force validation Oriskany on May 1. Photo by 2nd Lt. Roman Pyatetsky, New York Guard.

turn them to duty or send them out to a local hospital for definitive care.”

The medical area was set up with an immediate and minimal care area. Medics in the non-contaminated zone, or “cold zone” triaged patients and determined which area they will go to once they’ve arrived.

“We’re set up to do anything they can do in an emergency room,” said Rohatsch, who is from the 105th Airlift Wing.

The training site, at the New York State Preparedness Training Center, located at the former Oneida Airport. Most of the training took place near the training rubble pile in an open area of the former airport. Troops lived in a temporary tent city, similar to the logistics base the Guard established following their response to Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

During a week of rapidly shifting weather, troops endured high winds, frigid temperatures and rain. Due to the wind, some training was conducted in buildings on the site.

Some of the Airmen agreed that the flexibility needed mirrored what may happen in the real world, and made their training more realistic.

“We make do with what we have,” Rohatsch said.

During the exercise, the HRF Soldiers and Airmen had some expert help from troops of the Joint Interagency Training and Education Center (JITEC). In addition to helping train the Region 2 HRF troops, the JITEC subject-matter experts evaluated their performance.

“Our job is to do the external evaluation,” said Lt. Col. Scott Fuller, an

officer with JITEC. “We go all over the country to do this for each of the HRF teams.”

The successful evaluation means that the 27th Brigade takes over the mission from the 42nd Infantry Division. The division had the mission since 2012. If needed, the Region 2 HRF responds to civil authorities in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands,.

“What makes us so unique is covering New York State and New Jersey,” said New York Army National Guard Col. Joseph Biehler, HRF commander and 27th IBCT commander. “We’ve had 9/11, several hurricanes, (and) severe winter weather. New York City and New Jersey are prime targets for a homeland emergency response. All of this makes us even more ready.”

It’s been a very good experience for everyone involved, Biehler said.

“I feel good. I’ve learned a lot, and my Soldiers and Airmen learned a lot,” he said. “The training brought us together working with first responders and the area commander and understanding how they operate and what their needs are. This has been a very good week. Everyone’s really worked together to get the job done.”

The exercise was good training for his Soldiers, said Search and Extraction Team 1st Sgt. David Fallon.

“This exercise will put us on the list to be first-to-call when a major event affects the state or our nation,” he said. **gt**

Twice the Lifesaver

Story by Sgt. Patricia Austin, Joint Force Headquarters

ORISKANY — New York Army National Guard Engineer Spc. William Mongeon joined the Guard to make a difference in people's lives, including his own.

As a member of the Region II Homeland Response Force (HRF) Search and Extraction Team, he's trained to don a hazardous material suit and search within a contaminated incident site and evacuate survivors.

However, being a member of the HRF Search and Extraction team represents only a part of Mongeon's role in the community.

"I work for a homeless shelter in Rochester," Mongeon said during a break in training at the New York State Preparedness Training Center May 1.

Like the hundreds of other HRF Soldiers and Airmen present for the exercise, Mongeon committed more than a week of training in Oriskany to show evaluators that the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's HRF was ready to respond.

It was a culminating event for Mongeon and the other troops, many of whom had prepared for more than a year.

"On any given drill, we do a lot of training for the HRF mission," Mongeon said, whose combat engineer duties are with Company A, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion based in Lockport. "We're

constantly moving and preparing for the next mission."

Mongeon's service at the homeless shelter may seem less dramatic, but it is just as important in the lives of those he touches.

"We take care of them and make sure that they have some place to sleep and something to eat so that they can continue on with their lives," Mongeon described.

And like an extraction team engineer, the shelter tries to remove people at risk and provides them resources for support.

"We also help them find different avenues to find work and to get their education," he said.

Mongeon, who worked with children for more than 10 years, proved to be a valuable team member as soon as he started working at the Catholic Family Center in Rochester, said Brandon Grantham, the program coordinator.

As a National Guard Soldier, he also fit right in to the camaraderie and structure of the center's staff and those they serve.



Specialists William Mongeon (left) and Jeffery Gatti practice Homeland Response Force search and extraction techniques at the New York State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany on April 27. Mongeon also volunteers in his community at a homeless shelter. (Courtesy photo)

"It is very structured here," Grantham said. "He's a good role-model, a team player and a valued asset to our company."

When he's not helping the people at the shelter, or preparing for disaster with the National Guard, Mongeon is at the place he likes to support the most; his family.

"I'm kind of a home-body," Mongeon added with a grin. "We just had our baby-girl five months ago, and my two sons are nine and four, so pretty much the majority of my time is being spent with my family."

It was his family that motivated his decision to join the Army National Guard in the first place. "My family loves that I'm in," Mongeon said.


He decided to join the National Guard after talking to his wife about how it could improve their family's financial situation.

"The more I experience the military way of life the more I really enjoy it," he said. "At this point, I'm willing to make this a 20-year career."

Mongeon also added that having a good unit in the National Guard has helped too, much like the

"He's a good role-model, a team player and a valued asset to our company."

-- Brandon Grantham, program coordinator, Catholic Family Center, Rochester staff at the Catholic Family Center.

"We have a great team," he said. "I like the camaraderie that we have-we really keep each other motivated during these [HRF] missions." 

Citizens Prepared

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

LATHAM -- From Long Island to Niagara Falls, New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen continue to criss-cross the state, teaching New Yorkers how to be better prepared for emergencies.

Since early February, the troops of the Citizens Preparedness Corps Training Program have given emergency preparedness training to thousands of citizens.

From large venues like the Binghamton University Events Center to small town high school gyms and auditoriums, New Yorkers of a variety of backgrounds and ages have responded with enthusiasm, questions and applause.

The program is New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's initiative, and it gives citizens the knowledge and tools to prepare for emergencies and disasters, respond accordingly, and

recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions.

The troops, working with experts from the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) and local emergency management personnel, hold about two classes a week. The program was designed by DHSES and covers everything from developing family emergency plans to stocking emergency supplies.

The troops worked with interpreters to train citizens of New York City's Chinatown, and future sessions will include one which will be translated into Spanish. For more information, go to www.nyprepare.gov.



TOP PHOTO: New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. David Oliver teaches an emergency preparedness class at the State University of New York at Fredonia in April. MIDDLE PHOTO: Terrance Smith takes notes as Capt. Glenford Rose (on stage) teaches a class at PS41 Greenwich Village School in New York City in June. BOTTOM PHOTO: New York Air National Guard Airman 1st Class Fabian Rodriguez (far left), Airman Marianna O'Brien (middle left) and Airman 1st Class Estacamille Covey (center) distribute training certificates and disaster and emergency response starter kits after a training session at the State University of New York at Albany in May.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



A New York Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk based in Latham and a New York State Police Bell Huey II helicopter hover in place while doing swift load and drop water bucket training here, June 4. Both agencies trained their helicopter crews to prepare to fight wild fires at the same time and place. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Petibone, 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters.

Ground-Air Firefighting Training

Story and photos by Guard Times Staff

ROUND LAKE -- New York Army National Guard aviators teamed up with their New York State Police counterparts, and Department of Environmental Conservation Rangers here June 4 to hone their forest fire fighting skills.

Ten Army Guard aviators based at Army Aviation Support Facility 3 in Latham and seven State Police aviators spent the morning picking up and dumping water, while the Rangers worked on their techniques for directing aerial water dumps.

“Our firefighters need to hear the language of the crews.”

-- Lt. John Solon, N.Y. Forest Ranger

The key, participants said, is communicating well by learning the same terminology; no matter what your service.

“Fighting fires from the air is more than just dumping water on the flames,” said Chief Warrant Officer Chuck Roda, an Instructor Pilot.

“Depending on their size, the terrain, the threat to communities and largely the prevailing winds and weather, wildfires can be attacked aggressively or contained to limit damage. Knowing the goals of the firefighters on the ground is a key part of knowing where to drop the water,” he said.

Because of the additional cost to the state in calling on National Guard helicopters for fire fighting, the State Police get far more hands on experience in water bucket operations.

The last time New York Army National Guard helicopters had to be employed in a fire fighting role was in April, 2008 when a series of wildfires developed at Minnewaska State Park in Ulster County.

Every spring, Army National Guard helicopter crew members and maintenance personnel retrain on how to attach the Bambi water buckets to Blackhawk helicopters.

The training is necessary because a bucket full of water weighs about two tons and helicopter pilots need to practice flying with that additional weight hanging under their aircraft in order to fly safely in an emergency.

“That was the weirdest thing; punching off the water and feeling the power change,” said 2nd Lt. Frost Thrush, a member of Company A of 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation.

Thrush graduated from Army aviation flight school December, 2013. This was his first time flying a Bambi water bucket training mission.

Timing and ground coordination are the essential elements that lend itself to a well-practised training experience, Thrush said.

Being on the ground and talking via radio to the aircraft is pivotal to controlling a water drop where it can be most effective.

“Our firefighters need to hear the language of the crews,” said Lt. John Solon, Dept. of Environmental Conservation Forest Ranger. “If the Rangers on the ground aren’t used to talking with the helicopter and aren’t used to getting that practice and the pilots aren’t used to talking to the Rangers on the ground, then it takes that many cycles to get familiar with all the procedures.”

Solon added that once the Rangers receive this training it is something that will be passed on to train new Rangers.

“It’s important that we speak the same language. This training gives us a leg up for when we might need aircraft for the next wildfires,” said Joe Zeglen, NYS Forest Ranger Division Director.

The New York State Police pilots fly the Bell Super Huey, a variant of the military UH-1; a helicopter that the New York National Guard used to fly.

In 2009, the National Guard stopped using the Huey and replaced it with the Blackhawk.

Whether a Huey or Blackhawk, pilots are concerned about the control of their aircraft while executing maneuvers to get the water on fire.

“We like to control the drops. You could be doing 50 to 75 bucket drops a day, dropping tons of water on a fire,” said State Police pilot, Tech. Sgt. Kathy Humphries. “It can be very exhausting getting the water sling loaded, you have to estimate how heavy your load is because the helicopter can only carry so much and stop to refuel, said Humphries, who is also a retired New York Army National Guard helicopter pilot.” **gt**





Infantrymen Brush Up on Slingload Training

SENECA ARMY DEPOT, N.Y. -- Sixty Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry from Ithaca, trained with two CH-47 Chinook helicopters and their eight crew members from Detachment 1, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation, based in Rochester, at Seneca Army Depot, on June 7.

The depot is located in the heart of the Finger Lakes between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes.

Newly qualified pathfinder and air assault Soldiers trained the company on how to sling load the Company D up-armored and soft skinned Humvees to familiarize Soldiers with air assault and sling load operations in preparation for a Joint Readiness Training Center rotation in 2016 and any future operations.

When the Chinooks arrived, the flight crews verified the loads and gave rehearsals for loading and unloading the aircraft. Each of the trained hook-up crews rotated through getting a Humvee hooked to the sling under the Chinook. The Chinooks flew short patterns with the 5,000 and 12,000 pound Humvees.

Each of the four assault platoons in Company D were then flown around Canandaigua and Keuka Lakes.

While aboard the helicopter, company commander Gary Clark was able to promote Spc. Joshua Meriwether (photo right) to Sergeant.

Photos by Capt. Gary Clark, commander, 108th Infantry Regiment.



Guardsmen Display Hardware for Army's 239th Birthday

Story and photos by Maj. Al Phillips, 138th Public Affairs Detachment



Staff Sgt. Daniel Dukin from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, poses with a visitor to the weapons and equipment display the unit held in Bryant Park June 13 commemorating the 239th Army Birthday June 14.



Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno meets New York Army National Guard Soldier Pvt. Naiquan Walker, the youngest Soldier present at the Army Birthday display held in Bryant Park on June 13. The 69th Infantry displayed weapons and vehicles as part of an event marking the Army's 239th Birthday held the day before the Army Birthday on June 14.

NEW YORK -- More than 20 New York National Guard Soldiers from the historic 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, took part in a New York City ceremony held in Bryant Park, June 13, to commemorate the Army's 239th birthday.

With the skyline of New York City as a backdrop, the National Guard Soldiers gathered at the park and set up two displays on the north entrance and the south entrance with typical gear used in the particular unit. Representing the 1-69th battalion were Soldiers of A Company, who showcased and demonstrated the proper use of the M4 Machine gun, the M-240B and the M-249 on the north entrance. By all accounts this was the hottest civilian draw at the park.

"This is very exciting, especially since it is my first time celebrating the Army's birthday," said Spc. Erik Grijalva, a Brooklyn native from A Company, 1-69. "All the attention and interest in our weapons makes me proud to be a member of the 69th."

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, with their 120mm mortar weapon system, which seems to be referred to as a bazooka by civilians, were camped out at

the south entrance.

"It is not every day that we can interact with the public and show them what our job entails. [I find] something like people calling the mortar a bazooka really unique, but [I feel] better after I tell them the difference. The interaction totally contributes to the amount of pride I already have for this unit," said Spc. Antonio Reyes of Staten Island and a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

What began as a rainy and soggy morning, turned out to be a bright and sunny late spring day. Gen. Raymond Odierno, the chief of staff of the Army, was on hand to witness a full production of pomp and circumstance to mark the occasion.

He applauded all the participants who came out for the event that included members from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard)'s Silent Drill Team, the Colonial Revolutionary Squad, the Army's Morale and Welfare band "Down Range," the USO entertainment troupe, the New York police Department Emerald Society Pipes and the United States Military Academy at West Point band.

Additionally, the attendees who included a hundred city locals witnessed a birthday cake

cutting, and a swearing in of twenty local enlistees, by the chief of staff.

After the ceremony, Odierno met the youngest National Guard Soldier in attendance, Pvt. Naiquan Walker, a Brooklynite and member of A Company.

The 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, has a celebrated and storied history going back to the Civil War, as has been depicted in the films "Gettysburg" and "Gods and Generals."

The battalion is approaching its tenth anniversary of their deployment to Iraq, for Operation Iraqi Freedom, in which members were charged with securing the road between the Baghdad Airport and the International Zone, or Green Zone, known as Route Irish, and once considered the most dangerous route in Iraq.

The unit which was established in 1849, by Irish immigrants and exiles retains its immigrant spirit today, with nearly a quarter of its Soldiers born outside of the United States.

"It is indeed a great honor to have members of the New York National Guard be here today because it is an integral part of the same team -- Active, Reserve, Guard," said Maj. Matt Sucec, Military District of Washington Special Events staff officer. "We are one unified front." **gt**

1569th Trans on the Ground in Afghanistan



CAMP MARMAL Afghanistan-- New York Army National Guard Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, 1569th Transportation Company take time out for a group photo as they prepare to execute a Combat Escort Team mission protecting supplies for coalition forces. The Soldiers from the New Windsor based National Guard unit have been in Afghanistan since May providing logistics support from this German Army-run Coalition Forward Operating Base. Combat Escort Teams are the fighting element of the Combat Logistics Patrols which keep forces in Afghanistan supplied. Courtesy photo.

Aviation Brigade Soldiers Learn to Earn their Stripes

CAMP BUEHRING, KUWAIT -- Sgt. Daniel Feng (center kneeling), a signal support systems sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade, positions his team for an assault into a mock compound during his squad's Warrior Leadership Course (WLC) mission the night of July 10, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

The students of the U.S. Army Central Command WLC planned and led missions versus mock opposing forces across multiple training lanes for two nights, testing their leadership and tactical abilities at the conclusion of the course's three weeks. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.





Troops of the 1569th Transportation Company get out from under a hovering Chinook helicopter they've sling-loaded cargo to at Camp Marmel Afghanistan. The Soldiers have been in Afghanistan since May, providing logistics support to coalition forces. Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade

1569th: Working under the belly of the beast

Story and photo by Sgt. Michael Selvage

CAMP MARMAL, Afghanistan – Soldiers assigned to the New York Army National Guard's 1569th Transportation Company, a National Guard unit out of New Windsor, N.Y., conducted sling load operations training here June 30.

With the help from Company B, 1st Battalion, 169th General Support Aviation Battalion, a CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopter unit comprised of Georgia and Alabama Guard members, the Soldiers of the 1569th, serving with the 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, conducted sling load training with helicopter support, something which is not always available.

The training consisted of a day and night portion to better prepare the Soldiers for the obstacles they may have to overcome.

Soldiers met up with the Chinook crew to go over a safety brief, the planning and preparation portion of the training.

Once the Soldiers had a solid grasp of the mission they moved out to conduct the hands-on portion of the sling load training. The instructors were members of the crew team and would lead the Soldiers to the equipment that was ready to be hooked up to the Chinook.

They practiced how to prepare and hook up cargo to the aircraft as well as how to communicate with the pilots and crew members inside.

Staff Sgt. Mike Wolff, of Marlboro, N.Y., a motor transport operator assigned to the company, said that it was great training to have for the Soldiers. This is something he had to do on a previous deployment and was excited to have his Soldiers get the same experience.

When the Soldiers were in place, the crew members signaled to the pilots they were ready.

The pilots maneuvered the Chinook directly over the equipment before hovering about nine feet off the ground.

With the rotor wash throwing sand, rocks

and anything loose in the training area, the Soldiers kept their eye on the prize and were determined to secure the cargo correctly.

As soon as the instructors ensured the cargo was hooked up, they made their way out from under the Chinook and took a knee to signal to the crew team that everything was ready to go.

The Chinook's hooks released the cargo connections when the crew members inside received the signal from the ground instructors. After the ropes fell to the ground the pilots gracefully manipulated the Chinook back into the staging area to await the next set of Soldiers.

"I was blown away by the power of the Chinook's rotors," said Pfc. John Bowman, a Hopewell Junction, New York native, motor transport operator assigned to the 1569th TC.

Soldiers may be required to use air assets as part of the retrograde mission throughout Afghanistan and sling load training is one way to help prepare Soldiers. **gt**



Soldiers from the 42nd Division man their command post stations during Warfighter training May 20-26. The training exercise tests the ability of a division staff to process information and make decisions in a simulated combat situation. Photo by Lt. Col. Roberta Comerford, 42nd Infantry Division

42nd Division Warfighter at Fort Leavenworth

Story by Master Sgt. Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan. -- After arduous, around-the-clock simulated battlefield tasks, about 1,800 troops of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division validated their skills in a Warfighter exercise here in late May.

The troops, who belong to the division's headquarters elements, began preparing for the Warfighter exercise (WFX) over a year ago, said Division Command Sergeant Major David Piwowski.

"42nd Division Soldiers came to their Warfighter ready, but knowing where they could improve, and improve they did," he said. "From the first day until the last day of the exercise there was obvious improvement in staff processes and individual expertise."

Preparation for the WFX, which took place at the Mission Training Complex (MTC) here, was only the first half of the battle for the 42nd "Rainbow" Division.

The WFX is an electronic battle simulation designed to test and evaluate a division staff on all levels of operations, communications, and adaptation on the battlefield. The MTC creates the simulation using computer programs by placing ground units into enemy territory.

The simulation involves a long list of situations from maneuvering forces and securing an objective to dealing with refugees and logistics.

Once on the ground, the division began their operations using the Army's new collaboration tool, the Command Post of the Future (CPOF). CPOF gives commanders a clear picture of operations in real time. Units can be tracked as they move across the battlefield. Movement patterns of both friendly and enemy forces can then be analyzed to formulate new strategies, giving commanders more information in order to make decisions in less time.

"The information that reached the commanding general continually became more focused and concise, which led to the division making the right decisions on the battlefield," Piwowski added.

Once the battle commenced, operations ran 24 hours a day, testing the effectiveness of synchronization within staff sections.

The Warfighter Exercise is designed to test the readiness of Army Brigade and Division staffs in a simulated combat environment. It tests the full range of all staff and warfighting functions," said Col. John Andonie, the Division Operations Officer. "The 42nd had a

successful Warfighter Exercise and emerged from the experience as a better team and unit for New York State and the U.S. Army," he said. "The improvement in staff proficiency will enable us to better serve the citizens of New York and the nation in the time of need. We have shown the Army that we can do this."

The WFX also provides interaction with professional role players, ranging from media on the battlefield to local civilian leaders.

The 42nd led more than 28,000 simulated Soldiers on the electronic battlefield. Over 400,000 gallons of fuel was required daily for the thousands of vehicles and aircraft with food and water transported throughout 12,000 square miles of terrain, all while dealing with enemy forces. Convoys moving across the supply lines were planned and tracked in real time.

"We control all the ground assets for the division," said Staff Sgt. Tonia D'Meza, a water purification specialist from Brooklyn, N.Y. "We sync movements, coordinate maneuvers, and track all the road space within the battlefield. The Warfighter is very fast-paced and I am learning all the time."

Even though the killed in action and wounded Soldiers are fictitious, medical personnel still

N.Y. Soldier Joins Army Birthday in Africa



CAMP LEMONNIER, Djibouti -- New York Army National Guard Warrant Officer Dave Lewis (left) joins Brig. Gen. Wayne Grigsby, commander of Combined Joint Task Force- Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) and a Soldier from the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry in cutting an Army Birthday cake on June 14 as the task force marked the Army's Birthday.

Lewis takes his turn cutting the cake as the oldest Soldier present. Traditionally, the oldest Soldier and youngest Soldier at an Army Birthday gathering join the ranking officer in cutting the cake.

Lewis and seven other New York Army National Guard aviators operated a C-12 aircraft in support of CJTF-HOA. Courtesy photo.

42nd CAB Trains with Royal Navy



THE ARABIAN GULF -- A deck hand on RFA Cardigan Bay, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Royal Navy, gives the signal to lift off to a UH-60 Medical Evacuation Blackhawk flown by pilots of the 1st Battalion, 214th Air Ambulance on June 8.

The pilots trained on deck landings during Exercise Spartan Kopsis, an exchange between the Cardigan Bay and aviation elements of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade, deployed to Kuwait.

Spartan Kopsis was the first time American Apaches worked with a Royal Navy ship to function as its eyes and ears during an escalation of force exercise in conjunction with the Navy's U.S.S. Thunderbolt. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

42nd Warfighter

Continued from Preceding Page
planned and coordinated treatment.


"This training develops a solid foundation for our staff processes and procedures," said Capt. Amanda Ponn, the medical plans officer and resident of Manchester, N.H. "The simulation requires us to ensure continual monitoring

and care from the point of injury all the way to definitive care. This training is well worth the effort."

On the digital battlefield, engineers continually moved forward.

"We clear the enemy obstacles and set up obstacles for the enemy," said First Sgt. David Fallon, a Utica, N.Y. resident and division's

senior engineer NCO.

"Warfighter is also about Soldiers and the relationships that they develop, and how they communicate with each other and ultimately the commander," Piwowarski said. "After only a few weeks total of working together the brigades and the division have shown that they are lethal. We have a lot to be proud of." 

Rainbow Division Memorial Honors Iraq War Vets

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

FORT DRUM – Iraq War veterans of the New York Army National Guard’s 42nd Infantry “Rainbow” Division dedicated a memorial June 28 to commemorate the historic mobilization of the unit here 10 years ago.

The memorial was placed outside the entrance to the National Guard Readiness Center, where modern and future National Guard Soldiers will be able to view it.

“Just as the World War I veterans placed their memorial where they mobilized at Garden City, on Long Island, and our World War II vets placed theirs at Camp Gruber Oklahoma, this site memorializes the sacrifice of the 42nd Division for Operation Iraq Freedom,” said retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, former commander of the 42nd Infantry Division and Adjutant General of the State of New York.

“So here we are today marking yet another significant benchmark of Rainbow Division history,” Taluto said.

The ceremony brought together the board of trustees and members of the Rainbow Division Veterans Foundation, the association for veterans and their legacies.

The foundation, a legacy of the Rainbow Division Veterans Association founded in 1919, oversees division monuments around the globe and provides scholarships to descendants of 42nd Division Soldiers.

“We are the keepers of their legacy,” Taluto told the group of approximately 50 current Rainbow Division Soldiers, Iraq veterans or WWII veterans and descendants.

The 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters, based in Troy, N.Y., mobilized for deployment in May 2004. It conducted pre-deploy-

“This memorial is a testament to your courage, sacrifice and commitment to serve. It is your memorial now and forever.”

--Retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, former 42nd Division commander

ment training at Fort Drum along with other division base units through the fall.

The division base included some 3,000 Soldiers from the New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts Army National Guards with augmentees from the active Army.

Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General for New York State, officially welcomed the placement of the memorial plaque.

“My connection with the division began in Kuwait when the division rolled into Iraq,” Murphy said, recalling his service with the 3rd Army, supporting deploying forces heading into theater. “It was a very professional staff who rolled in. There was nothing but kudos and great compliments for the division.”

42nd Division Soldiers provided the command and control, logistics and operational base for four maneuver brigades in North Central Iraq. The division base, after pre-deployment training, received its combat brigades and formed Task Force Liberty. The task force oversaw more than 23,000 Soldiers in Iraq from February through November 2005.

The 42nd Division helped establish the conditions for the successful Iraqi-led constitutional referendum vote in October 2005.

“It is really hard to believe that it has been 10 years and to realize



Retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, left, former commander of the 42nd Infantry Division and Adjutant General of New York, representing the Rainbow Division Veterans Foundation, joins current Rainbow Division Commander Maj. Gen. Harry Miller unveiling a memorial that commemorates the 10th anniversary of the mobilization of the 42nd Infantry Division for combat service in Iraq. Photo by Master Sgt. Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division.

how much has transpired since,” said Maj. Gen. Harry Miller, the current 42nd Infantry Division Commander. “I am fortunate to still have so many Iraq veterans serving in the headquarters, and it was their experience that helped the division excel at our recent Warfighter,” he said.

“As I travel around the senior circles of the Army and Army National Guard, people know the 42nd Division and how good we are,” Miller said.

“This ceremony is noteworthy because on this very day, June 28, exactly 100 years ago Austrian Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated. This became the tipping point that began WWI and a war effort that would lead to U.S. involvement and the birth of the 42nd Division,” Taluto said.

“There were so many similarities between the mobilization for World War I and Iraq, both bringing together Soldiers from across the country to train for combat,”



Taluto said.

“There were three WWI guys still here when I first showed up at a Rainbow veteran event,” recalled Gerald Eaton, a veteran of the Division’s 242nd Infantry Regiment who fought in Europe in WWII. “They were glad to pass the torch onto us and we’re now passing it on to you,” he said to the Iraq veterans at the ceremony.

“To the 42nd Division and Task Force Liberty members, job well done,” Taluto told the Iraq War veterans.

“This memorial is a testament to your courage, sacrifice and commitment to serve,” he said. “It is your memorial now and forever.”

Regional Training Institute Preps Soldiers to Save Lives

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Patricia Austin, Joint Force Headquarters

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR - More than 70 Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard are now better equipped to save lives after completing a four-day-training course here June 22.

The Soldiers are certified graduates of the combat lifesaver (CLS) course offered here by the 106th Regional Training Institute.

"The combat lifesaver is somebody who is embedded in a unit-whose usual duties entail something totally different than medical-but is able to conduct that initial treatment if a medic isn't available," said Sgt. 1st Class Lamont Pugh, the medical branch course manager at the 106th Regional Training Institute.

This isn't just a "check-the-box" training event for the Soldiers who attend the CLS course, Pugh emphasized. Computerized mannequins that can cry out in pain, breathe, blink and even bleed are utilized to intensify the practical portion of the training, he said.

"There are certain conditions that you just can't replicate," Pugh added, "however, we found that if you make the training challenging enough, that when a Soldier goes to battle, they won't freak out as much when they are confronted with somebody who is injured."

Having a sense of urgency is emphasized by instructors who know just how valuable a CLS can be preventing the death of a fellow Soldier.

"Their training isn't as extensively detailed as the medic's course, but we really try to get the Soldiers, who come through here ready for a combat environment, said Staff Sgt. Dara Cunningham, a CLS instructor with the 106th RTI.

"CLS Soldiers are typically the first responders, and if something happens to the medic on patrol, then the CLS is going to be the one to take care of your Soldiers," Cunningham said.

Cunningham, who deployed as a combat medic in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2004-2005, has first-hand experience with working alongside CLS's.

"They would come in with the patients that they had already treated, and they would help us to continue to treat the patient. There were some Soldiers [in Iraq] who could have died if it hadn't been for the CLS who did the initial treatment."



Staff Sgt. Timothy Janis, an instructor with the 106th Regional Training Institute, and a Sunnyside, N.Y. resident, instructs students during Combat Lifesaver Training at Camp Smith, June 21. The course graduated more than 70 Soldiers.

The Soldiers learned a variety of medical procedures, such as how to use the combat application tourniquet, open and maintain airways, treat a sucking chest wound, use combat gauze, call in a nine-line medical evacuation or medevac request and how to use different carry techniques to evacuate casualties.

The course is broken up over the time span of two months and is geared toward first time learners and also Soldiers who need to recertify as CLS's.

"I really feel confident that after this course, if I ever have to do some of the stuff we learned that I'll be less nervous, said Spc. Jasmine Owens, a food service specialist with the 442nd Military Police Company. "I definitely learned that a good CLS has to be persistent and to stay motivated no matter what."



A New York National Guard Soldier checks the airway on a training mannequin during Combat Lifesaver Training conducted by the 106th Regional Training Institute, Camp Smith, June 21.

"We actually learned things here that we didn't learn during the CLS course in Basic Combat Training," Owens, a Queens resident added. "The simulator really helped me, but the instructor's really made the course very clear and helped me to retain the information I was learning." **gt**

MP Soldiers Head for Gitmo

Story and photos by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force HQ, New York
AUBURN -- More than 50 Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 102nd Military Police Battalion said farewell to family and friends here, July 6 as the unit departed for training at Fort Bliss, Texas and deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The Soldiers mobilized onto active duty July 4.

"Today is a rough day, a bittersweet day," said Brig. Gen. Michael Swezey, commander of the 53rd Troop Command to the assembled Soldiers and their families. "It is rough because it is a separation. But it is sweet because you are trained, equipped and ready for this."

The unit will deploy later this summer to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to provide command and control and administrative supervision of the nation's detention facility to provide safe and humane care and custody of those detainees brought under U.S. security from overseas operations.

The unit, drawn from military police officers and NCOs from across the battalion, reflects a tremendous amount of experience and diversity, noted the detachment commander, Lt. Col. John Studiner.

"Collectively, there are more than 600 years of military experience standing here in formation," Studiner said. "We have 60 years of combat experience alone," he said.

"With all this experience, all this leadership in this formation, you will do well," said Col. James Pabis, the 153rd Troop Command Commander. Pabis noted that among the formation were Military Police Soldiers who had successfully supervised detention facilities in overseas contingency operations and faced similar challenges.

Soldiers deploying with the 102nd Military Police Battalion, though based in Auburn, N.Y., come from hometowns across the state.

"We have Jets fans alongside Giants fans and our own Bills fans," joked Studiner, highlighting the wide reach of the detachment across the many NFL football team markets in New York.

Army Guard leaders spoke of praise to the formation of Soldiers and their families, highlighting the extent of services and support to deployed Soldiers and families back home should the need arise.

"Family members and their Soldiers are part of the same team," Swezey said. He encouraged families to "pick up that phone and access all of the services available to you through your Family Readiness Group."

Joining the ceremony to offer success for the unit deployment was Auburn Mayor Michael Quill.

"We thank you for your service," Quill said. "You are the best trained, best equipped Army the world has ever seen. Auburn will open its arms to your families," he said. "We'll do whatever we can to take that burden off your mind."

The 102nd Military Police Battalion is the higher headquarters for three Military Police Companies, all of which have previously deployed overseas. These include the 222nd Military Police Company, with elements in Auburn and Hornell, Buffalo's 105th Military Police Company and the Utica-based 206th Military Police Company. The Headquarters Detachment handles the day-to-day activities and staff functions of the battalion, including administration, logistics and operations planning and supervision.

The 102nd Military Police Battalion was the lead element in the New




New York Army National Guard Lt. Col. John Studiner, commander of the forward detachment of the 102nd Military Police Battalion, speaks to his formation of troops during the unit's deployment ceremony here July 6. More than 50 Soldiers will deploy to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to support JTF Gitmo later this summer.



Sgt. Juba Jefferson, part of the forward detachment of the 102nd Military Police Battalion, speaks with a local media reporter at the unit's deployment ceremony in Auburn, July 6.

York Army National Guard immediate response force deployed to Long Island as Superstorm Sandy hit the New York coast in 2012. The unit was on duty for almost a month assisting in emergency response missions on Long Island.

The Soldiers are expected to serve for a year on active duty, returning home to New York for the summer of 2015.

"Keep faith with the Army values," Swezey told the Soldiers. "Have faith in each other." 

From Army Green to West Point Gray

Guardsmen Offered West Point Admission Through Its Own Program

By Eric Durr, Public Affairs Director

LATHAM -- New York Army National Guard Private First Class Mitchell Valenza is now United States Military Academy Cadet Valenza thanks to his own hard work and a program that sets aside 85 slots annually for Army National Guard and Reserve Soldiers.

Valenza, who joined the 466th Medical Company in 2013 and graduated from high school this year, is one of 49 Army National Guard Soldiers who entered the West Point Class of 2018, according to Maj. Michael Bedryk, the military academy National Guard liaison officer.

National Guard Soldiers who enter West Point through this program have to pass the academy's physical fitness test, have great grades and SAT and ACT scores, and be nominated by their service, Bedryk said. That means



Pfc. Mitchell Valenza, New York Army National Guard. Courtesy photo.

they have to be a good Soldier with demonstrated leadership potential.

Valenza comes from a National Guard family. His father is also Army National Guard Staff Sergeant William Valenza in the 106th Regional Training Institute and his mother is Captain Julie Valenza in the Army National Guard's Medical Command. His sister Camille recently enlisted in the 102nd Military Police Battalion.

While the Military Academy set aside program for Guard and Reserve Soldiers provides an avenue into West Point, it doesn't make it easier to get in, Bedryk said.

Soldiers need to have good SAT and ACT scores and an excellent high school transcript. They need to score in the 500s on the SAT and the 20s on the ACT test, he said.

Soldiers need to be physically fit, and be recommended as potential Army leaders by their commander. That also means demonstrating leadership by serving as a team captain, participating in varsity sports, acting as a student body president or band member, earning the Boy Scouts Eagle Scout award or the Girl Scout Gold Award, and getting good recommendations from teachers and community leaders, Bedryk said.

Applications need to be done as early as possible, Bedryk said, because the deadline for applying to a seat at the Military Academy is Feb. 28 each year. He recommends getting application process done by November.

It's also a good idea to study for the SAT and ACT and retake the test to improve your score, Bedryk said.


While West Point demands high academic standards, it will give potential

leaders a chance to improve their academics.

Twenty-four of the 48 Guard Soldiers who entered the Academy with Valenza this year spent 10 months at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School improving their scholastic ability to ready themselves for academy work. The school is designed to help promising enlisted Soldiers make it through West Point.

Valenza hit most of the markers the Military Academy is looking for. He belonged to National Honor Society, and earned varsity letters in Soccer, Baseball, Track and Football. He recently earned his Eagle Scout award and also interned in the offices of Representative Chris Gibson and Bill Owens.

Valenza was also offered a Reserve Officers Training Corps scholarship at Siena College but opted to earn his Army commission through the Military Academy instead. **gt**



**UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT**

Want to be one of the 170 Soldiers admitted to West Point next year?

Current Soldiers
Soldiers who are currently serving in an Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard capacity are encouraged to apply to USMA to further their education. West Point is committed to helping qualified Soldiers reach their full potentials and secure commissions in the Regular Army. Soldiers must have competitive scores on either the SAT or ACT to be considered for admission to the academy.

Soldier Experience
USMA believes Soldiers enhance the Corps of Cadets, and we value the life experiences you have earned as a Soldier. If you want to be an officer in the U.S. Army, the academy will give you an excellent education and the training you need to lead Soldiers as you continue to serve.

Start Here
If you want to apply, start by allowing enough time for the process. Classes start each July, so it's best to start your application the preceding summer to allow enough time to complete the entire admissions process. It's recommended that applications be completed by 1 December, but the file completion deadline is 28 February.


Next, consider whether you meet the basic eligibility requirements. Those who have component SAT scores in the 500's or ACT scores in the 20's and achieved average grades or better in high school are especially encouraged to apply.

As a Soldier you must be recommended by your company commander. Even though that endorsement constitutes a nomination, Soldiers are still encouraged to obtain additional nominations from their congressional nomination sources.

For an application or more information:
<http://www.usma.edu/applynow>

Admissions requirements:

- ✓ Be a U. S. citizen
- ✓ Be unmarried
- ✓ Have no legal obligations to support dependents
- ✓ Be between the ages of 17 and 22 on 1 July of the year entering West Point (no older than 21 on 1 July of the year entering the Prep School)
- ✓ Be of high moral character
- ✓ Have a sincere interest in attending West Point and becoming an Army officer.



Warrant Officers: Do What you Love. Move up in Rank

By Eric Durr, Public Affairs Director

LATHAM -- The New York Army National Guard needs quality warrant officers, so Chief Warrant Officer Robert Wold, New York's Command Chief Warrant Officer, is looking for good Non Commissioned Officers to fill those slots.

The need is especially critical in the intelligence, field artillery, and signal fields, Wold said. Only twenty percent of our Field Artillery warrant officer slots—many involving critical targeting skills-- are filled, while vacancy rates for Intelligence and Signal Corps warrant officers stand at around 60 percent.

Across the New York Army National Guard there are about 90 positions out of 285 authorized which need to be filled, he said.

The bulk of these vacancies are in positions filled by traditional "M-Day" Soldiers, Wold said.

The full-time Active Guard and Reserve and military technicians who work in human resources, ground maintenance, and aviation fields form a natural feeder for warrant officers in those fields, Wold explained.

Finding good men and women to fill the other warrant vacancies has proven a bit tougher, he admitted.

While a full-time Soldier or technician can justify taking up to six months to attend a Warrant Officer Basic Course as a natural part of their full-time job, it can be much harder for a traditional Guard Soldier to justify that commitment, Wold said.

"That squared away Soldier in the unit is also the consummate professional in their civilian job," Wold said. "Everybody is busy these days and something has to give and when they work it out with their family or employer, the priority may not be the Guard."

Candidates making the transition from the NCO Corps to serving as a Warrant Officer are

normally a sergeant with at least 48 months experience in their military occupational specialty and at least three good evaluation reports in that specialty, Wold said.

The warrant officer corps also demands good leaders, he emphasized.

"The perfect candidate is an E-6 or E-7 that has got 8 to 12 years in," Wold explained. "They have that solid leadership experience. They have carried the green book, monitoring, and



Command Chief Warrant Officer Robert Wold



developing their Soldiers. Then, they add in their MOS skills and it is just a natural progression."

Why should an NCO go the warrant officer route instead of moving up the ranks into a master sergeant or first sergeant job? There are a couple of reasons why becoming a warrant officer is the right move for some NCOs, Wold said.

Moving up in the NCO Corps can mean becoming a generalist, working in administrative and leadership roles. Many NCOs miss the rewards of working in a specific military specialty, Wold said. Warrant officers stay in their field throughout their career.

Warrant Officers today-- particularly in the targeting, intelligence, and signal fields --also play critical roles in providing commanders the information they need to fight and win on the high-tech battlefield. "The command is going to come to you and look for that guidance," Wold said.

There's also a financial incentive for new warrant officers, Wold said.

There's a \$10,000 bonus for filling needed warrant officer positions, and more importantly, becoming a warrant officer means a heftier retirement at the end of a military career.

A good NCO moving into a warrant officer position is very likely to make Chief Warrant Officer 4 before they retire, Wold said.

His goal, Wold said, is to make sure Soldiers and leaders realize what options for advancement are available. Soldiers interested in becoming a warrant officer should start planning for it and leaders should be identifying Soldiers with the needed skills, he said.

Commanders and senior NCOs can help identify and mentor Soldiers they consider to be good candidates for a career as a warrant officer, just as they mentor future NCO leaders.

"We are trying to build a bench," he added.


While filling any slot is important for unit readiness, he's particularly concerned about the warrant officer vacancies in the headquarters of the 42nd Infantry Division and the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Wold said.

"There are significant numbers of vacancies and someone has to make up for that workload," he explained. "When you are missing that many officers, that many planners; someone—whether it is a senior NCO or a junior, mid level officer—someone is taking up the slack there."

"Without the warrant officers, the NCOs and officers are not allowed to focus totally on their jobs. Those same leaders do not receive the level of training a warrant officer would get, so that is another challenge," he said.

Recruiting and Retention Command has three warrant officer recruiters.

- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Seeger in Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo at 585-259-5147
- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brian Sherman in Westchester, New York City and Long Island at 518-491-3448
- Chief Warrant Officer 3 Harry McDonough for the Hudson Valley, Capital Region and north at 518-272-6353

Or go to the warrant officer recruiting page on the Division of Military and Naval Affairs website at <http://dmna.ny.gov/arng/ocs/?id=warrant>. 

Combatives

Instructing Soldiers in the Art of Self Defense

Commentary and photo by Sgt. Jay P. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division



Another group of New York Army National Guardsmen and instructors complete a week-long combatives class at Camp Smith during the week of June 23.

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor -- A group of 23 Soldiers stood in a circle, each wearing uniforms stripped of name, rank and unit patches. They were men and women of different ranks and experiences, but on the wrestling mat, they were equal. Over the next five days, they would all learn how to fight and how to teach others to fight in hand-to-hand combat.

I was one of them, and until the end, I didn't think I'd make it. The course began by teaching basic grappling moves, which are easiest to teach.

The Army's combatives program, a hybrid creation, was formed from the basics of Brazilian jiu-jitsu ground fighting, with the throws and take downs of judo and wrestling, and the strikes of boxing and muay thai.

The goal, according to the Army's combatives field manual, is to teach Soldiers how to protect themselves without using firearms, and to provide a non-lethal response to situations on the battlefield. In addition, the training program aims to instill a 'warrior instinct' to provide the necessary aggression to meet the enemy – on the mat or on the battlefield – unflinchingly.

The emphasis at the lower levels of combatives training is teaching students easily repeatable training drills, as opposed to teaching how to fight in every scenario. Each drill had multiple distinct steps with very specific instructions.

The three instructors would show various moves and positions one could encounter while fighting. The students would then try their best to

repeat each step.

On the second day, students learned chokes and arm bars, meant to end fights. On the third day, students learned takedowns. On the fourth, they learned how to strike, punch and kick. Each day was another batch of lessons to be learned and digested.

Spc. Christopher Cereo, one of the Soldiers at the training, said the training gave him more confidence to take down a larger opponent. "My favorite memory was watching my teammates spar and improve every day," he said. "I saw just about every Soldier gain confidence from when we first showed up to the day we left."

Cereo said that after the course he intends to train other Soldiers in his unit. In many ways, this is the ultimate reason for the course.

"The purpose of this course is not to turn people into tough guys. It's to train Soldiers to go back to their units and pass on knowledge," Staff Sgt. Abismael Gonzalez, an instructor with 2nd Battalion, 106th Regional Training Institute, said.

By the end of the first day, my mind was reeling from all the information taught, as if I were trying to carry water up a hill while running. By the end, however, I was able to decode a fight, to understand my options, moves and countermoves. The final test was to teach the instructors. I was scared I would forget the steps, but after practicing endlessly after hours and in the barracks, I stepped onto the mat with confidence.

And I passed. **gt**

AIR NATIONAL GUARD



After Hiatus, Pararescue Jumpers Show Their Stuff at Air Show

By Master Sgt. Cheran Cambridge, 106th Rescue Wing



WANTAGH - Federal budget restraints last year kept the pararescue jumpers of the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing away from the annual Memorial Day weekend Jones Beach Airshow. This Memorial Day weekend, though, they were back; showing the 231,000 people the skills they use when called upon to rescue downed pilots.

Six jumpers from the 103rd Rescue Squadron jumped from a 102nd Rescue Squadron HC-130 as part of the air show events on May 24.

The original plan had been to drop the "PJs" from 35,000 feet in a free fall jump, but due to weather conditions the Airmen jumped from 15,000 feet in a static line jump, said Maj. Michael Rutigliano, the HC-130 pilot.

"During the static line drop, the parachutes open instantaneously as the PJs jump out of

the plane," he said.

Participation in the Jones Beach Air Show, a major annual event on Long Island, is not only used to show people what the 102nd and 103rd are capable of, it is also used as a training tool for new pilots, Rutigliano said.

"I love doing the air show because we can get together and do combat training without being in a situation where we are being shot at," added Rutigliano. "It also allows us to train the newer pilots on how to fly the plane more aggressively."


Capt. Patrick Harding said he was proud to be a part of the Air Show for the first time as a C-130 co-pilot. It was at the 2005 Air Show that he made the decision to fly for the Air National Guard.

"I walked up to the helicopter in the sand during the air show in 2005, and I said that I wanted to fly that. That's how I ended up here."

Harding said. "It's pretty neat for me to come full circle and now perform in the air show. It is intimidating doing it for the first time, but it helps having a pretty experienced crew," he added.

"Today, we had the opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of what we really do. There are a lot of people who don't know what we do. There are also some people on the island who don't even know that there is an entire base that is capable of combat search and rescue," Harding explained.

Participation in the Jones Beach Air Show serves the dual purpose of training and air showmanship.

"We are combat search and rescue and at the air show, we can go down there and tell everyone, 'Hey this is who we are, this is where we live and this is what we can do.'" Rutigliano said. 

Airmen and Aircraft Continue Greenland Mission

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



A 109th Airlift Wing LC-130 "Skibird" from Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, takes off from Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, on June 29, for Summit Camp. Two LC-130s and 70 Airmen from the Wing recently completed the fourth rotation of the 2014 Greenland season. The unit flies supply and refueling missions to various camps in support of the National Science Foundation and also trains for the Operation Deep Freeze mission in Antarctica. Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German, 109th Airlift Wing.

KANGERLUSSUAQ, Greenland -- Every year a group of Airmen and a few ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft head for the Arctic region to support the National Science Foundation and get some real-world training out of their base at Kangerlussuaq, Greenland. This year the Greenland mission is in full swing with 70 Airmen and two LC-130 aircraft completing the fourth rotation of the season June 27-30. Only two rotations are left before the 2014 season comes to a close.

The Airmen and aircraft are with the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing based out of Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia. During the U.S. winter season, the 109th is supporting Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) in Antarctica, and in the summer months, the unit flies to Greenland to not only continue their support for NSF but to also train for ODF.

"The overall mission here is two-fold," said Capt. Rachel Leimbach, the supervisor of flying

for the most recent rotation. "Our primary mission is in support of the NSF and CPS (CH2M Hill Polar Services). We fly missions to (forward-deployed locations) for the enhancement of science - similar to what we do in Antarctica."

The LC-130s are the only aircraft of its kind in the military, able to land on snow and ice and fly supply and refueling missions to the different camps NSF works out of, both in Greenland and Antarctica.

"The other part of our mission is training out of Raven Camp," she said. "There is minimal science that we do at Raven, making it primarily a training site, which is how we get the crews ready for Antarctica."

Greenland makes for a much safer environment to train air crews for the ODF season, she said.

Besides the air crews, deployments to Greenland also consist of maintainers to tend to the

aircraft, Airmen with the Small Air Terminal to handle the cargo and passengers, the first sergeant, and various other support staff to help keep the mission going.

"We have about 40 maintainers here this rotation," said Master Sgt. Joseph Deamer of the 109th Maintenance Group who has taken the trip to Greenland about 15 times since joining the unit in 1996. "Our primary mission is to fix the aircraft so they fly their missions while here."

Master Sgt. Scott Molyneaux of the Small Air Terminal has also been up numerous times. "My first time here was in 2003 and since then I've been up at least once a year."

Each year maintenance and weather delays and cancellations are pretty typical, but Molyneaux said his section and everyone else still push on to complete the mission. "We have a great working relationship with the CPS

Continued on Page 36

Airmen Hone Combat Skills at Michigan CRTC

Story courtesy of 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION - Fifty members of the 107th Air Wing's Security Forces Squadron headed to Michigan this June for intensive weapons training and urban combat skills training.

The Airmen, who provide security to air bases, trained at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) June 5-20.

The security forces Airmen-who specialize in the same skills Army infantrymen learn-practiced establishing, occupying and defending a base location.

Air security forces personnel are required to conduct this type of training every three to four years.

The Alpena CRTC provides Air National Guard Security Forces units with the ability to train on the M240B machine gun, the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, and the M203 grenade launcher.

There are no ranges at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station where the 107th is based, to accommodate these weapons.

The 107th Security Forces Squadron expected to fire over 50,000 rounds of ammunition during their two week annual training period.

The Airmen also practiced fighting in built up areas, using special urban combat training facilities.

The training exercise culminated with a 16-hour field problem in which the 107th Security Forces Squadron team defended their base against opposing forces players modeling their tactics after those used by the Taliban in Afghanistan. **gt**



Training exercises at the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, Michigan includes an urban combat scenario for members of the 107th Security Forces Squadron. The Airmen trained to defend military bases overseas during their June Annual Training. Above, members of the Air Force undergo similar training in May 2014. Photo by Capt. Joe Simms.

Eastern Air Defense Sector Welcomes New Commander

By Tim Jones, Eastern Air Defense Sector Public Affairs Office



Col. Michael Norton. Courtesy photo.

ROME - Col. Michael J. Norton assumed command of the Eastern Air Defense Sector July 11, during a ceremony here at the Air Force Research Laboratory.

Norton took command before a crowd of 150 family, friends and fellow Air National Guard members. The ceremony was presided over by Lt. Gen. William H. Etter, Commander of Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Region (CONR) – 1st Air Force (Air Forces Northern).

A North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) sector headquar-

ters, Eastern Air Defense Sector is manned by New York Air National Guardsmen, a Canadian Forces detachment and liaison officers from the U.S. Army, Navy and Coast Guard. They are responsible for the air defense of 1 million square miles east of the Mississippi River.

An F-16 pilot, Norton underwent initial training at the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot course at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. He has flown over 300 combat hours in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Allied Force, Southern Watch and Northern Watch. He also served as the operational plan-

ner for the air campaign that initiated Iraqi Freedom and in several staff positions.

A graduate of the Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College and Air War College, Norton holds a master's degree in international public policy from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

Col. Norton's awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. **gt**

Air Guard Firemen Train Professionally

YAPHANK -- Members of the 106th Rescue Wing's Fire Department hone their fire fighting skills at the Suffolk County Fire Academy in Yaphank N.Y. with live fire training exercises May 9. Photo by Senior Airman Andrew Schumann, 106th Rescue Wing.



New York City Hospital Fine Tunes Guardian Angel Fitness

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Cheran Cambridge, 106th Rescue Squadron

WESTHAMPTON BEACH – Airmen of the 103rd Rescue Squadron—pararescue specialists who must be fit to do their jobs—have a new partner to help them perform.

The Airmen, known as Guardian Angels, have teamed up with New York City’s Hospital for Special Surgery, (HSS) which specializes in orthopedic health, and created a “human performance optimization training program, called the HPO for short.

On April 22, the HSS assisted with the fitness and nutritional knowledge of the human based Guardian Angels when the program hit its six month training reassessment.

“We are taking all of the data that we collected on the initial assessment and comparing it to what we are doing today,” said Kara Federowicz, a certified athletic trainer who works for the hospital. “We look at how far the guys have come, if they have made any progress, if they have regressed at all and how we can build their programs for the next six months.”

When the HPO team trainers come in, they start with class work, Federowicz explained; the lectures differ from nutrition to stretching techniques and then move to warm ups and then to the drills that they will be doing for the day.

Every month the team comes out and trains with the 103rd and every six months the 103rd’s progress is re-assessed. The HPO team consists of a registered dietitian, an exercise physiologist, certified strength and conditioning specialist and a Certified Athletic Trainer.

Both teams have been working together since October 2013 and this program has already made a big impact on the lives of the operators that are in the program. This type of program, in the near future, will be making even more strides as it becomes ingrained across the Guardian Angel career field, said Chief Master Sgt. Brian Mosher, a pararescue jumper.

This program is vital to the sustainment of the Pararescue/Guardian Angel career field, he emphasized.

“We have a lot of guys who are very knowledgeable and have a lot of experience at that 18 year mark, but they acquire underlying injuries that may prevent them from mentoring and passing on their knowledge to the younger guys,” Mosher said.

The HPO program takes a holistic approach towards fitness. It includes proper stretching techniques, eating habits, calisthenics, plyometrics, endurance training, running and jumping



Airmen of the 103rd Rescue Squadron perform running and jumping drills at F.S. Gabreski airport under the supervision of Certified Physical Fitness Trainers from New York City’s Hospital for Special Surgery’s Human performance optimization program.

drills, resistance and weight training.

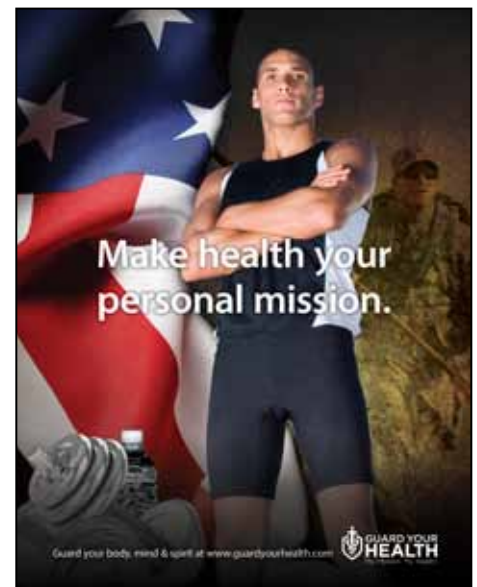
This type of training is what is needed to maintain the operators’ body for peak performance,” Mosher said.

“We are the only human weapon system in the Air Force,” he explained. “Every other weapon system has a Maintenance Group or Squadron that fixes their aircraft. We do not have any maintenance procedures or a plan in place and that’s where HPO comes in. It gives guys the education and the tools to maintain their bodies beyond the 18 to 20 year mark” Mosher added.


Maj. Glyn Weir, a 103rd Rescue Squadron Combat Rescue Officer said the HPO fitness program does a better job of preparing Airmen for their combat mission than routine physical training.

“A lot of the military’s physical fitness programs that we do entail running straight forward on a flat surface, pushups, sit ups, maybe some pull ups and those are not necessarily the exercises that will prepare us for a mission. For example, you may be good at running straight forward but, not good at running up a hill with 100 pounds of equipment on or caring patients in a combat setting,” Weir said.

“The concept is to build a battlefield Airmen so that he has the stability in the core to build the strength, speed, stamina and endurance for missions that running straight forward and



doing sit-ups may not prepare you for,” Weir emphasized. “When you have a strong core, you are less likely to injure your lower back, neck or shoulder.”

The 103rd and the HPO team’s goals are to create resilient, educated PJs who have the nutritional and physical knowledge to sustain their minds and bodies for years of successful service and they are coming closer to achieving those goals, one month at a time, Weir said. 

107th Team Prevails Again in TAG Match



CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor -- For the fifth year in a row, a team from the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing has won the annual The Adjutant General (TAG) Match, held here May 31 to June 1. The team members are, from left: Senior Master Sgt. Edward Stefik of Lewiston; Tech. Sgt. Ryan Mang of Niagara Falls; Staff Sgt. Johnathen Wagner of Buffalo and Tech. Sgt. Warren Jones of Rochester.

Marksmanship training and competition has long been a key component of National Guard training.

The modern TAG Match requires participants to employ the weapons used on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. The match consists of eight timed events that include the use of those weapons during close-quarters combat, casualty, and nuclear biological chemical (NBC) drills. About 125 New York National Guard troops from across the state took part in the match.

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

Airmen Head to Greenland Continued from Page 32

civilians and the research staff that goes up to the camps. I think that helps us get our work done because it's their cargo that we're moving."

Tech. Sgt. Amie Moore is also with the Small Air Terminal. In March she returned from a six-month deployment to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, with other members of the 109th Small Air Terminal, making it clear the Airmen at the 109th can do it all.

"I feel like this mission allows us more ownership," she said. "I'm very proud that we're the only ones who do it."

Master Sgt. Michael Lazzari was the first sergeant for the rotation.

This was his first trip to Greenland.

"It's quite a unique mission up here, and the roles of the first sergeant are very extensive," he said. His role as first sergeant is to take care of everyone deployed and their needs in all areas. "It can be hectic but it's still a lot of fun."

Lazzari said he spoke to the first sergeants who had been up to Greenland before him to better prepare for the deployment. "I felt great coming into it for the first time and had a good idea of what to expect. Everyone here was a great help. This isn't the first trip for a lot of people, so I relied on their experience to help me do my job well."



Airmen with the 109th Small Air Terminal unload cargo from an LC-130 "Ski-bird" at Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, June 29, after returning from a mission at Summit Camp. Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German, 109th Airlift Wing

Typical rotations in Greenland last about two weeks and consist of an average of three to five aircraft. The season starts in the March/April time frame and comes to a close in August; however, there's not much downtime for those supporting the Greenland mission.

"We have our Greenland plan-

ning conference in October to start preparing," Leimbach said. "It's a lot of preparation to get ready."

While they start their planning in October, Airmen and the ski-equipped aircraft are on their way to Antarctica for Operation Deep Freeze. **gt**

106th Medical Group Supports Suffolk County Partners

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Cheran Cambridge



Suffolk County Department of Health Services representative Dr. Salvatore Scarpitta checks out 106th Medical Groups patient radiation decontamination supplies and capabilities at Westhampton Beach on May 3. The two groups trained together May 3 to better prepare for a radiological incident in Suffolk County.

WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- What happens in Suffolk County, New York if there is a radiological emergency?

The Suffolk County Office of Emergency Preparedness jumps into action and, with an okay from the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services the 106th Rescue Wings's 106th Medical Group Patient Decontamination Team will do the same.

Suffolk County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) coordinates the county's response to natural and man-made disasters. OEM personnel are responsible for working with local, state, and federal officials in all aspects of shelter management, planning, resource management, and emergency response and recovery activities.

Because of the 106th Medical Group's highly responsive Patient Decontamination (Decon) Team, the 106th Rescue Wing will now be incorporated as one of the county's options within the OEM's Radiological Emergency Plan.

On May 3rd, the Suffolk County Public Health Emergency Preparedness representative found out how useful the 106th Patient Decon Team really was.

"Today we found out what assets the Air National Guard, specifically the 106th Rescue Wing, could offer us in the event of a Radiological event. We got to see a demonstration video and actually got to see the assets, which were quite impressive," Dr. Salvatore Scarpitta said.

Scarpitta is a Forensic Scientist who is also a Suffolk County's Emergency Preparedness representative.

"The assets which I have seen today which were the tents that come up, the showers and the decontamination capabilities with tempered water and the 24 trained personal who will show up in two shifts of 12 will be

a be a huge asset to have in the field within six to eight hours or less," Scarpitta added.

"I got more information than I anticipated today. We had difficulty getting a building to do decon showering and this is ideal and could be done out in the field anywhere," he said.

The 106th Medical Group is more than willing to help out with Suffolk County's Radiological Emergency Preparedness endeavors, said Lt. Col. Gilbert Harvey, the 106th Medical Group administrator.

Communication and education will be important for both entities while working together during training and during an incident, Harvey explained.

"I think this is a great opportunity to let our civilian operations know what assets the Air National Guard has to offer for a domestic incident. We can also help them with the education piece concerning our processes as well as they can educate us on how their process works; so that when we exercise an incident together we will already know how we are going to integrate with each other" Harvey said.

106th Rescue Wing's relationship the Suffolk County's OEM will turn out to be a long-standing partnership between the Air National Guard and the community, Harvey added.

"This patient decon package was made for domestic operations. It was made to be available for a wing commander to use at a moment's notice when something in their community was affected," Harvey explained

"That is why it is being staffed by full timers at the Air National Guard Bases, so it could be used any day of the week. So, yes I think that this will be a positive ongoing training event and an option for a real world event," Harvey added. **gt**

Community Comes to See 109th Pull a Skibird



SCHENECTADY COUNTY AIRPORT--New York Air National Guard Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing pull an LC-130 aircraft 15 feet at Richmor Aviation, Schenectady County Airport on May 22 as part of the Unified Military Association Councils Airplane Pull. The 109th team of 25 members kicked off the event pulling the aircraft in 14:48 seconds. The corporate challenge included nearly 20 teams most of which were corporations throughout the community. Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.



SCOTIA -- Richmor Aviation at the Schenectady County Airport was packed with people taking shelter from the weather May 22, hoping it would pass so they could complete the mission they set out to do... pull a 109th Airlift Wing LC-130 Skibird aircraft 15 feet in the fastest time possible.

Rain, thunder, lightning and a tornado warning put the Airplane Pull, hosted by the Unified Military Affairs Council or UMAC, on hold for a little while, but the weather did pass, and the 109th's team of 25 was up first to set the bar for the event; 14:48 seconds was the time to beat.

About 20 teams competed in the event, including a team from the Navy.

UMAC planned the event for months, with the intent to raise awareness to help support local military events.

The 109th jumped on board and offered their ski-equipped LC-130, weighing in at about 90,000 pounds, to pull as well as a team to kick off the event. The unit's aircraft is the

only one of its kind in the U.S. military, supporting the National Science Foundation in both Antarctica and Greenland.

Currently, the unit is in full swing as they provide airlift and polar airdrop support to the NSF and several allied nations in Greenland and above the Arctic Circle.

Members of the 109th Airlift Wing, including the community manager, Capt. Ashley FitzGibbon, and Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, were part of UMAC's Airplane Pull planning committee. They coordinated with command to approve using one of the unit's aircraft, with maintenance for the logistics of using the aircraft, and brought together a team of 25 Airmen to represent the wing.

"As soon as I started to advertise the event, people throughout the base started asking how they could be part of the team," FitzGibbon said. "It was easy to pull off with the excitement of all our members and the integral support of the 109th Maintenance Group. Without the maintainers, this event would not

have been possible."

While the base played an integral part of the event, it was the entire community that pulled it all together.

"There were so many people throughout the community that made this event possible," Giaquinto said.

Despite the weather, the event was a success all around. The 109th team was proud of their effort, and many said although challenging, it was a lot of fun.

"It was a lot harder than I thought it was going to be," said Capt. Melissa Cucchi, 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. "It was great to be able to get everyone out here and be so involved with the community."

"Events like this are what make my new role as community manager so fulfilling," FitzGibbon said. "Seeing our members come together and give back to the community distinguishes our Wing from others, while truly representing our core value of Service Before Self." **gt**



New York Guard volunteer Sgt. Joseph Dee competes in the annual Adjutant General Marksmanship Competition at Camp Smith. Dee has 25 years of shooting competition as part of his service in the New York Guard State Defense Force. Courtesy photo.

New York Guard Marks 25 Years in TAG Marksmanship Competition

Story by Master Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor -- One competitor in the 35th Annual Adjutant General (TAG) Match is such a strong marksmanship advocate that a match trophy is named after him.

In addition to almost 40 years of service to the state and nation, New York Guard Staff Sgt. Joseph Dee has a quarter-century of TAG matches under his belt. This year, Dee and about 125 New York National Guard members are taking part in the match here from May 30 to June 1, testing their marksmanship skills with weapons like the M-16 rifle, M-9 pistol and M-249 light machine gun.

At the end of the match, one team will be awarded the "Sergeant Joe Dee Combined Arms Team Champion" trophy. But for Dee, taking part in the match seems reward enough.

"I'm having a good time," said Dee, a Rochester native. "There's no place I'd rather be."

Marksmanship training and competition has long been a key component of National Guard training. During the 1800's, annual New York National Guard shooting competitions in New York City and at Camp Smith, then known as Peekskill Camp, were reported by the New York Times and other newspapers.

The tradition continues with this TAG Match, which gives troops the chance to sharpen their marksmanship training, engage in healthy competition, and pick top contenders to represent the state in national competitions.

The modern TAG Match requires participants to employ the weapons used on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. The match consists of eight timed events that include the

use of those weapons during close-quarters combat, casualty, and nuclear biological chemical (NBC) drills.

Along with the TAG Matches, Dee has competed on the state, national and international level, taking part in shooting matches in Canada and England. He's double-distinguished in rifle and pistol, and has earned the National Guard Chief's 50 Marksmanship Badge three times: once in the rifle category and twice in the sniper category.

"It's in my blood," he reflected. "Ever since I was a boy and picked up a BB gun, I've enjoyed shooting."

Dee's passion for shooting went hand-in-hand with his military career. Drafted in 1966, Dee spent two years on active duty and 32 years in the New York Army National Guard,

"I always shared my marksmanship knowledge with Soldiers who asked for it or needed it," he said.

The need for Dee's knowledge expanded after terrorists destroyed the World Trade Center buildings in 2001. As a member of the New York National Guard's Small Arms Readiness Training Section, Dee gave small-arms training to troops guarding bridges and tunnels in the wake of the 9-11 attacks.

The "Sergeant Joe Dee Combined Arms Team Champion" trophy was created at the time of Dee's retirement in 2007.

"They knew I was retiring, and they knew all the work I did to promote the marksmanship of Soldiers in New York, so they decided to have a trophy in my name," Dee explained.

The trophy is awarded to the team with highest combined score in the TAG match.

In his experience, the TAG Match draws shooters of all calibers, from experts to beginners, Dee said. The beginners always need help, which yields another benefit of the TAG match, he added.

"They can bring back the knowledge they gain here and share it with their units," he said.

Dee now serves in 21st Engineers of the New York Guard, a state volunteer force which augments and supports the New York National Guard as required with manpower and skills. When asked, Dee shared some tips from his wealth of marksmanship knowledge.

"Stay calm and concentrate on that front sight," he said sagely. "Slow is smooth and smooth is fast." 🍀

Naval Militia Celebrates 123 Years



LATHAM -- New York Naval Militia leaders (From left) Cmdr. David Hawley, Capt. Trip Powell and Cmdr. Don McKnight celebrate 123 years of service to the state of New York on June 23. The New York Naval Militia was organized as a Provisional Naval Battalion in 1889 and was formally mustered into State service as the 1st Battalion, Naval Reserve Artillery, on June 23, 1891.

Today, the New York Naval Militia is the only federally recognized Naval Militia with continuous, unbroken service dating back to the 1890s. Its members are proud of the Naval Militia's long history and tradition of voluntarism and service to the Nation and to the State of New York, and have dedicated themselves to carrying this tradition into the future. Courtesy photo.

South African General Visits Hancock Field

Story and photo by Senior Airman Duane Morgan, 174th Attack Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse -- Brig. Gen. Mashoro Abel Phala, Defense Attaché of the South African Embassy and Maj. Gen. Eric W. Vollmecke, the Air National Guard Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, United States Air Forces in Europe/Air Forces Africa, visited the 152nd Air Operations Group here on June 7.

Phala's was visiting as part of the New York National Guard's partnership with South Africa through the State Partnership Program.

Vollmecke is in charge of all engagements involving the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

The National Guard has created 68 partnerships with 74 countries over 20 years by conducting military-to-military engagements that support defense security goals. Most states have a counterpart from another country and have a mutually beneficial relationship. New York's counterpart is South Africa.

"Whether we travel there or they travel here, we just want to get Airman to Airman interaction," said Col. Michael V. Comella, Commander of the 152nd AOG.

"This would give us the opportunity to find a number of subject matter experts in the South African Air Force, he said."

The 152nd, for example, can help train South Africans in the American Joint Operations Planning Process-Air, which would aid the South African Air Force, Comella said.

"We both stand to benefit from learning each other's process," said Comella. "We get to learn as well as share knowledge with the South African Air Force."

Phala received a tour of both the 152nd AOG, and the 274th Air Support Operations Squadron and the Field Training Detachment.

"Before he left, he turned to me and said this is not goodbye, this is just the beginning," said Comella. **✪**

"We both stand to benefit from learning each other's process. We get to learn as well as share knowledge with the South African Air Force."

-- Col. Michael V. Comella, Commander of the 152nd AOG



Brig. Gen. Kevin W. Bradley, Assistant Adjutant General for the New York Air Guard (left), speaks with Brig. Gen. Mashoro Abel Phala, Defense Attache with the South African Embassy during his visit to the 152nd Air Operations Group. Gen. Phala visited for the purpose of strengthening relationships through the State Partnership Program.

New Commander for 2nd CST



STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Scotia- Lt. Col. Drew Pinckney receives the guidon of the New York National Guard's 2nd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (CST) during change-of-command ceremonies here on Monday, June 9. Pinckney took over from Lt. Col. Tom Benton, who has commanded the team since 2011. Benton will be moving to Florida to take command of one of Florida's two CSTs. Photo by Eric Durr, Public Affairs Director.

Guard Job Fairs Dedicated to a Range of Military Veterans

Story and photos by Maj. Al Phillips, *Guard Times Staff*

BUFFALO – More than 200 military veterans - young and old, male and female - networked with potential employers at the New York National Guard's Connecticut Street Armory here on June 19.

Organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, along with the University of Phoenix, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, NBC News, the American Legion and Student Veterans of America, the four-hour event brought together 66 companies and agencies offering multiple job openings for veterans and military spouses.

"We are not just looking for young people or middle-age people," said Irma Tyszko, a representative for Fisher Price, the famous East Aurora, toy maker. "We brought four veterans who were hired through previous hiring fairs here to best reinforce our commitment to giving opportunities to veterans, particularly in product development" she added.

Her company has eight job openings in the Buffalo and western New York region at different levels of experience that she is hoping to fill, Tyszko said.

One of the 200 veterans searching for a job was Spc. Victoria Mariani, a Soldier in the Army National Guard's 153rd Troop Command here in Buffalo, who has served in Afghanistan.

"I personally feel that the job fair is awesome, but I am interested in health care opportunities," Mariani said.

"I wish to see more variety of positions offered the next time, and hopefully one applicable to the health care service field," she added.

The event also included a free Hiring Our Heroes employment workshop dedicated to improving resume writing, interview skills, and job search techniques for all military members and their spouses.

"Our efforts are paying off, and we see the results with the growing number of improved resumes and products students and potential job seekers are submitting to employers," said Matt Campbell, the University of Phoenix National Defense Liaison for western New York.

Additionally, the day also included a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve signing ceremony in which 15 Buffalo-area companies pledged to fully recognize, honor



Daniella Richards, district support manager for Allied Barton Security, one of 15 Buffalo-area companies which signed a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve in a ceremony at the Connecticut Street Armory on Thursday, June 19, receives her certificate from Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York. The event was held in conjunction with a Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other groups at the armory.


and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

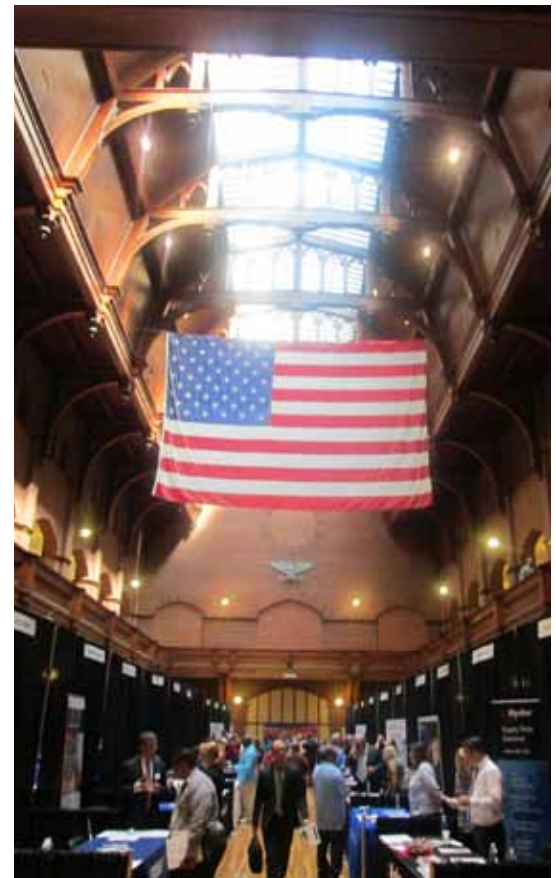
The law ensures that members of the Reserve military and National Guard can serve their country as citizen-Soldiers and not lose their civilian jobs.

USERRA provides that returning service-members must be promptly re-employed in the same position that they would have attained had they not been absent for military service, with the same seniority, status and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority.

Since Hiring Our Heroes began in March 2011, more than 1,500 companies have hired over 23,000 veterans and military spouses as a result of more than 700 hiring fairs, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

These hiring fairs make a big difference in finding veterans and reservists jobs, emphasized Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the adjutant general of New York. Murphy opened Thursday's event.

"As a result of those efforts, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a current unemployment rate of 5.3 percent for post-9/11 veterans compared to the national rate of 6.3 percent," Murphy said. 



The Hire Our Heroes Job Fair sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Buffalo June 19 included 66 companies seeking veterans for employment.

Rescue Wing Security Forces Staying Sharp



WESTHAMPTON BEACH, NEW YORK - Members of the 106th Rescue Wing's Security Forces Squadron train on the M4 carbine and M9 pistol at the firing range at FS Gabreski Air National Guard Base July 13th. Photo by Senior Airman Christopher S Muncy, 106th Rescue Squadron.

As do Aircrews of the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade



CAMP BUEHRING, KUWAIT-- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Munz, a pilot with the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, fires a 240B machine gun for the first phase of aerial gunnery June 3. The aircrews fired familiarization tables and conducted aerial gunnery qualification with their UH-60 BlackHawks later in June. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

Babe Ruth: Great Ballplayer, Artillery Guardsman

By 1st Sgt. Eric R. Hunt, Recruiting and Retention Command

NEW YORK - Babe Ruth was the “Sultan of Swat,” the “King of Crash” and the “Great Bambino.” He was also Private George Herman Ruth in the New York Army National Guard’s 104th Field Artillery.

Ruth had registered for the draft during World War I and received a deferment. But in 1924 the New York National Guard was holding a recruiting drive and Ruth, then playing for the New York Yankees, enlisted. He was sworn in by 104th Field Artillery commander Col. James Austin in a Times Square Ceremony.

The 104th Artillery Regiment was part of the 27th Division and was the largest artillery regiment in the United States Army. The regiment had seen action with the division in France in 1918.

Ruth enlisted in Battery D, 2nd Battalion, whose home armory was on Broadway and 68th Street. Police had to barricade Times Square to keep the crowds back as the ceremony took place in front of Batter D’s 75 millimeter French guns and horse alongside a detachment from the battery.

After he swore in, Ruth signed his enlistment contract on the barrel of one of the guns and then jumped up on one of the horses. He rode the horse all the way to the armory per the tradition when new members enlisted.

One week later Ruth was summoned to Washington. General John J. Pershing, General of the Army, wanted to meet him. Back in New York, Ruth couldn’t find a uniform large enough to fit so, while in D.C., he went to the Quartermaster General and found one in his size.

Not much is known about Babe Ruth’s service. He was allowed to continue playing baseball fulltime. It is said he enlisted for three years service. In 1924 he hit 46 home runs, had 121 RBIs and had a .393 average. In July 1926 Ruth attended “summer camp” at Mitchell Field on Long Island. He autographed balls and bats for National Guard Soldiers at other summer camps who were competing on the unit baseball teams. For a stunt Ruth caught a baseball from a plane flying at 100 miles per hour and flying at 250 feet.



New York Army National Guard Private Babe Ruth, right, greets Army Chief of Staff General of the Army John J. Pershing in shortly after his enlistment in May 1924. Courtesy photo.

The big footnote in history is Babe Ruth was arguably the greatest baseball player of all time, but the small footnote in history is Pvt. George H. Ruth, the artilleryman and New York Army National Guard member, served his community and country with pride.

Editors Note: 1st Sgt Eric R. Hunt is a full-time New York Army National Guard NCO and the first sergeant of Company A of the

New York Army National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Battalion. His cousin, the late Lewis P. Fern, a World War II paratrooper, caddied for Babe Ruth when Ruth played golf, became the famous baseball player’s friend, and also served in the 104th Artillery Regiment. A version of this article was published in GX Magazine.👊

Guard Kids Enjoy Family Day with Guard Parents



WATERVLIET -- Military kids whose parents serve in the New York Army National Guard’s Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Joint Force Headquarters--New York, based in Latham, check out the recruiting command climbing tower during family day activities on June 8 at the Watervliet Arsenal. The Recruiting Battalion brought along the 26 foot rock wall for the Family Readiness Group-sponsored Family Day. The annual event lets Guard families enjoy each others company in a relaxed setting. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters.



Family Volunteers Plant Yellow Ribbon at JFHQ

LATHAM – Family Program volunteers Jacob Hedges (far left), Keri O’Neil (middle left), Jacob’s mother Lisa Hedges (middle right) and Colleen Casey (far right) pause for a photo while planting a bed of marigolds at the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs here June 11. The planting, which resembles the shape of a yellow ribbon, is the annual community service project for the New York State Family Programs Teen Council. O’Neil, of Rotterdam, is a Family Programs child and youth program coordinator; Casey, of Granville, N.Y., is a lead child and youth program coordinator for Family Programs; Jacob Hedges is the treasurer of the teen council and son of 109th Airlift Wing member Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hedges; and Lisa Hedges is a Family Programs volunteer. The Hedges live in Schoharie. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Drumsta, Joint Force Headquarters.

Presidential Flyby in Newburgh



STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE--Col. Timothy LaBarge, commander of the New York Air National Guard’s 105th Airlift Wing greets President Barak Obama as he leaves Air Force One May 28. The President flew into and out of Stewart ANGB when he visited the United States Military Academy to present a major foreign policy speech to the graduating cadets. Courtesy photo.

What an Unhealthy Habit Can Really Cost You



New York's Top Warrior in Northeast Region Competition

Story by Guard Times Staff

CAMP ETHAN ALLEN, Vt. - Staff Sgt. Jeffery Dorvee, a combat veteran and a Queensbury, resident, has won top honors in the northeast region Best Warrior Competition held here, May 13-16.

Dorvee took first place in the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year category. He went on to compete as Best Warrior for the National Guard in July.

New York Army National Guard Spc. Caleb Longley, from Pulaski, represented New York in the enlisted Soldier category of the competition.

National Guard Soldiers from New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine took part in the competition hosted by the Vermont Army National Guard.

The competition tested the Soldiers in a wide range of skills, including marksmanship, physical fitness, endurance, military knowledge and land navigation. Soldiers scored points in each event, and the highest scores decided the winners.



Staff Sgt. Jeffery Dorvee (left) and state sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks, display the plaque that Dorvee was awarded for reaching top honors in the northeast region's Best Warrior Competition-taking first place in the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year category. Courtesy photo.



New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dorvee carries five-gallon water cans during the 2014 Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas July 14. Dorvee was one of 14 competitors--which tests competitors on a variety of tactical and technical skills in a physically and mentally demanding environment--vying to earn the title of Best Warrior and become the Army Guard Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Photo by Staff Sgt. Darron Salzer, National Guard Bureau.

Dorvee competed to be the top NCO in the 350,000-member Army National Guard during a competition in mid-July but did not win.

The winner will compete against NCOs from the Active Army and the Army Reserve to be the best NCO in the entire Army.

New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks praised Dorvee's performance in the Vermont competition.

"Staff Sgt. Jeff Dorvee is an exceptional Soldier, and all of us in the New York Army National Guard are proud of his victory in this very demanding event," Wicks said.

"This event pits the best junior enlisted Soldiers and Non-Commissioned Officers in the Army National Guard against each other and just getting to compete is an honor," Wicks said.

The sergeants major of each state in the region run and judge the event.


Soldiers in the competition are nominated by their leaders and then compete within their units to enter the state competition. The winners of the state Best Warrior Competition then go on to compete at the regional level.

Dorvee, is a full-time Active Guard and Reserve Soldier assigned to the 1427th Truck

Company in Queensbury.

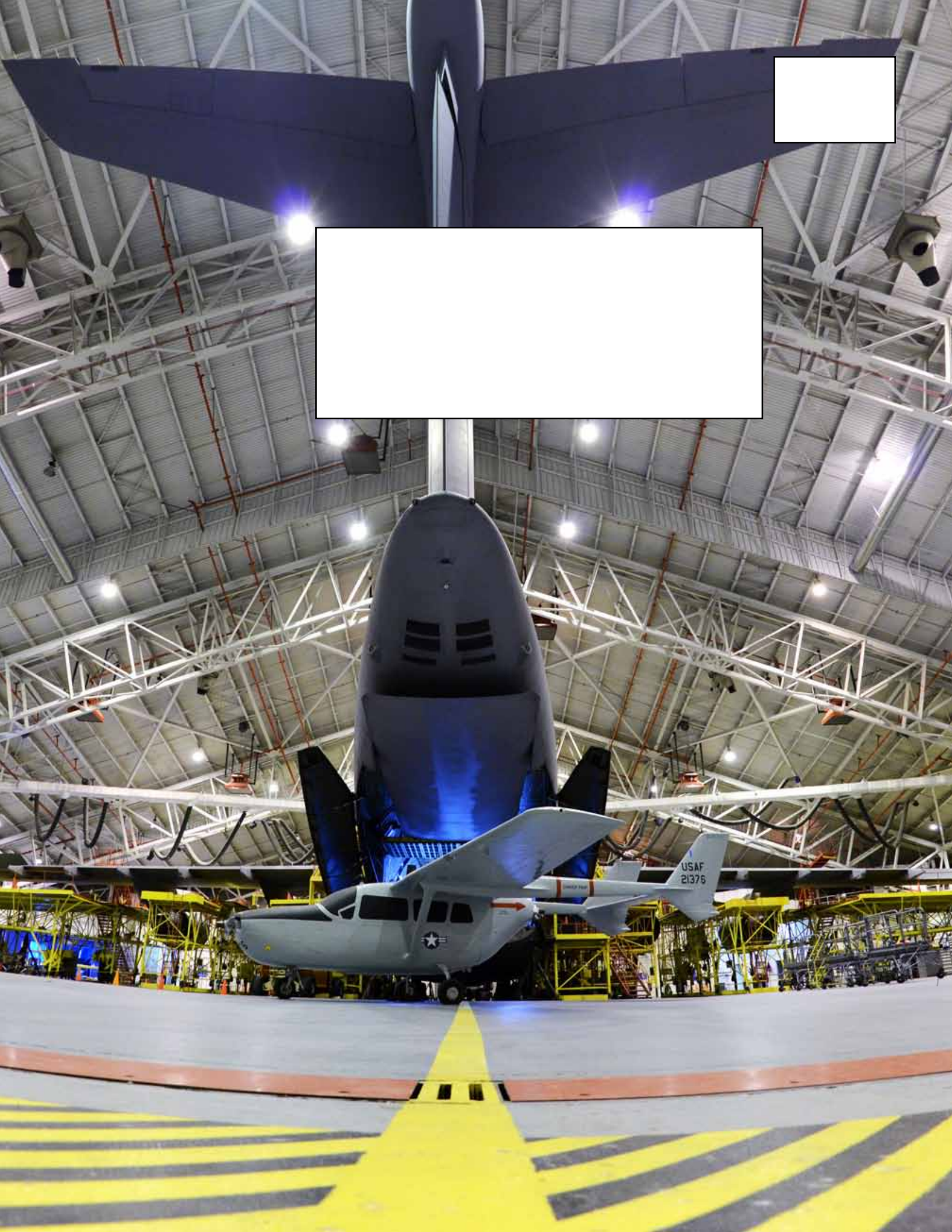
A native of Glens Falls, Dorvee joined the Army in 2003 and served with several active component and New Army National Guard infantry units.

He served two tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, was awarded the Purple Heart, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with campaign stars, two Army Commendation Medals and two Army Achievement Medals, among his other awards.

Dorvee and his wife Shannon have two children. 

"Staff Sgt. Jeff Dorvee is an exceptional Soldier, and all of us in the New York Army National Guard are proud of his victory in this very demanding event,"

-- New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks



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