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# guardtimes

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



# FROM THE LEADERSHIP

## Army and Air NCOs can Learn from Each Other

**I**t's been just over a year since I became your adjutant general and I'm happy to be able to report that the New York Army and Air National Guard — along with the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard — are moving forward.

The New York Army National Guard has had success in recruiting and retaining Soldiers. Our New York Air National Guard has been finding quality Airmen as well.

As the adjutant general, my big-picture priorities for our force are straightforward: recruit and retain quality people, upgrade our facilities, give our Soldiers and Airmen great equipment and ensure they know their basic military tasks.

In the past year, we moved troops back into the Harlem Armory after a four-year, \$80 million renovation to bring this historic armory into the 21st century and opened a new consolidated maintenance facility at Camp Smith.

We are also constantly conducting smaller projects on all of our buildings.

I, and other leaders, will push hard for the money to upgrade our older armories. These are historic and beautiful buildings, but they were designed for an industrial age Army at the dawn of the 20th century and we are an information age Army in the 21st century.

We are working to get the funds necessary to turn both the Jamaica Armory in Queens and Lexington Avenue Armory in Manhattan into buildings that Soldiers can be proud of and want to drill in.

The New York Air National Guard will also strive to upgrade facilities.

At Gabreski Air National Guard Base for example, we hope to soon replace a 60 year old building housing the security forces and communications squadron with a new state of the art facility which will feature a new base fitness center.

Beyond buildings, we've seen a great improvement in equipment for our force.

I am happy to report the 174th Attack Wing is flying the latest version of the MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft, while artillery crews of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery are now equipped with the M-777A2 155 millimeter towed howitzer. These are state of the art weapons systems which make our Soldiers and Airmen more effective.

In the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team the 152nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry and the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry all fielded the new M-153 Common Remotely Operated Weapon Station – or CROWS—which makes their vehicles more lethal.

I made it one of my priorities going forward to re-equip the 109th Airlift Wing — our Scotia-based LC-130 unit which flies to the South Pole and Greenland — with the latest version of the LC-130 on skies.

The LC-130 "Skibirds" the wing flies are the largest ski-equipped aircraft in the world. This gives our Air National Guard an absolutely unique capability which is more important than ever. We will work to recapitalize the 109th with LC-130Js, the ski-equipped version of the latest C-130 model.

Our 173rd Cyber Protection Team, a computer network security force the New York Army National Guard stood up along with elements from the New Jersey Army National Guard, was the first in the country to be validated for their mission.

We have also successfully ex-

ecuted our civil support mission.

New York State Military Forces responded when high waters in Lake Ontario threatened homes and businesses. Our New York Naval Militia and New York Guard forces played key roles in this flood control mission and I am grateful for their professional contributions to this governor-mandated effort.

In November in Herkimer County, Soldiers and Airmen did great work following the Halloween storm that hit the region and caused massive flooding.

It is amazing what our Soldiers and Airmen have accomplished. Speaking with our fellow citizens who suffered property loss and those whose homes were destroyed, they were all upbeat and appreciated the help and support of our National Guard.

The men and women assigned to conducting the Citizens Preparedness Corps training on behalf of the governor have been quietly working to help our fellow New Yorkers prepare for the next storm or power outage.

Since 2014 the team has taught the course to 191,812 New Yorkers. They have distributed 79,587 basic preparedness kits to families which attended certain training events.

Since 2003 New York has had a State Partnership with the South African National Defence Force. We sent Airmen and Soldiers to South Africa for events and training and they have sent people here to New York. This fall we sent members to participate in the South African military skills competition.

Our military-to-military relationship is important to the United States Africa Command and U.S. diplomatic relationships with South Africa.

With the urging of U.S. Southern Command we became one of the few states with two partnerships, inking a deal with Brazil in March.

Since then, we have conducted a number of exchanges. Airmen



Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields

from the 109th Airlift Wing visited Brazil to meet with their counterparts who fly to Brazil's Antarctica base. We entertained the chief of operations of the Brazilian army here in New York for a week and we sent Soldiers to the Brazilian Jungle Warfare School and their Explosive Ordnance Disposal Course.

This latest partnership is an opportunity to advance the interests of the United States in South America by partnering with the largest South American military, while also offering our Soldiers and Airmen fantastic training opportunities.

We continue to offer unique and innovative training opportunities to our Soldiers and Airmen. The 104th Military Police Battalion, for example, deploy to Poland in the spring of 2020 for an Overseas Training Deployment in May, while the 204th Engineers will go to Germany in June.

The 109th Airlift Wing will be teaming up with the 197th Fires Brigade from the New Hampshire Army National Guard for an exercise in Alaska in May.

We are ok providing forces to theater commanders. The 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters will deploy in 2020 to Central Command area of responsibility. Our Soldiers will play key roles in deterring aggression in the region from ISIS and other bad actors. We know

*Commentary Continued, Page 8*





# guardtimes

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**New York Army National Guard Sgt. Nathaniel Cross from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 108 Infantry receives his Expert Infantry Badge following his successful training at Fort Drum with the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) competition course October 2, 2019. Cross earned the award "true blue," meaning he completed all events without having a single retest. Courtesy photo.**



FRONT COVER: Spc. Frederick Butt, left, and Spec. Ryan Baranski, both assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation, clear snow from a fire hydrant in Kinderhook, N.Y. Dec. 3, 2019 following a snow storm which hit the northeast Dec. 1, 2019. New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo placed up to 300 New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen on duty in the Hudson Valley and Capital Region to assist local governments following the storm. Photo by Maj. Michael Squires, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation.  
BACK COVER: A Soldier of the Homeland Response Force (HRF) for FEMA Region II awaits a simulated patient arrival at the decontamination line during validation training of response capabilities at Lakehurst Naval Air Station in Lakehurst, N.J. November 16, 2019. The HRF, comprised of some 600 members of the New York and New Jersey National Guard, augment first responders in the event of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear incident. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

## New York Army Guard Welcomes First Female Armor Officer

Story by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. — Army 2nd Lt. Jessica Reed has made history by becoming the New York Army National Guard's first female armor officer after graduating from the Armor Basic Officer Leadership Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, on June 4, 2019.

Reed, who is from Salamanca, is assigned to Bravo Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment in Jamestown, is training to become a platoon leader. That position will see her commanding upwards of 25 Soldiers plus assigned Humvee vehicles.

It all started when she enlisted in August of 2017, and Reed explained that she focused on being an officer after having considered the idea of joining the Army National Guard for several years. After the required interview process, she shipped out to basic training and then to Officer Candidate School.

"I went in with the intention of kind of shopping around, I didn't even know that officer was something that I could do," said Reed.

Capt. Jared Kausner, the officer strength manager that Reed worked with during the process, was able to explain first-hand what it is like to be an armor officer and what the benefits are.

"A lot of it was just hearing him talk about how he loved what he did, so he kind of sold that to me," said Reed. "Hearing how excited he was about it was more what I was looking for, something drastically different from what I do in everyday life."

"She immediately impressed me as someone who had officer potential," said Kausner. "She had come prepared for the interview, displayed maturity, asked thoughtful questions and displayed an air of confidence."

Kausner explained to Reed that the 101st Cavalry had leadership positions for armor officers and once she did more research on her own, Reed came back asking to branch armor.

"Based on her leadership traits and potential, I knew she would do well as an armor officer," said Kausner. "All Army branches are now open to women to serve, in New York this opens up opportunities in 14 infantry and cavalry units."

"The Army has a 'leaders first' policy in which these units must have at least two female officers

or non-commissioned officers present before female enlisted Soldiers may be assigned. Having leaders such as Reed filling these spots will help us open the door towards bringing more women into infantry and cavalry roles."

Reed explained that she was more excited than nervous at the idea of doing something that females had previously not been allowed to do in the Army.

"Some of my friends and family were a little nervous which is understandable," said Reed. "But a lot of them were very, very excited, especially my dad. It was better received than I was expecting."

After basic training, Reed graduated from Officer Candidate School in July of 2018 before going to armor school in January of 2019. She drilled with bravo troop for a few months to observe the day to day operations of the unit before being sent to armor school in January of 2019.

"It was amazing, it was probably the most fun I've ever had," said Reed. "The biggest learning curve though is you go down there and you don't know anything about the concept of tanks, but it was amazing to go in not knowing anything and seeing week by week how much you are learning, so it was certainly very difficult but very fun."

January also marked three years since the Army opened up to females the fields of armor, field artillery, infantry and special operations jobs for the first time. Going into 2019, more than 1,000 females were already serving in these fields across the Army, according to the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel.

Asked if women are treated differently, Reed said no.

"People are going to think that. I could see where people were getting maybe nervous, with having females coming in but I didn't experience anything like that. People always get nervous when there is a change," she said.

Now at age 34, Reed said that the Army National Guard is going to be her career, with no intentions of leaving armor.

"I don't think I'll ever leave the armor branch," said Reed. "It's amazing. With what we can do, it's an exciting branch to be part of."

Making further accomplishments, the unit held a "spur ride" where Soldiers set out to complete



**2nd Lt. Jessica Reed, an armor officer assigned to Bravo Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment based in Jamestown, N.Y., became the New York Army National Guard's first armor officer when she graduated from the course on June 4, 2019. Courtesy photo.**

a series of cavalry related tasks in order to get their silver spurs. After successful completion, the Soldier is inducted into the Order of the Spur and are authorized to wear their spurs at all cavalry functions.

"Lt. Reed volunteers to assist for almost every training event either within the squadron or outside of drill," said Phillips. "She was selected to attend the 2-101 cavalry spur ride which she completed and also attended the Small Arms Weapons Expert course at Fort Drum in September as the officer-in-charge for the range."

Looking back on her decision to join, Reed said she hadn't considered the fact that she was making history for New York Army National Guard when she joined. Instead, she saw herself doing something she liked to do.

"I didn't look at it like that," said Reed. "I definitely think it's amazing, I definitely think for other women out there that you can do anything you want. I look at it as I'm just another person doing my job and I love my job."

Reed said that she is looking forward to more training and becoming more involved with bravo troop, training which will keep her and her Soldiers ready for combat should they ever be needed.

"It's what we signed up for," said Reed. "We are here to make a difference." **gt**

# VA Social Worker Becomes New Officer

Story and photo by Ryan Campbell, *Guard Times Staff*

ALBANY, N.Y.— New York Army National Guard leadership joined the Albany Stratton Veterans Administration Medical Center to commission one of their social workers as the Guard's newest officer during a ceremony held at the facility, Oct. 8, 2019.

The event was arranged by her coworkers at the VA, where Samantha Dominguez, from Porter Corners, N.Y., and her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Erwin Dominguez, both work. Samantha's husband was joined by Brig. Gen. Michel Natali, assistant adjutant general of New York, in pinning on her second lieutenant rank as she enters the military intelligence field.

"I recently hired a new voluntary service specialist, Sgt. 1st Class Dominguez, and through the course of his employment I found he was married to one of our social workers," said Jim Keller, chief of voluntary service. "The conversation came up that she was in training to be an officer in the National Guard and when

she came back I just thought it would be a nice thing, as husband and wife, to have her commissioned here at the VA."

Keller who is a Navy veteran that served from 1978 to 1984 explained that he knew the significance behind commissioning ceremonies, including the first salute an officer gives.

"Samantha was part of our accelerated Officer Candidate School so she was not able to participate in the ceremony that we do at Camp Smith because she was still in training at that time," said Natali. "I'm glad we were able to catch up and take care of that here this morning."

Samantha, who joined the New York Army National Guard in September of 2018 is assigned to the 501st Ordinance Battalion based in Glensville, N.Y. She received bachelor's and master's degrees in social work from the State University at Albany, and works with post 9/11



2nd Lt. Samantha Dominguez, assigned to the 501st Ordinance Battalion based in Glensville, N.Y., is commissioned into military intelligence at the Albany Stratton Veterans Administration Medical Center where she works in Albany, N.Y., Oct. 8, 2019.

combat veterans in helping them get connected with services and their benefits, work that was praised by Natali. **gt**

## Captain Helps Replace Lost Medal of Honor

Story by Timothy Jones, *224th Air Defense Group*

BEREA, O.H. — It took three years of writing letters, filing forms and cutting through red tape, but thanks to New York Air National Guard Capt. Jason Cole, the actions of a World War I Soldier are being commemorated again in Berea, Ohio.

Cole, a member of the 224th Air Defense Group at the Eastern Air Defense Sector based in Rome, N.Y., is the great-nephew of 2nd Lt. Albert Baesel, a Berea native who received the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions in World War I.

Baesel, a member of the Ohio National Guard's 148th Infantry Regiment, was killed while attempting to rescue a wounded Soldier under fire.

For years his medal was on display at American Legion Post 91, which is named in Baesel's honor. The medal went missing in the 1980s and the Army refused to replace it. So Cole and his father Gary Cole got involved.

"The Legion had been named after my great, great uncle for 100 years and I wanted to help the organization," Cole said. "I also wanted to honor Albert's legacy. Medal of Honor recipients are heroes and every one of them should

have their story told, and re-told, for many, many generations."

The Coles first tried working with the Army through the Legion but the Army refused the Legion's request. This led to the family contacting the Army directly.

After 80 e-mails, numerous phone calls and an estimated 100 hours researching regulations and family genealogy, the Coles were able to make their case.

In October, the Army Human Resources Command Awards and Decorations Branch at Ft. Knox, Kentucky awarded a replacement medal, which Cole presented to the Post on Nov. 18 during a ceremony at Berea's City Hall.

Cole told the group at the presentation that the medal represents a legacy.

There are four criteria to receive the Medal of Honor, Cole said: two eyewitnesses, outstanding gallantry beyond the call of duty, risk of life and a deed of such bravery and self-sacrifice that it can be justified beyond all criticism.

"A moment like that happened 101 years ago," Cole said. "A Berean was killed but a hero was born."

The Baesel family will hold a reunion next



Capt. Jason Cole, left, a member of the 224th Air Defense Group, worked with his father, Gary Cole where the medal was presented to the Berea Ohio American Legion Post during a ceremony on Nov. 18, 2019. Also taking part was Marianna Peris, president of Berea, Ohio American Legion Post 91 Auxiliary; Mel Baher, past commander of Post 91; and Gary Cole, Capt. Cole's father. Courtesy photo.

year and it will include an open house for the community to view the Medal of Honor.

Baesel is buried in Woodvale Cemetery. On the 100th anniversary of his death, the City of Berea and the city's Veterans Outreach Office dedicated a plaque to 2nd Lt. Baesel on the downtown Triangle's clock tower.

Cole said his family was proud to bring the Medal of Honor to Post 91 and the community "to commemorate the next 100 years." **gt**

# US State Department Recognizes NY Soldier

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Guard Times Staff



Members of the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center display the variety of vehicles and equipment removed from the closing of the U.S. Embassy's Basra Consulate in Baghdad, Iraq, October 20, 2018. Sgt. Jhon Ortiz developed a logistics tracking system to support the relocation of the Basra Consulate personnel and equipment during his deployment to Iraq. He received the U.S. Department of State Meritorious Honor Award September 5, 2019 for his actions. Photo by Col. Michael Bice, Joint Force Headquarters.

WASHINGTON — Sgt. Jhon Ortiz received an award September 5 that most Soldiers will never see: the U.S. Department of State Meritorious Honor Award for outstanding performance while deployed to Iraq in 2018.

Ortiz, a Corona, N.Y. resident, was recognized for a role most Soldiers don't see: working with Diplomatic Security Service, a branch of the State Department that protects U.S. officials at bases, embassies and consulates abroad.

During his nine-month deployment in 2018, Ortiz was assigned to assist in receiving, storing and transporting equipment and facilitating the movement of personnel in and out of Baghdad.

"I was in charge of security, transportation and lodging of U.S. military and government officials visiting Iraq," Ortiz said. "I handled officials ranging from Congressmen and women to the highest levels of leadership in the U.S. military and NATO."

Ortiz was deployed as part of the 10th Mountain Division Mobile Command Post Operational Detachment, an element that trains to deploy with the 10th Mountain Division Headquarters for staff augmentation.

Faced with increasing hostilities by Iranian-backed militias, the

Basra consulate was closed in October 2018, requiring the evacuation of all personnel and securing its equipment.

"I was located in the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center, which was the only base that was close enough and had the capability of storing, housing and transporting all of the Basra Consulate's people and equipment," Ortiz said.

Col. Michael Bice, who deployed as the base commander for garrison operations at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center, picked Ortiz for the mission.

"I knew that he was the one that could be counted on to get the job done. He was self-motivated, smart and well respected by the State Department," Bice explained.

Ortiz devised a system to store the massive amounts of cargo and equipment coming into Baghdad from the Basra location.

"There were more than 200 trucks coming in during the span of two or three weeks," Ortiz said, "all carrying containers that had half a ton of equipment in them, and all of them were being driven by local Iraqi contractors."

"Screening and security were a main concern, because we did not know who among those local people was sympathetic to hostile

groups. Luckily, we did not have any incidents during that time," he said.

The movement of State Department equipment and personnel required a tremendous amount of expertise to support the State Department Regional Security Team, Bice said.

"Ortiz and his team were able to track and account for 58 flights which was comprised of 114 vehicles and over 662,333 pounds of materials with all personnel," Bice said.

The Department of State Meritorious Honor Award is not given lightly, said Phillip Smith a member of the State Department Regional Security Team, who nominated Ortiz for the award.

It typically takes an above average Foreign Service Person a few years to obtain such a prestigious award, he said.

"He earned it," Smith added.

"I was not expecting to receive any awards from my time helping the evacuation of the Basra Consulate," Ortiz said. "I enjoyed my time helping the Regional Security Officers during the mission. Receiving the Meritorious Honor Award was a great motivational boost and an honor -- there are just so many people who get nomi-



Sgt. Jhon Ortiz outside the nation's capital September 5, 2019. Ortiz received the U.S. Department of State Meritorious Honor Award for his actions in 2018 as part of the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center to relocate the U.S. Embassy Consulate in Basra, Iraq. Courtesy photo.

nated for this award every year. It reminded me that the work that people do for the United States does not go unnoticed," he said.

State Department Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Michael Evanoff presented Ortiz with the award and plaque that read, in part, "for exceptional devotion to duty, enthusiasm and exemplary conduct during the period of October 3 to 18, due to the evacuation of Consulate Basra."

"Jhon was the right person at the right time to get this mission accomplished," Bice said. **gt**

# NY Soldier Graduates from Brazilian Course

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

MANAUS, BRAZIL— Staff Sgt. Thomas Carpenter knew it would be sink or swim when he showed up at the Brazilian Army's Center for Jungle Warfare Instruction in October 2019.

He was enrolled in the six-week long International Jungle Operations Course the Brazilian army runs for foreign soldiers. The opportunity came as part of New York's State Partnership Program with Brazil.

But the 38-year old training NCO in the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry knew he had to pass the initial swimming test first.

"It was quite a struggle to get the swimming," the Ranger School graduate recalled.

But he learned to swim in full uniform, with his weapon, towing a pack.

Six weeks later, the Prospect, N.Y. resident, was the third honor graduate for the course.

This is a pretty big deal, according to Army Lt. Col. Rob Santamaria, a military liaison in the U.S. Embassy in Brazil.

"Most jungle military experts consider the Brazilian Army Jungle Warfare School to be the premier jungle school in the world," Santamaria said.

"Staff Sgt. Carpenter's graduation from the Brazilian army Jungle Warfare Schools International Course has given the New York Army National Guard instant credibility," he added.

"Staff Sgt. Carpenter embodies the spirit of the minuteman," said New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major David Piwowarski. "He responded with toughness to this demanding course with just the training he already had under his belt and a lot of guts."

Swimming is vital because rivers replace roads in the rain forest, Carpenter explained.

"Where they operate in the Amazon jungle there are only two roads," Carpenter said.

"Most everything is done through the river system."

The first phase of the six-week course focuses on living and surviving in the jungle, Carpenter said. The soldiers learned what they could and couldn't eat.

"We didn't do any snake eating but I had to catch one," he said.

Navigating in the dense jungle is also a special skill needed, Carpenter said.

Stream water levels vary each season. The Brazilians issue different maps for different times of year reflecting those changes, he said.

The soldiers learned to follow the "dry line" while navigating, he explained.

Those skills were tested in a four day exercise.

"They dropped us off in a place where they knew there were no fruits and vegetables we could eat," he said. "We pretty much starved."

Two weeks was spent in the water. The men helocasted – jumping from a helicopter into the Amazon—and learned to make rafts and to waterproof gear.

Eventually, Carpenter and his squad conducted a two kilometer river insertion.

"We were in the water for three hours that night," he recalled.

The final phase of the training focused on military tactics in the rainforest.

That training was similar to the Army's Ranger School, Carpenter said.

The difference is that the jungle is multiple times denser than the woods Rangers train in, Carpenter said.

After passing, Carpenter and the other international students, which included one other American, were presented with their Jaguar Badge—the official symbol of a Brazilian jungle warrior—and a machete.


"It's a pretty cool machete," Carpenter said. "At the end of the course you have a machete ceremony"

"Somebody already qualified presents it to you and then you christen it by waving it through the smoke from a fire," he added.

Since Brazil founded its jungle warfare school in 1964, over 6,300 soldiers have made it through the course, Santamaria said. This includes 530 graduates of the international course the Brazilian army runs once a year.

Carpenter is the 30th member of the U.S. Army to make it through the class, he said.

His goal now, Carpenter said, is to bring the skills he learned back to his unit and other New York Army National Guard formations.

"I'm not a good NCO unless I train Soldiers and make them better than me," he said. 



"Most jungle military experts consider the Brazilian Army Jungle Warfare School to be the premier jungle school in the world,"

-- Lt. Col. Rob Santamaria, military liaison officer for Brazil



Top photo, Staff Sgt. Thomas Carpenter, second from right, and other Soldiers who graduated from the Jungle Operations International Course conducted by the Brazilian Army Jungle Warfare Training Center, brandish their machetes following a graduation ceremony on Nov. 30, 2019 in Manaus, Brazil. At Bottom, Staff Sgt. Carpenter, right, stands with two other international soldiers recognized as honor graduates from the Jungle Operations International Course. Carpenter was the 30th American Soldier to graduate from the physically demanding course and finished 3rd in the class. Courtesy photos.

# AROUND THE STATE

## Colonel Maureen Murphy Retires After 35-year Career

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

*“The profession demands a lot of us, but it gives a lot in return,”*

*-- Col. Maureen Murphy, commander, 109th Mission Support Group*

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA, N.Y. -- New York Air National Guard Col. Maureen Murphy, a Baldwinsville resident, retired after 35 years of service in the Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the New York Air National Guard during an Oct. 10, 2019 ceremony here.

Murphy's last assignment was as the commander of the 109th Airlift Wing's Mission Support Group. In that role she led 390 military and civilian personnel which supported the 109th Airlift Wing's unique Arctic and Antarctic missions.

During the ceremony she was awarded the Legion of Merit in recognition of her many accomplishments.

Col. Michele Kilgore, the commander of the 109th Airlift Wing, praised Murphy as everything an Air Force officer should be.

“She has the respect of her subordinates, her superior officers and her peers,” Kilgore said.

“She left the organization better than she found it,” Kilgore said. In her remarks, Murphy thanked her extended family for the support given to her and her husband Mark Murphy, another retired Air Force colonel, throughout their careers.

She also praised the Air Guardsmen of the 109th Airlift Wing for the missions they accomplish regularly in their unique mission.

“I have been amazed time and again at what each of you does,” she said.

She's had a career with a lot of twists and turns, Murphy said, but she has enjoyed every part of it.

“The profession demands a lot of us, but it gives a lot in return,” she said.

Murphy, who was initially trained as an intelligence officer, is a veteran of deployments in support operations in the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan.

She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Duke University, and a master's degree in international relations from Cambridge University in England.

In 2003 she was named the Air Force Reserve Intelligence Field Grade Officer of the Year and in 2011 the American Red Cross presented her with its “Women who Mean Business” Award.



Col. Michele Kilgore, left, commander of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing, presents a retirement certificate to Air Force Col. Maureen Murphy, who retired after 35 years of service in the active Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the New York Air National Guard, during a ceremony at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, N.Y. on Oct. 10, 2019. Murphy's final assignment was as commander of the 109th Airlift Wing's Mission Support Group. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.

## NCOs can Learn from Each Other, Cont'd from Page 2

they are up to it.

Whether you will be deployed overseas or here at home, my direction to our Army National Guard leaders has been to focus on small unit and individual skills as we lay out training plans.

Training at the platoon or squad level is where our collective focus training will be. This is in-line with the thinking to Army Chief of Staff General James McConville, who emphasizes the importance of individual Soldier skills and fitness. Our Army, the chief says, needs to win at the point of contact.

A small group of Soldiers at the tip of the spear—and that is all of our Soldiers, not just infantrymen—can make a difference.

Our Soldiers need to know how to survive on the

battlefield, be fit and resilient and be lethal by understanding how to employ their weapons.

We will continue to focus on small unit training, while ensuring that battalion, brigade, and higher level staff officers and non-commissioned officers know their jobs.

For us in the National Guard, this also means ensuring Soldiers and Airmen in our Homeland Response Force are also capable of performing their individual tasks in a stressful, demanding environment.

The New York National Guard is a dynamic, relevant force. We play a vital role here at home and in our nation's defense. You can be proud of your membership in this force and look to the future for bigger things to come. **gt**





Members of the New York Military Forces Honor Guard provide military honors for the funeral service of former Army paratrooper Pvt. Needham Mayes at Calverton National Cemetery, N.Y. December 2, 2019. Mayes, 85, a Soldier dishonorably discharged from the Army in 1955 after a bar fight, had his discharge upgraded to honorable and was buried, today, with his comrades-in-arms.

# National Guard Grants Old Soldier's Final Request

## Honor Guard Provides Military Honors after Discharge Upgrade

Story and photo by Sgt. Jonathan Pietrantonio, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CALVERTON, N.Y. — A former Army paratrooper’s final request—to be buried with military honors alongside other veterans – was carried out by a New York Army National Guard honor guard on Monday, Dec. 2 at Calverton National Cemetery.

Needham Mayes, the New York City resident who was buried, was one of the first African-American Soldiers to join the 82nd Airborne Division in 1953. But he left the Army with a dishonorable discharge in 1956 after a fight in a noncommissioned officers club.

In 2016—after a lifetime of accomplishment and community service-- he began the process of

having that dishonorable discharge changed so he could be buried as a veteran. His lawyers argued that in a southern Army post, just a few years after the Army had integrated, black Soldiers were often treated unfairly.

With an assist from New York Senator Kirstin Gillibrand, Mayes appeal came through in September 2019. When he died on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2019, he was eligible to be buried with other Soldiers.

That duty fell to the Long Island team of the New York Military Forces Honor Guard.

On Dec. 2, the Long Island National Guard Soldiers dispatched

11 members to honor Mayes last request.

Honor Guard members treat every military funeral as a major event, because that service is important to that family, said 1st Lt. Lasheri Mayes, the officer in charge of the New York Military Forces Honor Guard.

But the story of Mr. Mayes “was unique” and because his family had fought hard to get him the honors he deserved that made the ceremony particularly important, Lt. Mayes said.

Sgt. Richard Blount, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the mission assembled a great

team, she added.

It was “a tremendous honor” for his Soldiers to conduct the mission for the Mayes family, Blount said.

“I was proud to see the team that I put together all join in celebrating his life, and being a member of this memorable event for the family,” he said.

According to the New York Times, after leaving the Army, Mayes moved to New York City, and became an exemplary citizen.

He earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree and became a social worker and a therapist. But Mayes said his dishonorable discharge always bothered him, 9

# Young and Old Mark Guard Birthday

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. -- A 21-year old Airman with two years of service and a 59-year old Soldier who has served since 1984 cut the birthday cake Dec. 14, 2019 as the New York National Guard headquarters marked the 383rd birthday of America's oldest military force.

Airman 1st Class Caleb Lapinel, a Stamford, N.Y. resident, and Master Sgt. Roger Townsend, from Waterford, N.Y., joined Maj. Gen. Timothy LaBarge, commander of the New York Air National Guard, in a ceremony recognizing the creation of a part-time military force by the Massachusetts Bay Colony on Dec. 13, 1636.

Traditionally the oldest and youngest service members present cut the birthday cake at this observance. The old Soldier represents the history and traditions of the National Guard while the young Soldier represents the future of the National Guard.

While the National Guard as an idea is older than the United States, the role of the militia which is now the National Guard, is built into the Constitution, LaBarge told 100 Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees during the ceremony.

It is great to recognize the institution, but the National Guard is really about the people who belong and who are ready to fight our nation's wars and respond to emergencies and disasters here at home, LaBarge said.

"So this is really happy birthday to all of you," LaBarge said. "Because the National Guard is all of you."

It's the people who responded to Herkimer County to help clean up after the flooding in November, and it is the people who will deploy to Kuwait with the 42nd Infantry Division in 2020, he said.

"You are our home game and our away game," LaBarge said.

Lapinel, who is assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Schenectady serves as an intelligence analyst in the 109th Operations Support Squadron.

He joined the New York Air National Guard because he's always been interested in the military and he wanted to do something that would help pay for college, Lapinel said.

So far he doesn't regret it at all, Lapinel said.

"My career as a whole to this point has been an amazing experience," he said.

He just returned from a survival, evasion, resistance and escape training course in Spokane, Washington where he learned how to survive behind enemy lines, he said.

"Through that I learned a lot, met some great people and really opened my eyes to the realities that some military members face," he added.

It was an honor to represent the young Soldiers and Airmen of the New York National Guard during the birthday event, he said.

Townsend, who served in the active Army for three years before transferring to the National Guard, said he never expected to serve so many years.



Air Force Major General Timothy LaBarge(center), commander of the New York Air National Guard joins Army National Guard Master Sgt. Roger Townsend, age 59, left, and Air National Guard Airman 1st Class Caleb Lapinel, age 21, in cutting the National Guard birthday cake at a ceremony marking the 383rd birthday of the National Guard held Dec. 13, 2019 at the National Guard Headquarters in Latham, N.Y. Photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff.

Townsend, a transportation specialist assigned to the Army component of the New York National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, also serves as information branch chief for the National Guard's information technology section.

He joined the National Guard after leaving active duty because he wanted to serve his community, Townsend said. He's proud of the many times he's responded to weather emergencies and other state disasters over the years, Townsend said.

Now, his plan is to serve as long as he can, until he turns 60 later in 2020.

"I am proud to have outlasted my own expectations and to have served with my fellow Soldiers," Townsend said.

In New York, the first citizen-soldiers were members of the Burgher Guard, organized by the Dutch East Indian Company in 1640 to help protect New Amsterdam from their English neighbors in Massachusetts and Virginia or from hostile natives. **gt**



## Volunteers turn out at Trees for Troops

BALLSTON SPA, N.Y. -- Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Hanna, assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing loads a Christmas Tree at the Ellms Tree Farm in Ballston Spa, N.Y. December 9, 2019 to help load about 125 Christmas trees being donated and sent to military bases around the country to support troops and military families this holiday season. More than 15 volunteers from the New York Army and Air National Guard joined with Capital District area veterans and members of the Association of the U.S. Army Capital District Chapter to help load trees. This marks the 15th year of military members volunteering their time to assist in the loading of trees destined for fellow service members and their families around the country and around the world. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

# WWII Veteran Recognized for Liberation of France

Story and photo by Ryan Campbell, *Guard Times Staff*

OLEAN, N.Y. -- Surrounded by 120 friends and family members, Charlie Brown, a 95-year old veteran of the New York Army National Guard's 258th Field Artillery Regiment, received France's highest honor on Friday, Dec. 20th, 2019.

Brown received the French Legion of Honor in recognition of his role in liberating France during World War II in his hometown of Olean, N.Y. at the Olean Community Church that he helped found.

"How could we French forget D-Day in France and your heroic action? We did not. We never forget," said Pascal Soares, the Honorary Consul of France in Buffalo who presented the award. "Even my mother and father, who were 10 and 12 years old at the time, they remember when the Nazis came into town, occupying, and leaving town as you and your comrades were liberating our cities."

The former private first class was inducted into the Army in 1943 at the age of 18 and was sent to Scotland the following year to prepare for the invasion of Europe. He landed on Utah Beach, Normandy, on July 2, 1944 and spent the next 302 days fighting across France and Europe, from the invasion of France to the Battle of the Bulge.

Shortly after his high school graduation, Brown was drafted as a fire direction instrument operator, working with his regiment's 155mm howitzer canons. He participated in three of the four major campaigns in France, Normandy, Ardennes and Northern France, while only one is necessary to be eligible for the Legion of Honor.

"I heard they gave one to President Eisenhower," said Brown of the award which is the highest award for military and civilian service given by the French. "And now a Pfc. has one."

In 2017, Brown reached out to the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. and current members of the 258th Field Artillery to present the memorabilia he'd saved from his World War II experience and tell his story.

Brown was in a position in the 258th where he was able to keep meticulous records of the regiment's actions during the war. He recounted to those who attended the ceremony that during their time in Europe they fired 33,902 rounds from their howitzers.

Those documents, items and captured German flag became a special exhibit at the military museum and the members of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery adopted the World War II artilleryman as one of their own.

Brown's records made it possible to fill in gaps in the unit history that they wouldn't have been able to otherwise, explained Capt. Steve Kerr, the commander of Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery.

The unit invited Brown to Fort Drum to meet current 258th Field Artillery Soldiers and pull the lanyard on the latest high-tech howitzer assigned to the unit. He was also a guest at the battalion's annual banquet where he was awarded the Ancient Order of St. Barbara, presented for service to the field artillery branch.

"Charlie is an outstanding gentleman and truly has a remarkable story and has been an instrumental part of our family," said Kerr. "I know I speak for everyone in this room when I say how proud of you I am today and how thankful I am for your service."



Charlie Brown, a World War II veteran of the New York National Guard's 258th Field Artillery, stands with current and former members of the battalion after receiving the French Legion of Honor from the government of France during a ceremony in Olean, N.Y., Dec. 20, 2019.

"How could we French forget D-Day in France and your heroic action? We did not. We never forget."

-- Pascal Soares, *Honorary Consul of France*

Kerr, along Maj. Brian Napier, the battalion executive officer, Lt. Col. Peter Mehling, a former commander of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery and Maj. Eric Emerling, a member of the 153rd Troop Command, represented the New York Army National Guard at the ceremony.

"There's a reason why your generation is referred to as the Greatest Generation," State Senator George Borrello told Brown. "You had the steadfast, determined attitude and everything else that made World War II turn around."

Brown said he couldn't put into words what it meant to receive the award and the fact that so many people wanted to come out to recognize what he did during his time at war.

He did say that he is proud of the next generation of Soldiers, pointing out the current members of the 258th who attended the ceremony.

The ceremony also recognized that December 2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, the largest American battle of World War II and one that Brown participated in.

"Today you are our hero, today you are my liberator," Soares told Brown.

Brown said that he simply held his gun close and got through the war while friends around him did not.

"I remember going past the Statue of Liberty on our way to Europe and wondering if I would ever see it again," said Brown. "I did." **gt**

# THE JOINT FORCE

## CST Proves their Skills in Certification Exercise

Story and photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff

BROOKLYN, N.Y. -- Flashlights shine through stacked pallets, looking towards dark empty offices. With only some sky light here, and some fluorescent light there, they are more on the lookout for the powder and liquid that covers the floors.

Three people move slow and deliberate, walking towards things that others would run from. Radiation and chemical agents are hiding somewhere behind a closed door or in a patch of darkness, but will be found.

This is the scene that greeted 22 members of the New York National Guard's 24th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team in Brooklyn during an October 22, 2019 exercise evaluating them on their ability to find chemical, biological and radioactive materials and weapons.

Usually called a CST, the unit, headquartered at Fort Hamilton, was being certified to carry out their mission. They identify unknown materials for first responders and any agency that requests them.

The New York National Guard has two CSTs, the 24th which covers New York City and Long Island and the 2nd CST which covers upstate New York and the northeast.

Evaluators from the Department of Homeland Security planted items in the cavernous, empty warehouse for the Airmen and Soldiers to find during the exercise.

"Our job is basically to assess, assist and advise the civilian incident commander," said Maj. Robert Freed, the deputy commander of the 24th CST. "Our job is to bring in a high level of expertise and equipment and be able to provide some tools, techniques and procedures that civilians may not be able to."

They are present at what they call "national security events" which has included everything from the U.S. Open tennis championships and Major League Baseball playoffs, to the president being in the area and the U.N. General Assembly.

Freed explained that the level of expertise the team members bring to each situation is extremely high, given the fact that they all go through two years of training once selected



Soldiers assigned to the New York National Guard's 24th Civil Support Team based at Ft. Hamilton, search a warehouse for potential simulated weapons of mass destruction during an exercise in Brooklyn, N.Y., Oct. 22, 2019.

for the team. They work together with civilian agencies who often do not have their own team capable of responding to weapons of mass destruction, he continued.

Within 90 minutes of being alerted for an incident, they can be on scene wherever they are needed at no cost to the requesting agency.

But they must be routinely certified every 18 months through these exercises.

Inside the warehouse, the Department of Homeland Security planted materials for the team to find during the training.

"They have to be able to identify any hazards they might come across, they have to look for things that may be a crime scene," said Rick Martin, an evaluator from the U.S. Army North Civil Support Training Activity. "When they recognize those things, they have to know how to report them, if they find a substance they have to be able to take a sample, bring it out and process it."

Of the three CST members, one looks for

explosives. The others find chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear substances.

"They have to do this as a team," Martin emphasized. "They need all the different parts of the team to make this happen."

In this scenario there were three radiological sources, along with a simulated potassium sulfide blister agent lab.

"From where we stand right now, they're being very deliberate," said Martin. "That's good, take your time and find what you need to find. In a real world situation this would take a couple days."

To become part of the 24th CST is not easy, Freed explained. Each member has to apply and then go through a selection process before being sent out for the two years of training it takes to become individually certified.

"We're here to help," said Freed. "We're a joint team, Army and Air Force and we live by our military values, and we're there to help those civilian first responders." **gt**



New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen on the range in Potchefstroom, South Africa, during the Military Skills Competition October 24, 2019.

## Soldiers, Airmen Represent US in South Africa

*Story and photo by Lt. Col. Al Phillips, Joint Force Headquarters*

**POTCHEFSTROOM, SOUTH AFRICA -- Ten New York Soldiers and Airmen took part in five days of shooting, negotiating land and water obstacles, grenade throwing and a four mile combat run, during the annual South African Defence Force Military Skills Competition, held here October 21-26.**

The competition is open to members of reserve components from other nations as well as South African active duty military members and reservists.

Teams also came from the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Federal Republic of Germany.

There were also all male and all female teams from the Army's 108th Military Police Company at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

By midweek, the Guard Soldiers and Airmen who made up half the American team were finding their stride and placing points on the board, with both pistol and rifle ranges being notable successes.

The New York National Guard,

which has a State Partnership Program relationship with South Africa, last took part in the competition in 2003.

The team members got word about the competition just two months out and had no time to train, according to Master Sgt. Cole Shebat, the Air Guard team coach.

By comparison, the British and German teams had a year to get ready for the event.

The Americans, though, thought they were still holding their own.

"We all had the right mindset coming into this competition. We are here to be consistent, focused and score," said Army Guard Sgt. 1st Class Martin Cozens.

With temperatures hitting 95 degrees during the day, the New York Soldiers and Airmen said they stressed hydration and maintaining energy to remain at peak levels.

Some of the obstacles were especially challenging. The South Africans designed the water obstacles to be the most difficult part of the course.

The Americans prepared for

that with their training ahead of time said Air Guard Tech Sgt. Justin Murphy.

"We took the opportunity before coming here to improve our breathing techniques and build our upper body strength—both chest and shoulders to really develop an organized approach to competing during the obstacle course," Murphy said.

When it was all over, the Germans won the competition among the foreign teams, but the Americans said it was all worthwhile.

The New Yorkers wanted to win, but the competition was about more than just scoring points, Shebat said. The Soldiers and Airmen "had a blast," Shebat said.

The South Africans also treated their visitors to a "braai," which is the South African version of an American barbecue with lots of meats, local homebrewed beer and a performance by traditional Tswana dancers.

"Being at the cultural event was a really cool experience and added value of traveling here to South Africa," said Army Guard Sgt. 1st

Class Brendon Mavra.

"These experiences introduce you to the culture and gives you a memory for life," added New York Army National Guard Sgt. Jonathan Patton.

The trip was a fantastic experience, the Soldiers said.

"I can tell you, being in this competition and grinding out the different events and breaking bread with others at the cultural event is what we as Soldiers want, it's a different element and I personally think this is the best opportunity for retention," Mavra added.

Command Sgt. Major Marc Maynard, the coach for the New York Army National Guard team, said he was looking forward to coming back again.

"Competition is an excellent training tool that naturally encourages participants to excel at their best," he said.

"We look forward to returning and continuing to build our partnership," he added. **gt**

# Homeland Response Force Validates

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, *Guard Times Staff*

**JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – Six hundred New York and New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and Airmen proved they’re ready to handle disasters following a two-day training exercise November 15-16, 2019 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.**

The Guardsmen and women are part of a regional disaster response force trained to respond to a Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) incident in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region II.

Known as a Homeland Response Force (HRF), the task force assists civilian responders during a CBRN incident.

“It’s really impressive to see the entire thing all in one place,” said Army Spc. Renee Rivas, a water-purification New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier assigned to the 154th Quartermaster Company, performing security roles at the site. “This is so much bigger when you see it all together,” he said.

HRF elements come from a variety of Army and Air Guard units in New York and New Jersey.

The Soldiers and Airmen receive specialized training in addition to their traditional unit readiness responsibilities to operate in a CBRN environment. The troops train for search and extraction of disaster victims, incident site security, decontamination, medical triage and treatment and command and control of the response mission.

They are often doing things very different from their normal military job, said Army Staff Sgt. Jennifer Meyer, a medical readiness non-commissioned officer for the 642nd Support Battalion’s decontamination team.

The 642nd Support Battalion is an aviation maintenance unit,

filled with Soldiers more skilled at helicopter engine and transmission repairs than operating decontamination stations, she said.

“We have lots of mechanics out here, admin Soldiers, even cooks supporting the mission,” Meyer said, “but it has all come together.”

The ramp-up from individual to collective training was a challenge for the force, said Col. Robert Charlesworth, HRF Commander and commander of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

“We have combat engineer units, for instance, that are doing urban search and rescue which is something that they’re not ordinarily accustomed to doing,” he said.

The elements of the FEMA Region II HRF Team began preparing for this validation event in the spring of 2019. Typically, National Guard units have a year to conduct individual and section training before coming together for full-scale training and evaluation.

The entire HRF element completed its collective training at the beginning of September 2019.

Observe controllers from U.S. Army North and National Guard Bureau praised the team for its improvements and progress.

“There really are no war-stoppers here,” said Luis Mercado the observer-controller for medical triage. “The train-up in September and the run-through here really paid off. They’re ready for this.”

The team came together quickly, said Army Lt. Col. William Snyder, commander of the 152nd Brigade Engineer Battalion and the CBRN response force element.

His headquarters provides command and control, but only the battalion’s engineer company serves in the CBRN response force.



**Soldiers of the Homeland Response Force move a simulated casualty through decontamination during an exercise for chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incident response training at Lakehurst Naval Air Station at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in Lakehurst, N.J. Nov. 15, 2019. Below, decontamination team members don protective gear. They are assigned to the 642nd Support Battalion and cross-trained for the CBRN response skills needed for decontamination.**

“The decon line, the engineers, security element, medical and others are all doing really well,” Snyder said. “They’ve shown a great learning curve and have been able to work together, side by side, seamlessly.”

The units that completed the HRF training include:

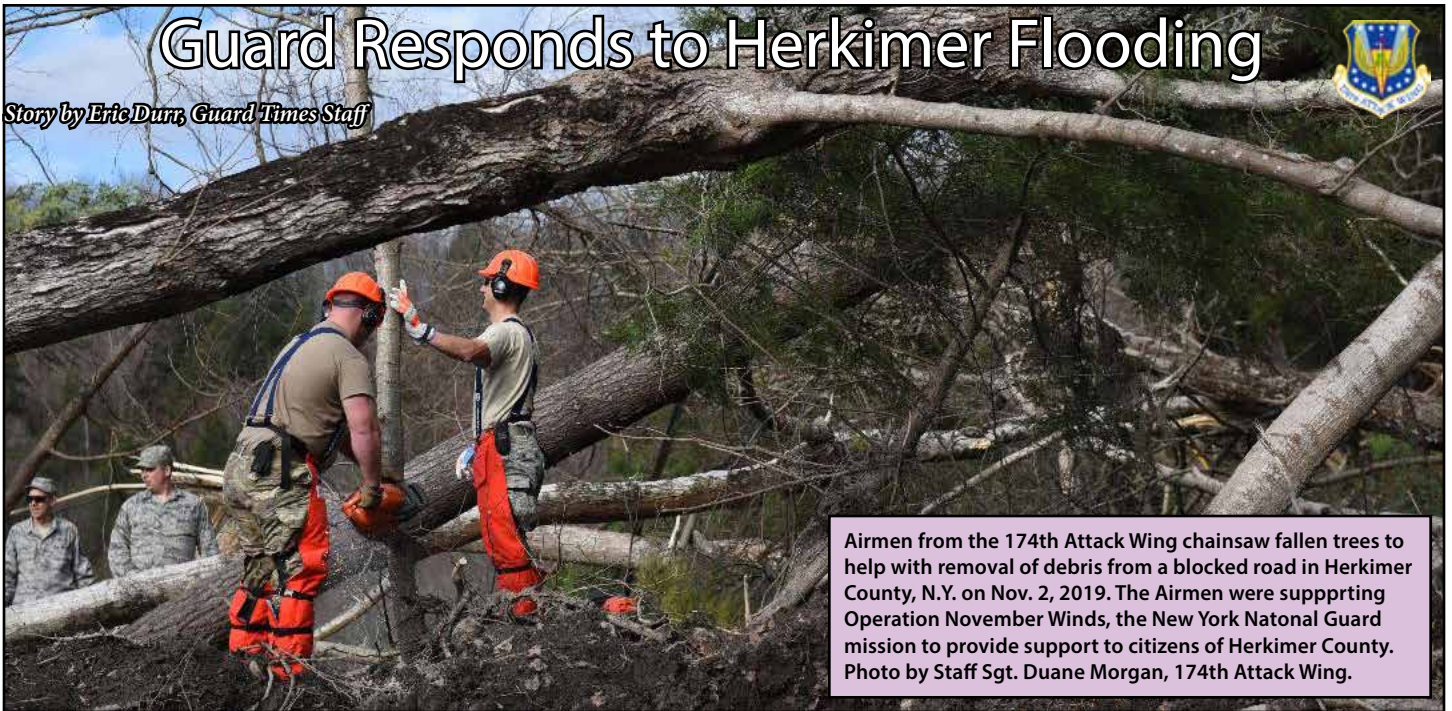
- The 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters, based in Syracuse, N.Y. to provide command and control
- Air National Guard communications personnel from the 105th Airlift Wing, based in Newburgh, N.Y. and the 107th Attack Wing, based in Niagara Falls, N.Y., providing communications support.
- New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers from the 154th Quartermaster Company and 50th Chemical Company, providing a Casualty Assistance and Security Element (CASE).
- A New York CBRN response task force headquarters from the 153nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, based in Buffalo, N.Y.



- Decontamination Element personnel from the 642nd Support Battalion, based in Rochester, N.Y.
- Search and Extraction Element Soldiers from B Company, 152nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, based at Lockport, N.Y.
- A medical triage element from the Airman of the 105th Airlift Wing, based in Newburgh, N.Y.
- A Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) comprised of Airmen of the 107th Attack Wing, based in Niagara Falls, N.Y. **gt**

# Guard Responds to Herkimer Flooding

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff



Airmen from the 174th Attack Wing chainsaw fallen trees to help with removal of debris from a blocked road in Herkimer County, N.Y. on Nov. 2, 2019. The Airmen were supporting Operation November Winds, the New York National Guard mission to provide support to citizens of Herkimer County. Photo by Staff Sgt. Duane Morgan, 174th Attack Wing.

HERKIMER, N.Y. -- The New York National Guard mobilized 210 Soldiers and Airmen in response to heavy rains and winds that damaged roads and flooded towns in Herkimer County, Halloween night in upstate New York's Mohawk Valley.

Winds of up to 60 miles per hour and heavy rain hit the watershed leading into the Mohawk River.

"We saw rain totals of 3.6 inches in Oneida County, 5.2 inches in Herkimer County, and then 5.6 inches in Hamilton County," explained New York State Emergency Operations Director Michael Kopy. "This created significant flooding in areas downstream, in Utica, in Rome, in Herkimer, in Dolgeville, and a number of other communities."

In Herkimer County one individual was killed when he drove his car into a flooded area, got out, and was swept away by the rising waters. A significant section of the village of Dolgeville was flooded and residents were evacuated from parts of the Town of Frankfort.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo directed National Guard leaders to send troops to help local governments cope.

"There's going to be a lot of debris to clean up afterwards, many of the homes are going to be uninhabitable. So the National Guard will help with that," the governor told reporters November 1.

Guard leaders mobilized debris clearance

teams from the 174th Attack Wing in Syracuse, N.Y. the 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, N.Y. and the 105th Airlift Wing in Newburg, N.Y. for the mission. The Army National Guard's 204th Engineer Battalion, headquartered in Binghamton, N.Y. deployed an engineer response team equipped with front end loaders, bulldozers and dump trucks.

The Soldiers and Airmen made a difference, and local residents appreciated it, said Major Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General.

"Speaking with our fellow citizens who suffered property loss and those whose homes were destroyed or declared condemned, they were all upbeat and appreciated the help and support of the National Guard," Shields said.

He met a farmer who lost a huge section of his pasture to flooding, with a barn barely standing, who still found time to thank the Guardsmen working in the area, Shields said.

"He and his family were providing sandwiches and coffee to our Soldiers working to build a berm between him and the creek," Shields said.

In Dolgeville, the scene of the heaviest flooding, the local Stewart's convenience store gave coffee and snacks to Soldiers for free, he said.

A 39-Soldier team from the 204th Engineer Battalion was tasked with cleaning up the debris left behind when the East Canada Creek flooded parts of Dolgeville.

The river breeched a berm that the Army

Corps of Engineers built to contain the stream in the 1930s, explained 1st Lt. Andrew Campany, the officer-in-charge on the project.

"From there it pretty much destroyed the foundations of 16 houses and went right through town, sweeping cars away," he said.

Along with punching a hole in the berm, the fast-moving water left rocks throughout the flooded area after the water receded, Campany said. The engineers brought in two bulldozers and other equipment to rebuild the embankment along East Canada Creeks and removed the debris left by the flooding.

Campany, a resident of nearby Holland Patent and the executive officer of the 204th Engineer Battalion's 827th Engineer Company, said he was happy to be able to help his neighbors out by leading the response.

Campany's worked in the Dolgeville area from Nov. 2 to Nov. 7.

Air Guard debris clearance teams from the 174th, 109th and 105th wings stayed on site longer, along with the members of the 204th Engineers.

The entire task force completed its recovery mission and reset for the balance of the week, November 8-9.

"Having toured the flood damaged areas every day since Saturday, it's amazing what our Soldiers and Airmen have accomplished," Shields said. **gt**

# NY Welcomes Brazilian 3-Star Operations Officer

Story by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff

NEW YORK -- Brazilian Lt. Gen. Achilles Furlan Neto, the operations officer for the Brazilian Army, spent the week of October 6-11 visiting New York National Guard senior leaders, Soldiers and Airmen and facilities in Latham, Scotia, Camp Smith and New York City.

Furlan was visiting New York as part of the partnership between the New York National Guard and the Brazilian military as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Furlan checked out Army National Guard aircraft and vehicles, and took part in briefings outlining the capabilities of New York's Civil Support Teams, Counterdrug Task Force and individual units to include the 501st Ordnance Battalion, the 204th Engineer Battalion, The 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery and the 369th Sustainment Brigade.

He capped his visit with a look at Joint Task Force Empire Shield's security operations in New York City.

"My experience this week in New York has been great, everyone has been kind and very generous to provide thorough briefings of their capabilities," Furlan said.

Everyone has been treating me like I am one of them but also provided a very organized professional trip that has met all my expectations," he added.

The general discussed future exchange opportunities which Brazil and the New York National Guard can participate.

"We have incredible opportunities ahead to work together with the Brazilian military to achieve a great partnership, we can capitalize our different capabilities in the future and continue to work together to make great changes and new developments," said Col. Robert Mitchell, director of operations for the New York National Guard.

The week-long event focused on disaster and emergency response; aviation operations, maintenance, and safety; military medical and engineer activities. There was also a meeting with brigade and battalion leaders at Camp Smith Training Site, in Cortlandt Manor, N.Y.

Furlan got the opportunity to examine equipment used by engineers, aviation and field artillery units parked on the parade field of



Lt. Gen. Achilles Furlan Neto, the Brazilian Army's Operations Officer shares a laugh with Soldiers while touring a display of equipment at the Camp Smith Training Site October 8, 2019. Below photo, Lt. Furlan greets Col. Isabel Smith, Chief of Staff for the 53rd Troop Command at Camp Smith, Photos by Sgt. Jonathan Pietrantoni, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

Camp Smith.

Lt. Col. Roberto Santamaria, a military attaché with the U.S. Embassy in Brazil who traveled with Furlan, said that he was impressed by what he saw.

"I have had the opportunity to travel all over the U.S. and this is my second time to New York to help assist with the Brazilian Partnership and I am really impressed with the New York National Guard," Santamaria said.

"It's really incredible, the different capabilities of the Guard and all the diverse entities that work so well together within the organization," he added.

In New York City Furlan met with New York National Guard leaders at the Lexington Avenue Armory to discuss civilian and military interactions and visited Soldiers and Airmen assigned to Joint Task Force Empire Shield at their duty locations.

In addition, Furlan made time to visit the memorials to the September 11, 2001 attacks at the World Trade Center and the Brooklyn Bridge.

"The lieutenant general had a great trip, ev-



everyone was incredibly professional and helpful, he is impressed by all the military members he has met, and the many great opportunities in the future for both New York and Brazil," Santamaria said.

Since initiating the partnership with Brazil, the New York National Guard has sent Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing, which specializes in Arctic and Antarctic flying, to meet with Brazilian aviators and is also sending a Soldier to the Brazilian Jungle Warfare Training School.

The Brazilian partnership is New York's second State Partnership. Since 2003 New York has had a partnership with the South African National Defence Force. **gt**



## Honors for 8<sup>th</sup> US President

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

KINDERHOOK, N.Y. — Air Force Major General Timothy LaBarge, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, marked the 237th birthday of President Martin Van Buren, the man who gave the term ‘OK’ to the English language, during a short ceremony in Kinderhook, N.Y. on Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019.

LaBarge, and New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, placed a wreath from President Donald Trump at Van Buren’s grave in the Kinderhook Cemetery to commemorate his birth.

A wreath from the sitting president is traditionally placed at the gravesites of former presidents on the anniversary of their birth. Placing the wreath at Van Buren’s grave in Kinderhook Cemetery is the responsibility of the New York National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters.

Van Buren, born in 1782, was the first President who was not born a British subject. He was born in Kinderhook and died in Kinderhook in 1862.

During his service as New York Governor and President, Van Buren was nicknamed “Old Kinderhook.” Reportedly Van Buren would put the initials “OK” for Old Kinderhook on papers that he had read and approved.

The placing of the White House wreath capped a ceremony which included remarks from local officials and the placing of many wreaths.

After two unsuccessful runs for president after his only term as president—once as the standard bearer for the anti-slavery Free Soil Party, he retired to his Lindenwald estate outside Kinderhook and died there at age 79, July 24, 1862. **gt**



Air Force Maj. Gen. Timothy LaBarge, commander of the New York Air National Guard and assistant adjutant general of New York, and New York State Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley render honors after presenting a wreath from President Donald Trump at the grave of President Martin Van Buren in Kinderhook, N.Y. on his 237th birthday, Dec. 5, 2019. The sitting president sends a wreath to be presented each year on the birthday of every previous president.



A Key Partner Panel is held during a mass fatality incident preparedness workshop where the panel members discuss resources they can offer during a mass fatality incident such as the Red Cross, victim specialists from the FBI and Health and Human Services at the New York National Guard headquarters, Latham, N.Y., Nov. 22, 2019.

## First Responders Discuss Mass Casualties

Story and photo by Ryan Campbell, *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y. – 100 emergency responders from across New York attended a workshop on dealing with mass fatality incidents hosted by the New York National Guard state headquarters here Nov. 22, 2019.

The training was coordinated by the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. Attendees came from the New York State Police, the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and local county emergency responders, among others. The day-long workshop focused on the latest issues and trends associated with mass fatality incidents.

“We’re talking about mass fatalities and how to plan for them,” said Mike Hartzel, the director of the Schoharie County Office of Emergency Services, and a retired New York Army National Guard sergeant major. “Especially in today’s environment, where we have incidents, like in Schoharie County, we had the limo accident that took 20 lives,” he said referring to a crash that occurred on October 6, 2018.

On that day, a stretch limousine carrying 18 people ran through an intersection at the base of a hill, hit two people in the parking lot of a general store north of the village of Schoharie and plunged into a ravine. All 20 people died and Hartzel and other first responders in the rural were coping with a mass casualty.

Since 2000, there have been more than 160 incidents in New York where there were 10 or more fatalities. Organizations such as the New York National Guard are always ready to help, and Hartzel explained that this requires people in positions who know what resources can be requested from what agency.

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services had a specialized tent called a Mass Fatality Portable Operations Center setup at the workshop as an example of a state resource that can be requested.

As a retired command sergeant major in the New York Army National Guard, Hartzel knows what he can request from the Guard and has come to learn what else can be provided through workshops such as this. In the end, it provides a big payoff he explained.

“It stops chaos,” Hartzel said. “We’re ready.” **gt**

## Final Checks Before Rainbow Farewell

Story by Capt Jean Marie Kratzer and Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division

Fort Drum, N.Y.— New York's 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" Division conducted a staff training exercise October 22-27, 2019 as part of its final preparations for deployment to the Middle East in the early spring of 2020.

The division headquarters and headquarters battalion will support Task Force Spartan, leading more than 9,000 troops to increase security and self-reliance throughout the region.

During the 2019 training, the division staff war-gamed situations that might arise while overseas.

This gave sections a chance to work together and learn, or re-learn, how to accomplish their individual missions, said Maj. Gary Barney, the training and exercise chief for the staff training exercise.

The staff training tests the ability of command post teams—senior officers and non-commissioned officers -- to communicate and work through issues to increase their proficiency in an environment similar to what they will experience overseas, Barney said.

Since 2017 the division headquarters has taken part in a division level command post exercise called Warfighters, two brigade-level command post exercises and two separate staff training exercise.

"What you're seeing with these events is people maturing in their positions. When we started back in first staff training exercise, we had people that were new to the division...and we've seen a steady increase in proficiency among Soldiers," Barney said.

A major objective of the exercise was to get division leadership and staff focused on issues not dealt with before during prior exercises and evaluations, Barney explained.

"Prior to beginning this staff



Staff Sgt. Denis Podoleanu, assigned to the 42nd Division, spray paints a humvee at Fort Drum, N.Y., Oct. 24, 2019. Soldiers were checking equipment and vehicles in preparation of their 2020 deployment. Photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division.

exercise, a lot of the focus of the division was on a Korea scenario," Barney said. "Our goal is not only to pivot from Korea, into what we're going to be doing while deployed, but also to integrate new personnel who have just come into the unit. And we want to establish battle rhythm into working groups and how we're going to operate overseas."

Soldiers not directly involved in the staff exercise conducted maintenance on division equipment stored at Fort Drum to prepare it for the upcoming deployment.

The division's mission to the Middle East will be to work with U.S. and other coalition forces in the U.S. Central Command region to help sustain troops conducting missions there.

A part of that mission is to help deter aggression against allies and partners, said Brig. Gen. Joseph Biehler, the 42nd Infantry Division's deputy commanding general.

The Soldiers assigned to the 42nd Infantry Division are ready for this mission, Biehler said.

"These Soldiers have been training their whole career for this, since basic training, as individuals to squad and platoon collective training," Biehler said.

"They are some of the best you can have in the Army. I think they're on par with the active Army."

No matter how well trained Soldiers are, their families will still worry about them, Biehler said.

But their training and their leaders will keep them as safe as possible, he emphasized.

"I believe we'll be safe, and your loved ones will be doing a great service for the country by being over there and serving a need

that is an enduring mission that's going on,"

Biehler said. **gt**



Sgt. Daraine Delevante helps Spc. Troy Bailey, both assigned to the Signal Company of the 42nd Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, get fitted for an M40 Protective Mask at Fort Drum, N.Y., Oct. 24, 2019. Photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division.



42nd Infantry Division Soldiers gather for a farewell ceremony January 11, 2020 at Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y. Photo by Sgt. Matthew Gunther, Joint Force Headquarters.

# Rainbow HQ Mobilized for Deployment

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff



Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division conduct a farewell ceremony held on January 11, 2020 at Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y. More than 1,500 Soldiers and family members turned out for the farewell, one of three held in the state. Photo by Sgt. Matthew Gunther, Joint Force Headquarters.

LATHAM, N.Y. — 650 Soldiers assigned to the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters said goodbye to their families Saturday, January 11 at three farewell ceremonies held in Rochester, the Albany suburb of Loudonville and on Staten Island.

Around 2,500 family members turned out to support their Soldiers at the farewell ceremonies, held at the College of Staten Island, Siena College in Loudonville and the Army Aviation Support Facility in Rochester.

The Soldiers will deploy to the U.S. Central Command area of operations in the spring.

Soldiers have been training for more than a year to prepare for the deployment.

The division, based in Troy, N.Y. and led by Maj. Gen. Steven Ferrari, will assume command over Task Force Spartan.

"You are now part of the unique history of the 42nd Infantry Division," Ferrari told the Soldiers at the Staten Island farewell event. "You are part of a legacy that has seen this division deploy four times in the past 102 years."

"The team we have assembled; I could not be more proud of," he added.

Brig. Gen. Michel Natali, the assistant adjutant general, Army, who deployed with the division to Iraq in 2005, sounded a similar theme at the farewell at Siena College.

"You will write the next chapter of Rainbow Division history," Natali told the 200 Soldiers and 1,200 family members who filled the

Alumni Recreation Center there.

In Rochester, New York Lt. Governor Kathleen Hochul praised the parents of those leaving for active duty.

"To the moms and dads who raised these individuals, who stepped out of the line of most Americans and are willing to put on the uniform and go into harm's way, it's because of the values that you taught them," Hochul said.

Task Force Spartan is a multi-component organization, made up of active Army and National Guard units, rounded out by U.S. Army Reserve support units. Units in the task force support Operation Spartan Shield with capabilities such as aviation, logistics, force protection and information management.

The task force will facilitate theater security activities such as key leader engagements, joint exercises, conferences and humanitarian assistance/disaster response planning.

The division's last mobilization as a full headquarters was in 2004-05, when the division led 23,000 Soldiers operating north of Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

At the event on Staten Island Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the adjutant general of New York told the 230 Soldiers in his audience that "your hard work preparing for this day is evident in the enthusiasm and professionalism."

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Timothy Schultz, who deployed to Iraq with the division in 2005,




42nd Division Soldiers load buses and give family farewells following their departure ceremony at the College of Staten Island January 11, 2020. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

attended the Siena farewell to say goodbye to his son Spc. Jordan Schultz.

Saying goodbye to his son at Staten Island was Col. Andrew Caliendo, who deployed in 2005 and is among about a dozen Iraq veterans deploying again.

"It is really bittersweet," he said. "I'm much older now and your perspective changes so much with family and kids."

U.S. Representative Max Rose, a New York National Guard combat veteran attended the Staten Island Event, while U.S. Representative Paul Tonko was at the Siena College farewell ceremony.

Following the ceremonies Soldiers boarded buses heading for Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. 

# 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Soldiers are Best in 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade

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

SYRACUSE, N.Y.— After three days of intense challenges, two Soldiers from New York City won the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team’s Best Warrior Competition.

Spc. Troy Perez, an infantryman assigned to Alpha Company, 1-69th and Staff Sgt. Matthew Ortiz, an infantryman assigned to Headquarters Company 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment won the titles of Soldier and NCO of the year, respectively.

Ortiz and Perez were two of the many Soldiers sent from units across New York State to compete at the Brigade level.

For three days, they were tested on their proficiency with weapons, ability to complete grueling physical challenges, skills in land navigation, and knowledge of military regulations.

Preparing for the competition took months. “You have to be mentally and physi-

cally ready,” said Perez. “You’ve got to put the work in. There’s a lot of running and there’s a lot of memorization.”

For Perez, a member of the New York City Fire Department, competition is part of his personal drive.

“I feel blessed,” said Perez. “I know a lot of people that are in the military and don’t know what they want to do in life, but I wake up every morning feeling blessed for every day.”

New to this year’s competition was a change of location.

“We have always held it at Fort Drum and this year I wanted to change it up and try a different venue,” said Sgt. Maj. Richard Richardson, the 27th IBCT operations noncommissioned officer in charge.

The majority of the tests were held at or near the Brigade’s Syracuse headquarters, with a land navigation course at Green Lakes State Park in Fayetteville, and only the marksmanship portion of the competi-



Soldiers assigned to the New York Army National Guard’s 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team complete a four mile run during the 27th IBCT Best Warrior Competition in Syracuse, N.Y. on Oct. 26, 2019.

tion at Fort Drum.

This was the first year Richardson took over responsibility for organizing the event. It took nearly five months to plan, and he’s already got his sights set on 2020.

“Next year, I plan to make it a little bit harder,” he said.

In the meantime, Ortiz and Perez are preparing to compete at the state level, and they’re not alone. In a change from prior years, New York Army National Guard leadership have asked for two NCOs and two Soldiers from the brigade to compete. Joining the winners will be Soldier runner-up Pv2. Alejandro Sanchez, an infantryman assigned to Charlie Company, 1-69th, and NCO runner-up Cpl. Paul Philbeck, an

infantryman assigned to Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment.

Ortiz, Perez, Philbeck, and Sanchez will compete at the New York Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition in the spring of 2020 for a shot at advancing to the regional and national Best Warrior Competitions. In the 2019 Army National Guard competition 27th Brigade Soldiers who placed third and runner-up for the Soldier and NCO categories, respectively. **gt**



Left, Cpl. Paul Philbeck, a team leader assigned to Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, carries two water jugs during the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Best Warrior Competition in Syracuse, N.Y. on Oct. 26, 2019.



Right, Sgt. Nicole Scibelli, a cannon crewmember assigned to the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery, completes a four mile run during the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Best Warrior Competition in Syracuse, N.Y. on Oct. 26, 2019.

# Guard Leaders Learn from History for Deployment

Story and photo by Sgt. Trevor Cullen, 42nd Infantry Division

GERMANTOWN, N.Y.— Thirty New York Army National Guard leaders learned about the demise of the Ottoman Empire—which ruled the Middle East from 1299 to 1919—to prepare themselves for a deployment to the region in 2020 during a professional development session on Dec. 13.

The officers and senior noncommissioned officers of the 42nd Infantry Division's headquarters heard from Dr. Sean McMeekin, a professor at Bard College in Annadale-on-Hudson, N.Y.

McMeekin is the author of the book "The Ottoman Endgame: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Modern Middle East."

The Ottoman Empire once controlled the region which now includes the counties of the Arabian Peninsula, Jordan, Syria, Israel and Iraq. The breakup of that empire following World War I shaped the Middle East today, McMeekin explained.

"It is important to know the history of the region," said McMeekin. "Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it."

The division staff members and leaders attended the lecture to learn more about the history of the Middle East and its impact on the current political and military environment.

The division headquarters will mobilize in January 2020 to deploy to Kuwait and other locations throughout the region. The deployment is expected to last ten months.

The program was developed through the efforts of New York Army National Guard Maj. John McBride, a staff officer preparing for mobilization in January with the headquarters.

McBride had read McMeekin's book and was impressed. He found out that the professor taught at Bard, just under 60 miles away from the 42nd Infantry Division's headquarters in Troy.

So he reached out to McMeekin to ask if he would be willing to speak to division staff, McBride said.

"One of the main themes of the book is how shifts in allegiance have had long lasting impacts in the region," McBride explained.

"These themes have resurfaced in the present day. As Russia tries to replace the U.S. as a patron of Turkey, other regional actors have had to adapt to the changing dynamics. The lasting impacts of these changes will begin to emerge during our deployment, with many of these changes having roots in the treaties that ended World War I," McBride added.

McMeekin is also the author of "July 1914: Countdown to War, The Russian Origins of the First World War", which won the Norman B. Tomlinson Jr. Book Prize and was nominated for the Lionel Gelber Prize; and "The Berlin to Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power, 1898–1918", which won the Barbara Jelavich Book Prize.

To accommodate McMeekin's schedule, the event was held at Germantown's Central House Hotel, instead of at the division headquarters building.



Officers and senior noncommissioned officers assigned to the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division gather on the porch of the Central House Hotel in Germantown, N.Y. following the professional development lecture on Middle Eastern history by Bard College Professor Dr. Sean McMeekin, center, on Dec. 13, 2019.

Martin Lueck, who runs the hotel with his partner Rachel Levine, said he was happy to host the event.

"The hotel is a community asset," said Levine. "It serves as a connection to people."


"The information we received today is just the tip of the iceberg," said Col. Sean Flynn, the 42nd Infantry Division's Chief of Staff. "It informs us how much more study is needed."

This studying will be carried out by the officers of the division staff, who assist the Chief of Staff in planning and carrying out the division's mission in the Middle East, Flynn said.

"I couldn't be more confident in our staff," said Flynn. "The staff are experts in their fields and experts in the Middle East."

Lt. Col. Gurpreet Singh, the commander of the 42nd Infantry Division's headquarters battalion said it was important to learn about what happened in the region's past as the division headquarters prepares to deploy.

"Just like I tell my kids," Singh said. "It's about not making the same mistake twice."

The 42nd Infantry Division headquarters last deployed in 2004-2005. The division served as the headquarters for the 23,000 Soldiers of Task Force Liberty, consisting of two active Army brigades, two National Guard brigades, and supporting elements north of Baghdad in 2005. 

**"It is important to know the history of the region. Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it."**

-- Dr. Sean McMeekin, Bard College Professor and author of "The Ottoman Endgame: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Modern Middle East"

# Soldiers Train for New Combat Fitness Test

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Warren Wright, 10th Mountain Mobile Command Post Operational Detachment



Above, Soldiers assigned to the 10th Mountain Division (LI) Main Command Post-Operational Detachment conduct a straight-leg deadlift exercise during an Army Combat Fitness Test training event in Syracuse, N.Y. November 17, 2019. Soldiers spent the day learning various exercise techniques, which can be done at home to help them prepare to take and pass the Army's new fitness test. Below, Army ROTC Cadet Felicia Showers, left, and Staff Sgt. Jeffery Barker, center, demonstrate how to properly perform a supine chest press.

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- For active duty Soldiers, the day begins before sunrise; donning Army Physical Fitness Uniforms and heading out for PT.

Daily physical fitness training is one of the essential tasks of a Soldier's day.

For National Guard Soldiers, maintaining the Army's demanding physical fitness standards means finding creative ways to exercise at home and on their own time, far away from the influences and guidance of unit leadership.

Now, with the new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) replacing the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) in October 2020, Soldiers will need to do more than simply work on their pushups, sit-ups and run to pass the new test, according to Sgt. 1st Class Travis C. Muhl-nickel, a master fitness trainer with the 10th Mountain Division Main Command Post – Operational Detachment (MCP-OD).

Based in Syracuse, the MCP-OD is designed to augment the 10th Mountain Division's command post during combat deployments.

"The ACFT is a solid, holistic test," Muhl-nickel said. "It's more comprehensive than the APFT, so if Soldiers train for the ACFT it's going to benefit them in all areas of their physical levels."

Instead of testing in three areas like the APFT – pushups, sit-ups, and a two-mile run – the new ACFT will push Soldiers by using six events to test everything from muscular strength, explosive power, balance, muscular endurance, agility and aerobic endurance, he noted.

Muhl-nickel said preparing Soldiers for the ACFT will require a multitude of physical fitness activities to target muscle groups tested in the new comprehensive test. This could be difficult for Soldiers without a proper understanding on how to approach their fitness training at home, he added.

"I think the only reason it's more difficult is because (reserve component Soldiers) have less structured lifestyles," he said.

"However, the resources are just as available. From where most people live, they're usually within driving distance of a gym. But if not, we want to make sure they understand there are a lot of exercises that can be done without any equipment. If you have some self-motivation, it can be done," he emphasized.

During one of the MCP-OD's drills in late 2019, Muhl-nickel spent a day showing Soldiers how they can better prepare for the ACFT.



"The emphasis was arming them with exercises that can be done with or without a gym and with minimal equipment," Muhl-nickel said.

Muhl-nickel's team demonstrated how to conduct exercises to build endurance.

"As Soldiers, part of our job is to be physically fit, whether we're Guard or active component. (Training) like this is vital," said Lt. Col. Brian Bonanno, the MCP-OD's commander.

Ultimately, it's up to the Soldiers to take responsibility for their physical fitness, Bonanno said. "Don't wish for it, work for it. You're not going to show up and just pass this test." **gt**

# NY Names New Army Guard Medical Advisor

## Afghan Veteran is New York's newest State Surgeon

Story by Ryan Campbell, *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y., — Army National Guard Lt. Col. William LeCates, a Cooperstown, N.Y. resident and president of Bassett Medical Center, a 180-bed teaching hospital in Cooperstown, has been selected as the New York Army National Guard's top medical advisor.

LeCates serves as the New York Army National Guard state surgeon.

As New York Army National Guard state surgeon, LeCates is the senior medical advisor to Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the adjutant general of New York.

He oversees Army National Guard medical practitioners and the medical readiness of National Guard Soldiers and ensure that Department of Defense, New York state and national medical standards are adhered to.

LeCates is a veteran of the war in Afghanistan having deployed there twice and deployed to Liberia in 2015 to help combat tropical and infectious diseases, which included an outbreak of the Ebola virus.

He has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, the NATO Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal and the Flight Surgeon Badge.

He replaces the outgoing state surgeon, Col. Mathew Liepke January 1, 2020. With the new position, LeCates will be promoted to the rank of colonel.

"I'm looking forward to working with Soldiers across the state," said LeCates. "It gives me a chance to

get to know areas of the New York Army National Guard that I haven't gotten to know well. I see their great



**Lt. Col. William LeCates, New York Army National Guard State Surgeon, stands with Capt. Joseph Kowo, deputy commander of the Armed Forces of Liberia Medical Command, during his 2015 deployment to Liberia as part of Operation Onward Liberty, a mission conducted by the Michigan Army National Guard. Courtesy photo.**

work and now I can finally meet the people who are doing it."

LeCates is a nephrologist, a specialist in kidney diseases and hypertension, who studied at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine for ten years, which included a residency and fellowship.

He is also a graduate of Amherst College and worked as an assistant economist for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York before studying medicine. After graduating, he returned to Cooperstown as a practicing doctor, specializing in internal medicine with a focus on kidney disease.

He joined the New York National Guard in 2009. It was something he'd always wanted to do, LeCates explained.

"Joining the Guard allowed my wife and children to have a home here and me the opportunity of military service without asking

them to move around the country," said LeCates. "It's something the Guard that is more difficult to find active duty sign-

as MEDCOM, is responsible for overseeing the health and wellness of the New York Army National Guard MEDCOM personnel conduct regular medical readiness checks of New York Army National Guard Soldiers to ensure they are ready for deployment and tracks health issues that impact the force.

LeCates will do all this while still serving as president of Bassett Medical Center. He has been associated with the medical center since 2003 and also served as medical director and vice president of medical affairs.

"Bassett Medical Center has been really, really good to me in terms of supporting military service," said LeCates. "They support others that serve, we have a doctor that's deployed with the Navy right now. It's nice for our community to know that this organization supports people that are willing to take on military service."

His commitments to his civilian employer and the New York Army National Guard, compliment and benefit each other, LeCates explained.

"I found that the military training has been a great help to me in my civilian work," said LeCates. "Also, my civilian leadership work here at Bassett in working on health policy and health administration, it's been a big help to me in my military work."

The goal LeCates explained, will be doing the best work he can to support all of the medical professionals of the New York Army National Guard, and working to ensure medical readiness across the state for all of New York's Guardsmen. **GT**

# Medics Train Lifesaving Skills with Medevac Aircraft

Story and photos by Sgt. Matthew Gunther, Joint Force Headquarters

QUEENSBURY, N.Y.— Thirty Soldiers of the 466th Area Medical Company, with support from C Company, 171st General Support Aviation Battalion, conducted medical evacuation training as part of the medical unit’s preparation for deployment at Floyd Bennet Memorial Airport in Queensbury, New York, October 20, 2019.

The training consisted of loading patients on stretchers on and off UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, using portable radio equipment including an OE-254 antenna to request a nine-line medevac request, and familiarization training with the aircraft.

The 466th Area Medical Company will deploy to Iraq in 2020, and this training was intended to prepare them for operations in theater, said Major Jason Cossey, the company commander.

The company has more than three dozen combat medic specialists, commonly referred to by Soldiers by their military occupational specialty code, as a “68 Whiskey.” These medics provide emergency medical treatment, limited primary care, and health protection and evacuation from a Soldier’s point of injury or illness to care at a treatment facility.

“Our goal is to incorporate 68 Whiskey sustainment training with practice loading and unloading patients in a real-world environment, in preparation for our pending deployment,” Cossey said.

The training is obvious, stressed Sgt. Felix Cruz, a medical team leader. Army medicine relies heavily

significance of the

on rapid medical evacuation from the battlefield to treatment facilities. Nearly two decades of combat experience overseas has validated the life-saving efforts of rapid medical evacuation.

“Medics and aviation go hand in hand,” Cruz said. “For many of these Soldiers, this is their first time touching a Black Hawk, and they are gearing up for their first deployment. So this training will be invaluable for them moving forward,

and if we make it fun, hopefully it will ignite a fire in them to work hard and

learn more.”

Another crucial part of the training is building unit cohesion, said Pvt. Paige Dixon, attending only her second drill with the unit this weekend.

“Doing this with the people we are deploying with is extremely important,” Dixon said. “Building teamwork skills and a work flow will be valuable downrange.” **gt**



Soldiers of 466th Area Support Medical Company conduct medical evacuation training with medevac aircrews of C Company, 1st Battalion, 171st General Support Aviation at Floyd Bennet Memorial Airport in Queensbury, N.Y., October 20, 2019. The training prepares the medics of the 466th for mobilization and deployment overseas in 2020.



Above, Soldiers of 466th Area Support Medical Company move a simulated casualty to a medical evacuation helicopter during training with aircrews of C Company, 1st Battalion, 171st General Support Aviation in Queensbury, N.Y., October 20, 2019. At right, Soldiers prepare an antenna for air to ground communications. The 466th Medical Company expects to mobilize and deploy overseas in the spring of 2020.







# 42<sup>nd</sup> Division Blooded in Battle 75 Years Ago

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

TROY, N.Y. – In the early days of 1945 the infantrymen of the 42nd Infantry Division, spent their days in desperate combat against German tanks and paratroopers.

Operation Nordwind, sometimes called “the other Battle of the Bulge” kicked off on New Year’s Eve 1944 in the Alsace region of France. American and French soldiers fought desperately to halt the attack.

Three regiments of 42nd Infantry Division Soldiers, which had been hurried to France without the rest of the divisional had arrived just before Christmas and were thrown into the fight.

With a desperate need for infantry troops in Europe the Soldiers of the 42nd’s 222nd, 232nd, and 242nd Infantry Regiments had been pulled out of training and shipped to southern France.

The three regiments were named Task Force Linden, because they were commanded by the division’s deputy commander Brig. Gen. Henning Linden.

The attack came as a shock to the newly arrived infantrymen, explained Capt. William Corson in a letter to a 42nd Division reunion in 1995.

German paratroops and panzer forces with tanks and self-propelled guns crossed the Rhine River 12 miles north of Strasbourg and clashed with the thinly stretched Rainbow Division infantry at Gamsheim on January 5.

For the next three weeks, the three regiments defended, retreated, counterattacked and finally stopped the Germans.

The fighting was so desperate that the 42nd Division even threw individual rifle companies into the fight whenever they became available.

“Officers knew little more than the GI,” Corson said. “One morning my company moved to a barren, frozen hillside with orders to dig defensive positions covering an area about three times larger than we were capable of adequately defending. After four hours of chipping away at the frozen ground, we were told that this position would not be defended, so we moved to another frozen spot about ten miles away and started digging again.”

At Gamsheim the odds were too great for the American infantry. The majority of its de-



U.S. Army Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division’s Task Force Linden prepare a defensive position at their log and dirt bunker near Kauffenheim, France, January 8, 1945. The Soldiers, assigned to Company I, 242nd Regiment, held off the German offensive in Alsace, France called Operation Nordwind. Courtesy photo.

fenders from the 232nd Infantry Regiment were captured or killed.

A January 5-7 counterattack failed.

Dan Bearse, a rifleman with the 242nd Infantry in the counterattack, recounted the events.

“They had tanks and heavy artillery, endless infantry troops,” Bearse recalled. “We were outnumbered two or three to one. So we were quickly repulsed.”

At Hatten, on January 10, 1945 the 242nd Infantry Regiment and a battalion from the 79th Division tried to stop the German tanks and paratroopers again. The defenders were overrun.

But one Soldier from the 242nd Infantry, Master Sgt. Vito Bertoldo decided to stay. Bertoldo volunteered to hold off the Germans while other Soldiers retreated.

Bertoldo drove back repeated German attacks for 48 hours.

Moving among buildings in Hatten to fire a machine gun he defeated the German attacks and killed 40 of the enemy.

For his actions, Bertoldo was awarded the

Medal of Honor.

“All I did was try to protect some other American Soldiers from being killed,” Bertoldo would tell newspapers back home after the war.

The 1st Battalion, 242nd Infantry paid a heavy price for its defense of Hatten. At the beginning of the battle there were 33 officers and 748 enlisted men. Three days later there were 11 officers and 253 enlisted men reporting for duty.

The Germans launched their final assault on January 24.

They attacked straight into the 222nd Infantry Regiment.

The back and forth fighting continued through the rest of the night as the 222nd fought to contain the German breakthrough towards Haguenau. The regiment earned a Presidential Unit Citation for its actions.

By mid-February the rest of the 42nd Infantry Division arrived in France and the infantry regiments were rebuilt. The division then went on the attack against German units that had been ground down in the Nordwind attack. 🇺🇸



An LC-130 "Skibird" assigned to the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing between missions at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, the National Science Foundation research center in Antarctica on Dec. 2, 2018. The 109th Airlift Wing flies the largest ski-equipped aircraft in the world which can land on snow and ice. Courtesy photo.

## Skibirds Return to the South Pole Summer Season

*Story by Master Sgt. Jaclyn Lyons, 109th Airlift Wing*

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA, N.Y. — The New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing launched its 32nd year of support to U.S. Antarctic Program research October 28, 2019 when the first of five LC-130 "Skibird" aircraft departed on the weeklong trip to the National Science Foundation's McMurdo Station.

The 109th Airlift Wing flies the largest ski-equipped aircraft in the world, which are capable of landing on ice or snow and transport people, equipment and supplies to stations across the continent. The National Science Foundation manages the Antarctic Program.

The 109th Airlift Wing provides support to the program as part of Operation Deep Freeze. The military's Joint Task Force-Support Forces Antarctica employs sealift and airlift to deliver supplies and personnel to Antarctica.

During the 2019-2020 support season, which runs through February 2020 for the 109th Airlift Wing, about 500 Airmen are expected

to deploy, approximately 120 of them will be deployed "on the ice" at any one time. The wing anticipates conducting 160 missions, included logistical support for ongoing research in West Antarctica. Scientists are studying ice loss in glaciers in that section of the continent.

"The 2019-2020 Operation Deep Freeze season marks the 60th anniversary of the Antarctic treaty and the 32nd year that the 109th has supported this mission," said Col. Michele Kilgore, 109th Airlift Wing commander. "Operating in extreme weather is no easy task. Our 109th Airlift Wing Airmen are experts and continually rise to complete the mission in the most efficient and safest way."

During the 2018-2019 season, 109th Airmen completed 242 missions within Antarctica.

The 109th Airlift Wing transported 2,100 researchers and support staff plus about 2.8 million pounds of cargo and 1.8 million pounds of fuel to research stations across the continent.

During the 2018-2019 support season,

scientists launched the International Thwaites Glacier Collaboration in West Antarctica. This is a project to research one of the most unstable glaciers in Antarctica.

Supporting this project required a significant logistics effort by the Airmen of the 109th.

The unique capabilities of the ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft make it the only one of its kind in the U.S. military able to land on snow and ice. The wing provides airlift within Antarctica, flying to various remote locations from McMurdo Station.

Crews will transport scientists, support, fuel, supplies, medical supplies and more throughout the season. Maintenance personnel will also endure harsh conditions while working outside with limited facilities to keep the aircraft ready.

The 109th Airlift Wing has been supporting South Pole research since 1988. Since 1999, the unit has been the sole provider of this type of airlift to National Science Foundation Arctic and Antarctic research efforts. 

# Air Guard Firefighters Travel to South Africa for Training

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Al Phillips, Joint Force Headquarters

CAPE TOWN, South Africa -- Eleven New York Air National Guard firefighters spent two weeks learning how to battle brush fires with 60 South African firefighters from Western Cape Province during a training program run by South African National Parks at Table Mountain National Park here.

The Americans, members of the 109th Airlift Wing, which is based at Stratton Air National Guard Base outside Schenectady, New York, were there as part of a training exchange as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

New York has had a partnership with the South African National Defence Forces since 2003.

It's the second time this year that New York Air National Guard firefighters have visited South Africa to train with South African fire teams.

In May, 2019, Airmen from the 106th Rescue Wing trained with South African National Parks firefighting crews.

The New York Guardsmen learned a lot of lessons from their South African counterparts, said Senior Master Sgt. Lloyd Hale.

"Working with our Table Mountain Fire Department counterparts was highly beneficial," Hale said. "It was a great chance to learn and share best practices, techniques and training methods," he added.

South African fire fighters from Working on Fire, a South African national firefighting organization; Nature Conservation Corporation Environmental Services; and the Cape Peninsula Fire Protection Association, took part in the training.

The training focused on understanding the Incident Command System (ICS) and its standardized

approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response.

In addition, significant time was spent discussing how best to predict, prevent and assist with wildfires and how to best improve the knowledge base for the implementation of integrated fire management and coordination strategies.

The training culminated in an exercise showcasing shared capabilities that included how to lay out the hose when fighting a fire, aerial water assaults and drills to clear and beat out fire+s.

"It was a great experience to be part of an international partnership and to be able to learn from other firefighters as well as show them what we are capable of," said Staff Sgt. Jodi Ruther.

Ruther said she was also pleased to see South African women participating in the firefighting training.

"Hopefully, encouraging more women to join firefighting will show that we are just as capable as the men in the world of wildland fire fighting," she added.

The New Yorkers learned new wildland firefighting techniques from the South Africans, said Tech Sgt. Christopher Meyer.

South Africa has experienced a number of ferocious fire seasons since 2017.

According to the Western Cape Umbrella Fire Association, over 320,000 acres have been destroyed by fires and thousands of people have been displaced.

Previous years have also produced very little rainfall, culminating in severe droughts—making a local plant called the fynbos more vulnerable to catching fire.

Sending New York firefighters



Firefighters from the 109th Airlift Wing, which is based at Stratton Air National Guard Base near Schenectady, N.Y. training at Table Mountain National Park in Cape Town, South Africa, on Nov. 20, 2019. The New York National Guard sent 11 firefighters from the 109th to South Africa as part of the State Partnership Program between the New York National Guard and the South African National Defence Force.

to the South African training course helps pave the way for that support.

"It's invaluable that the South African and New York Air National Guard firefighters could come together to share ideas and information, while working side by side to learn new techniques and practices to achieve the same goals of protecting life, property and the environment," said Senior Airman Christopher Clemente. **gt**



Eleven Firefighters from the 109th Airlift Wing train at Table Mountain National Park in Cape Town, South Africa, Nov. 20, 2019. The training is part of the State Partnership Program between New York and South Africa.

# 139<sup>th</sup> Aeromed Airmen Home from Deployment

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA, N.Y. - Twenty-four members of the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron returned from a five month deployment in October 2019 during which they helped transport 1,300 service members from war zones in the Middle East and Afghanistan to treatment facilities in the United States.

The 139th, a part of the 109th Airlift Wing based in Scotia, N.Y. deployed teams to Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington, D.C., Ramstein Air Base in Germany, Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, and Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.

The Airmen deployed in May, 2019.

The deployed Airmen included flight nurses and medics, and medical administration and medical logistics personnel.

The 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron's mission is to monitor patients being transported

for more advanced medical care aboard modified C-130s.

The Airmen returned to Albany International Airport October 14-16, 2019.

Service members with critical injuries from blasts and burns were airlifted directly to Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany.

Major Tammy Ostrowski, the senior flight nurse for the deployment, praised all of the Airmen for the work they did.

Approximately 90 percent of the Air Force's aeromedical evacuation personnel are in the Air Guard and Air Force Reserve and they usually are deployed for four to six months every other year, Ostrowski said.

Ostrowski singled out 139th Staff Sergeant Bianca Bustamante for her outstanding work as a ground controller for evacuation flights during the deployment.

"She did all of our mission planning. She coordinated all of our transportation for crews, prepared all the paperwork and planning



Five 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron members get a warm welcome home from anxiously waiting family and friends at Albany International Airport in Latham, N.Y. on October 16, 2019 after a five months deployment to locations in Germany and Qatar.

to launch every mission as well as recovering crews upon their return to base,' Ostrowski said.

Bustamante, who was on her

first deployment, said it was gratifying to get a chance to do what she had trained for. **gt**

## Airmen Cheer Buffalo Bills During 2019 Salute to Service



ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. -- Airman 1st Class Ashley Malave assigned to the 107th Comptroller Flight, 107th Attack Wing, New York Air National Guard, Niagara Falls, N.Y., holds part of the American flag at New Era Field during the NFL's annual Salute to Service event before the Buffalo Bills and Denver Broncos game, Orchard Park, N.Y., Nov. 24, 2019. Service members from all branches of the military were honored prior to kick off. The Bills defeated the Broncos 20-3 on their way to a 10-7 record and a playoff Wild Card game January 4, 2020. Photo by Master Sgt. Brandy Fowler, 107th Attack Wing.



A finished ski crate constructed by Airmen of the 109th Airlift Wing and designed to carry the one-of-a-kind skis that enable the Airmen of the wing to land on ice and snow, ready to be shipped to Antarctica at the Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, N.Y. in December, 2019.

# Airmen Help Pack, Crate & Ship Their LC-130 Skis

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jamie Spaulding, 109th Airlift Wing

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA, N.Y. — A good set of skis are expensive. So it's always a good idea to protect them when they're being shipped.

It's an even better idea to protect them when the skis being shipped are 25 feet long, weigh 3,000 pounds and are used to land 75,800 pound LC-130 airplanes on ice and snow.

But the shipping containers that the 109th Airlift Wing use to move the massive skis were falling apart and no longer serviceable.

That's when members of the wing's 109th Logistic Readiness Squadron got involved to design and build a new solution for shipping the massive skis that the LC-130s land on.

The 109th's LC-130 cargo planes are the only heavy airlift aircraft in the world with the ability to take off from, and land on ice and snow.

This means, like any other part on an airplane, the skis need maintenance and in some cases need to be transported to proper facilities with the capability to accomplish repairs.

"The solution was around two years in the making," said Maj. James Vendetti, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) Commander.

"Essentially, the way by which we previ-

ously transported the skis just wasn't an option anymore because the shipping containers we inherited had deteriorated to the point that they were unserviceable," Vendetti said.

To solve this problem, Airmen identified the need for new and updated shipping containers and went to work designing and planning the fabrication of the new crates.

"The team was assembled with people of LRS who simply had the skills and the desire to assist," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Pingitore, the materiel management flight chief.

"It was truly a team effort by the 109th; involving several organizations on this base as well as leadership backing and support to find the funding for the project," he said.

The crates themselves were constructed using wood based on the specifications for the originals. During the process it was discovered that several improvements could be made to the design.

The Airmen incorporated a better mechanism for opening and closing the crates. They also built in rubber cushioning that would prevent the skis from moving in transit. Finally, they included dunnage—wood pieces—which

keeps the container off the ground when stored.

"The key part was just to simply bring the right people with the right skills into the mission," said Tech. Sgt. Andrew Smith, a vehicle operator with the squadron.

"A need was identified and we in the squadron simply had the means and desire to contribute to the solution and make sure the project as well as the mission got done. There wasn't much more to it than that," Smith said.

The team took six to eight weeks to fabricate the five crates. They made three large crates for the main landing skis and two smaller ones for the skis at the aircraft's nose.

"This project will also assist in further development of the supply chain for the skis and big Air Force will now be able to move them in the transportation system safely and efficiently," Pingitore explained.

The unique mission for polar flying means the Airmen frequently face challenges that other wings don't deal with. That means they have to come up with solutions that only 109th Airlift Wing members have the background to figure out, the logistics squadron members said.

"Since we began flying to the Arctic and Antarctic, it's been tradition for us to solve our own problems simply because no one else in the Guard or the Air Force knows how we do what we do or what we need to do it," Vendetti said. **gt**

*"Since we began flying to the Arctic and Antarctic, it's been tradition for us to solve our own problems simply because no one else in the Guard or the Air Force knows how we do what we do,"*

*-- Maj. James Vendetti, Commander, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron*

# New York Guard



## Guard Helps Provide Holiday Meals

NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. --New York Guard Spc. Samantha Blazer of the 21st Detachment, photo above, based in Rochester, N.Y., picks up bags filled with turkeys for distribution at the Niagara Falls Housing Authority November 24, 2019. Blazer was among more than 50 New York Guard and New York National Guard Soldiers to support Operation Turkey Drop in Western New York and New York City. Photo by Sgt. Michael Rehbaum, New York Guard. Below, members of the 88th Area Command distribute turkeys at the Jacob Javits Center in Manhattan. Photo by Capt. Mark Getman, New York Guard.



## Snow Clean-up in Capital District

ROTTERDAM, N.Y. -- Volunteers from the New York Guard participated in snow removal efforts to clear fire hydrants in Rotterdam, N.Y. Dec. 1, 2019. Following a storm that dumped two feet of snow on some parts of New York's Capital Region Dec. 1 and 2, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo ordered the deployment of up to 300 members of the National Guard, including 20 members from the New York Guard. Photo by Spc. Vinny Herring, New York Guard.



## NYC Troops Train for Communications

NEW YORK – Members of the New York Guard's 88th Area Command conduct basic communications qualification training at the Whitestone Armory in Queens, November 17, 2019. New York Guard members conducted hands-on training operating as a radio net control station and passing radio traffic. The New York Guard operates the state's Military Emergency Radio Network and supports the National Guard's Mobile Emergency Response Center communications trailers that provide long distance high frequency (HF) and short range very high frequency (VHF) voice and digital communications. The training prepares the 88th Area Command for a statewide communications exercise later in 2020. Photo by Officer Candidate Zach Perkins, New York Guard.

# New York Naval Militia

## New Naval Militia Skipper

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

LATHAM, N.Y. — New York Naval Militia Rear Admiral Warren Smith, a Rhinebeck, N.Y. resident, relieved Rear Admiral Timothy Zakriski as commander of the 2,700-member force during a change of command ceremony on Friday, October, 18, at the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters in Latham, N.Y.

The New York Naval Militia is comprised mainly of members of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Reserve who also volunteer to serve on New York state missions when called.

The Naval Militia also operates a fleet of patrol boats on New York's waterways that can respond to civil authorities when necessary.

Smith took over the command in a traditional naval ceremony that included bosun pipe calls, the ringing of bells, and remarks by the incoming and outgoing commanders as well as Major General Ray Shields, the Adjutant General of New York.

In his remarks, Smith thanked New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Shields, for having the faith in his abilities to entrust him with command of the Naval Militia.

"It would be hard to overstate the honor and sense of responsibility that come with appointment as commander of the New York Naval Militia," Smith said.

The Naval Militia has become an integral part of the New York Military Forces response to emergencies, working side-by-side with members of the New York Army and Air National Guard, Smith said.

With over 7,000 miles of waterfront and coastline, New York is a maritime state and it makes sense to have a force like the Naval Militia, Smith emphasized.

In his remarks, Shields noted that members of the Naval Militia have "become an indispensable force for our nation and the citizens of our state in times of crisis."

Smith has "had a long and tremendously successful career serving our state and nation and I look forward to working with him," Shields said.

The New York Naval Militia traces its history back to 1889 before there was a Navy Reserve. Naval Militia members served as a naval National Guard and saw service in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II and Korea.

Naval Militia members responded to Superstorm Sandy in 2012, the Buffalo snowstorm in 2014, Lake Ontario flooding in 2017 & 2019 and snow storms in the Hudson Valley in 2018.

The Naval Militia also operates a fleet of ten patrol boats which respond to state emergencies, augmenting law enforcement agencies and supporting the U.S. Coast Guard.

Zakriski, who retires after 39 years of serving in the Marine Corps and Navy Reserve and the Naval Militia, was awarded the New York State Conspicuous Service Medal in recognition of his service.

Smith, a retired Navy Reserve officer, was promoted to rear admiral, a one-star rank, in the New York Naval Militia on Sept. 9, 2019.

Smith, an architect and a principal of his own firm, Warrant Temple Smith Architects, LLC, formerly served as the deputy commander of the Naval Militia.

Smith was commissioned in the Navy in March 1981 and served on ac-



Photo above, Rear Admiral Warren Smith, the incoming commander of the New York Naval Militia salutes as he prepares to take command of the 2,700-member force during a change of command ceremony held at Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters in Latham, N.Y., October 18, 2019. Below, Smith, (left) salutes Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General of New York, during the ceremony. Photos by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, *Guard Times Staff*.

tive duty until July 1985. He served on board the USS Towers, a destroyer, and the USS Yorktown, a guided missile cruiser.

As a Naval Reserve officer, Smith took on a variety of assignments to include joint public affairs operations officer for the United States Atlantic Command and a Joint Staff Planner for Area Air Defense Commander Atlantic.

Smith, who is a surface warfare officer, joined the New York Naval Militia in 2004 and retired from the Navy Reserve in 2007.

As a member of the New York Naval Militia he also served as commander for the Naval Militia Northern Command. **9**



