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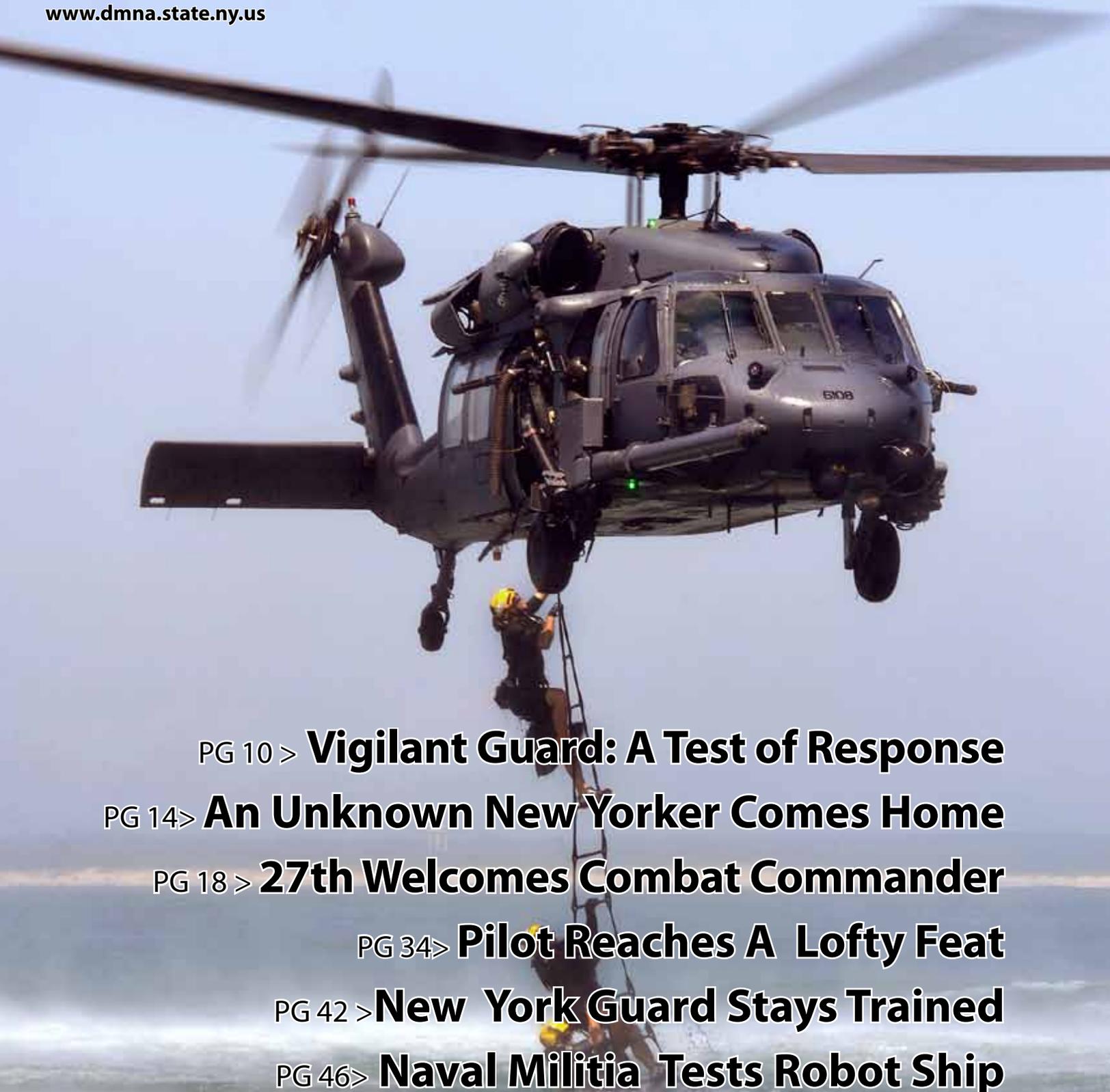
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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Vigilant Guard Validates Joint Vision for New York

When I took this job, my vision of the New York Military Forces was to develop forces that could work together to prepare for and conduct state missions, while also being ready to deploy worldwide in defense of the United States.

The Vigilant Guard exercise conducted in the Buffalo-Niagara region—simulating the response to a major earthquake- as well as in New York City from Nov. 1 to Nov. 6, illustrates how far we've come in making that vision a reality.

The 107th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard worked seamlessly with Army elements to receive and house more than 1,000 National Guardsmen and women coming from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Vermont and even the Virgin Islands at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. Air Guard security squadrons from around the state contributed Airmen to a National Guard Reaction Force which conducted security training with civilian police at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport.

Army Guard forces in our CERFP (CBERNE Enhanced Response Force Package) worked with civilian first responders from the Buffalo-Niagara region, other parts of the nation and even Canada, to hone their urban search and rescue and decontamination skills. Army National Guard helicopters flew medical evacuation and reconnaissance missions in support of civil authorities and the Air and Army National Guard worked together to train in medical procedures.

The New York Guard component of our CERFP, which augments the National Guard Soldiers, played an important role in training for an event we all hope never comes, but which we must be prepared for.

Our Civil Support Teams in New York City and upstate tested their skills in challenging environments, working with National Guard components from other states.

Our Naval Militia carried out its maritime mission, working with our critical infrastructure team to simulate checking bridges for earthquake damage.

Vigilant Guard '09 validated the progress we've made so far integrating our forces and working as one; bringing our unique capabilities and assets together. We tested our plans and procedures and identified what works and what needs to work better.

General Craig McKinley, Chief of National Guard Bureau, visited the exercise on Nov. 4 and was impressed with the level of integration and joint effort and planning he saw. Our New York Air National Guard is a full partner in domestic operations, something other states are still striving for. I was incredibly proud to escort him through the training sites that day as he met our fine men and women.

Leaders at all levels must remember that taking care of our families is always an important part of readiness for both our state and federal missions. Even though we have no large deployments in the coming months, family readiness requires real attention and commitment from commanders.

We must continue our efforts to recruit quality Soldiers and Airmen, as well as welcoming new members to the Naval Militia and New York Guard. Keeping our strength up is key to readiness for all missions.

We must ensure that our veterans, who increasingly fill our ranks, are getting the services they need. Be aware of Soldiers and

Airmen who may have problems reintegrating back into civilian life when they return from theater. Leaders at all levels should know how to refer their men and women to the Veterans Administration for help if need be. Leadership doesn't end when the drill weekend ends.

We must continue to train our Soldiers and Airmen for deployment into combat. When we send our young men and women into harms way we owe it to them to ensure that they have the best training possible. Never pass up the opportunity to give your people the best training possible.

Finally, we must continue talking to the people of New York, through the press, through one-on-one interactions, and through community events, telling them about what it is we do. We are a community-based force. We must keep the support of the community and the best way to do so is to tell them as much as possible about who we are and what we do.

Let's take what we learned from Vigilant Guard, combine it with the lessons we've learned in combat, and continue to make our forces better.



Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto



Major General Joseph J. Taluto speaks with Massachusetts Army National Guard CERFP team members at the Spaulding Fibre site in Tonawanda during Vigilant Guard. The Soldiers are, from left: Spc. Mark Williams, Spc. David Lyons and Sgt. Randy Isaacs. Photo by Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

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Complimentary or Back Issues of the *Guard Times* are available. Contact us at the address above or visit us on the web for current news, photos or to download prior issues at www.dmna.state.ny.us.



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Two Guardian Angel pararescue jumpers from the 103rd Rescue Squadron, 106th Rescue Wing are hoisted up to an HH-60 during training over Long Island waters Aug. 1. The 102nd Rescue Squadron dropped two Rigged Alternate Method Zodiac kits and Para Jumpers from an HC-130 in a designated spot where a safe boat was waiting. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing.

ON THE COVER: On Aug. 1, during the Saturday drill period, Guardian Angels (GA) from the 103rd Rescue Squadron, 106th Rescue Wing, participated in various water exercises. The 102nd Rescue Squadron dropped two RAMZ kits and PJs from an HC-130 and they landed in a designated spot in the water off of Hampton Bays, N.Y., where a GA boat was waiting. The GAs boat was primarily responsible for retrieving the parachutes and other items related to the jump. In addition, GAs on Advanced Rescue Crafts assisted in the drop by creating concentric circles around the boat giving the HC-130 a better target and keeping the drop zone free from boat traffic. Once the GAs finished setting up their RAMZ Kit, an HH-60 from the 101st Rescue Squadron worked with the PJs to perform various Alternate Insertion and Extractions to include "low and slows," hoist, fast rope and rope ladder. U.S. Air Force Photo/Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy
BACK COVER: New York Army National Guard Spec. John Walis, 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry fires his 50 caliber machine gun against opposing forces during the Orient Shield bilateral training exercise in Japan Oct. 16. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse, 42nd Inf. Div.

Chaplain's Corner: *Saluting Our NCO Corps*

By Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen, New York National Guard Chaplain

2009: The year that celebrated the NCO! Thanks for all you do.

I have heard throughout my military career these words: "the Army doesn't care!" Perhaps you have heard them or something like them. I guess we expect to hear words like this and it is the right of all Soldiers to complain about their situations, assignments and duties. More than once I have felt that I was left out in the cold while others were given more attention, better treatment and better food. I call that the luck of the draw. Sometimes I have been the fortunate one to get the better chow, shorter line and better seat. I probably still complained. Perhaps it is in our nature.

As I travel the state working with Soldiers and their families, I am struck at how large an organization the New York National Guard really is. I am amazed that in being so large, with multiple missions and responsibilities, how well we get so many jobs and requirements completed. In particular, I have grown to truly respect and highly value the full time Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) who continually take care of Soldiers.

I have had the privilege to see these hard working individuals taking care of Soldier needs time and time again. Many of the issues that I get called in on as a Chaplain are sensitive in nature and often deal with the very human side of this machine we call the National Guard. In each situation, I have always been met with positive attitudes, professionalism and a desire to take care of the individuals involved. I have come to witness that the Army does care because these men and women, these professional NCOs care about the Army and Soldiers in it.

I am sure that we can all come up with instances when we met with a less than stellar NCO who made our life harder and seem out of place. Such NCOs are not the norm but the exception. We seemingly take for granted all the hundreds and thousands of tasks that are completed well each day. We only seem to notice when things do not run as we expect they will. We complain when things do not meet the Army standards or our personal standards.

How fortunate to work with such professionals who maintain this well-run and well-oiled machine. We are all better off because they care with that selfless, honorable integrity we have come to expect and often under appreciate.

As the year of the NCO draws to a close I wish to personally thank the many men and women throughout our Army and Air National

Guard who have made my military career and life better. It was an old command sergeant major who told me loudly how not to wear my uniform as a young second lieutenant and a young staff sergeant who showed me how to survive in battle.

I owe them both and many more my thanks. Thanks for caring for our Army, her Soldiers and our Nation. Well done!



Inspector General's Corner

By Col. Eric J. Hesse, Command Inspector General

JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, Latham – In this edition of the IG Corner we would like to talk about anonymous complaints. **AR 20-1 states: Anonymous complaints. IGs will not ignore anonymous Inspector General Assistance Request (IGARs). Inspectors General will analyze all anonymous complaints for issues and allegations and then take action to resolve them to protect the interests of the Government. If the IG does not have enough information to work the case, however, the IG will close the case and note that fact in the case file.**

When processing anonymous allegations and complaints, IGs will avoid identifying the complainant or creating the appearance of unduly trying to identify the complainant. The determination of the facts and circumstances related to the IGAR is the IG's primary concern. Because the complaint is anonymous, the IG does not need to reply to the complainant even if the IG later learns the complainant's identity.

Certainly you have the right to come to the IG with your complaint anonymously but let me caution you with the challenges for us; our first concern is that we don't know who to talk to about the circumstances surrounding the allegation and the second concern is that there is no one to whom we can respond. These are both important because often times the person making the allegation has specific information, which we don't receive, such as dates, times and locations. As for responding, there is no way to get the information back to the complainant that their issues, concerns or allegations were

addressed. Unfortunately, this often leads us to address the same issue multiple times and folks perpetuating the belief nothing is being done.

The best solution is to come to us confidentially. While we can not guarantee confidentiality, we take every precaution to protect the confidentiality of the complainant. Provide us with your contact information and as much detail as possible to give us a solid starting point. To just say, "You need to take a look at Lt. Col. Verbatim for taking home government pens," does not give me enough information to formulate an allegation.

The bottom line is to trust in the IG system enough to believe that we will do everything possible to protect your identity and to look into your concerns. We want to come back to the complainant to ensure they know something is being done and that we take your complaints seriously.

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(518) 786-4716; toll free: 1-800-422-9228

Email to: NewYorkIG@ny.ngb.army.mil

On AKO: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/534621> or on the Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) agency web site: <http://dmna.state.ny.us/ig/ig.php>. There is a link on the DMNA website that will allow you to file your request for assistance on site.

We hope this corner will peek your curiosity, facilitate knowledge of the IG and serve as a resource for Soldiers and families in regards to trends, issues and problem resolution.

Guardsmen Turning to TRICARE in Troubled Times

WASHINGTON (National Guard Association of the U.S.) -- An increasing number of National Guardsmen are purchasing TRICARE Reserve Select health insurance in these times of economic troubles, according to figures from the program's management.

"Numbers are definitely increasing, particu-

larly among ages 18 to 34," said Dr. Richard Bannick of TRICARE Management Activity's Health Program Analysis and Evaluation Division, according to a news release.

TRS delivers coverage similar to TRICARE Standard and Extra to eligible members and features continuously open enrollment.

Nearly 105,000 reserve component members and family members have TRS coverage, the

release said.

Premiums were reduced in January by 44 percent to \$47.51 for individual coverage and by 29 percent to \$180.17 for family coverage.

As of July 31, the Army National Guard had 16,888 total plans covering 43,851 people, up from 32,581 people reported in March. The Air Guard had 6,443 plans, covering 15,534 people, up from 11,843 in March.

Pentagon Proposal Upsets Governors

WASHINGTON (National Guard Association of the U.S.) -- Governors are not happy with a Pentagon proposal for legislation that would give the Defense Department more authority to deploy troops to a disaster scene and more control once those troops arrived.

The law would allow DoD to send any of the nation's 380,000 Reservists to the scene of a natural disaster just as it can now to a terrorist attack.

A letter to a Pentagon official from the chairman and vice chairman of the National Governors Association makes clear the concern on the part of the state executives. Such a law "would invite confusion on the critical command and control issues, complicate interagency planning, establish stove-piped response efforts and interfere with governors' constitutional responsibilities to ensure the safety and security of their citizens," the letter said.

Paul Stockton, assistant secretary of defense for homeland security, told the Associated Press the provision would "in no way impede or undermine or inadvertently reduce the authority that governors exercise under the United States Constitution."

"The key here is that right now, we lack the authority to bring to bear the hundreds of thousands of trained reserve forces that in extreme circumstances might help governors deal with disasters in their states," he told the wire service.

Governors, however, point out that the lesson from 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina is the "need for clear chains of command to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure the most effective use of response resources."

DoD Launches New Web Portal

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) --The Department of Defense launched a new home page on August 17, www.Defense.gov, designed to invite participation from the public and make military news and information more accessible. The new Web site will provide quick access to those sites that are most sought by Web site visitors, including DoD social media sites, the Pentagon Channel and DoD news stories.

Prominent on the new home page is a new "We Want to Hear From You" feature that will give users the opportunity to ask questions of Defense Department leaders, vote on policy issues they want explained, and explore frequently asked questions and answers. The new site, <http://www.Defense.gov>, replaces <http://www.DefenseLink.mil> as the department's main Internet entry portal. DefenseLink will remain a news Web site and may be accessed from Defense.gov. Visit us online: <http://www.defense.gov>.

Benefits Season Open for Technicians

National Guard Federal Technician season open to Dec 14

JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS, Latham -- The New York National Guard office of Human Resources reminds all full time federal technicians that the 2010 season for making changes to health or dental plans opens in early November. Here is their Top Ten List for the Guard's Federal Technicians across the state:

1. The 2010 OPEN SEASON Info is now posted to the Office of Personnel Management web site at www.opm.gov/insure/openseason/.
2. If you are satisfied with your health/dental/vision plans you do not need to take any action, they will continue as is for the 2010 year.
3. If you want to make a change you must make it between Nov. 9 and Dec. 14. All changes and elections will be effective Jan. 3 2010. (Those currently deployed or returning from deployment have additional options).
4. Changes or elections for health insurance are done by completing Enrollment Form SF 2809 and forwarding to the Human Resources Office (HRO).
5. Changes or elections for dental or vision

may be done online at www.benefeds.com.

6. Changes or elections for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) may only be done online at www.fsafeds.com; If you are currently enrolled in FSA you must re-enroll for 2010.

7. The annual health fair held Nov 10. in Latham included representatives from Blue cross, MVP, CDPHP and GHI along with various materials from other insurers. Contact the Human Resources Office if you have questions or missed the fair.

8. The Office of Personnel Management no longer sends copies of insurance brochures to each agency, therefore we will not have all of the carriers publications to hand out at the health fair - please use the online resources as much as possible.

9. IMPORTANT DATES: Open Season period ends on Dec. 14; all elections become effective on Jan. 3, 2010.

10. Your HRO Points of Contact are: Sgt. Lydia Montiforte (518-786-4728); Staff Sgt. Misty Clements (518-786-7825); or Sgt. Stephen Clemente (518-786-4448)

Military Personnel News: The MILPO CORNER

Military Personnel Directorate (MNP)
Development on AKO MNP continues to develop their web portal within AKO for convenience in accessing many tools, web sites and information relating to all personnel actions. Each branch of MNP has a subpage within the web portal for issues, actions, information and more. Please visit the web portal on a regular basis, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/55373> and see how MNP is leading the way in getting information to all commands and each Soldier.

Dental News

TRICARE Dental Program (TDP). The TRICARE Dental Program (TDP), is the ONLY dental plan sponsored by the Department of Defense (DoD) for the Army National Guard and their families. Under TDP there is a nationwide network of more than 57,000 dentists who participate. This plan is an affordable and flexible program. It can be enrolled in by mail, on line or by fax. It provides insurance during inactive duty training as well as deployment, with a reduction in premiums during activations. For more details go to: www.tricare-dentalprogram.com.

TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). TRICARE Reserve Select is a premium-based TRICARE health plan available for purchase by New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

Monthly premiums for TRS individual coverage is \$47.51, and TRS family coverage is \$180.17. Soldiers interested in this health plan must be drilling members and not be eligible for enrollment in the Federal employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Plan.

To check your qualifications and purchase insurance visit: www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/.

Retirement Qualification News

Reducing the Retirement Age Due to Reserve Retirement Service Credit. The Department of Defense Instruction 1215.07, Service Credit for Reserve Retirement, was passed by Congress, effective, 28 January 2008. This bill reduces the age a National Guard member is eligible to receive retirement pay by three months for each qualifying period of 90 days served on active duty in any fiscal year. However, no eligible member may receive retired pay prior to age 50.

Qualifying Active Duty: This duty must be performed after 28 January 2008. The law does

not provide credit for time served on or before that date.

Involuntary or voluntary active duty in support of a contingency qualifies. There is no requirement that that active duty to be performed outside the continental United States. Most active duty time qualifies, including training, operational support duties and school tours. It does not matter whether the active duty is paid under active military or reserve personnel appropriation accounts, provided such active duty is performed under 10 U.S. Code 12301(d).

Special Full-time Calls to Duty: Full-time National Guard duty served under a call to active service by a governor and authorized by the president or secretary of defense, under 32 U.S.C. 502(f) for purposes of responding to either a national emergency declared by the president or a national emergency support by federal funds also qualifies.

Duty That Does Not Qualify:

- (1) Duty as a member of the Guard, Title 10 U.S.C. 12310
- (2) Duty on annual tour, Title 10 U.S.C. 12301(b), while in a captive status.
- (3) While in a captive status, Title 10 U.S.C. 12301
- (4) Medical treatment, medical evaluation for disability, a medical study, Title 10, U.S.C. 12301(h)
- (5) As a member participating in units, Title U.S.C. 12303
- (6) Under Active-duty agreements, Title 10 U.S.C. 12311
- (7) Disciplinary/courts martial, Title 10, U.S.C. 12315
- (8) Muster duty, Title 10 U.S.C. 12319
- (9) Title 32, AGR service.

Health Benefits: Those eligible for earlier retired pay must still wait until age 60 to receive health benefits.

Enlisted Personnel Management

Changes to Enlisted Time in Grade (TIG): The following changes to the Time in Grade (TIG) for Enlisted promotion is provided below. The change went into effect Oct. 1:

Rank	Old TIG	New TIG
SGT	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
SSG	8 MONTHS	18 MONTHS
SFC	11 MONTHS	24 MONTHS
MSG	12 MONTHS	24 MONTHS
SGM	14 MONTHS	24 MONTHS

2010 Enlisted Promotion Cycle Change.

There is a change on how promotion packets will be submitted for 2010. The new time frame for Soldier 4100 review, submitting Promotion Packets and publication of lists is provided below.

Rank	Cutoff Date	Packet Suspense	Promotion List Published
SGM	Nov 15	Dec 15	Jan 31
MSG	Dec 15	Feb 15	Mar 31
SFC	Jan 15	Mar 15	Apr 30
SSG	Mar 15	May 15	Jun 30
SGT	May 15	Jul 15	Aug 31
SSG Supplemental	Aug 15	Oct 15	Nov 30
SGT Supplemental	Oct 15	Dec 15	Jan 31, 2011

Please contact your full time administrator or senior NonCommissioned Officer for additional information. You may also visit the MNP AKO Web Portal. On the main page click on MNP-EPM under MNP Sections, on the main page for more detailed information, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/553732>.

Redeployment News

Survivors Guide to Benefits. This handbook assists in the difficulty and pain of losing a loved one. It provides a clear explanation of how the Department of Defense will assist a survivor from the first meeting with the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO). It covers the planning and details of the funeral or memorial service, continuing through the application and processing of benefits. You must have AKO authorization to access the handbook at the below address. Go to: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/16370526>

Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA). PDHRA identifies Soldier physical and behavioral health concerns and provides Soldiers with education on issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). All Soldiers who have deployed, are eligible for the PDHRA 90 days post-deployment, with most Soldiers completing the PDHRA 90-180 days after return from combat. It is the most important requirement for each returning Soldier.

The first method is the On-Site PDHRA process involves: Soldiers view the Battlemind II, Training video on AKO, preferably in small groups, to encourage interaction and discussion. The video focuses on transitioning from

MILPO PDHRA news, continued combat to home. The training is best given by behavioral health personnel, chaplains, or other personnel (e.g. senior NCOs), who are familiar with behavioral health issues, the referral process, and deployment experience.

Next, each Soldier completes the Soldier's portion of the Post Deployment Health Reassessment, DD Form 2900 on AKO. Each Soldier's response is voluntary and confidential. Only the completion of Section One on the DD Form 2900 is mandatory. All answers given are privileged information.

Finally, each Soldier engages in a one-on-one interview with a health care provider to complete the DD Form 2900. PDHRA Conducted On-Site, is the preferred method. Teams of Physician Assistants provide a one-on-one interview. These events are normally scheduled during the 90-day reintegration event.

The second method is the on-line or telephone method. If Soldiers are unable to attend their 90-day on-site event, instructions for an online PDHRA can be found by going to the below site. Each Soldier must log in with their AKO username and password: <https://apps.mods.army.mil/mwde/secure/defaultin.asp>.

A third method, if the above doesn't work, a Soldier can complete the process via phone 1-888-734-7299. Soldiers MUST talk to the health care professional, prior to calling this number. Call 518-272-6444 or -6470 to secure a PIN number to expedite the phone method.

Education News

Emergency GI Bill Payments. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has authorized checks for up to \$3,000 to be given to Soldiers/Veterans who have applied for educational benefits and who have not yet received their government payment. The checks will be distributed to eligible students at VA regional benefits offices across the country starting Oct. 2, 2009. NYS has two regional offices one in downtown Manhattan and one in Buffalo. For more information, please visit the Veteran Affairs website at www.va.gov.

Free SAT/ACT Materials. eKnowledge is offering free \$200 SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ programs to military service members and their extended families. Families interested in ordering FREE SAT/ACT PowerPrep™ Programs should visit www.eknowledge.com/military.

Safety Rides on Tire Maintenance



Most of us never even think about tire maintenance. Our minds are full of other things such as planning our route, packing the car and making sure the tank is full of gas. Failure to maintain a vehicle's tires, however, could bring a quick end to a family road trip.

The most important part of vehicle tire maintenance is having the tires inflated to the recommended pressure. That pressure is shown on the tire sidewalls and can also be found on a placard located on the driver's side door jamb.

To check air pressure, always use an accurate tire pressure gauge and check the tires when they are cold. After driving, the tires will be hot and the gauge will register higher than actual pressure. This false reading could cause problems later.

As tires wear, patterns develop and these wear patterns can indicate several problems.

An under inflated tire can flex more than a properly inflated tire. This flexing builds up heat, which can ruin the tire and lead to sidewall cracks. Under inflation can also reduce fuel economy through increased rolling resistance which makes your vehicle work harder.

Over inflation causes the tire to wear in the middle of the tread, where the tire takes all the weight, accelerating wear. This uneven wear reduces the useful life of the tire.

Another important step in proper tire maintenance is to check for tread depth or boldness. There are two ways to check for tread depth. One method is the penny test. Simply insert a penny into the tread with the date facing you. If you can see the date, it's time to replace the tire.

The majority of tire troubles occur when there is less than 10 percent of tread depth remaining. Remember, when it comes to tires, bald is never beautiful.

Bulges and abrasions should also be checked as part of a good tire maintenance routine. A certain amount of bulge is normal with radial tires. However, if you notice a bulge on a bias tire, replace it. Any bulge on these tires makes them unserviceable. Any abrasion that goes all the way through the rubber to the cords should also end the life of that tire.

Before you hit the road, take the time to check your vehicle's tires. A good tire inspection means a safe and happy trip.

Editor's Note: This article was taken from the August 2009 issue of Knowledge Magazine.

Bringing the Guard into an Emergency Response

Empire Shield Surges Troops at Simulated Airport Crash Site in NYC

Story and photos by Capt. Alvin Phillips, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

NEW YORK – Members of the New York National Guard's Joint Task Force Empire Shield responded to a major emergency drill at LaGuardia Airport here Sept. 12 in partnership with the New York and New Jersey Port Authority Police Department.

The training scenario involved a simulated aircraft crash on the airfield and included first responders from the Port Authority Police Department, New York City police and fire departments, FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, Office of the Medical Examiner, U.S. Coast Guard, New York City Department of Corrections, New York City Office of Emergency Management, and the American Red Cross.

The exercise gave emergency responders the opportunity to hone their skills in the most realistic atmosphere possible in post 9-11 New York City. Exercise victims, portraying fake wounds and injuries requiring evacuation and triage, were played by local volunteer Boy and Girl Scouts to add realism to the training.

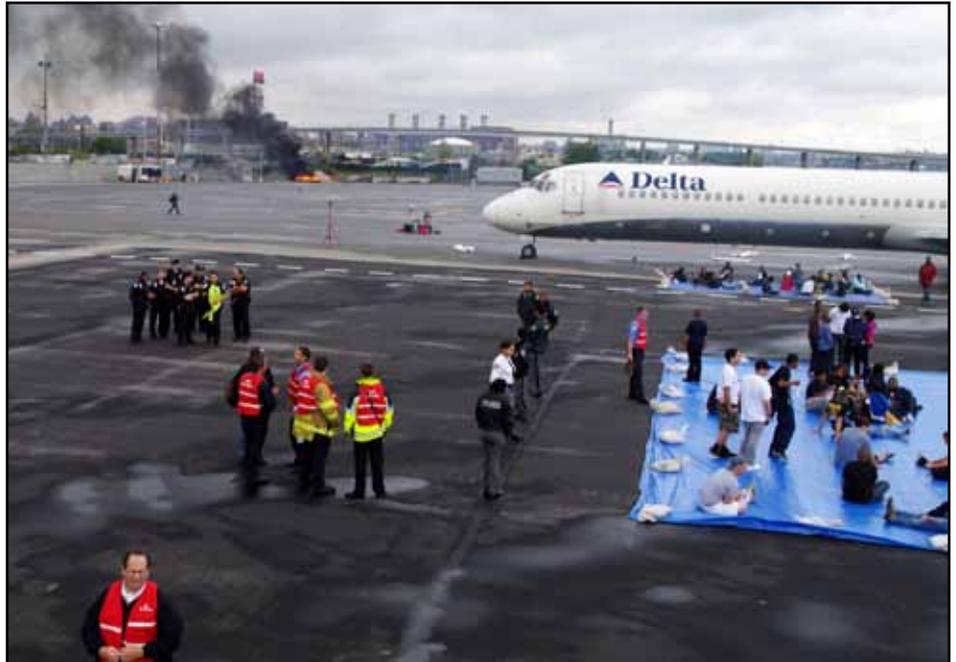
"There is no training more valuable than an environment which involves our task force responding in a quick and effective manner to save and/or protect lives like on a flight line," said Sgt. Keith Albert, an Empire Shield squad leader.

The day's events marked several firsts for Empire Shield members who regularly conduct security missions in the New York City metropolitan area. This training exercise was the first collaboration with the city's different multi-agencies response teams.

The training also was a significant first-time transition from its daily steady-state operations to providing presence patrols at key city locations to surging as a force multiplier. Empire Shield Soldiers and Airmen quickly established security and order on a flight line where over a hundred distorted and disoriented role-playing passengers awaited rescue.

"We know that our men and women from Joint Task Force Empire Shield are capable of doing day and night (missions) because we see them daily providing a calming confidence to the many passengers that come through our terminals each day," Warren Kroepfel, LaGuardia Airport General Manager, said during the training.

"However, this drill strengthens their role in an even greater capacity," Kroepfel said, "because we [LaGuardia Airport officials] are able to see the Joint Task Force working together and familiarizing (with) the interagency contingencies enacted by the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and required once every three years, but now voluntarily executed annually."



A gathering of first responders survey the situation and make preparations for aid and relief of mock victims during a scenario staged at LaGuardia Airport, Sept. 12.



Staff Sergeant Percival Luke, Company B, Joint Task Force Empire Shield briefs his team prior to movement while participating in a simulated aircraft crash exercise at LaGuardia Airport, Sept. 12.

The emergency drill was a successful reminder of the proactive planning and preparations done by City Emergency Management officials and Joint Task Force Empire Shield to react and respond to emergencies in a timely manner.

"We are here, ready and definitely prepared 24/7 to assist in any way, shape or form while continuing to build our camaraderie with our agency partners," Spc. Anthony Velez said of the training. **gt**

Bringing Experts Together to Prepare for Disasters

Story and Photos by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, *Guard Times Staff*

GRAND ISLAND, Niagara County, N.Y. – For the second time this year, the New York National Guard brought military and civilian professionals together to talk about emergency response and military support at home Sept. 15-18.

The conference, at the Grand Island Holiday Inn, was organized by the Operations and Training section of the Joint Forces Headquarters. Participants included the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the New York State Department of Homeland Security, the New York State Police and State Emergency Management Office, the New York City Office of Emergency Management, United States Northern Command, Erie and Niagara County Emergency Services offices and county and municipal emergency response and public safety offices from across the state.

There were presentations, equipment displays, and panel discussions centered on aspects of domestic operations such as natural disasters, Homeland Security, upcoming Defense Support of Civil Authority (DSCA) exercises including Vigilant Guard, and the capabilities of the state's Army and Air National Guard, Naval Militia and New York Guard.

Deputy Secretary Denise O'Donnell of the New York State Office of Public Safety delivered a key note address Sept. 15th during which she praised the New York National Guard for its record of emergency response at home while also meeting all federal missions overseas.

"I want to thank Maj. Gen. Taluto for his help as I have been working to learn and understand more about the capabilities of the National Guard and what it brings to the people right here at home," she said.

Former Chief of National Guard Bureau and now Deputy Commander of U.S. Northern Command Lt. Gen. H. Stephen Blum delivered a capstone presentation on Sept. 17 about the importance of the domestic home land defense and emergency response mission. He spoke of his pride in the National Guard and in New York, especially in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in 2001. He acknowledged the many "combat patches" worn by military conference attendees and noted that those who have served overseas have a well-earned sense of accomplishment for the federal mission.

"But this mission here at home -- we have to do this right," he warned. "We have not, nor have we ever, failed at home. Were we to do so -- the American people will not forgive," he said. **gt**

"This mission here at home -- we have to do this right,"

-- Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Deputy Commander, U.S. Northern Command



Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, Deputy Commander of U.S. Northern Command speaks to conference attendees.



Brigadier General Michael Swezey, commander of 53rd Troop Command, is briefed by Spc. Joshua Anderson on a hand-held monitoring device used to check victims during decontamination for residual contaminants while Master Sgt. William Zeughardt listens in.



National Guard Task Force Takes on Rubble Pile

Response Team Tackles Virtual Earthquake in Western NY

By Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th Public Affairs Detachment



New York Air National Guard Airman 1st Class Kevin Rech, of the 174th Fighter Wing and Staff Sgt. Josh Nichter, of the 107th Airlift Wing, join Niagara Frontier Transit Authority Police Officer Ed Carney to provide security at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport. The security force Airmen, normally tasked to defend air bases, assisted civil authorities in the wake of a simulated disaster during Vigilant Guard. Photo by Pfc Jeremy Bratt, Joint Forces Headquarters.

TONAWANDA - For New York National Guard forces taking part in Exercise Vigilant Guard in Western New York Nov. 1-6, it was like a disaster area which was the whole point.

These forces took on the disaster, mounting a rubble pile at the Spaulding Fibre Site in Tonawanda to rescue mock earthquake victims. The pile simulated a building destroyed by an earthquake, and the mock victims, lying on or in the rubble, provided more realism for the training exercise.

Vigilant Guard is a national exercise program sponsored by the National Guard Bureau

and United States Northern Command to provide joint training for National Guard and emergency response organizations to build relationships with local, state, regional and federal partners against a variety of different homeland security threats including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks.

“Governor Paterson understands as much as any of us how important it is that we all work together to become prepared, to be able to respond to any emergency, to any disaster that we face here in New York State,” said Denise O’Donnell, the state’s deputy secretary for public safety.

“The key to this event has been to bring as many partners as possible together for a shared training experience,” said Tim Riecker, training manager for the New York State Emergency Management Office.

“Erie County took the lead in this effort and participants have come from local, state, federal and international departments and agencies. We are still measuring and quantifying the lessons and benefits gained and there are many,” he added.

The Spaulding Site was just one area being used for this training, which more than 1,300 National Guard troops



A member of Vermont’s 15th Civil Support Team conducts an initial recon of the disaster scene at the former Spaulding Fibre Plant site in Tonawanda. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott, Joint Forces Headquarters.



New York Army National Guard Soldiers get some instruction on search and rescue and extraction techniques from a member of one of the 14 civilian urban search and rescue teams that are participating in the exercise, including teams from Canada. Photo by Pfc. Jeremy Bratt, Joint Forces Headquarters.

and hundreds of local and regional emergency response professionals took part in.

The troops on the rubble pile were part of a task force called CERFP, or Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) - Enhanced Response Force Package.

Composed of medical personnel from the New York Air National Guard and military police and engineers from the New York Army National Guard, CERFP's mission is to find the casualties, extract them from the rubble, decontaminate them, triage their injuries and evacuate them from the disaster area.

After notification, the CERFP deployed to the Spaulding Fibre Site, setting up decontamination and medical treatment areas. Dressed in decontamination suits, rubber boots, gloves and hard hats, CERFP mounted the rubble pile to find casualties and evacuate them.

The pile was composed of unstable concrete slabs, rusty steel plates and a pair of crushed cars. Pfc. Brandon Preisch, who was part of the group rescuing casualties, felt the pile lent realism to the earthquake scenario.

"It looks like a building collapsed," Preisch said. "There's debris everywhere." It was tiring work "especially in the suits," and the mask sometimes made it difficult to walk on the shifting debris."

"When it fogs up, it gets kind of hairy, because you can't see," he said. Rescuers had to be careful of falling in the rubble, which contained pieces of broken rebar."

While the pile made for a treacherous work environment, the wounded - dressed up in fake wounds and pretending to cry for help - motivated him to move quickly, said CERFP member Pvt. Jeremy Glynn.

"Your blood starts pumping, and you really want to get those people out of there."

In this scenario, medical personnel from the

Members of the 1st Civil Support Team, Mass. National Guard (left to right) Sgt. 1st Class Michael Kleinebreil, Sgt. 1st Class Maddox Aubrey and Sgt. James Kivleham prepare to conduct response missions at the rubble pile Nov. 3 during Vigilant Guard. Photo by Pfc. Jeremy Bratt.



New York Air National Guard prepared to treat crushed injuries, respiratory conditions and exposure to hazardous materials, said Capt. Kelly Hall, medical plans and operations officer for CERFP. Hall said they would perform a fast triage and quickly stabilize victims for evacuation.

"The key thing is to get the patients out of the disaster area to definitive care as soon as possible," she said. The Airmen, she added, have been doing exercises like this since 2005, and some of the medics are even skilled in confined-space rescues. "We're trained for this."

"This has been far above and beyond what anyone else has ever done," said Brian Rousseau, Deputy Chief of Special Operations, New York State Office of Fire Protection and Control.

"For the first time we have joined local, state, national and even international teams for a common training experience. The value for boots-on-the-ground performers and emergency managers has been enormous."

"It's clear to all right now that the benefits of our collective efforts will be felt long after," said Brig. Gen. Mike Swezey of the New York Army National Guard.

"We are grateful for the cooperation and support from the community that enabled us to train here," Swezey added.

"This has been a great opportunity for Erie County and our local communities from the very beginning," said Greg Skibitsky, Commissioner of Erie County Emergency Services.

Holding an exercise like this provides real training value to professionals conducting hands-on response as well as emergency management and provides the opportunity for networking among agencies and departments, he said.

"This will lift participants up in preparedness for the next emergency --and there is sure to be one, some time, some day in the future," Skibitsky said. **gt**



National Guard Bureau Chief General Craig R. McKinley speaks with Erie County Office of Emergency Services Commissioner Greg Skibitsky during a visit to the Erie County Emergency Operations Center in Cheektowaga, NY. McKinley, the highest ranking officer in the National Guard of the United States visited Western New York on Nov. 4 to check on the progress of Vigilant Guard, the largest combined civil/military training exercise ever held in New York. Photo by Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



Soldiers from the National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, High Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) direct casualty role-player Tonya M. Quarles towards decontamination and medical triage during Vigilant Guard. Photo by Staff Sgt. Dennis Gravelle, 369th Sustainment Brigade.

Guard Shares Lessons with South African Leaders

Story and photos by Maj. Patrick Chaisson, Joint Forces Headquarters

DOORNKLOOF, Republic of South Africa -- Five NCOs and officers from the New York National Guard traveled here September 7-13 to brief their South African Reserve Force counterparts on the impact of repeated mobilizations on Reserve Soldiers, Airmen, their families and employers. It was a message the South Africans were anxious to hear.

The presentation, entitled “First, Second and Third Order Effects of Protracted Mobilization on Reserve Forces,” reflected the knowledge gained by New York Air and Army National Guard units over eight years of deployments following the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

Some of New York State’s most seasoned experts on mobilization gathered to present these lessons learned, all at the invitation of senior South African National Defence Force leaders.

The briefing team included Col. Glenn Marchi, assigned to Joint Force Headquarters and formerly a battalion commander in Iraq during 2004-05; Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen, the New York Army National Guard Chaplain and also an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran from 2004; Lieutenant Colonel Frantz Michel of the 272 Military Police Detachment, who deployed to Iraq in 2005; and Command Chief Master Sergeant Hardy Pierce, the New York Air National Guard (NYANG) Senior Enlisted Advisor, who among his achievements participated in the National Guard response to terrorist attacks in New York City during 2001.

New York Air National Guard Major David Panzera, a C-130 Hercules pilot currently assigned as Bilateral Affairs Officer with duty in Pretoria, also attended.

The New York briefing team addressed how, in the United States, the National Guard and other reserve components have since 2001 transformed from a strategic into an operational reserve.

Marchi first described how constant, repeated use of reserve forces in combat theaters has strained American military personnel, equipment and training systems, resulting in a host of readiness issues not previously seen.

Chaplain Olsen went on to illustrate the hu-

man impact of protracted mobilizations. He showed how, in many cases, lack of individual resilience and poor community support has led to increased suicide risk, growing substance abuse rates and a rise in other family issues such as domestic violence. Michel detailed the processes by which Army and Air National Guard leaders provide predictability for their members, families and employers. He outlined the U.S. Army Force Generation model as well as the U.S. Air Force Air Expeditionary Force concept, two ways the National Guard manages deployment cycles to offer maximum preparation time to its members while ensuring they are adequately trained and equipped for the mission.

Finally, Command Chief Master Sergeant



Lieutenant Colonel Franz Michel (right) of the 272nd Military Police Detachment, New York Army National Guard, poses with a group of South African University Reserve Training Corps cadets at the SANDF Reserve Force Symposium, Doornkloof, RSA, on Sept. 10.



New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Hardy Pierce, the senior enlisted Airmen for the New York Air National Guard, speaks with an unidentified warrant officer of the South African Military Health Services during the South African National Defence Forces Reserve Force Symposium, Doornkloof, RSA, on Sept. 10.

Pierce proposed solutions for the human problems described earlier. He challenged the South African leadership to initiate family assistance programs such as the systems available to deployed New York National Guard members and their loved ones. He pointed out that deployed Soldiers and Airmen do their jobs better when they know the needs of their families back home are being met.

Panzera’s remarks covered vital legislative support for U.S. Reserve Force members. He described several federal laws designed to protect Americans while they are mobilized, as well as programs intended to preserve the re-employment rights of deployed Reservists upon their return home.

Lieutenant-General Roy Andersen, South African Chief of Reserve Forces, and Army Chief of Reserves Maj. Gen. Keith Mokoape, expressed appreciation for the New York National Guard team.

“You have given us much to think about,” Mokoape said, “and we are grateful for the information you have shared with us.” **gt**



South African Partners Visit Troops in the Field

FORT DRUM-- Senior Chief Warrant Officer Jan Viljoen, Chief Warrant Officer Dennis Leonard, and Warrant Officer Mandla Makhoba from the South African Army observe marksmanship instruction for

New York Army National Guard Soldiers of Company B, 2-108th Infantry Battalion here during weapons training Sept. 19. The South African Warrant Officers were at Fort Drum to observe training as part

of the State Partnership Program; an exchange program between the New York National Guard and the Republic of South Africa. Photo by Capt. Shawn Shutts, Joint Forces Headquarters.

New Yorkers Recall 9-11 with South African Partners

By Maj. Patrick Chaisson, Joint Forces Headquarters

DOORNKLOOF, Republic of South Africa -- The Reserve Force Symposium here coincided with the eighth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on New York City, Washington D.C. and Shankstown, Penn. on Sept. 11, 2001. The New York National Guard delegation attending the symposium helped commemorate the event in a unique and solemn manner.

Unfurling a memorial flag, the U.S. team bowed in memory of lost friends and family as a brief chronology of the September 11 attacks was read.

Colonel Glenn Marchi then presented the 42nd Infantry Division's "Never Forget" flag to South African National Defence Force Chief of Corporate Staff Lt. Gen. Jansen Van Rensberg, on behalf of the New York National Guard.

Marchi explained the symbolism of the

Never Forget flag: "The stars symbolize the airplanes that were sacrificed on 9-11-01. The star outside the pentagon represents the plane diverted by the brave passengers over Pennsylvania, saving hundreds of lives. The red background symbolizes the lives lost past, present and future. The pentagon and two rectangles represent three of the most recognized structures ever built on U.S. soil. The circle around the pentagon represents the unity that occurred after the tragedy.

"The slogan "Never Forget" was adopted as a reminder that we will always keep close to our hearts the sacrifices of those slain that terrible day," Marchi explained.

After accepting the flag, Van Rensberg commented that it will occupy a place of honor in the South African National Defence Force headquarters. **gt**



The 42nd Infantry Division "Never Forget" Flag is displayed by Command Chief Master Sgt. Hardy Pierce, at left, and Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen as Col. Glenn Marchi (at podium) recounts the events of September 11, 2001's terrorist attacks on the United States. Courtesy photo.

New York's Unknown Soldier Comes Home

Civil War Soldier Returned to New York State with Full Military Honors

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



Members of the 125th New York Civil War reenactors carry the remains of an unknown Civil War Soldier for his re-interment at Saratoga National Cemetery in Schuylerville, N.Y. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, 42nd Infantry Division

GERALD B.H. SOLOMON SARATOGA NATIONAL CEMETERY, Schuylerville – The New York Army National Guard brought an unknown New York Soldier home 147 years after he gave his life preserving the United States at the Battle of Antietam.

The Soldier was buried with full military honors Sept. 17 by the New York National Guard's Honor Guard, joined by Civil War reenactors and the volunteer honor guard of the Saratoga National Cemetery.

"What a wonderful, wonderful tribute to this unknown Soldier," Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen, New York State Chaplain said after the funeral service. "This brings him home and there is now somebody who will always honor him where he is finally laid to rest."

Honor guards from the 125th New York Volunteers and volunteer honor guards of the Saratoga National Cemetery, assisted the New York National Guard to bury Saratoga's first

unknown Soldier in a traditional 1860s pine casket, replete with U.S. Colors representing the 34 stars of the flag as a Union Soldier would have received in 1862.

The New York National Guard procured the 34-star flag and the Parker Brothers Funeral Home from Watervliet, N.Y. donated the replica Civil War era coffin.

The New York National Guard became aware of the remains earlier this year, said Don Roy, Director of the New York Military Forces Honor Guard. He and New York State Military Museum Director Michael Aikey decided that this Soldier's remains should be brought home to New York, and they began coordinating with the National Park Service and Saratoga National Cemetery to honor this Soldier.

"The majority of the men who came here and were killed did not have the opportunity to go back home," said John Howard, Superintendent of the Antietam National Battlefield and Antie-

tam National Cemetery.

"In our National Cemetery there are over 1,500 unknown graves and you do not know who these young men were, and yet you knew they came here and made this sacrifice. The idea of being able to send him home was something the entire staff stood behind. It was the right thing to do."

Mr. Roy transported the remains to the New York State Military Museum on Sept. 16 for a public viewing. The Patriot Guard Riders Association, a motorcycle club which rides at military funerals to honor service members, provided escort along the entire route through the State of New York.

Veterans organizations, civic groups, local schools and citizens all came out along the 140 mile procession north from Peekskill, N.Y. up to Saratoga Springs.

"It is right and fitting that today's Citizen Soldiers from New York State bring home this

unknown New York volunteer of the Civil War,” said Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General. “Today we bring this young Soldier back from a different time, but with similar emotion. Although his name is unknown to us, we know the kind of person he was.”

Joining Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, The Adjutant General for the State of New York in the procession were reenactors of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia Dent Grant. The Grants were portrayed by Larry and Connie Clowers of Gettysburg, Penn.

The honor guard joined with Civil War reenactors and the Sons of the Union Veterans of New York along with approximately 500 attendees, including the entire 8th grade class of approximately 140 students from the nearby Schuylerville Central School District to welcome home the Civil War Soldier after nearly 150 years and pay their respects.

The Soldier’s remains—fragments of bone, a belt buckle, and metal buttons—were discovered in an area of the Battlefield called “The Cornfield” by a hiker in October 2008.

A team of National Park Service archeologists, with forensic analysis provided by the Smithsonian Institute helped determine the nature of the young man’s remains. The button’s design, particular to New York regiments, identified the remains as those of a New Yorker.

“He was a Union Soldier fighting in a veteran New York

State regiment that had seen hard campaigning,” noted Dr. Stephen R. Potter, Regional Archeologist for the National Park Service who led the analysis team.

Because this Soldier was wearing a coat with buttons issued to New York regiments early in the Civil War, it is likely that this Soldier volunteered shortly after the war started in April, 1861, Howard said. As the war went on, generic uniforms replaced state-specific items.

“I say to this unknown Soldier, the legacy of his service has been transformed today into the ethos that says I will always place the mission first; I will never accept defeat; I will never quit and I will never leave a fallen comrade behind,” Taluto said.

After the funeral honors, Taluto presented the 34-star U.S. flag to Aickey. Without known family members, the colors will be added to the New York State battle flag collection. **gt**



The Military Forces Honor Guard provides a final salute to an unknown Civil War Soldier. Photo by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, 42nd Infantry Division.



New York National Guard State Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen says a few last words over the remains of the unknown Soldier. He was buried 147 years to the day after he died at the Battle of Antietam Sept. 17, 1862. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, 42nd Infantry Division.

Guard Tweets at the Top

The Guard Engages the Social Media Realm

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau



ARLINGTON, Va. -- Even in the 140-character brevity demanded of a tweet, the enthusiasm was evident:

“Just shot my first rounds from a M1A1 Main Battle Tank. Killed 3 of 4 targets. Best Tank on the planet!”

Among Twitter’s many users, this one is rare: He wears four stars and is responsible for policies affecting more than 450,000 National Guard members.

Gen. Craig McKinley may be a Twitter rarity (follow him @ChiefNGB) - but it’s not unique to find a leader of his stature at the cyberspace water cooler.

Even as debate over social media policy swirled in the Department of Defense this summer, someone tapped out this tweet:

“Obviously we need to find the right balance between security and transparency. We are working on that. But am I still going to tweet? You bet.”

The author? Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff (follow him @thejointstaff).

There is healthy debate about the balance between the need for operational, information and network security and transparency, but the National Guard embraced social media in November, 2008.

“The old way of communicating - internal communications or command information, external communications or media relations - [is] a 20th century model,” said Jack Harrison, the National Guard Bureau’s director of public affairs and strategic communication.

“Gen. McKinley is a believer in communication... collaborate, coordinate, communicate - and he is very much embracing social media.

“Our position on social media is that we ought to carefully learn these different methods of communicating, keeping in mind our objective when we’re communicating, who our audience is, [and] follow [Defense Department] policy.”

Name the social media site and

the National Guard is there - Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube. Visit www.dmna.state.ny.us for links to the New York National Guard sites for these media as well.

“I’ve seen people interact with the National Guard and Guard leadership in a way that they’ve never been able to before,” said Rick Breitenfeldt, chief of the social media in the Guard Bureau’s public affairs office. “If we’re not one of the voices out there, somebody’s going to be there telling our story in a way that is inaccurate or that is maybe not the whole story. If we’re not involved in the conversation, we’re missing the point of social media: We have to be there, where the people are.”

The jury is still out on Department of Defense social media policy.

“The debate is about operational security and balancing the vulnerabilities of an entire network versus being open and transparent,” Breitenfeldt said. “It’s about risk.”

“I don’t think [the Defense Department] really knows yet where it’s going to fall with respect to social media,” Harrison said.

The public is invited to contribute to the policy discussion at web20guidanceforum.dodlive.mil.

Some National Guard Bureau officials believe social media’s true worth will shine during the next major disaster.

“Social media has an immediate impact,” Breitenfeldt said. “North Dakota used Facebook and Twitter during the floods this spring, and they were putting out real-time, accurate, lifesaving information that was picked up by not only the citizens, but also by media outlets.”

“I really see the value in these sites for the first time the Guard gets called out [domestically] in a large number,” Breitenfeldt said.

People are going to be looking to ... social media sites for immediate, accurate and reliable information. We’re in a position now where we can do that.” **gt**

Being A 'Soldier for a Day' Gives Lift to Young Boy

Local Leukemia Patient Fulfills Dream of Serving as a Soldier

Story and photo By Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, 42d Infantry Division

LATHAM, Joint Forces Headquarters -- Members of the New York National Guard welcomed a new "recruit" to the Army National Guard Oct. 6 when the National Guard helped fulfill the dream of a local area boy battling Leukemia. Nine-year old Jacob Kaminski was surprised by his family with a day-long visit with the National Guard as the state's "Soldier for a Day."

The event was arranged, in part, by Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Mathew Starr, assigned to the Joint Forces Headquarters staff and a long-time fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Starr, a marathon runner, completed a fundraising run at the Rock'n'Roll Marathon in San Diego in May, where he met Theresa Petrone, the Campaign Manager from the Upstate New York/Vermont Chapter of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

"In August she (Petrone) approached me about Jake, who was the Chapter's Boy of the Year, and asked if I would be able to assist in any way to make Jake's dream of being a "Soldier for a Day" a reality," Starr explained. "I immediately presented the idea to the Chief of Staff, and here we are!"

Jacob's battle with cancer began at age four in May of 2004. After months of bone pain, fevers and a long illness, Jacob was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. After three and a half years of chemo-

therapy, spinal taps and numerous stays in the hospital, Jake's cancer went into remission and he completed his last day of chemotherapy in August of 2007.

He became a normal, healthy seven year old and even went on to a perfect second grade attendance.

In December of 2008, Jacob learned after an oncology visit that his leukemia had returned. Jacob once again had to endure chemotherapy, now at a much higher dose.

"We did have a lot of treatments," Dawn Kaminski, Jake's mother, said, The family is again thankful that Jake's cancer is back in remission.

Jake's day began with a meeting with New York State's Director of Recruiting, Lt. Col. Robert Hawthorne. Hawthorne reviewed the military specialties for Jake so that he might choose his Military Occupational Specialty, or MOS. Jake selected 19D, or cavalry scout.

Before heading off for a full day of training, Jake met with The Adjutant General for New York, Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto.

"In our Army, we have a slogan to be Army Strong," Taluto told Jacob, "but that means both physically strong and mentally strong.

"You already know how important it is to be physically strong," Taluto explained, "and I want you to know that it is just as important for you to remain mentally strong; have the right attitude and you can accomplish any mission."

Then Jake met with Soldiers from the Joint Force Headquarters for an orientation with Army National Guard weapons and a try at the Beamhit Marksmanship Training System. Then after lunch is was off to the motor pool for familiarization with an array of National Guard vehicles, including humvees, uparmored humvees, an armored security vehicle and the family of medium tactical vehicles.

"To have this, and all of these people just showering him with attention and affection and everything is just overwhelming," Dawn Kaminski said.

"I think everyone, from the family to the participants, were completely blown away by the pouring out of gifts," Starr said. "It takes a lot to

amaze me and I was completely amazed."

From the motor pool, Jake was taken to the Army Aviation Support Facility where Soldiers provided Jake with a simulated flight mission, fitting him with survival equipment and tours of the UH-60 and OH-58 aircraft.

To complete his long training day, Jake and his family then traveled to the nearby Scotia Air National Guard Base where Jake received an orientation of the 109th Airlift Wing's LC-130 aircraft. The airlift wing provided Jake with a brief aircrew mission, even placing his name onto one of the aircraft on the tarmac to reflect Jake's important role as a crewmember.

He then visited the Army Guard's 501st Ordnance Company (EOD) to familiarize himself with the capabilities of the unit's robots that remotely detect and disarm explosive devices.

"Unless you are around people who are going through stuff like this, you never really know what they're going through," Starr said. "To be able to distract him like this for a day is great. "It makes you cry, it melts your heart." **gt**



Jacob Kaminski is promoted by members of the Army Aviation Support Facility 3 in Latham. Maj. Kevin Ferreira presents Kaminski the rank of sergeant as Sgt. Maj. Anthony Malizia looks on. To the left of Kaminski's escort, Staff Sgt. Dolan Brammer.



27th IBCT Changes Command

Orion Welcomes Newest Combat Veteran Commander

Story and photo by Spc. Ian Boudreau, 27th IBCT



New York Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Steven Wickstrom, right, commander of the 42nd Infantry Division presents the colors of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to Col. Geoffrey Slack during his assumption of command ceremony Aug. 2 in Syracuse, N.Y. Slack, formerly the division's operations officer, served in Iraq as commander of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry. The change of command also marked the transition for Col. Brian Balfe, the outgoing commander of the brigade. Balfe, a combat veteran with the brigade from his deployment to Afghanistan last year, will now serve as the deputy commander for the 42nd Infantry Division.

SYRACUSE – Members of the New York National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team applauded as they welcomed their new commander, Col. Geoffrey J. Slack, as he took command of the brigade from outgoing commander Col. Brian K. Balfe.

"While my emotions are mixed, as anyone who has relinquished a successful command can attest, I am confident that Col. Geoff Slack will rise to the occasion, and under his leadership, the 27th will meet and overcome all challenges ahead," Balfe said during the ceremony, held in the Thompson Road Armory in Syracuse.

Balfe was marking the completion of more than three years as the commander of the 27th, including a deployment to Afghanistan as part of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII, training the Afghan National Security Forces.

A 1983 graduate of the Army's Military Academy at West Point, Balfe, who lives in Boston with his wife, Tara, became the first artillery officer to command a New York Army National Guard unit when he assumed command of the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment. He deployed as the commander of a battalion task force to New York City in 2001 following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. He holds a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa.

Balfe will next serve as the deputy commander for the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters in Troy.

With summer heat and humidity beginning to rise in the armory, Slack issued his first command to the Soldiers of the 27th: "Okay, everybody, it's hot. Take 30 seconds and shake it out."

"I am honored to have been selected as the new commander of this great brigade," Slack said. "No officer could be entrusted with a more important assignment, either in peace or in time of war."

Slack is no stranger to war himself. As a lieutenant colonel, he commanded the 1st Battalion of the "Fighting" 69th Infantry Regiment in and around Baghdad, Iraq, and became known to the Soldiers in his unit as the kind of commander who enjoyed patrols more than paperwork.

Following his deployment, he served as the division operations officer for the 42nd Infantry Division, attending War College, where he earned a master's degree in strategic science. **gt**

'Jesters' Journey Ends With Freedom Salute for Troops

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade

LATHAM – In two separate locations approximately 300 Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion were honored for redefining the term “doing more with less” during their recent tour to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

For Company's A, B and D and a detachment of Headquarters Company in Latham, a ceremony was held on the rustic campus of Sienna College in the Marcelle Field House.

Likewise, for Soldiers in Company E and Headquarters Company from the Ronkonkoma facility who held their Freedom Salute on the campus of St. Joseph's College in Patchogue - the same site they departed from more than a year before.

In front of proud families and friends Lt. Col. Albert Ricci, commander, briefly outlined the enormous and almost unexpected amount of work and responsibility that was placed upon the 3-142nd from the time they entered theater until their departure.

“This battalion was like the post office, we delivered every day, every week and every month that we were in theater.” Ricci said.

According to Ricci, the 142nd mobilized in May of 2008 for service in Iraq and deployed with 20 UH-60 Blackhawks from the New York Army National Guard, and picked up an additional 10 Blackhawks after arriving in Iraq. At that time, the Battalion was more than 400 Soldiers strong, but it didn't stop there. The battalion received another 27 helicopters in the form of a Medivac company with twelve more Blackhawks and two active duty aviation companies with 15 of their Blackhawks and additional Soldiers for those units. In all, the 142nd's ranks swelled to more than 700 Soldiers, almost making it a brigade size element.

“When we received these augmentees, there was no additional staffing of senior NCO's and officers to help us perform our mission.” Ricci said. “We were nearly double the capacity that we were meant to handle, but we did it and soon this unit gained the reputation of being very reliable and responsible in supporting the troops of Task Force Jester.”

During their ten months in Iraq, the 142nd flew 15,000 hours supporting more than 1,600 general support missions, moved 47,745 troops,



Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, Latham are greeted by Brig Gen. Steven Wickstrom (left), commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, and Col. Michael Bobeck, commander of the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade during Freedom Salute ceremonies Sept. 12 at Sienna College.

and transported more than 500 tons of cargo.

The battalion was attached to the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade in the Baghdad area initially and was then moved to southern Iraq to provide support for the 10th Mountain Division which replaced British troops in that region.

Ricci admitted that there was not enough time to thank every Soldier for making their mission a success. He began both Freedom Salutes by having his Soldiers stand and say, in unison, “let it be said” to which he would reply, “let it be done.” He explained that it was the Battalion's motto because from the time they arrived in Iraq, things were changing so fast that there wasn't always time to put things out in writing or in an operations order, it simply had to be said and executed so that's how they went about their business.

In a swiftly changing tactical environment, the success or failure of the mission is on each Soldier deployed. Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Martin from Company A explained that, “In the beginning, it was very hectic but it was manageable. Most of the day-to-day routine was invisible to the rest of us. The senior leadership kept us well informed.”

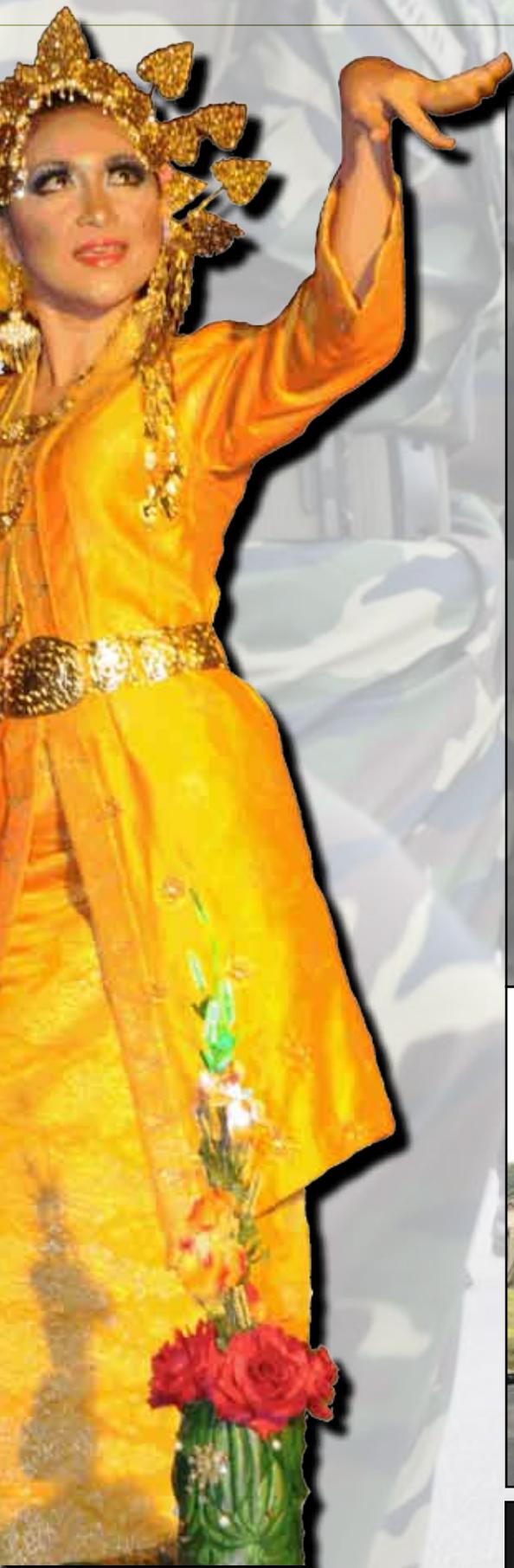
Ricci revealed that he had two major con-



Brigadier General Steven Wickstrom presents Maj. Jason Lefton, with the bronze star for achievements with Task Force Jester, a task force of 57 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, eight AH-64 Apache helicopters and more than 600 personnel supporting air operations from Baghdad to Kuwait.

cerns for the deployment. First, he wanted their mission accomplished to the best of everyone's ability and that he wanted everyone to come home.

“I'm proud to say that those two things were accomplished.” **gt**



CAMP WARDIEBURN, Malaysia – Twenty-three New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the Support Operations Section, 369th Sustainment Brigade from the Harlem Armory participated in “Keris Strike 2009” a United Nations peacekeeping training mission during their annual training here during most of the month of July.

The 369th left for Malaysia on July 9, arriving in Kuala Lumpur, the capitol city of Malaysia after completing 20 hours of flight time. During the 18 day training exercise, the 369th partnered with the 12th Malaysian Infantry Brigade to conduct a combined brigade-level command post exercise.

Both Malaysian and American military forces worked in unison to maintain communications, security and operational networking while supporting the United Nations mission.

“This joint-multinational training exercise significantly benefitted members of the 369th by allowing them to work side-by-side with their Malaysian Army counterparts.” said Col. Stephanie Dawson, commander, 369th Sustainment Brigade. “The Soldiers were able to share best practices and develop effective working relationships, demonstrating not only leadership but the ability to function in an environment where diplomacy was a key factor.”

The operation was intended to help build a strong relationship and partnership between the U.S. and the Malaysian forces.

“The 369th used this mission to prepare for any deployment in its future.” Sgt. Maj. Charles Tillman, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 369th Sustainment Brigade said. “Unlike smaller units that might handle individual supplies, we deal with things in metric tons.”

Prior to their overseas deployment training, the 23 Soldiers conducted training according to NATO guidelines.

According to Tillman, they worked through such scenarios as responding to a national natural disaster, an escaped war criminal and riot control.

“It was a success. We accomplished the mission.” Tillman said. “We came together as a team. We don’t often get the opportunity to do that.”

Before leaving Malaysia, the 369th Soldiers took a couple days to soak in the culture around them. Soldiers went to Malacca, which is a city in southern Malaysia that had been colonized by the Dutch. Soldiers also went to the Malaysian Army Museum in Port Dickson. **gt**

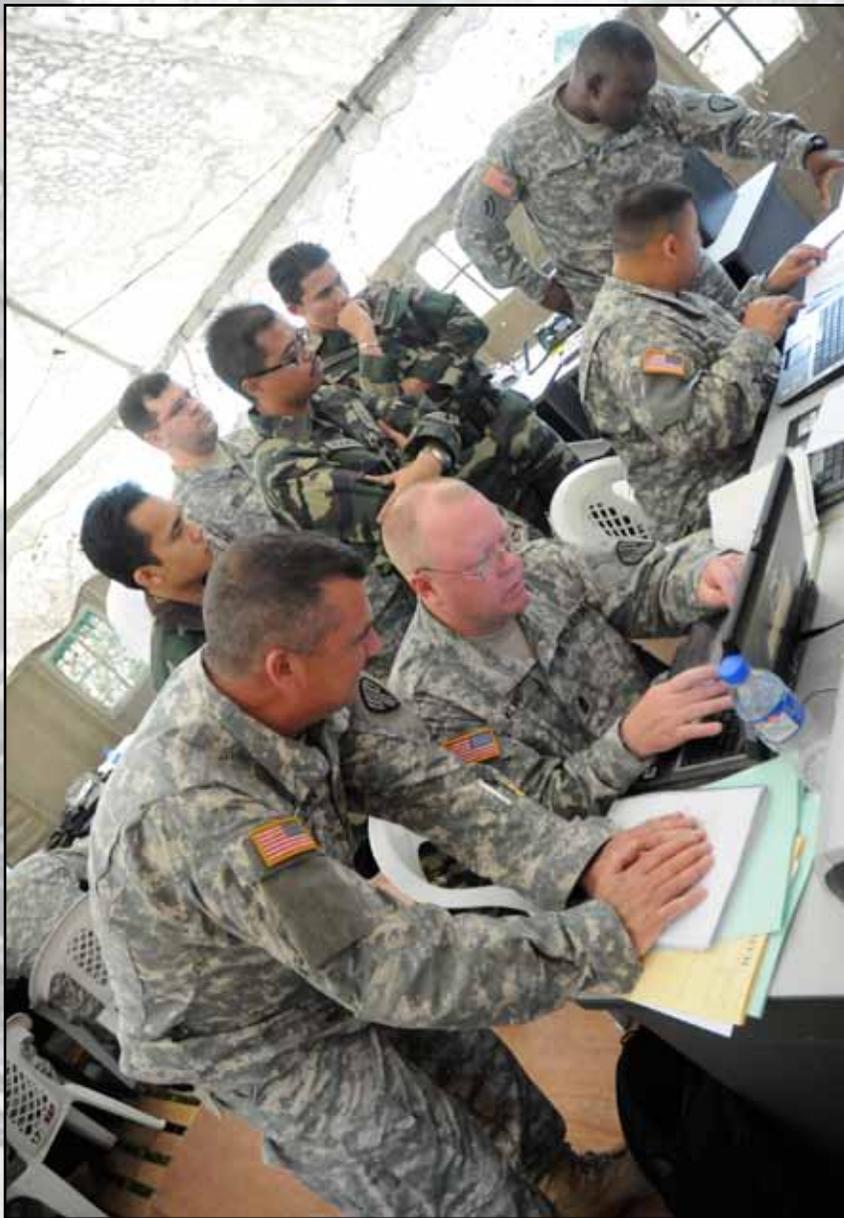


Colonel Stephanie Dawson, commander, 369th Sustainment Bde. and Malaysian Brig. Gen. Halim pose with their staffs at the conclusion of Keris Strike 2009. Photo by Maj. Stephen Lynch, 369th Sustainment Brigade.

Malaysian Training For Harlem Hellfighters

Overseas Deployment Takes City Troops to Far East

Story by Spc. Leigh Campbell, 138th Public Affairs Detachment



Making team work pay off. New York Army National Guardsmen work alongside of Malaysian officers during Exercise Keris Strike 2009. Twenty-three Soldiers from the 369th sustainment Brigade attended the exercise. Shown in the Tactical Operations Center from left are: Sgt. Maj. Charles Tillman, Sgt. Maj. Phillip Klipp, Capt. Steven Arias and Maj. Daniel Harris. Standing behind is 1st Lt. Christian Bixby.



Last night in Malaysia. A dancer performs a cultural Malaysian dance for multi-national military members at the conclusion of Exercise Keris Strike 2009 on July 24. Twenty-three Soldiers from the 369th sustainment Brigade attended the exercise.

Fall Brings Rise to Change

New Leadership for Western NY Army Guard units

Story by Spc. Jimmy Bedgood, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

BUFFALO -- The 153rd Troop Command Headquarters and 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB) change of command ceremonies took place during back to back weekend ceremonies Sept. 12-13 at the Connecticut Street Armory here bringing rise to change this Fall.

Col. Fred Kubus of Cheektowaga, N.Y., who commanded the 153rd Troop Command Headquarters for the past three years, turned over command to Lt. Col. Reginald Sanders of Sackets Harbor, N.Y., during the ceremony.

The following Sunday afternoon, Sanders, who commanded the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB) for the past three years, then turned over his former command to Lt. Col. John Burke.

"Lt. Col. Sanders did a great job forming the 27th BSTB," Burke said, "mobilizing many members for Operation Enduring Freedom, and then acting as the Task Force Orion rear detachment commander. His selection to brigade command is a tribute to his leadership."

"As a Western New Yorker, I am absolutely thrilled to be given the opportunity and responsibility to lead the Soldiers of the 27th BSTB," Burke said. "This is a unique battalion in the state with many specialty capabilities: from satellite communications to unmanned aerial vehicles to engineer sappers, it truly is an



Lt. Col. Reginald Sanders addresses his Soldiers during the 153rd Troop Command change of command ceremony Sept. 12. Photo by Staff Sgt. Peter Dean, 107th Airlift Wing.

enabler for the 27th Brigade Combat Team."

Kubus plans to retire from the Army National Guard, after nearly 40 years of service. He commanded 42nd Engineer Brigade during the unit's mobilization and deployment to Iraq. The brigade earned a meritorious unit citation from the Army for its contributions to stability and support operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following the engineer brigade deactivation in 2006, Kubus commanded the 153rd Troop Command Headquarters.

"You meet some of the most dynamic Soldiers, all with a common goal," said Kubus. "Retirement is bitter sweet: you no longer influence the game, yet it's nice because you don't have the responsibility."

Kubus said he talked with his successor, Sanders, many times. Sanders, a Desert Storm veteran, also deployed with the 42nd Infantry Division to Iraq in 2004-05.

"He's certainly ready," Kubus said, "I wish Sanders all the success and wisdom and patience to go forth in the command."

"It's an honor to lead these Soldiers with the 153rd Troop Command," Sanders said to the assembled troops. "I expect to take the unit to the next level."

Sanders currently serves as Superintendent of the National Guard Mobilization Assistance Equipment Site at Fort Drum.

Burke has served full-time since he joined the New York Army National Guard in 1995. Before he joined the Guard he was an officer serving on active duty in the Marine Corps for four years and then the Marine Corps Reserve.

Sanders was promoted to Colonel by the Adjutant General in a separate ceremony at the Joint Force Headquarters in Latham on Oct. 28.

"An Officer spends the majority of his or her career preparing for this event," Burke said. "I am honored, and seek to show the Adjutant General and the generals who recommended me for command [that] I am worthy of their trust. It is my duty to ensure that the Soldiers of the BSTB are trained, equipped and led properly so we can accomplish our mission. It is a huge responsibility, and I look forward to proving myself to my new team." **gt**



New York Army National Guard Lt. Col. Reginald Sanders returns the colors of the 153rd Troop Command to Command Sgt. Maj. Louis Wilson for safekeeping after receiving the colors Sept. 12 as a symbol of his new command from Brig. Gen. Michael Swezey, commander, 53rd Troop Command. Photo by Staff Sgt. Peter Dean, 107th Airlift Wing.



Colonel Geoff Slack, commander, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, transfers command of the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion to Lt. Col. John Burke. Photo by Maj. Kathy Oliver, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Western Guardsmen Mobilized for Flood Clean Up

Story and photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Joint Force Headquarters



Sergeant David Green of the New York Army National Guard's 152nd Engineer Company off loads a bucket loader from the trailer that brought it to Gowanda from the unit's home at the Connecticut Street Armory in Buffalo. Green lives in Medina and works as a firefighter for the City of Batavia.

VILLAGE OF GOWANDA – When Cattaraugus Creek overflowed its banks on August 8, and flooded this Western New York village, New York Gov. David Patterson called up 50 members of the 152nd Engineer Support Co. to aid village officials in recovery. He called out the Guard engineers, because the situation required their special skills and capabilities, Paterson told reporters during a press conference at the village on Aug 12. “The damage here is heart wrenching and I am going to do everything I can to help the people here,” Paterson said.

Forty members of the unit had arrived on the scene with nine dump trucks and four front-end loaders shortly before the governor spoke. “In my time in the Guard, I have certainly seen worse disasters, but for the people in this community the situation is very bad,” said Capt. Jeff Miles, commander of the Buffalo-based 152nd.

What he saw were roads covered with slimy mud, broken pavement, trees and other debris and piles of mud encrusted furniture and appliances that home owners had begun placing along the curbs as part of their clean up efforts.

Eventually, the accumulated mud and debris will also become a health hazard, especially if it's contaminated by sewage and other materials,” Miles added. “We will be working closely with public works staff and state and county coordinators.”

The 152nd Engineers spent six days on the site, clearing debris and

mud from village roadways.

Heavy rains ranging from 2 to 6 inches, coupled with the already saturated ground, brought heavy flooding in portions of Western New York. The towns of Gowanda and Silver Creek, located along the Cattaraugus Creek, near the Cattaraugus-Erie County line were inundated with three and four feet of driven water that swept away cars and mobile homes, damaged home foundations and businesses and caused extensive property and structural damage. Receding waters uncovered scenes of devastation the community was unprepared for. The Governor declared Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Erie Counties as state disaster sites.

“We have been asked to clear a new road to the reservoir so that pipes can be run to a clean water source,” said Brig. Gen. Patrick Murphy, director of the Joint Staff at the New York National Guard state headquarters who also came to Gowanda to see the damage. “This is a joint response of local, county and state resources,” said Gen. Murphy who, ironically, was in Buffalo leading a planned emergency response table top exercise with local civil authorities as part of the Vigilant Guard program when the disaster struck.

“Many of these troops have already served in either Iraq or Afghanistan,” said the general. “We are glad to be able to help our communities when they need us,” he added. **gt**

Guard Provides Training for Canadian Forces



ROCHESTER -- Canadian Corporal Pres Lavier from the 408th Tactical Helicopter Squadron, watches as one of Detachment 1, Company B, 126th Aviation's CH-47 "Chinook" helicopters departs Genesee County Airport after successfully making a two-wheel pinnacle landing Sept. 20.

A detachment of Canadian pilots and crew members received transition training with the Chinooks at Army Aviation Support Facility 2 in Rochester this fall prior to their deployment to Afghanistan. Canadian aviation forces currently have all of their Chinook aircraft deployed to Afghanistan and travel to various American facilities to get transition training. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.



249th Medevac Part of a Much Bigger Picture

VOLK FIELD, Wis. - Flight engineers from the Rochester-based 249th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) prepare for a training flight on a UH-60 Blackhawk during Patriot Exercise 2009 at Volk Field, Wis. on July 17.

Patriot 2009 is a large scale exercise integrating U.S. Army and Air National

Guard and as many as five coalition forces from as far away as the Netherlands in a joint-training environment. Patriot is unique because participating units plan their scenarios and events to meet their training requirements.

In 2009, Patriot will again go the extra mile to maximize training for all participants,

incorporating combat operations and homeland defense scenarios.

Pilots and crew members from the 249th participated in the Patriot Exercise to provide an opportunity for joint force training in medical evacuation and helicopter operations. Photo by Senior Airman Kayla K. Edwards.

Vice-Presidential Airlift

LATHAM – Colonel Michael Bobeck, commander, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade greets Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice-President Joseph Biden outside of Army Aviation Support Facility 3 on Sept. 21.

Dr. Biden spent the afternoon of Sept. 21 visiting New York National Guard Headquarters to learn more about the New York Army National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program. She was in the Capital Region accompanying President Barak Obama to Hudson Valley Community College for a speech there.

After her visit she and some staff members were transported to Andrews Air Force Base, Md. aboard the New York National Guard's C-12 aircraft flown by Col. Bobeck and Chief Warrant Officer Dave Lewis. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.





Orient Shield: Troops Walk the Same Path

U.S., Japanese Discover No Matter the Uniform, the Mission is the Same

Story by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

AIBANO TRAINING AREA, Japan -- Hundreds of U.S. and Japanese Soldiers took to the wood lines here in a simulated combat field training exercise this fall. Moving simultaneously and parallel with one goal in mind -- defeat a common enemy.

Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion 69th Infantry Regiment identified enemy fighting positions and collected information on the makeup and strength of the fictional enemy. This was used to assist both the U.S. Army and the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) soldiers set up hasty defense positions and attack and defeat enemy forces. Ground and mounted soldiers from both forces crossed steep elevations and rivers, concealing their movements as they denied the enemy the capability to conduct counter attacks on friendly forces.

The ultimate goal was to advance the 7th Regiment, JGSDF, to their appointed objective and secure it. Mission Accomplished.



Private Shaheem Dantzler and Pfc. Carlos Gonzalez, members of 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry's scout platoon, along with members of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, stand stacked and ready during training in, Japan Oct. 14. Photo by Spc. Rachel Sanzo, 42nd Infantry Division.



Spc. Joshua Earle, Company B, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, fires his M240 Bravo machine gun against opposing forces during Orient Shield, Oct. 16. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse, 42nd Inf. Div.

The training was all part of Orient Shield, an annual field training exercise co-sponsored by United States Army Japan and the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force. The Oct. 10-17 exercise at Camp Imazu and Aibano Training Area, Shiga-prefecture, Japan enhanced staff coordination and promote regimental and battalion level training opportunities.

"Orient Shield is an exercise we run every year with the Japanese in a bilateral environment to really strengthen the relationship between the U.S. Army and JGSDF," said Maj. Gen. Francis J. Wiercinski, U.S. Army Japan/I Corps (Forward) Commanding General, Camp Zama, Japan.

"The 1-69th Soldiers have been training side by side with their Japanese counterparts and sharing their knowledge; not only what they've learned in combat, but their Soldier skills as well," Wiercinski said.

Throughout the week-long exercise, U.S. and JGSDF soldiers exchanged combat skills and techniques. The U.S. Soldiers demonstrated



Private Shaheem Dantzler, a member of 1-69th Infantry Regiment's scout platoon, along with members of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, stand watch and provide security during scout training at Camp Imazu and Aibano Training Area, Japan Oct. 14 as part of exercise Orient Shield. Photo by Spc. Rachel Sanzo.

how they conduct military maneuvers in urban terrain, air assault missions, squad movement and reconnaissance techniques. Of particular interest to the Japanese forces was learning to engage targets while moving in a confined area and reacting quickly to unstable targets.

“The command and control abilities of the 69th Regiment Commander, staff activities and basic action of each soldier are very helpful for us,” said Col. Hiroyuki Hata, 7th Infantry Regiment Commander.

“They’ve also learned about Japanese leadership skills and techniques, tactics and procedures... and that’s what this whole thing’s about,” Wiercinski added.

“This training is a way to build up connections between the U.S. and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force. It is most important in case we must conduct combined operations under each chain of command,” said Lt. General Mamoru Fujisaki, Commanding General for the 3rd Division, JGSDF, Camp Senzo, Japan. “This field training exercise is remarkable, which has a direct bearing on interoperability.”

For many of these Soldiers it was their first opportunity to train with soldiers from a different culture with different weapons systems.

“This has been a great opportunity to assess how they perform their missions and possibly utilize some of their practices,” said Staff Sgt. Johnny Madera, a Squad Leader with Company B, 1-69 Inf. from Queens Village, N.Y.

“Their mission performance was executed on point with successful use of their equipment. Everything we saw convinces me I’d fight alongside them any day,” Madera added.

Sgt. Masahiro Jyoko, Co. 5 Rifle Platoon Squad Leader, gained a great deal from the combined training. “The 69th Infantry Regiment fight effectively and have experience from combat. I am very happy to teach these important skills to my subordinates,” Jyoko said.

“It is very good working with our Japanese counterparts,” said Staff Sgt. Ronald Stroh, a squad leader with Company C, 1-69th. “Their techniques are similar to ours and we were able to learn from them as well.”

“The friendship and trust built between 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment and the 7th Infantry Regiment is forever,” Hata said.

“The 69th Infantry Regiment has very good skills in security and positions,” said Sgt. Koji



Soldiers of Company C, 1st Bn., 69th Inf. exit a Japanese CH-47 Chinook Oct. 12 during an air assault mission October 12. The training was one part of Orient Shield, the annual field training joint exercise, combining U.S. Army and Japanese Ground Self-Defense Forces. The exercise was designed to implement tactical combat skills and took place in the Shiga Prefecture, Japan Oct. 10-17.

Nagashima, anti-tank platoon leader, Company 5, 7th Infantry Regiment. “I am happy to learn better techniques to teach my subordinates.”

“It’s an honor to have the 69th here. They have a great history, a magnificent combat record and they come here with an attitude of learning and an attitude of teaching and that’s exactly what we need,” Wiercinski said.

“My hat goes off to them for doing such a superb job out here, for extending U.S. and Japanese relations, and really being great ambassadors for the United States of America,” Wiercinski said.

“This has been an outstanding experience for our Soldiers, not only in the context of our own training, but the opportunity to share our experiences with our Japanese counterparts and learn from them,” said Lt. Col. John Andonie, the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment Commander. **gt**

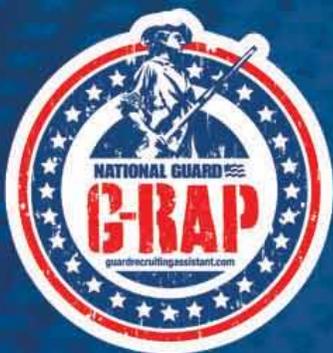


Staff Sgt. Ronald Stroh, an infantry squad leader with Company C, 1-69th Infantry, signals his squad to board a Japanese CH-47 Chinook Oct. 12 for an air assault mission during Orient Shield. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse, 42nd Infantry Division.

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The UAS is Coming!



As of October 1, 2009, Detachment 1, Company B Military Intelligence, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion stood up an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) of "Shadow" Army reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, and battle damage assessment aircraft based in Rochester. When deployed the UAS Detachment will consist of a platoon of four "Shadow" aircraft and two ground control stations. The 642nd Aviation Support Battalion will oversee the platoon to enhance aviation standardization and safety training. Currently, the UAS Detachment is the only one in New York State. Courtesy photo.



NY Flag Flies Over Baghdad

Soldiers from the 53rd Army Forces Liaison Detachment display a New York State flag over the Al Faw Palace in Baghdad Oct. 17. Pictured are Lt. Col Eric Weber at left, and Sgt. Maj. Randy Ross. The unit is nearing the end of its second deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom to train, coach and mentor senior Iraqi security force leaders. This is the same flag that was once flown over the World Trade Center after the terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001. Courtesy photo.



Hofstra Honors Guardsman

UNIONDALE, LONG ISLAND -- Retired Lt. Col. Paul Farinella, Hofstra University Class of 1969 and President of the University Veteran Alumni Chapter presents the Veteran of the Year salute to New York Army National Guard Second Lieutenant Mark H. Getman for his service to state and nation Oct. 24. Getman, a 1994 graduate of Hofstra, joined 1968 grad retired Col. Paul J. Flora for this year's award presentation. He also received his promotion orders to 1st Lieutenant the same week. Photo by Lizaveta Litvak.



Lieutenant Colonel Greg Dreisbach accepts the 101st Signal Battalion colors from Col. Stephanie Dawson, commander of the 369th Sustainment Brigade, during his change-of-command at Fort Dix Oct. 3.

New Commander for 101st Signal

Story and photo by Spc. Leigh Campbell, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT DIX, N.J. -- After raining for the better part of the day, clouds broke and the sun shone brightly upon the four companies that make up the 101st Signal Battalion.

Lieutenant Colonel Greg Dreisbach was standing in front ready to receive command during a change of command that took place here Oct. 3.

"It has been a dream of mine since a young lieutenant to get the opportunity to command a battalion," Dreisbach said. "I promise to you all that I will do my best to lead through the upcoming challenges the are set in front of our battalion."

Dreisbach deployed to Tikirt, Iraq in 2005 being in charge of maintaining communications in northern Iraq. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his outstanding efforts.

"There is no better honor for an officer in the U.S. Military than to become a commander," said Brig. Gen. Mike Swezey, Commander of 53rd Troop Command.

Colonel Stephanie Dawson, commander, 369th Sustainment Brigade, noted that she is looking forward to working with Dreisbach and knows that he is ready to hit the ground running and that he has a wonderful foundation to lead on. **gt**



Command Sergeant Major James Haggerty, 427th Brigade Support Battalion provides guidance to Company C's Sgt. Colin Dudziak and his wife Jamie during a visit to the Walter Reed Army Medical Center's Warrior Transition Unit, Aug 25. The Buffalo couple currently reside at the Medical Center's Mologne House until Dudziak is released from active duty and returned to the 427th.

New York's Wounded Warriors Not Forgotten

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, 42nd Infantry Division

WALTER REED MEDICAL CENTER, Va.-- Command Sergeant Major James Haggerty can get to the bedside of every one of the New York Army National Guard's wounded warriors with his eyes closed.

The top Noncommissioned Officer of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion visits every New York Soldier who is wounded and recovering in a Warrior Transition Unit in the United States.

"First and foremost, our Soldiers need to know they are not forgotten," Haggerty said. "My job is to make sure they receive the care they need and deserve and to make sure they have someone back home who can address their issues for them."

The Warrior Transition program provides primary care and case management for service members receiving treatment for wounds or injuries suffered while deployed in the war on terror, explained Sgt. 1st Class Keith Clement, the Army National Guard Warrior Transition Program Liaison at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

"Our mission is to promote the Soldiers timely return to their unit or transition back to civilian

life. Our Soldier's mission while they are here is to get better," Clement said.

If a Soldier is injured, wounded, or becomes sick while on active duty, has a pre-existing condition that is not identified before day 25 or a pre-existing condition that is aggravated during active duty, the Army is obliged to fix the condition to its best ability, to ensure the Soldier is fit for duty or referred to a medical evaluation process.

Every Soldier in the Warrior Transition is assigned a Primary Care Physician who serves as their patient advocate. This physician develops an integrated treatment plan, provides acute care, monitors medication and pain management, de-conflicts clinical care, collaborates with specialists on post surgical care and assists with transfers to military and civilian facilities.

Also assigned is a case manager who uses a team approach to facilitate all medical care, schedule appointments, identify other challenges the Soldier may be experiencing and act as a resource to coordinate focused care while working with family members, primary care providers, various specialists and the Command Team.

"The medical care has been first class. It's the

healing process that has been slower than what I want it to be," said Sgt. Colin Dudziak, who deployed to Afghanistan with the 27th Brigade Combat Team in 2007. "One of the greatest frustrations is not being able to do the things I think I should be able to."

Dudziak was poisoned in Afghanistan by an unknown substance and went into a coma before he was medevaced back to the United States.

To assist the Soldier, a non-medical attendant, usually a family member, is placed on military orders and remains with the patient until all medical treatment is complete and the Soldier is released from the program. The attendant is involved in the health care plan and assists in making informed health care decisions.

Fortunately, the Dudziaks discussed what they would do if he was seriously injured before his deployment, which made it easier for his wife to cope when something did happen to him.

"It was one of the hardest things we had to do in our life together, but had I not known what his wishes were, I could possibly have made the wrong decision when I received the call that he was in a coma and they didn't expect him to recover," Jamie Dudziak said. **gt**

Not Forgotten con't.

"First and foremost, our Soldiers need to know they are not forgotten. My job is to make sure they receive the care they need and deserve."

-- Command Sgt. Major James Haggerty, 427th Brigade Support Battalion

In addition to worrying about the health and rehabilitation of their loved ones, family members also deal with the frustration of putting their own lives on hold.

"Since I am his caregiver here, I am unable to work and had to give up my job," Jamie Dudziak said. "The bottom line is, you do the best you can, he's alive and getting better and that's all that matters."

Once immediate care is resolved and Soldiers work through the rehabilitation process, they may be assigned temporary duties, commiserate with their skills, training and military rank, as long as it does not violate their physical profile and does not interfere with their medical care requirements.

The program assists Soldiers in becoming active members in the community by delivering compassionate, tailored, and personal support and guidance to Soldiers and their families. Also available are programs providing education degrees, internships, networking and job opportunities.

In some instances, Soldiers are transferred to a Community Based Warrior Transition Unit where Soldiers receive treatment and recuperate at or near their homes using locally available health care providers.

"The treatment is localized and allows the Soldier and family to remain closer to home," Haggerty said.

The community based program offers the same medical oversight as Walter Reed and other Army medical facilities. The Soldiers maintain all benefits and pay and are encouraged to work at their local unit or armory while following up with medical treatment or physical therapy.

"Having the Sgt. Major visit has been wonderful. He has been great as far as providing guidance on where I see my career and future going in the Guard," Dudziak said. **gt**



Combined Endeavor 2009

KOZARA BARRACKS, Bosnia and Herzegovina -- Bosnian Captain Dalibor Surlan (left) and New York National Guard Sgt. Jasmine Wilson, 101st Signal Battalion, prepare to test voice communication between Bosnian and Croatian forces at the Combined Endeavor testing site Sept. 10. Combined Endeavor is a multinational coalition exercise that brings together approximately 40 nations and multinational organizations, including NATO partners, Partnership for Peace nations and virtually all of the European non-aligned nations. It is the United States' largest Theater Security Cooperation exercise in the world. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Prentice L. Colter.

Remembering and Honoring A Brave New Yorker

NEW YORK -- A portrait of the late Staff Sgt. Christian P. Engledrum, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, New York Army National Guard is unveiled to his family during a special ceremony aboard the Intrepid Museum in New York City Sept. 12.

Texas-based artist Phil Taylor, founder of the American Fallen Soldier Project paints portraits of fallen Soldiers. He is sponsored by American Airlines, flying him and the portraits for special presentations around the nation. Photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Joint Forces HQ.



Afghan Veteran Takes Command of 258th FA

JAMAICA, Queens -- Lieutenant Colonel Michael Hoblin (left) receives the colors of 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment from 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team commander Col. Geoff Slack during Change of Command ceremonies here on August 29.

Hoblin is a veteran of the 27th Brigade Combat Team's deployment to Afghanistan in 2008, where he served as Civil-Military Operations Officer.

Hoblin was commissioned as a Field Artillery officer in 1991 and served on active duty as a fire direction officer, a company fire support officer, a radar platoon officer and a battery commander with the 3rd Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division. He is also a veteran of the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

After joining the N.Y. Army National Guard, he was the assistant operations officer and battalion fire direction officer for 1st Bn., 156th Field Artillery. While deployed to Afghanistan in 2008, he was the Civil-Military Operations officer for the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Hoblin replaces Lt. Col. Paul Conte, who is now the 27th's executive officer.

Conte was commissioned a Field Artillery officer in 1988 and served on active duty with the 2nd Armored Division in Germany as a company and battalion fire support officer. He also served in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Operation Desert Storm.

Since joining the New York Army National Guard he has served as a battery commander, brigade fire support officer, and division joint fires coordinator prior to taking command of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery. He deployed to Iraq with the 42nd Infantry Division headquarters in 2004-2005 and also responded to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Photo by 1st Lt. Mark Getman, 1-258th Field Artillery.



56th Personal Services Battalion Cases Colors, Deactivates



LATHAM -- New York Army National Guard Lt. Col. Deborah Foley (left) commander of the New York Army National Guard's 56th Personal Services Battalion and 1st Sgt. Erin Connell prepare to case the battalion colors during a deactivation ceremony Saturday, Aug. 1, at New York National Guard headquarters.

The battalion is no longer required in the New York Army National Guard structure after 23 years of service to Soldiers, including a deployment to Iraq.

"Casing the colors of this unit is a bittersweet moment for me and all members of the 56th," Foley said. "Our Soldiers have served our country and state well, both at home and in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Photo by Capt. Amy Bonanno, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



New York's Finest: Fallen, But Not Forgotten

NYPD Soldier Killed in Afghanistan Memorialized in Kabul

Story and photo by Sgt. Danny Durham, Combined Joint Task Force Pheonix 9

CAMP PHOENIX, Kabul Afghanistan - New York Army National Guard Sgt. Deon L. Taylor of the Bronx was killed on October 22, 2008 by an Improvised Explosive Device while on convoy in Bela Beluk, Farah Province, Afghanistan.

Taylor first served a combat tour in Iraq, performing Military Police duties. During his second tour in Afghanistan with the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Taylor was attached as a Police Mentor with the 7th Marine

Regiment. Taylor had served prior to deployment as a Fire Control Systems Specialist with Battery B, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery based in Jamaica, Queens.

Taylor was a New York Police Department Undercover Narcotics Officer in Brooklyn. He joined the Police Department in 2005 and served in the Transit Bureau before transferring to the Narcotics Division in 2007.

"Narcotics is very dangerous," said Mo Weathers, Taylor's uncle. But Taylor was deter-

mined to make a difference in his community by taking drug dealers off the streets; it was this same unselfish attitude and determination that motivated him to take on the daunting task of mentoring the Afghan National Police.

Sergeant Deon L. Taylor lives on. The Taylor Pavilion is but a small token of our appreciation, this dedication serves as reminder that a fallen Soldier is never forgotten.

Back home in New York, Taylor's home street was renamed in his honor on Oct. 29. **gt**

Newest Member of the 4,000 Hour Flying Club

Syracuse Pilot Attains Unique Flight Status in F-16

Story by Capt. Anthony Bucci, 174th Fighter Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse - A significant achievement in the career of a decorated and skilled 174th Fighter Wing aviator who, in his words, “never had a job” in his Air Force life was accomplished on Aug. 16.

Lieutenant Colonel D. Scott Brenton, 174th Fighter Wing, joined the very exclusive 4,000 flying hour club on Saturday when tail number 86-0249 touched down at 1115 at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base.

“I have often joked that I have never considered doing what I do as a job. For me being a pilot in the F-16 is the best occupation anyone could ever have. I absolutely love it! The thrill I feel taking-off is the same for me today as it was on my very first take-off. It is absolutely fantastic!” Brenton said.

Brenton became the 25th F-16 pilot in the world to pass this milestone and the 22nd American pilot to accomplish this incredible feat.

As an undergraduate pilot, Brenton finished at the top of his class earning the “Commander’s Trophy”. At the time, the F-15 Eagle was the popular choice; however, he wanted to fly the F-16 Fighting Falcon. The reason was simple: he wanted a fighter that would perform any kind of mission.

“I wanted to do it all. Selecting the F-16 was the best decision I ever made, because the F-16 challenges me with every fighter mission the Air Force performs. Whether it’s air-to-air, air-to-ground, Close Air Support, Forward Air Controller, Combat Search and Rescue, etc.” he said.

He credited the 174th Maintenance Group, stating, “They are the best maintenance professionals in the U. S. Air Force”. He could always be confident that when that crew chief saluted him and turned over responsibility of the aircraft, that he was getting the finest F-16 in the U.S. Air Force’s inventory.

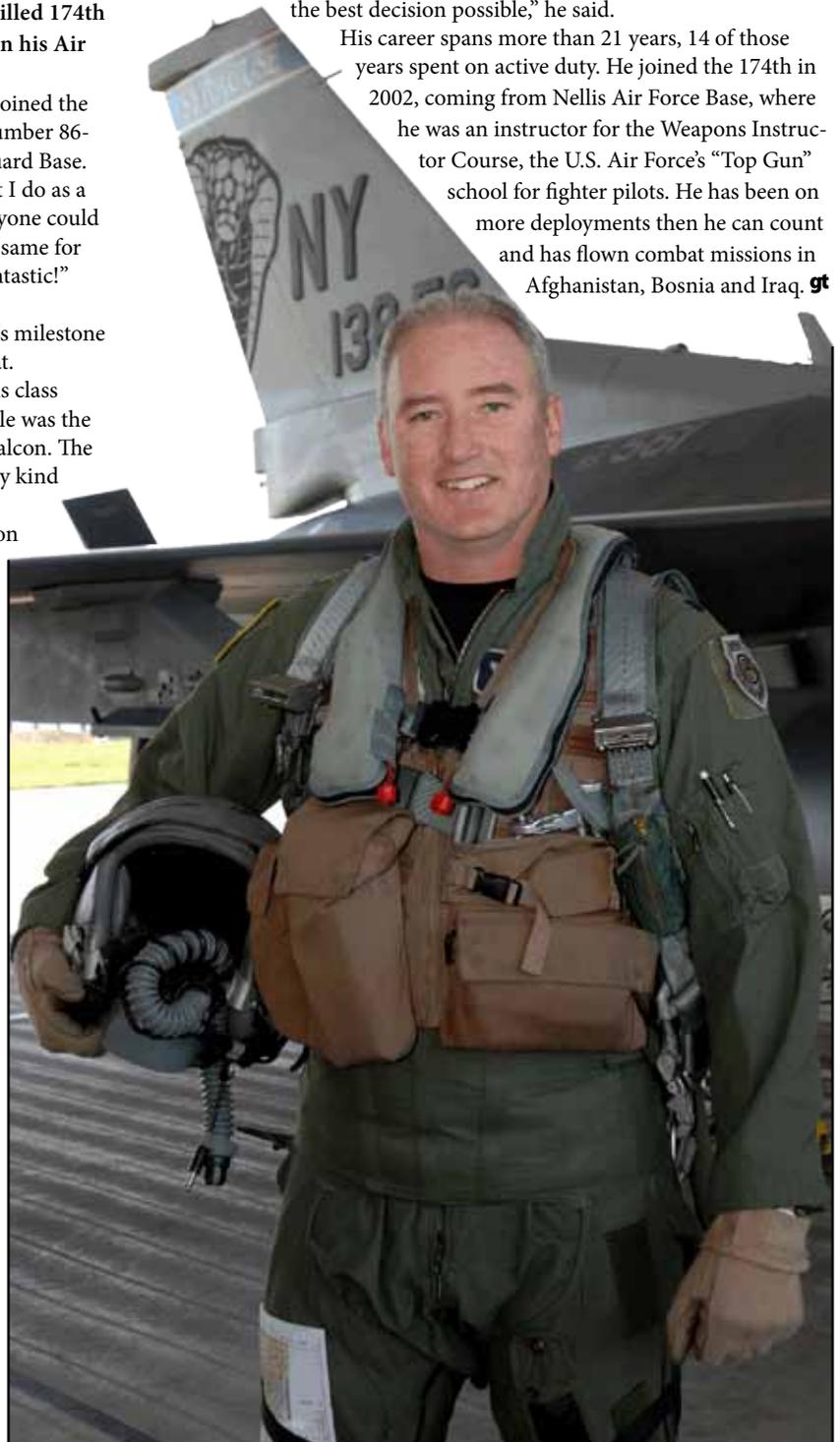
His wife Renee and two daughters Jennifer and Rachel are his biggest supporters. They have shared in all his triumphs and challenges as he progressed through his career. “I wish I could take them up with me to experience what I do. Because they are the reason that I can.” he said.

Brenton also talked about one of his more harrowing experiences as a 1st Lieutenant. While flying from Germany to Turkey in support of Operation Northern Watch, he was over the Mediterranean Sea when he had a trapped fuel problem. Basically his aircraft was out of gas, so he would have to divert to a foreign country. He contacted the tower, but was denied permission to land - the runway had just shut down due to another emergency aircraft. With fuel running low, he had to make a decision - either bail out or find somewhere near the runway to put the jet down. He instructed the tower that he was coming in and to clear the taxiways for a landing zone. While ground crews frantically cleared the taxiways he came in on fumes to a successful but white-knuckled landing on an uneven and precariously narrow surface between numerous other aircraft.

“It was experiences like this that helped me to be a better

pilot. It taught me not to panic and to stay level-headed so I could make the best decision possible,” he said.

His career spans more than 21 years, 14 of those years spent on active duty. He joined the 174th in 2002, coming from Nellis Air Force Base, where he was an instructor for the Weapons Instructor Course, the U.S. Air Force’s “Top Gun” school for fighter pilots. He has been on more deployments than he can count and has flown combat missions in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Iraq. **gt**





Retired New York City Fire Fighter Pat Concannon, Lt. Col. Christopher F. Hardej and Tech Sgt. Ruben Lopez unveil the piece of World Trade Center steel presented to the 106th Rescue Wing Aug. 1. Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus P. Calliste, 106th Rescue Wing.

WTC Steel Presented to 106th Rescue Wing

Story by 2nd Lt. Michael O'Hagan

F.S. GABRESKI AIRPORT, Westhampton Beach - Four retired members of the New York City Fire Department paid a special visit to the 106th Rescue Wing to deliver a sacred gift of steel that had been salvaged from our fallen World Trade Center Towers Aug. 1.

The presentation was part of a 106th Rescue Wing awards ceremony. Airmen were recognized for service, leadership and accomplishments.

Retired New York City Fire Department Lt. Pat Concannon accompanied by the three other retired FDNY members presented the steel on behalf of the New York City Fire Department. The steel was what remained of a select piece that had been put aside by the steel workers at 'Ground Zero.' The steel was used to carve out crosses to present to family members at funeral services that followed September 11, 2001.

It will be displayed in a place of honor in the Wing Headquarters building. **gt**



Retired New York City Fire Fighter Pat Concannon speaks to members of the 106th Rescue Wing about the significance of the World Trade Center steel presented to the wing Aug. 1 during a unit awards ceremony. Photo by Staff Sgt. Marcus P. Calliste, 106th Rescue Wing.

Guardian Angels Take to Long Island Waters

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy

HAMPTON BAYS - While some might see a sunny Saturday on a boat as a nice break from the office, for the pararescue jumper Guardian Angels (GA) of the 103rd Rescue Squadron, 106th Rescue Wing based at F.S. Gabreski Airport in Westhampton Beach, it is anything but a break.

During a mid-summer drill weekend Aug. 1, GAs arrived at the U.S. Coast Guard station in Hampton Bays to pick up their 27-foot safe boat, so named for its inability to capsize or sink. The safe boat is used for many different missions. Besides retrieving parachutes, it is used during extraction exercises and in case of emergencies it can be utilized to rescue Airmen. There are two boats that can be utilized by the Guardian Angels, one on the North Shore and another on the South Shore of Long Island.

Other watercraft that the GAs used included the Advanced Rescue Craft (ARC), commonly known as a Jet Ski or Wave Runner, and an inflatable boat kit called the Rigged Alternate Method Zodiac (RAMZ). The RAMZ kit is more than just the boat, it also includes the engine, gasoline and any other mission essential equipment.

The day's events weren't just focused on the pararescue GAs though; the training mission was a coordination of effort between the HC-130 transport aircraft of the 102nd Rescue Squadron, which deploy the GAs and kits, and the HH-60 helicopters of the 101st Rescue Squadron, which conducted the Alternate Insertion and Extraction training with the GAs.

After parachuting from the HC-130 and landing in the water, the GAs de-rigged the RAMZ kits and got under way while waiting for the HH-60 to arrive. During this time the safe boat crew worked quickly to retrieve the parachutes and any other debris left over from the RAMZ kits.

When the HH-60 arrived the crew worked with the GAs to conduct various tasks including "low and slows," hoist, fast rope and rope ladder maneuvers. Of course all this activity attracted the attention of local boaters, so GAs on ARCs worked to keep the curious observers at a safe distance.

When the GAs returned to Gabreski, wet and tired from a full day of training, most Guardsmen have gotten ready to, or were about to leave, for the day. The GAs, and others involved in the exercise, had another few hours to go before they could leave. Parachutes were given to the riggers of the 106th Operations Support Flight, who would need to rinse, dry and repack the chutes. In addition, all the gear used by the GAs had to have the salt water rinsed off and then members of each squadron met to discuss all phases of the training in a debriefing. For the GAs, the crews of the HC-130s and HH-60s, this kind of training is vital in ensuring the 106th Rescue Wing can accomplish its primary mission of Combat Search and Rescue. **gt**



106th Rescue Wing Guardian Angels (GAs) gather at a Rigged Alternate Method Zodiac (RAMZ) kit after their jump and prepare to get the zodiac boat under way Aug. 1. During the unit drill, the pararescue jumpers from the 103rd Rescue Squadron, 106th Rescue Wing, conducted various water exercises in the water off of Hampton Bays, N.Y. Once the GAs finished setting up their zodiac, an HH-60 from the 101st Rescue Squadron worked with the PJs to perform insertion and extractions. Below, GAs retrieve their parachutes after the jump. Riggers from the 106th Operation Support Flight will rinse, dry and repack the chutes so that they will be ready for the next jump.





New York Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. James W. Kwiatkowski (left), joins Col. Michael F. Canders (center) and Col. Thomas J. Owens II as the reviewing officer for the 106th Rescue Wing Change of Command Ceremony at Westhampton Beach Oct. 4. Photo below, Kwiatkowski presents the organizational colors of the Rescue Wing to Col. Owens, representing his assumption of command. The ceremony is a time-honored tradition which formally symbolizes the continuity of authority as the command is passed from one individual to another. Photos by Senior Airman Chris Muncy, 106th Rescue Wing.

Rescue Wing Welcomes New Commander

By Master Sgt. Michael Riccardi, Jr., 106th Rescue Wing

F.S. GABRESKI AIRPORT, Westhampton Beach -- With the posting of colors, the playing of the National Anthem, the command of "officers face" and by Col. Thomas J. Owens II accepting the 106th Wing organizational flag, a new 106th Rescue Wing commander was welcomed to the New York Air National Guard here Oct. 4.

"I am honored and humbled to have been chosen by Maj. Gen. Taluto and the New York Air National Guard leadership to command the premier 106th Rescue Wing," Owens said in his remarks to the assembled Airmen. "My family and I are excited to be here with the outstanding Airmen, families and friends of the 106th."

Owens stressed the fact that the mission is accomplished by people and teams of people, and that he was absolutely honored and

extremely excited to move into the future with such a proven unit, praising the 106th Rescue Wing for its accomplishments.

Col. Owens was previously the vice commander of the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse and a Madison County resident. He is an Iraq War veteran and command pilot with more than 3,800 hours of flight time.

Col. Michael F. Canders, who has commanded the 106th since 2002, will take command of an overseas Air Expeditionary Group in the Central Command theater. His emotional and heartfelt farewell speech during the ceremony indicated that he will miss this unit greatly, and the standing ovation to Col. Canders indicated that the unit will greatly miss him as well.

"I am very grateful and very humbled to have had the greatest job ever, to serve with and lead



the men and women of the 106th Rescue Wing and their families during this time in our nation's history," Canders said. "Their service and sacrifice went far beyond what was expected and I will always remember what they did so "That Others May Live," a reference to the wing motto. **gt**

Stewart Air Base Honors Hometown Heroes

Story by Senior Airman Jonathan Young, 105th Airlift Wing

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh -- The New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing honored 261 Airman and former members Aug. 2 as part of the Hometown Heroes Salute program. The Airmen were being honored for deployments in support of contingency operations since Sept. 11, 2001.

The 90-minute ceremony was held among hundreds of guests that were there to honor friends and family members.

"It is a well-deserved demonstration of our honor and respect for your contribution and sacrifices," said Brig. Gen. Verle L. Johnston Jr., commander of the 105th Airlift Wing in his remarks to the honorees.

Besides Airmen, the program also honored family members for their sacrifice during deployments. Spouses received a pen and pencil set and children received dog tags.

"I felt it was more important that they recognize the family members more than the military," said Tech. Sgt. Raymond Lucca, a member of the 105th and award recipient. He added that deploying is part of the job, but he can't imagine what it must be like for family members. "They carry on day to day activities while worrying about their loved ones, who perform their duties in harm's way. They deserve a lot of the credit," Lucca said.

"The 105th Airlift Wing has an unbelievable reputation, a great reputation earned over time," said Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto, The Adjutant General of the New York National Guard.

The 105th continues to send Airman abroad and has several men and women scheduled to deploy in the upcoming months.

This was the first Hometown Heroes Salute for the Air National Guard in New York State and will be held annually by the 105th Airlift Wing to recognize the contributions of its Citizen Airmen.

The Air National Guard is playing catch up to ensure all eligible Airmen from the past eight years of contingency and Air Expeditionary Force deployments were honored during the first ceremony. **gt**



Senior Airman Brian Biddinger shows Airman 1st Class Michael Segreti the medal he received at the Hometown Heroes salute ceremony Aug. 2. Biddinger received the medal due to his prolonged deployment after Sept. 11, 2001. Photo by Airman Basic Deanna DeLaura, 105th Airlift Wing.

105th Air Wing Salutes Young Champions

Story by Senior Airman Jonathan Young



Young Champions Alumni Joshua Decker enjoys the festivities with his sponsor Master Sgt. Renee Milano. Photo by Airman Deanna DeLaura, 105th Airlift Wing.

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE -- The eleventh annual Young Champions ceremony took place here Sept. 20 as 11 Young Champions were honored for their courage as they have battled or are currently battling life-threatening or debilitating injuries or illness.

The ceremony was hosted by Col. Charles Faro, vice-commander of the 105th Airlift Wing. He explained that Young Champions is a base com-

munity service program started in 1998 through the efforts of retired Lt. Col. and nurse practitioner Harriet Mark and Senior Master Sgt. Susan Sommerlad with other unit volunteers.

"Our hope is to further inspire a special group of children from within our own unit and the greater Hudson Valley community," Faro said.

The Young Champions received a medal and certificate honoring their achievements. **gt**



Above, members of the 105th Security Forces Squadron (SFS) and members of the 820th SFS practice tactical movements between buildings Sept. 19 as they prepare for upcoming deployments. At right, members of the two units conduct mounted patrols.



Security Forces Train for Wider Mission

Story and photos by Senior Airman Jonathan Young, 105th Airlift Wing

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE -- The 105th Security Forces Squadron continued their training for their new mission supporting the 820th SFS from Moody Air Force Base, Ga. Although plenty of organizational preparation has been going on, over 25 members of the 820th came here so the units could begin working side by side.

The 820th was able to bring several of their specialized vehicles up by way of the 137th Airlift Squadron here. A C5A Galaxy flew to Moody Sept. 14 and picked up the equipment and Airman for training in New York State.

Once here, the training ramped up at a unique facility off base. The complex consists of over 50 unused buildings making a perfect

training simulator for an urban environment. The training consisted of mounted and dismounted drills.

Master Sgt. Shawn Beahan, a senior trainer for the 105th SFS, explained that the goal was to get the 105th Airmen on the exact same page as the 820th by focusing on fundamentals. This will ensure the muscle memory they're creating is the correct way to operate in similar situations, he added.

The training was primarily taught by members of the 820th to share their expertise in real world experiences they've had while deployed.

"Very professional, definitely highly motivated," said Master Sgt. Donald Gallagher from the 820th SFS and an instructor for the training.

The mission is unique to the units because they are policing areas outside the air bases they are stationed at. Typically security forces squadrons have the responsibility of keeping the bases secure. The 820th usually replaces Army military police units where they are working outside the wire.

There will be 15 members of the 105th SFS deploying with the 820th sometime in the early part of 2010. As the time goes on the 105th SFS will be deploying Airman overseas on regular rotations. The new mission for the 105th will also add approximately 214 new Guard authorizations to support the tasking. **gt**

105th Welcomes New Command Chief

Story by Senior Airman Jonathan Young, 105th Airlift Wing



Former Command Chief Joseph Keenan (right) welcomes the new Command Chief of the 105th Airlift Wing, Joseph Rizzo Oct. 4. Photo by Airman Deanna DeLaura, 105th Airlift Wing.

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE
The 105th received a new command chief as Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Rizzo became command chief of the 105th Airlift Wing, taking over for retiring Command Chief Joseph Keenan at a Change of Authority Ceremony here Oct. 4.

The ceremony began with Rizzo being promoted to chief master sergeant as his wife Donna and Brig. Gen. Verle L. Johnston Jr. punched on his new rank. Rizzo was previously the 1st Sgt. of the 213th Engineering Installation Squadron.

Johnston then addressed everyone first by thanking Chief Keenan for his years in the position, but quickly explained it was Chief Rizzo's day.

"It's the enlisted force that really makes the base run and Chief Rizzo has the heavy respon-

sibility of representing them all," Johnston said.

He explained the importance of the position as the command chief is the senior enlisted person here and responsible for the enlisted force, which is about 90 percent of base personnel.

It will be a noticeable change since Rizzo is a traditional Guardsman. However, he will be very accessible and will do a great job, Johnston said.

"I'm very excited about having a traditional Guardsman as your command chief," Johnston said.

"I know it's going to be challenging, but I'm ready for it," Rizzo said

He thanked his family for all their support, then the 213th and said it was quite a ride, but he is looking forward to serving them as command chief. Rizzo is only the third command chief the 105th has had since the position was created. **gt**

The Influence of Captain Osterhout

Syracuse Fighter Wing Mourns Loss of Unit Chaplain

Commentary by 1st Lt. Greta Lewis, 174th Fighter Wing

HANCOCK FIELD, Syracuse -- The young chaplain at the 174th Fighter Wing has gone on to answer the higher calling to worship at God's side, and our loss is His gain.

Captain Jay Osterhout was lost to the 174th Fighter Wing family when his vehicle ran off the road after suffering a fatal heart attack June 18. Certainly his wife, Christy, and his two young daughters, Abigail and Breanna, will miss him, but his presence will definitely be missed among his military family members, as well.

If you were fortunate enough to cross paths with this young captain, you would know that he was a kind and gentle soul; a person that knew no enemies, and he always had a story to tell you. He was always visiting work areas and gently encouraging and inviting everyone

to attend Protestant services, which he was always quick to let you know were held Sunday mornings of drill at 1130 and usually in the Wing Conference Room.

"He was certainly a servant of the Lord's, gracious to counsel and advise," Lt. Col. Douglas Decker from the wing said, "He did everything we asked him to do."

Whenever I was rushing about to put out fires and prevent others, I would run into him quite often. And no matter how busy, it was always nice to take a moment to chat, even if only for five minutes, which is about as much time as I would have to spare. But as was his nature, he would always invite me to service, and I would always tell him, "If I don't have anything going on at that time, I will."

Of course, I never went. Not because I didn't want to, but

because I never found the time. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, especially on a drill weekend when we must try to "fit it all in," we keep rushing here and there trying to get to every appointment. Sometimes we must slow down. Otherwise, life will pass us by.

Most people are always trying to get it all in and get it all done, instead of appreciating the little things in life like taking your son to his little league game, pushing your daughter on the swings, or taking a quiet walk along the beach with the person you love.

Yes, we must work, but to maximize our time here on earth, we must also live, laugh and love.

As I saw Chaplain Osterhout going around, he was always leisurely, yet purposeful. Even though I was in a rush, I would slow down to his pace, and I would realize

that I was missing something.

Now with his untimely passing, I intend to look to his example to slow down and take my time to see things in their true beauty, and not with the blur I normally do while going from point A to point B.

I will remember him and his caring nature, but as Father Decker said, "He will truly, truly be missed." **gt**



Home at Last

Security Forces Return from Iraq

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Peter Dean, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RE-SERVE STATION -- "This is killing me," said Dennis Goerss, reacting to news about his younger brother Justin and other 107th Airlift Wing Security Force members, flight being delayed an additional 25 minutes.

Goerss along with family members, friends and loved ones gathered at the Buffalo International Airport on Sept. 3 awaiting the arrival of the final wave of 107th AW Security Force members to return home from their six-month deployment. While deployed the 107th members were an essential part of the 447th Air Expeditionary Group Security Force Squadron, providing base security on and around Sather Air Base, Baghdad, Iraq.

"I used to be his hero but now he's mine," said Dennis Goerss, referring to his younger brother Senior Airman Justin Goerss. "They're all heroes," he added.

"Amazing, can't describe the feeling," said Senior Airman Justin Goerss, referring to being home.

"I'm relieved, it's good to be

back home," said Senior Airman Stephanie Hopkins as she was embraced by more than a dozen family and loved ones.

"The first glimpse of her face was amazing absolutely amazing," said Bobbie Hopkins, Stephanie's mother. "I'm so proud of her," she added.

"You should see our street, all the neighbors have welcome home signs and balloons on their mail boxes," said Bobbie Hopkins. "They'll all be out cheering when we get there," she added.

While deployed Airman Hopkins, an avid singer, performed the National Anthem during a Fourth of July celebration held on Sather Air Base. In their limited free time, Hopkins, along with other unit members, participated in voluntary programs that aided local Iraqi families with basic necessities such as food, toiletries and clothing.

Since 9/11 the 107th has routinely deployed its members throughout the country and the world in response to both state and federal contingencies. **gt**



Senior Airman Justin Goerss embraces his older brother Dennis. "I used to be his hero but now he's mine," said Dennis Goerss. Airman Goerss returned home from Iraq Sept. 3 after a six-month deployment with the 107th Airlift Wing Security Forces Squadron.



109th Southbound for the Polar Season

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, Hawaii -- New York Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. David Aymat refuels a LC-130 Hercules belonging to the 109th Airlift Wing at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Oct. 28 in preparation for a flight to Antarctica. Aymat and the rest of his LC-130 aircrew stopped at Hickam en route to Antarctica to support Operation Deep Freeze, the Department of Defense's logistical support to U.S. research activities at the southernmost continent.

The wing kicked off its 21st year of providing support to Antarctica on Oct. 21. The 109th Airlift Wing is the only unit in the United States military flying aircraft equipped with skis that can land on ice and snow.

About 300 members of the wing will spend 16 weeks resupplying Antarctic bases operated by the National Science Foundation and Australia.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kerry Jackson, U.S. Air Force.



Family members, friends and loved ones gathered at the Buffalo International Airport on Sept. 3 awaiting the arrival of the final wave of 107th Airlift Wing Security Force members to return home from their six-month deployment.

10th Brigade Engineers Up On The Roof

Story and photos by Maj. Dave Greenwood, 10th Bde.

GUIDERLAND RIFLE RANGE - The engineers of the 10th Brigade conducted annual training at the Guilderland Training Area, just west of Albany from July 19th through 23rd, constructing a permanent bleacher enclosure in the rear training area on the rifle range, near the banks of the Normanskill Creek. The 10th also reinforced the earth covering on the gabions (wire baskets containing stone) which protect the pistol range from the flood-prone creek.

The Guilderland TA is used by the National Guard and Reserve components as well as by state, county and local law enforcement agencies as their primary chemical agent and firearms training facility. The 10th Brigade of the New York Guard has had the primary responsibility of maintaining the training area over the years to control flooding at the location.

The 10th also conducts periodic training at the facility to include Landing Zone Safety Operations, Winter Training and Land Navigation Training. The Guilderland Training Area includes several firing ranges, a classroom and mess hall facility, gashouse, shoot house, landing zones, severe cliffs and a swift water stream.

In April, the 1st Battalion, 102nd Engineer Regiment of the 10th Brigade, headquartered in Binghamton, began the project by grubbing the site, clearing trees and brush, and removing a chain-link fence that had fallen into disrepair. The work entailed use of a chain saw, front-end loader and backhoe. The site was cleared and rough graded and several tons of crushed stone placed and compacted with vibratory plates. This gravel base was completed utilizing a state-of-the art laser level. Forms for the concrete pour were then fabricated, installed and staked in place.

In May, the concrete floor was poured and in June the forms were removed and framing started. During the annual training, framing was completed along with truss installation and finally roofing material attached. More than 30 truck loads of clay earth were delivered and applied with heavy earth moving equipment to the pistol range back stop to protect the gabion baskets which prevent soil erosion. The service value of the project (which represents the value of labor, transportation & miscellaneous costs) provided to the State of New York by the 10th Brigade totaled \$78,264 – a significant achievement.

All construction operations conducted by the 1-102nd Engineers followed a strictly-enforced work site safety program. Special attention is given to construction vehicle safety, fall protection, proper hydration requirements, sun exposure, first aid, power tool usage and chainsaw



If you build it - they will train. Engineers of the New York Guard's 10th Brigade construct a roof over the Guilderland Training Area bleachers.

operation. The 102nd employed a safety officer for each engineer mission.

Over the past decade, the 102nd Engineers have conducted numerous missions at Fort Drum, home of the Army's 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and other state facilities including the Camp Smith Training Site in Cortlandt Manor. **gt**



Command Sergeant Major Yatram Jagroop applies a power drill to the task of constructing the Guilderland range roof during the 102nd Engineer annual training at Guilderland Range near Albany, N.Y.

Search and Rescue Training On Land and Water

By Major John Neely, 10th Brigade

GUILDERLAND TRAINING AREA - The 10th Brigade's annual training combined a real-world engineering mission at Guilderland Training Area, just west of Albany, with a comprehensive search and rescue exercise.

Guilderland is used by the National Guard and Reserve components as well as by state, county and local police agencies as their primary chemical agent and firearms training facility. The 10th has been the primary maintainer over the years to control flooding. The 10th also conducts periodic training at the facility to include Landing Zone safety operations, winter training and land navigation.

Guilderland includes several firing ranges, a classroom and mess hall facility, gas house, shoot house, landing zones, severe cliffs and a swift water stream.

As the 10th went boots down at Guilderland the 102nd Engineers Battalion went to work with their primary tasks of updating beam and flood control facilities, as well as constructing a roof and concrete pad for bleachers located near the long distance rifle range, as a location for spectators, participants and trainees.

While the engineers were hard at work on the bleacher mission, the 2nd Emergency Response Battalion (ER) began their annual training by deploying troops to the field for training in land navigation, slope angle rescue,



Sergeant Michael Romanych, a trained search and rescue servicemember from the 10th Brigade, crosses the Normanville Creek near Albany via rope bridge. Romanych was named New York Guard Member of the Year for 2008. Photo by Maj. Dave Greenwood, 10th Brigade.

swift water rescue, river crossing operations, ropes and knots, patient evacuation, landing zone safety and patient loading and unloading during helicopter medical evacuation. Troops of the 2nd ER learned the principals of crossing

a white water stream as a team and as individuals. They built rope bridges and rope handrail systems for safety. All of the training led up to the search and rescue exercise planned for the end of the week. **gt**



CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor -- Westchester resident Brian Colety, an administrator for the Board of Elections from New Rochelle, does morning physical training as he goes through the New York Guard's one-week basic training course for new recruits.

The New York Guard conducted week-long training schools for new recruits, non-commissioned officers, and company officers here July 20-25.

Photo by Staff Sgt. David Konig, N.Y. Guard Public Affairs

More Than a Hike in the Woods

56th Brigade Search and Rescue Trains for Emergency Response

Story and photo by Sgt. Christopher Ferraro, 56th Brigade

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE – Members of the New York Guard’s 56th Brigade, along with troops from Long Island’s 14th Brigade, conducted a four day field training exercise here in June to test their search and rescue capabilities.

The training incorporated in all facets of the New York Guard’s augmentation role to support the New York National Guard. In two locations – Newburgh’s Stewart Air Base and Minnewaska State Park – the Guard volunteers tested their skills in search and rescue procedures, tactical operation center operations, interacting with civilian and military emergency first responders, and providing first aid.

The exercise – dubbed Operation Hudson Guard 09 – kicked off with a simulated small plane crash in the Shawangunk mountains near Stewart Air National Guard Base.

Immediately the call went out for all available New York Guard Search and Rescue units to augment National Guard response teams. The

56th Brigade troops at Stewart Air Base were already undergoing common task classroom training. Upon receiving their orders to mobilize for deployment, the troops broke down their Tactical Operations Center (TOC) at Stewart, loaded up all equipment, and prepared to move the operations center to Minnewaska State Park, the site of the main search area for survivors of the crash.

The switch in locations afforded the 56th the opportunity to train in military convoy procedures.

Upon arrival at the scene, the 56th was joined by troops from the 14th Brigade.

The combined task force hiked into the suspected crash area and performed a search in the heavily wooded forest, eventually coming across the first piece of wreckage.

Hiking through the rough terrain, the New York Guard members located the debris field and soon thereafter found victims, portrayed by New Paltz emergency medical personnel.

“The field training was motivating,” Pfc. Kevin Gileo of the 56th Brigade said. “The SAR mission was a unique training mission ... we were sent into the deep woods that were so thick at times we had to backtrack and find another way around that particular area. The rough terrain taught us how tough it could be on a real-world mission.”

The SAR troops performed quick triage on all of the victims and called for medical support, putting into play the triage training they had just received back at Stewart.

New Paltz EMS personnel added a sense of realism to the exercise by playing the part of disoriented victims suffering from shock.

For Gileo, that kind of immediate field reinforcement of classroom training proved effective.

“The best part was learning triage a day earlier and then being able to put what we learned to use in the SAR mission,” Gileo said. **gt**

New York Guard members Staff Sgt. Jon Antonucci and Private Kevin Gileo execute a line search during search and rescue training operations in June near Lake Minnewaska. The training exercise, coined “Operation Hudson Guard,” provided opportunities for New York Guard members to prepare for search and rescue events in the most difficult terrain.



New York Guard's 88th Brigade Changes Leadership



Colonel George DeSimone receives the brigade colors from Acting Command Sgt. Maj. Fred Manney as Maj. Gen. Fergal Foley looks on. DeSimone took command of the New York Guard's 88th Brigade from retiring commander Col. James Whalen at Brooklyn's Fort Hamilton June 26. The 88th Brigade provides personnel and support to the New York National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package. Guard members receive training and equipment to decontaminate potential casualties from a CBRNE incident. Photo by Capt. George Lamboy, N.Y. Guard Public Affairs.



All in the Family

At right: New York Guard recruit Pvt. Michaela Milton stands next to her drill instructor and father, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Milton.

At left: The New York Guard welcomed a father and son Basic Training team with Pvt. John Scott, and his dad Pvt. Stephen Scott, of Queens. Photos by Sgt. Chris Ferraro, 56th Brigade.

Naval Militia Tests Unmanned Watercraft

Training Partnership Strengthens Navy's "MUSCL"

Story by Capt. Alvin Phillips, 42nd Infantry Division



A Naval Militia member and civilian contractor launch the MUSCL, short for Modular Unmanned Surface Craft Littoral, from PB400, during a test off the Indian Point nuclear power plant on Aug. 4. Below, the MUSCL gets underway in the Hudson River. Photos by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

BUCHANAN—The New York Naval Militia teamed up with experts from the U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Center to test an unmanned watercraft, designed to detect explosives attached to docks and ships, Aug. 4 off Indian Point nuclear power plant.

The small boat, consisting of television and forward looking infrared radar sensors, works like a nautical version of the land-based anti-IED robots used in Iraq and Afghanistan to investigate and eliminate explosive devices, is called MUSCL.

The MUSCL (Modular Unmanned Surface Craft Littoral) is "easy to steer, locks onto a heading, semi autonomous and straight-forward like operating or playing a Sony Play Station," explained Lee Cofer, a project manager with the Naval Surface Warfare Center from Panama City, Fla.

The exercise was part of a joint training exercise with civilian experts from the U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Center, the New York Naval Militia and the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia for Trojan Horse 2009, a maritime security exercise run annually by the State University of New York Maritime College.

Initiatives like the Trojan Horse 2009 exercise

highlight the joint commitment between the N.Y. Naval Militia and other federal agencies to develop and foster new collaborative means of patrolling New York's waterways.

Since September 11, 2001, the New York Naval Militia established its role in Defense Support to Civil Authority through the creation of the Military Emergency Boat Service. "Port maritime security is very important for homeland defense from both a domestic and international perspective," said Maj. Gen. Robert L. Wolf, commander of the New York Naval Militia. "By tapping into different individual agencies, we are able to achieve and secure the greater good for the people of the state."

Crew members are able to view a video and provide control up to two miles away, an essential capability for the various scenarios during the Hudson River training.

"It is absolutely a perfect opportunity to demonstrate our ability to work with a federal agency such as the U.S. Navy to become a force multiplier at trafficking criminal intent on N.Y. waterways," Commander Don McKnight of the New York Naval Militia said.

The Hudson River proved to be an ideal location for testing the latest in littoral warfare as a potentially armed vessel for the exercise inched

closer to the perimeter of the Indian Point power facilities, only to be intercepted by the MUSCL in a coordinated and timely manner.

Phil Thompson from the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO) spoke highly of New York State's commitment to advance new technologies and relate them to real world missions.

"This was the first time we [CTTSO] involved ourselves in this type of exercise at a state level," Thompson said. **gt**



Assisting U.S. Border Patrol On Lake Champlain

PB 280 Ensures Boats Crossing the Border are Inspected

Story and photo by Capt. Shawn Shutts, Joint Forces Headquarters

ROUSES POINT, N.Y. -- For the second year, the New York Naval Militia teamed up with the United States Customs and Border Protection Agency in July to enforce customs inspections where Lake Champlain changes from American to Canadian.

In a multi-agency operation consisting of federal, state and local law enforcement, the Naval Militia ensured that all vessels moving from Quebec to the United States stop and check in with customs. They made contact with U.S. bound vessels as they crossed the Canadian Border and directed them to the customs point approximately 500 meters after they crossed the border

The operation couldn't happen without the Naval Militia, said Border Patrol Agent Mike Cisco. Sometimes during the height of the season, 100-150 vessels could pass through the point on a given day and having the additional boat makes it easier to ensure all vessels stop, he explained.

The Naval Militia enables the Border Patrol to gain "operational control" of the lake, added Supervisory Border Patrol Agent Richard LaBounty.

"The members of the New York Naval Militia continue to be a strong partner and have been a great force multiplier for the U S Border Patrol. Their expertise and professionalism during Operation Lake Champlain has allowed us to reallocate our agents to other parts of the lake and provide increased border security in our area of operations," said Swanton Sector Chief Patrol Agent, Daniel B. Doty.

U.S. Customs and the Border Protection conducted inspections at the designated inspection port just before the bridge crosses Lake Champlain from New York to Vermont. The operation also involved the New York State Police and the local Sheriff's department.

According to Agent Cisco, prior to the opening of the customs point on the lake, there was an honor system, in which vessels were required to report they had crossed and customs would come down to inspect the vessel. The problem was very few vessels would report that they had crossed.

The Border Patrol has always sought to inspect vessels entering the United States, but the construction of the inspection station has made enforcement more effective, said Border Patrol Agent Mark Henry, spokesman for the Swanton District of the Border Patrol.

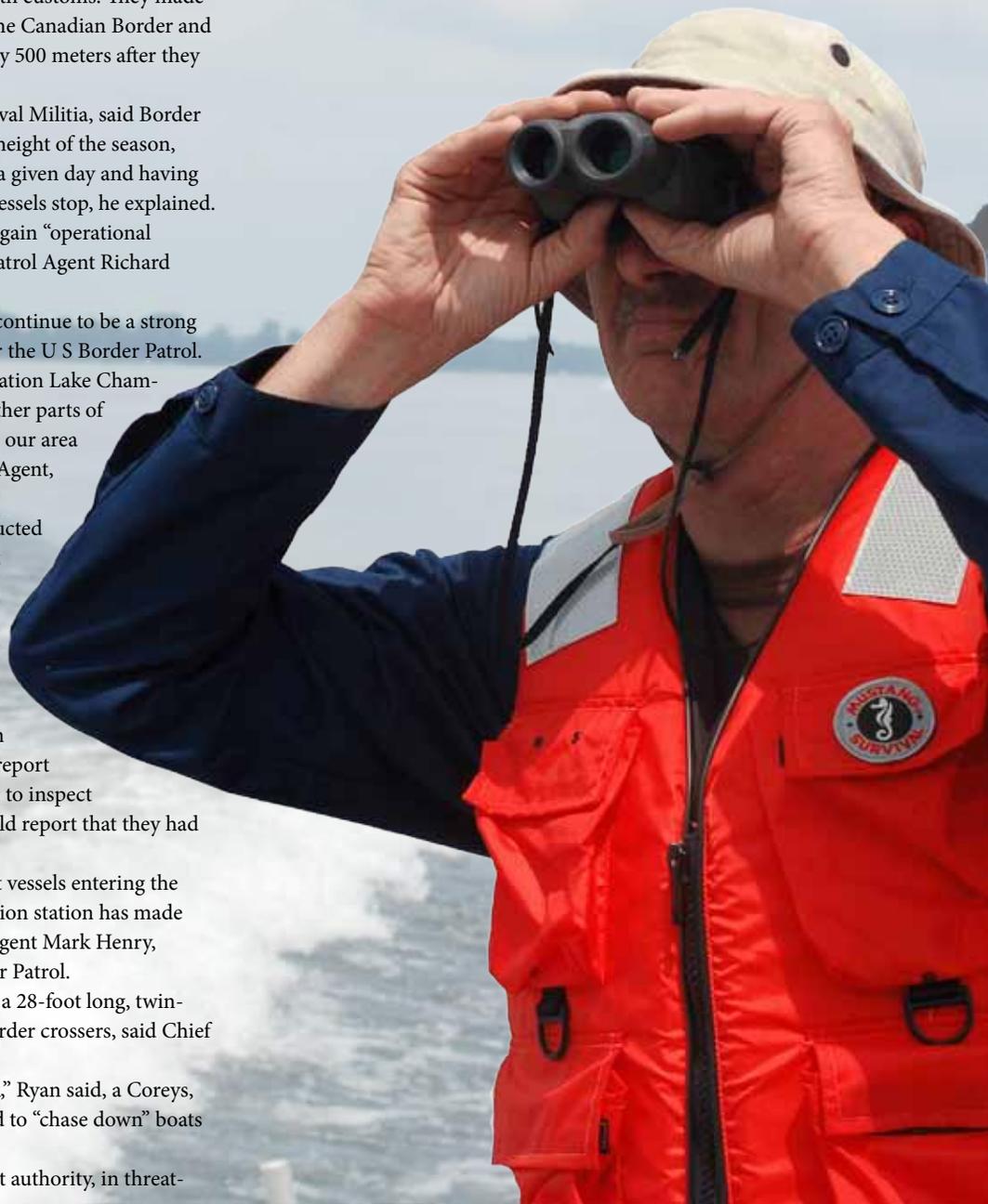
Just the presence of the Naval Militia's PB 280, a 28-foot long, twin-engine boat sometimes acted as a deterrent to border crossers, said Chief Petty Officer Paul Ryan the boat's coxswain.

"A lot of boats see us, turn around and go back," Ryan said, a Coreys, N.Y. resident. At times, Ryan added, the crew had to "chase down" boats and guide them into the customs station.

Since the Naval Militia has no law enforcement authority, in threat-

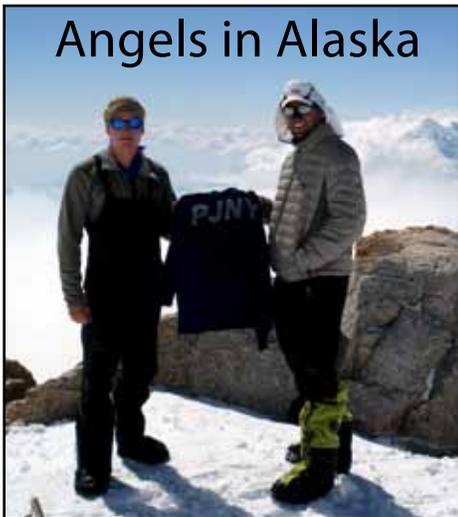
ening situations they call upon the Border Patrol for assistance, Ryan explained.

The two-man crew of PB280 handled all the maintenance on the boat themselves, which normally meant spending 30 minutes prepping each day before operations, said Petty Officer Garret Aldershoff, a Scotia resident. **gt**



GUARD NEWS BRIEFS AND PHOTOS

Angels in Alaska



DENALI NATIONAL FOREST, Alaska -- Pararescue Jumpers Staff Sgt. Samuel G. Prescott, at left and Senior Master Sgt. Erik S. Blom, from the 103rd Rescue Squadron of the N.Y. Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing supported park rangers on Mt. Denali, Alaska, in July. The Guardian Angels, as the pararescue forces are called, conducted patrols and rescue operations. The GAs worked at an elevation of approx. 14,000 ft. in below freezing weather. Courtesy photo.



Meeting Mr. Met

NEW YORK -- New York National Guard Maj. Joel Ablove and his son Aaron meet Mr. Met during a Mets Game at Citi Field Sep. 10. Nine New York Army National Guard Soldiers attended the game as guests of the Sons of the American Legion. The Mets could not overcome a difficult first inning and lost to the Florida Marlins, 13-4. Photo by Ken Kraetzer, Sons of the American Legion, Pelham Post 50.



GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba – Service members from the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron assigned to support operations at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, pose for a picture in front of the Camp Justice sign, Aug. 14, 2009. The 474th ECES includes members of the 109th Airlift Wing. The unit has the mission of maintaining the Expeditionary Legal Complex and Camp Justice facilities and infrastructure. Photo by Spc. Cody Black, JTF Guantanamo.

Fresh BEEF arrives at Guantanamo

By Army Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens, JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba – Service members from New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing arrived here in mid-August to support the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron (ECAS) at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

The Airmen will work alongside the Arkansas Air National Guard's 188th Tactical Fighter Wing, elements of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Air Wing and the Illinois Air National Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing.

The new units will serve a six-month tour in support of JTF Guantanamo.

JTF Guantanamo's 474th ECES is responsible for construction and sustainment of Camp Justice and the Expeditionary Legal Complex in support of military commissions at the naval station.

Teams of engineers from the 474th ECES maintain generators and electricity, provide carpentry skills, pest control services, utilities maintenance, heavy equipment operation and liquid fuel support. Administrative control and operations teams work behind the scenes to coordinate all of the projects.

When commissions are not happening at

Guantanamo, the squadron, also known as the Base Emergency Engineering Force, or BEEF, stays busy by completing projects around the naval station and JTF to improve the conditions for the service members and detainees.

Currently, the engineers are working to build a soccer field at Camp America and repairing flooring and distribution panels in the ELC. **gt**



New York Guard Recognizes a Distinguished Graduate

Sergeant Carl Majors, from the New York Guard's 88th Brigade is the Distinguished Graduate of the 2009 Basic NCO Course conducted at Camp Smith. In civilian life, Majors is a New York City bus driver. Photo by Pvt. Ubon Mendie, Headquarters, NY Guard.

Guard Hosts Student Field Trip

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

ITHACA – They came, they saw, and they asked questions – lots of them. And the Soldiers, who had once engaged insurgents in Afghanistan and Iraq, took on the students’ questions, engaging them with their knowledge and experience.

Outnumbered by about six to one, the veteran Soldiers gave the students a taste of a Soldier’s life, and everyone – Soldiers and students alike – appeared to have fun.

For one school day on Oct. 23, about a half-dozen Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry hosted 28 Homer High School students and a dozen foreign-exchange students from Tompkins-Cortland Community College (TC3) in a learning event designed to give them a first hand look and feel for the American military experience. The TC3 students hailed from places like Turkey, Pakistan and Ghana, and the Homer students were studying guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgencies, according to their teacher Joe Cortese, who conceived the idea for the visit.

Cortese said the goal was for the students to familiarize themselves with such things as the Soldiers’ weaponry, equipment and food and talk with them one-on-one.

“The fact that the Soldiers served in Afghanistan is a perfect link to my counter-insurgency course,” he said.

An M203 rifle, Mark-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher, humvees, radios, night-vision devices and other equipment were on display. The students got to handle weapons, sit in the vehicles, wear body armor and ask questions.

The foreign students are from TC3 Global, a scholarship program that brings less-fortunate

high-achieving students to U.S. colleges. When introduced to the idea of visiting Soldiers, some of the foreign students’ reactions were “intensely negative,” Cortese said.

But the Soldiers’ bearing appeared to carry the day as the foreign students spoke with them. Emmanuel Borlu, a business student from Ghana, said he was reluctant to visit at first, but later “found it was not harmful.”

“This has been a learning experience for me,” he said. “The people are friendly and willing to offer assistance.”

While opposed to the United States presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, Pakistani student Ahmed Hussain said his apprehensions diminished when he spoke with the Soldiers about their lives and jobs, and found them “very kind and friendly.”

“I felt I might face trouble because of the political climate,” said Hussain, a business administration student. “I found out the Soldiers are very nice, as are the other people.”

The Soldiers also held a question and answer session, which Cortese described as “super.”

“It covered a lot of different topics,” he said. “The Soldiers were really sharp, really professional and really human at the same time.”

“The day was transformative for them and how they viewed the American Soldier,” he said. “They became human beings to them.”

Staff Sgt. Carl Bush, the unit readiness NCO, was in charge of the Soldiers who spoke with the students. Bush, who also deployed to Afghanistan with the unit, said he enjoyed the students’ visit.

“It was really nice to talk to the students, and it was great that the foreign exchange students agreed to come as well,” he said.



Staff Sgt. Carl Bush from the 2-108th Infantry familiarizes infantry weapons with a Homer High School student during the student visit to the Ithaca armory Oct. 23.

Decorating a WWII Rainbow Veteran

By Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

HAMBURG, N.Y. – A modern-day veteran of the New York Army National Guard’s 42nd Infantry Division, the Army’s famous Rainbow Division presented overdue honors to a Rainbow veteran of the past late this summer.

Major Vincent Memole presented the Bronze Star and Combat Infantryman’s Badge to Staff Sgt. George M. Wagner Jr. August 16 at the Erie County Fair in Western New York State.

Wagner, now 86, served with the 42nd Infantry Division’s 232nd Infantry Regiment during World War II, serving in Europe in late 1944 and early 1945.

He was severely wounded and sent to England to recover from gun shot wounds to his right lower back and upper left shoulder. Wagner received his Purple Heart while hospitalized in England, but never received his additional military decorations.

“It was a great day for him and his family,” Memole said after the ceremony. “And it was my extreme honor to be the one pinning those medals on his shirt.”

Memole, a veteran of the 42nd Infantry Division deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005, now serves as an operations officer with the Army Reserve’s 98th Training Division. **gt**

Photo at right, Maj. Vincent Memole presents the Bronze Star Medal and Combat Infantryman’s Badge to WWII 42nd Division veteran Sgt. George M. Wagner, Jr. Aug. 16. Photo by Rosemarie Herr.



Preparing for Missions at Home, Overseas

New Military Police Unit to Provide Troops for Contingency Operations, Homeland Defense

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

AUBURN – Standing up and shipping out were themes of the 102nd Military Police Battalion's activation ceremony here Oct. 18.

Standing up were the battalion's headquarters and headquarters detachment (HHD) and the battalion itself, which gathers under its newly unfurled colors three seasoned military police (MP) companies: the 105th, 222nd, and the 107th from across upstate New York State.

Shipping out is the battalion's 105th MP Company, receiving notice to begin training for deployment sometime in 2011.

The battalion commander, Lt. Col. Martin Dinan, reflected on these developments in the light of past, present and future military police activations state wide, and the changing role of the guard itself. Just two years ago, companies that now fall under the battalion were either in Iraq, or just returning to garrison duty at Fort Drum, Dinan noted.

"If all these activations are not proof that we transitioned from a strategic force to an operational force, then I know of no greater example," Dinan, of Troy, told unit members and guests. "Yet as I speak today, we have more than 60 Soldiers deployed with the 206th MP Company in Iraq, and as recently as last week, we sent 17 volunteers to pre-mobilization training with the 442 MP Company. On the horizon, the 105th is once again going to start training

to be deployed in harms way."

The ceremony, held outside the unit's Auburn armory, included uncasing of the unit's colors, an Army tradition which marks the beginning of a unit's history.

Auburn Mayor Michael D. Quill, New York National Guard Joint Staff Director Brig. Gen. Patrick Murphy, and Brig. Gen. Mike Swezey, commander of the 53rd Troop Command were among the guests at the ceremony.

With the activation, the battalion is now almost 500 Soldiers strong, Dinan said. In addition to recent Operation Iraqi Freedom activations and the first gulf war, battalion Soldiers have deployed to contingency operations in Panama, Haiti, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo.

"At least half our Soldiers are combat veterans," he said. "We have a wealth of experience."

It took two years of recruitment and training to stand up the HHD, and in addition to MPs, Soldiers from a wide array of Army career fields – including engineers, medics and mechanics – joined the HHD to become MPs, Dinan said.

While the Battalion's other companies will continue to perform missions such as combat patrolling and law-enforcement, the HHD will be charged with Internment and Resettlement operations and command and control of CERFP.

An acronym inside an acronym, CERFP stands for Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced



Lieutenant Colonel Reginald Sanders, commander of the 153rd Troop Command "unfurls the colors" of the 102nd Military Police Battalion prior to presenting them to the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Martin Dinan during the battalion activation ceremony, Oct. 18. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott, Joint Force Headquarters.

Response Force Package, Dinan said. It is an element made up of other units which responds to disaster areas to find and extract casualties, decontaminate them if necessary and give them medical triage — a real-world homeland security mission, he added.

"We can respond to any natural or man-made disaster, from terrorist attacks to devastating storms," Dinan said.

Internment and Resettlement operations, also known as I & R, involves incarcerating and safeguarding prisoners of war, and moving and housing refugees, Dinan said. This mission includes constructing camps for the two different groups, he added.

"These Soldiers will have to be flexible and conscious of their actions, so as not to create an international incident," he said.

This message isn't lost on Sgt.

Kevin Palmer, of Skaneateles, who patrolled Baghdad and trained Iraqi Soldiers with about 50 other members of the 222nd MP Company. Palmer, who now works full-time as the battalion's assistant S3 NCO and is the battalion's NCO of the year, said I & R is "a very stressful job."

"It's very different from what we did in Iraq," he said. "This is human-on-human contact, which is different than patrolling. It's based more on individual skill and awareness."

Spc. William Hoch of the 105th MP Company expressed enthusiasm for the mission and deploying.

"I've always been interested in police work," said, Hoch, of Buffalo. "I like order. I like keeping people out of trouble."

Hoch is considering to go to Afghanistan, he said. "That's where we're needed the most." **gt**

"At least half our Soldiers are combat veterans. We have a wealth of experience,"

-- Lt. Col. Martin Dinan, Commander, 102nd Military Police Battalion



Keeping Airmen Fit to Fight

BAGRAM, Afghanistan -- Master Sgt. Jon Michael, a medical technician from the 774th Airlift Squadron, checks the pulse of Staff Sgt. Seth Fisher, an airborne electronics communication specialist from the 193rd Special Operations Wing, during a routine checkup here July 24. Michael is deployed from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing and hails from Lake George, N.Y. Fisher is deployed from the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and hails from Harrisburg, Pa. Photo courtesy of Capt. David Faggard, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing.



Keeping Aircraft Fit to Fly

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh -- Staff Sgt. Ryan Scow (left) and Tech. Sgt. Pat Gillen run tests that simulate airspeed to a C5A Galaxy's aircraft systems here Aug. 20. The test is part of a new inspection process known as Maintenance Steering Group 3, which is a proven commercial airline industry program that the 105th Airlift Wing's Maintenance Squadron has been able to adopt for the entire C5 fleet of the U.S. Air Force. Photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Young, 105th Airlift Wing.



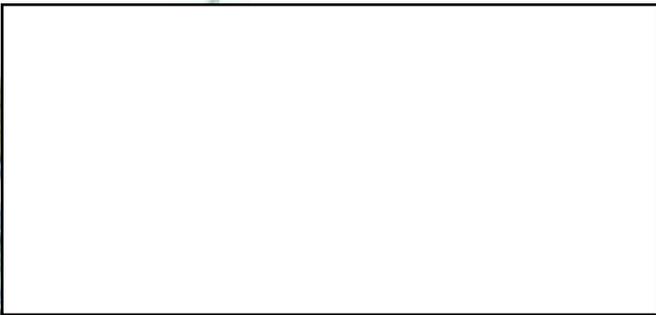
Supporting Airmen Services

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh -- New York Air National Guard Maj. Thomas Forrester accepts the colors of the 105th Force Support Squadron from Lt. Col. Lori J. Scheuermann, commander of the 105th Mission Support Group during assumption of command ceremonies held Oct. 3. The Force Support Squadron handles manpower and personnel issues and service support for the 105th Airlift Wing. Photo by Airman Deanna DeLaura, 105th Airlift Wing.



A Rainbow in the Army

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- A rainbow across the sky at Fort Drum's live-fire range Aug. 22 spans the site of the 1-258th Field Artillery annual training. In the foreground are vehicles from the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB) communications team. The brigade Soldiers were on site to train leaders and operators on the Joint Network Node (JNN) system of digital communications. The JNN provides communication services to the battalion command posts up to brigade. Photo by Sgt. Darryl Mehnert, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.



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