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guardtimes

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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Watching you in action—the men and women of the New York National Guard—always fills me with tremendous pride in our New York State Military Forces, our National Guard, our Army and our Air Force.

This past October and November I was privileged to see you, our Soldiers and Airmen, in action overseas in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf, and then here at home in New York City, Long Island and the Hudson Valley as you met and continue to meet the challenges of Hurricane Sandy.

Whether serving in a combat zone, or providing food and water to citizens coping with tragedy, the men and women I saw in action were well-trained, professional, and a credit to the uniform of the United States.

In October, Command Sgt. Major Frank Wicks and I had the opportunity to visit Guardsmen downrange as part of a group of Adjutants General and Army Reserve commanders. Everyplace we went, Wicks and I met New York Guardsmen doing exceptional work in tough circumstances. Leaders were stepping up and being the leaders our Soldiers and Airmen deserve and as a result, those Soldiers and Airmen were doing phenomenal work.

We visited with Soldiers of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion who were spread out in a number of remote locations in Afghanistan. Their job was to work with American and Coalition forces to identify, locate, transfer and remove military property to centralized locations as patrol bases closed down. In southern Afghanistan Company B of the 427th helped consolidate six brigade locations into two. I was especially proud of the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion. The leadership chain of the 101st is not only focused on the mission but is also taking care of Soldiers for when they return home after deployment. They've put in place an educational system which allows the Soldiers to document the work they do in theater, so Soldiers can provide proof of their skills to civilian employers.

In Bagram the sergeant major and I visited with Airmen of the 105th Base Defense Squadron. These Citizen Airmen teamed with the Air Forces 823rd Base Defense Squadron providing security to Bagram Air Base. The day we were there, they were actively engaged outside the wire in responding to an attack on the base. The commander of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing had nothing but good things to say about these Airmen.

When we got back home I was privileged to watch you go into action to protect and aid your fellow citizens on Long Island and New York City with the same professionalism and dedication I saw in theater.

More than 4,400 of you responded to the crisis that resulted when Hurricane Sandy came ashore and you can be tremendously proud of the job you did.

Even before the storm hit, Army and Air Guardsmen, Naval Militia and New York Guard members across the state were taking action: getting vehicles ready, packing gear, and testing alert notification systems. Our logistics systems were in place early and initial forces started deploying to Long Island two days before the storm hit to prepare.

Those initial responders worked with local police and fire departments and made a difference as Sandy came ashore on Monday, Oct. 29.

The experience of Staff Sgt. Richard Reed and Sgt. Jake Pollock, both members of the 102nd Military Police Battalion, was typical. Working with a local police officer they evacuated local residents in Long Beach and retrieved a boat that was needed for rescue work.

Joint Task Force Empire Shield, our team that normally works transportation security in New York City, changed gears and rescued 63 people from their homes as flood waters rose. This included a mother and her month-old infant.

And at Atlantic Beach pararescue Guardian Angels from the 106th Rescue wing launched their zodiac inflatable boats to retrieve people threatened by rising water.

When the storm was over our Guard Soldiers and Airmen, Naval Militia Sailors and Marines and New York Guard volunteers did whatever it took to help. Soldiers and Airmen worked around the clock to distribution hundreds of thousands of meals and bottles of water. Almost 500 servicemembers worked with utility crews in Westchester, Putnam and Rockland counties to restore power to tens of thousands of local residents without electricity. The Soldiers of the 204th Engineer Battalion cleared roads in the Hudson Valley and then moved south to clean up Rockaway and Breezy Point.

Our Airmen were an integral part of this mission. Airmen and Soldiers went door-to-door checking on the health of residents on Staten Island and in lower Manhattan. Our Naval Militia members manned boats working with the Coast Guard to survey the damage and assisted in working with Army and Air Guard members in sorting and moving supplies. And our New York Guard members reported in to help provide vital life support functions at Camp Smith and serve as liaisons with county emergency operation centers.

Everywhere I went during our main response, I was gratified to see Soldiers and Airmen doing their duty, and doing an exceptional job.

From the Airmen at the 105th Airlift Wing who handled almost

Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy

100 Air Mobility Command flights transporting in critically needed utility repair trucks, to the members of the 369th Sustainment Brigade moving relief supplies around New York City, to the 1st Battalion 69th Infantry leadership of the joint effort for Soldiers, Airmen and Naval Militia Marines who carried patients out of Bellevue Hospital during evacuation, every member of our force lived up to my expectations.

From our leaders, NCOs and front-line Soldiers and Airmen, each of you contributed immensely to our success in helping fellow New Yorkers recover. And for the first time in our state, we were able to successfully integrate National Guard Soldiers from other states and active duty forces into our response, expanding our recovery support at the most critical times and locations.

As we draw closer to the holidays, the Soldiers of the 27th Brigade who deployed earlier this year will be coming home to reunite with their families for Christmas and New Years. And I hope that those of you who responded to Sandy can make up for time away from your families with time together this holiday season.

This year you have done a great job responding to disaster here at home and fighting our nation's wars overseas. You all have lived up to our National Guard motto of being "Always Ready and Always There."

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http://dmna.ny.gov/sandyvid

guardtimes

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Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Commander in Chief
Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, The Adjutant General
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This Issue's Highlights:

The Joint Force

12 New York Military Forces Respond to Sandy
18 Western Region Counterdrug Supports Binghamton
20 NY National Guard Helps Seize Millions in Marijuana
23 JTF-4 Conducts Simulated Hurricane Response

Army National Guard

24 NY Guardsman Commemorate Fallen at Fort Bliss 9/11 Retreat Ceremony
26 1-258th Artillery Conduct Raid Training
28 New York Medics on the Job in Germany
30 Signal Soldiers Hone Skills in Mexican Desert
31 New York Engineers Lay Foundations in Germany
33 138th PAD Trains at Ft. Bliss; Guantanamo Bound
34 Task Force Iron Returns from Afghanistan

Air National Guard

36 109th Air Wing Returns to the Pole
37 New Planes: 105th Receives Extended Range C17s
40 Pararescue Rodeo Competition
42 107th Lights Up Night Sky over Lake Ontario
44 Accident Exercise in Syracuse

New York Guard

48 Band Leader Finale for West Point Performance
49 Capital District Guard Brigade Changes Command

New York Naval Militia

50 Joint Training on New York Waters for Naval Militia

Guard News Briefs and Photos

52 107th Mentoring in Cybersecurity
53 Salute to Guard for Keeping Communities Safe
54 Bucket List for a Boss Lift

GHENT, NY-- Fire fighters from the 109th Airlift Wing , New York Air National Guard, spray retardant foam on the remains of a chemical recycling facility operated by TCI of New York here which caught fire in the early morning hours of Thursday. August 2. The Division of Military and Naval Affairs dispatched a specially equipped fire fighting truck and a command vehicle, along with three fire fighters to assist in containing the blaze.

ON THE COVER: NEW YORK-- New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver work with New York Army National Guard Soldiers at the Lexington Avenue Armory loading emergency supplies for distribution to New York City residents on Thursday, Nov. 1. The governor has deployed more than 2,800 New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen to respond to the damage caused by Hurricane Sandy (Warrant Officer Ubon Mendie, New York Guard).
BACK COVER: ALBANY, N.Y. -- A New York Army National Guard Soldier reunites with family during the homecoming of the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry from Afghanistan at Albany International Airport Sep. 23. The first elements of the battalion returned from demobilization at Camp Shelby, Miss., bringing some 200 Soldiers home to their families. The remainder of the battalion task force is expected home Sep. 26. U.S. Army photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, New York National Guard (RELEASED).

Odierno: Guard 'critical' since 9/11

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jim Greenhill, Army National Guard

RENO, Nev. -- On the eve of the 11th anniversary of the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the chief of staff of the Army paid tribute to the role of the National Guard in the immediate aftermath and in the years since.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno also said 9/11 made America stronger.

"That day changed the lives of Americans forever," Odierno said. "And it will continue to impact generations of Americans. But, as in the past, our enemies underestimated the will, the pride, and patriotism of Americans. I believe these attacks have made America stronger, creating a spirit of service in the hearts of a new generation of Americans."

Air National Guard pilots were in the air within minutes of the attacks, and Army National Guard members responded on the ground -- including some who simply showed up at readiness centers without even waiting to be called.

"Our citizen-Soldiers were the first to respond," Odierno told attendees at the 134th National Guard Association of the United States General Conference here. "Within days -- within hours -- of the terrorist strikes, Operation Noble Eagle mobilized Guardsmen around the country to provide security on military installations, airports and other key infrastructure, as well as to patrol America's borders."

"And our total Army has been essential to our plans for the last 11 years: We have a true and proven operational Reserve, with experience that comes from more than 675,000 mobilizations," he continued. "Fifty percent of our Guard Soldiers today are combat veterans, many in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. National Guard Soldiers continue to provide support to our civil authorities around the nation in a variety of missions."

In recent weeks, Guard members from multiple states have responded in the thousands to support civil authorities in the aftermath of Hurricane Isaac, battle wildfires and provide security for both the Republican and Democratic political conventions, Odierno said.

"These missions, both overseas and in support of our civil authorities, are critical," he said. **gt**

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the Chief of Staff of the Army, addressed the 134th National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) General Conference in Reno, Nev., Sept. 10. About 3,700 Army and Air National Guard officers, spouses, defense officials and others from all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia registered. NGAUS represents nearly 45,000 current and former Army and Air National Guard members and petitions Congress for better equipment, standardized training and a more combat-ready force. Learn more about NGAUS by visiting www.ngaus.org.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, chief of staff of the Army, arrives for the 134th National Guard Association of the United States General Conference in Reno, Nev., Sept. 10, 2012. Odierno is accompanied by retired Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett, at center, the association president, Gen. Frank Grass, the newly named Chief of the National Guard Bureau and at right, Lt. Gen. William E. Ingram Jr., the Director of the Army National Guard.

Grass becomes 27th Chief of National Guard Bureau

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jim Greenhill, Army National Guard

WASHINGTON -- Gen. Frank Grass became the 27th Chief of the National Guard Bureau in a Pentagon ceremony, Sept. 7.

"I'm very excited about the future; there's hard work to do," Grass said. "To the men and women of the National Guard: You're the most professional, most well-trained and experienced National Guard our nation has ever had. I pledge that I will work every day to serve and support you so that we can continue to be a ready, accessible and essential operational force for our states as well as our nation."

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta hosted the change-of-responsibility ceremony in the Pentagon Auditorium.

"I know our citizen-warriors will be in good hands," Panetta said. "Today, we entrust General Grass with a national treasure -- a force that has been transformed from a strategic reserve to an essential part of the operational military and whose ranks are now filled with skilled combat veterans."

Grass relieved Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley as the chief of the National Guard Bureau. Grass also received his fourth star during the ceremony.

"I am confident that General Grass will be a strong advocate for the National Guard's most valuable asset -- its Soldiers, its Airmen and their families," Panetta said. "The reason we are the greatest military power on earth lies not in our weapons, lies not in our planes or our ships or our advanced technology, as great as they all are: The strength of our military lies in our people."

As chief of the National Guard Bureau, Grass serves as a military adviser to the president, the secretary of defense and the National Security Council and is the Department of Defense's official channel of communication to the governors and adjutants general in all 54 states and territories on all matters for the National Guard.

He is the second chief to also serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

McKinley was the first, and also the first four-star officer in National Guard history.

"The chiefs and I welcome General Frank Grass and his wife Patricia to the team," said Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "This is the right man for the job: A thinker, a learner and one of the most experienced leaders in our military today. He knows what it means to put service before self and to put people first. And he knows what it will take to overcome the challenges of tomorrow -- and those challenges are not going to be easy."

"It's because of leaders like you and the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard that we remain the world's preeminent military force," he said.

Grass is responsible for ensuring that more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel are accessible, capable and ready to protect the homeland and to provide combat resources to the Army and the Air Force.

The National Guard rose to the challenges of the past decade, Panetta said.

"The Guard responded," he said. "Be it patrolling our nation's skies. Be it fighting and dying on the war fronts. Be it responding swiftly and compassionately to floods and fires, disasters of one kind or another, meeting the needs of their fellow countrymen in distress here at home and abroad -- that is what the National Guard is all about."

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta administers the change of responsibility and promotion for Army National Guard Gen. Frank Grass with his wife Patricia looking on as he became the 27th Chief of the National Guard Bureau Sept. 7.

"When I travel to the war zones, when I travel abroad, I cannot tell the difference between Guardsmen and the active-duty force, and that's the way it should be, because we are all part of one team."

"The men and women of the Guard have shown again and again that they are always ready and always there. Throughout our history, America has depended on the citizen-Soldier.

"In deploying the Guard, we have made certain -- this is very important -- we have made certain that every community, every citizen shares in the responsibility of defending America. If we are to fight wars -- as we must when we are called to do that -- all of us, all of us need to be part of that effort if we are to succeed."

"The Guard has always been there for the nation," Dempsey said. "Today, the Guard is still on the front lines, both at home and abroad," he said.

The Minuteman, ready to set down the plow and pick up the musket at a moment's notice, is the Guard's symbol. "Guardsmen and women breathe life into that emblem every day," Dempsey said. **gt**

"This is the right man for the job: A thinker, a learner and one of the most experienced leaders in our military today. He knows what it means to put service before self and to put people first. And he knows what it will take to overcome the challenges of tomorrow -- and those challenges are not going to be easy."

--Gen. Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The signs are all around.

It's up to YOU to recognize and act on them.

Training, Discipline and Standards

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.

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https://safety.army.mil

Air Guard Director Discusses Way Forward

By Master Sgt. Marvin R. Preston, Air National Guard

WASHINGTON -- Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, the director of the Air National Guard, spoke about mission readiness and other challenges facing the ANG in future years to attendees of the Air Force Association Air and Space Conference and Technical Exposition here Tuesday, Sept. 18.

Wyatt discussed how the Air Guard provides a combat-ready force that has interchangeable capabilities for the Air Expeditionary Force, as well as critical skill sets and capabilities governors can call upon when America's communities are threatened by natural or man-made disasters.

"The status of the Air National Guard is strong, it's strong because the United States Air Force is strong," said Wyatt. "I think our Guardsmen around the country recognize that fact."

Wyatt said it is his belief that a strong ANG creates a stronger Air Force and the goal of the ANG is to ensure the most capable total Air Force possible.

The Air National Guard leadership is anticipating potentially difficult times ahead. Wyatt outlined in his comments that the ANG will meet 21st century challenges by actively shaping the ANG's future with combat-ready, adaptable Airmen as its core.

"In these days of shrinking budgets and where our total force is getting smaller, we're all going to have to find new ways to work together to leverage the particular strengths that the three components [of the Air Force] bring to the fight," said Wyatt. As the budget process for fiscal year 2014 unfolds, Wyatt recognized there will be tough decisions for leaders to make and believes the ANG can be part of the solution. Wyatt said this vision is dependent upon partnerships with the Air Force, the states and local communities. These alliances are the foundation of the ANG's strength and the key to its ultimate success.

"One of the things that we try to do in the Air National Guard is to leverage those skills and capabilities that are needed for the Title 10 fight and bring those skill sets and capabilities to help the governors with some of the requirements that they have," said Wyatt. "It's really a win-win for the country; it's a win-win for the United States Air Force." gt

Inspector General Corner

New IG Familiar to the Joint Setting

By Col. Daren Sears, Inspector General

It's a great honor to join the New York Army and Air National Guard team as the new Inspector General (IG). I want to pass on my sincere appreciation to Col. Eric Hesse, my predecessor, and the entire IG Office for making my transition into the office extremely smooth. You should notice only one thing different in the IG Office; I wear an Air Force uniform. An agreement between the Army and Air Force puts Air Force IGs in nine states and does not change how the IG serves our entire National Guard.

I attended the Army Inspector General school and have spent my last six years working for an Army-led joint command. The Inspector General Office at the Joint Force Headquarters is manned by both Soldiers and Airmen, and we will continue to serve The Adjutant General (TAG) and the great men and women of the New York Army and Air National Guard.

I also want to thank Master Sgt. Eric Heller for his two years of service in the IG Office. As he departs on an Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) deployment, we wish him the best. Master Sgt. Heller's departure means you will see a new Soldier in the IG Office by the New Year. We are well into the process of getting a new member on the IG team. All Army Inspector General personnel have to be approved by both the TAG and the Inspector General of the Army, and then they must attend the three-week course at the Army Inspector General school before being brought into the IG Office. This extensive process ensures that you have the highest caliber and best trained Senior NCO serving you.

As I get started in my new assignment, I am struck by the great work and diverse missions being performed by the members of the New York National Guard. From the counter-drug mission to multiple OEF deployments to the National Science Foundation mission in Antarctica, Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians continue to do great things for the State of New York and the United States of America. The National Guard brings a lot to the table with respect to the total force of the Active, Reserve, and Guard components, and you should be proud of your service.

With the high operations tempo of the last ten years comes many challenges in ensuring we are ready to perform our diverse missions and our members and their families are taken care of. The stated mission of the IG is to provide the Adjutant General a continuous assessment of matters relating to the state of economy, efficiency, morale, esprit de corps, and readiness of units and activities assigned to the New York National Guard.

In order to perform our mission, the IG Office interacts with all levels of Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians, from commanders and supervisors to new recruits. We need each and every one of our members to do the right thing, so that together we can meet the challenges of the mission at hand head-on and ensure our members and their families are part of the equation of success.

It is my expectation that I am part of an organization of professional Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians who follow standards and do what is right, even when no one is looking. If you see problems, you bring those issues to your supervisors and commanders to fix. If that fails, the IG is a resource you have to address an issue. Contrary to popular belief, the IG does more than inspect and investigate. We are also there to assist, teach, and train. Members should always try to solve problems at the lowest level possible, but if you need to talk to an IG, we are here.

The New York Army and Air National Guard have a great reputation, and I look forward to working with all of you to ensure that we continue to contribute to the State and Nation. I also look forward to meeting and talking to many of you as I embark on this assignment. gt

Military Personnel News: the MILPO Corner

Culture of Army Values. The Army Values include Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Integrity, Honor and Personal Courage. The Army Values campaign plan was launched in 2005 to reemphasize and reinvigorate Army Values throughout the Army, for Active and Reserve Components, and DA Civilians. This campaign parallels the ARNG G1's focus on getting back to the basics of personnel readiness by highlighting indispensable aspects of Soldier moral character. These values should be consistently reemphasized and cultivated by Army leaders and peers. A recent article highlights the culture of Army Values and provides more information on this subject. Visit www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2012-07-12 for more information.

Soldier Readiness

Structured Self-Development (SSD). An All-Army Activities message (ALARACT 216/2012) issued in August 2012 established effective dates for SSD completion to become a prerequisite for all NCO Education System courses. The effective dates include;

April 1, 2013 to complete SSD-1 before attending WLC, June 1 to complete SSD-3 or SSD-4 prior to SLC or SMC courses and completing SSD-5 prior to January 1, 2015 attendance at nominative assignments. If you are attending NCOES in 2013 after these effective dates, make sure you have the appropriate SSD completed.

Administrative Requirements. All Soldiers are required to have a complete and current DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data, and SGLV Form 8286, Serviceman's Group Life Insurance Election, within iPERMS. Soldiers and unit personnel must verify the accuracy of the data on their DD Form 93 and SGLV Form 8286, at least annually. Whenever there is a change to the forms, a new form must be prepared and transmitted to iPERMS immediately. See your Human Resource Administrator for guidance.

Physical Fitness and Height and Weight Requirements for PME. Army Directive 2012-20, Physical Fitness and Height and Weight Requirements for Professional Military Education, revises Army policy for the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and height and weight standards for Soldiers to attend Professional Military Education (PME) in Army Regulation (AR) 350-1 (Army Training and Leader Development). Effective November 1, 2012, the policy applies to the following PME schools and courses: Senior Service College, Sergeants Major Academy, Joint Special Operation Forces Senior Enlisted Academy, Captains Career Course, Intermediate Level Education, Warrant Officer Advance Course, Warrant Officer Staff Course, Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course, Advanced Leaders Course, Senior Leaders Course and Warrior Leader Course.

Soldiers who are flagged for failure to pass the APFT or comply with Army height and weight standards are not eligible for selection, scheduling or attendance at the PME schools and courses listed within the policy. Successful completion of the APFT and height and weight screening are mandatory for course graduation. For details, please see the full policy listed at the link: https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Pages/DisplayAnnouncement.aspx?AnnouncementID=239

Official Photographs. The DA Photo can quickly help determine a Soldier's professionalism and military bearing while conducting a board or in a situation where the Solider is not physically present. As with all first impressions, the DA Photo can be a positive or negative discriminator. AR 640-30 states that photos are valid for five (5) years and only taken at authorized Visual Information (VI) activities as required by AR 640-30. A new photograph is required when there is an award of the Army Commendation Medal or above.

Soldiers assigned to an area (including hostile fire areas) where photographic facilities are not available or conditions prevent them from getting a photograph are temporarily exempt from the requirements of this paragraph. These Soldiers will obtain a photograph within 90 days after reassignment to an area where photographic facilities are available. You can find the closest Facility at www.defenseimagery.mil/community/facilities.html. You must make an appointment online at http://vios.army.mil.

Healthcare

The differences in Tricare plans standard/extra and prime for dependents. TRICARE is the health care program serving active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, retirees, dependents, survivors and certain former spouses worldwide. When a National Guard Soldier is called or ordered to active duty for more than 30 consecutive days, their eligible dependents are entitled to TRICARE benefits. A Soldier's active duty status must be updated in the Standard Installation and Division Personnel Reporting System (SIDPERS) and Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) in order for Soldiers and their dependents to receive their eligible benefits. Failure to properly update both systems may result in eligibility issues and create delays in health care, as well as billing issues. TRICARE offers several options to better fit the needs of dependents, and plan availability is based on Home of Record (HOR).

TRICARE Standard and Extra are fee-for-service plans that utilizes TRICARE-authorized providers with cost shares and deductibles and is available to all eligible dependents. Enrollment is not required and coverage is automatic for dependents as long as their information is current in DEERS. TRICARE Standard and Extra may be the right choice for dependents if they have a provider who is not in the TRICARE network and they do not want to change providers. If dependents live in an area where TRICARE Prime is not available, TRICARE Standard and Extra may be a dependents only option.

TRICARE Prime/Prime Remote is a managed care option. With TRICARE Prime dependents have an assigned primary care manager (PCM), either at a military treatment facility (MTF) or from the TRICARE network that manages dependent's day-to-day care and provides them with health care referrals for specialized treatment as required. TRICARE Prime offers fewer out-of-pocket costs than TRICARE Standard and Extra, but less freedom of choice for providers as dependents must select a provider from the network. Dependents must enroll to participate in TRICARE Prime/Prime Remote. For more information, please contact SSG Collins at 518-272-6446 or SPC Nathan Morency at 518-272-6470, or visit www.tricare.mil.

Casualty Assistance Training. Casualty Assistance Training is mandatory for all AGR and long term ADOS Soldiers E7/W2/O3 and above. Each AGR Soldier must make sure their training is up to date on a yearly basis. Please email all completion certificates to 1st Lt. Jean Kratzer at MNP. AGR Soldier's can complete the online refresher training available at the CMAOC website: ttps://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/tagd/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm.

The Suicide Prevention Leader's Guide. Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, shows his support for health promotion, risk reduction and suicide prevention in a public service announcement (PSA) on the "Suicide Awareness: Guide for Leaders." The Chandler emphasizes leadership involvement at all levels and the need for leaders to know their available local and national resources. Leaders are highly encouraged to embrace and communicate this message down to the lowest level. https://forums.army.mil/communitybrowser.aspx?id=1797353&lang=en-US.

Officer Records

Basic Responsibilities.

1) Do you have a current DA Photo? AR 640-30 states that all Officers must have a DA photo in their records. If you don't, please visit http://www.vios.army.mil/ to make a reservation at your local studio.

2) Have you reviewed your iPERMS record? All Soldiers must check their iPERMS record at minimum, annually. It is your duty to ensure your iPERMS record is up to date. Visit https://iperms.hrc.army.mil to review your record. Your unit personnelist can assist you in updating your records.

3) Have you reviewed and updated your Officer Record Brief (ORB)? The ORB is a summary of your career. It is your duty to ensure that your record is validated. Visit https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/ to review your ORB online. All Officers were required to review and certify their ORB no later than September 30, 2012. If you did not meet this deadline please see your unit personnelist as soon as possible to correct any deficiencies and validate your record. DA 2-1's are no longer used.

4) Have you reviewed your Officer Professional Development Model via AKO? The Professional Development model is a helpful tool for planning your future career positions such as Company Command and other Key developmental positions. Log on to AKO at www.us.army.mil. Click on my Training and review your branch specific developmental model.

5) Have you completed and/or enrolled in your next level of military education requirement? Based on your current rank, have you completed BOLC, your Captains Career Course, or Intermediate Level Education (ILE)? If you are not currently enrolled or completed the required level of education coordinate with your S3 to get started today.

Warrant Officer Update. Over 70 New York Army National Guard warrant officers from all branches recently attended the Warrant Officer Conference in Albany. These technical experts gathered to exchange information on many subjects such as professional military education, deployments, and updates to the warrant officer recruiting program. Joint Force Headquarters senior leaders and the Chief of Staff of the 42d Infantry Division provided their perspectives about roles of warrant officers, leadership, and the force structure drawdown when coupled with readiness requirements.

For those who were unable to attend, please utilize these useful web links from the conference. All briefings are available at the WOPM Webpage.

a. Officer Action Packet status, after receipt from the GOCOM: https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/13113359&online=true

b. NGB Packet status: https://gko.ngb.army.mil/login/welcome.aspx (go to applications tab, then fed rec packet status)

c. NYARNG Strength Management Program: http://nyngportal/mnp/strength_man.html. Provides data on UMR, vacancies, APFT, HT/WT, pending losses, etc.

d. Directors Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO), is a source for strength management and readiness reports derived from metrics updated daily: https://arngg1.ngb.army.mil

e. Officer Record Briefs (ORB): h ttps://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/Benefits/Unsecured/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fbenefits

f. ARNG G1 Gateway is a centralized source for ARNG human resources information: h ttps://g1arng.pentagon.mil/Pages/DisplayFeaturedNewsItem.aspx?featuredNewsItemID=117

g. Warrant Officer (WO) Net: https://wonet.bcks.army.mil

h. Interactive Web Response System (IWRS) allows you to view the status of OERs attps://knoxhrc16.hrc.army.mil/iwrs/AcceptTermsServlet

Awards

DoD Medals Database. A new website, http://valor.defense.gov was launched July 25, 2012. The database was created after the Supreme Court struck down a 2006 law that made it a federal crime to lie about receiving combat valor related medals. The court said the law violated the right to freedom of speech. This site currently has limited information, containing 10 Soldiers who have received the Medal of Honor, since 2001. It will eventually contain recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, and Silver Star, since 2001.

Retroactive Combat Badges Reminder. From Awards and Decorations Branch, HRC: The Awards and Decorations Branch has reiterated that all retroactive combat badges (CIB, CMB, and CAB) need to be submitted IAW MILPER Message 11-268, Approved Changes to AR 600-8-22, Military Awards, issued in September 2011 (attached at the following link). As noted in paragraph 4B(1)(B) of the MILPER, "Retroactive awards of the CIB, CMB, and CAB. Retroactive award of the CIB, CMB, and CAB is authorized for time periods specified above for fully qualified individuals. These awards for those previously discharged may be awarded by USAHRC, ATTN: Awards and Decorations Branch (AHRC-PDP-A), 1600 Spearhead Division Avenue, Fort Knox, KY 40122-5408.

Applications for retroactive award to active duty Soldiers and reserve/Guard component Soldiers will be forwarded through command channels to the first general officer (for endorsement) through MNP to USAHRC for processing. Visit the following link for more information. https://forums.army.mil/SECURE/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=1550529&lang=en-US.

Chaplain's Corner

Wisdom: Learning what you need to know

Commentary by Chaplain (Col.) Eric Olsen, State Chaplain, Joint Force Headquarters

As a chaplain, it never ceases to amaze me when I hear or witness a Soldier, Airmen or family member make a dumb decision. Sometimes answers seem obvious, at other times we may not have a clue of what to do. When this happens, it reminds us that common sense is not always that common. If we have not learned what to do and what to avoid, we might just make a decision that will cost us the things most important to us. Sometimes they cost us the ones we love.

Needing wisdom is nothing new. Even though we have 24 hour news, films, TV, smart phones and social media, few if any of these types of communication can help us figure out what is best for us. On the contrary it is just the opposite. When watching cable, there are few examples of good parenting, ethical behavior or smart choices. Reality shows and hype TV show the drama of life but do not set the example of how to live it well.

As military professionals, we ask to assume a greater responsibility in the world. We profess our allegiance by our presence in the line, our commitment to solid character, ethical behavior and adherence to the rule of law. We ask to be judged daily by the content of our character, knowing that the demands of our profession will ultimately compromise the lesser individual. Again this is nothing new.

In the Jewish Scripture of The Book of Proverbs, the author, Solomon, writing some 2,000 years ago understood the need to be well informed and wise. Writing at a time of great stress, conflict and division, he understood that wisdom, those who were willing to learn good principles would have a better life. He also understood it took work. He gave examples of the values and principles to live by, and warned against compromising them on penalty of misery. We know some of these proverbs as they have been handed down, through the ages to us. They are found in the words Loyalty (bearing true allegiance to the things that matter), Duty (doing what you say you are committed to doing), Respect (valuing yourself and those around you), Selfless Service (willing to see the bigger picture and the needs of others), Honor (deep self-respect without compromise to the values you hold), Integrity (being a person of your word and keeping commitments) and Personal Courage (taking responsibility for your actions and following the right path).

Keeping these values is ultimately a spiritual walk because it molds who we truly are, our decisions and their outcomes. Falling short on these by lying, compromising and or deceiving ourselves and those around us only brings pain and misery. Who really wants to be on Jerry Springer?

It says in the book of Proverbs "Listen, wisdom is calling out. Those who listen will be happy" (Proverbs 8:1, 34). We need to make good choices each and every day. They begin by learning to have good character and not compromising what we believe in.

What do you stand for? Who are your role models? And, who depends on you for their future? **gt**

LONG BEACH – New York Army National Guard Chaplain (Capt.) Brian Pidkaminy greets residents as Soldiers of the 107th Military Police Company assist the City of Long Beach distribute rations and water provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at City Hall Oct. 31. The food and water helped residents who remained or returned to Long Beach three days after the passage of Hurricane Sandy Oct. 29. The National Guard Chaplaincy supported troops and residents as part of Governor Cuomo's call up of more than 4,000 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and New York Guard volunteers. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

****GT Corrections****

Our article in the Summer issue titled "Reunion Brings Together Soldiers" was written by Spc. Rachel Sanzo, 42nd Infantry Division.

Do Your Part: Be Prepared

Commentary by Col. Ray Shields, Director of the Joint Staff

LATHAM -- Being prepared for unforeseen emergencies is important for you, your family, your military unit, your employer and your neighbors.

Recent instances of floods, hurricanes, severe winter weather, long-duration power outages and possible pandemics or acts of terror demonstrate the need for being prepared to sustain yourself and your family. Being prepared, having a plan, and stockpiling necessary supplies can mean the difference between life and death. The latest advice from the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services suggests individuals should be prepared to support themselves for a minimum of 7-10 days without outside support.

As members and employees of New York's Military Forces, we need everyone to develop plans for dealing with emergencies and build an emergency stockpile. Disaster preparedness kits should include items such as food, water, medical items (including prescriptions), batteries, important papers, money (various denominations), emergency radio, and other necessary items. When you have a stockpile of emergency items available, you and your family can better overcome the fear and anxiety of staying safe during a crisis.

We recommend that everyone plan ahead, build a stockpile of emergency supplies, and encourage your friends, neighbors, and extended family to take the same action. Self sufficiency and personal preparedness will make a huge difference in your ability to survive.

Through personal preparedness, you are helping ensure that your unit is ready to respond when called. Commanders and supervisors have a duty to discuss the benefits and encourage their service members and employees to develop an emergency preparedness plan.

There are numerous websites that will assist you in developing an emergency stockpile and emergency plan. We recommend that you start your planning by visiting the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services website at www.dhses.ny.gov/aware-prepare. gt

Soldier, Airman and family readiness also includes disaster preparedness. Members of the New York National Guard are more prepared to serve in a crisis when they are already prepared at home. Courtesy photo.

NORTHCOM Marks 10 years Protecting U.S. Homeland

By Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- Ten years ago Oct. 1, still stinging from the 9/11 terror attacks, the United States stood up U.S. Northern Command with one mission: to deter, prevent and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the continental United States, its territories and its interests.

The activation marked the first time since the days of George Washington that a single military commander was charged with protecting the U.S. homeland.

Air Force Gen. Ralph E. "Ed" Eberhart, NORTHCOM's first commander, formed a team that provided critical support for U.S. civil authorities in times of national need.

Just one day after its standup, the new command responded when Hurricane Lilli struck the Gulf Coast with 100-mph winds that caused extensive damage.

Five months later, NORTHCOM was called to action when the space shuttle Columbia disintegrated as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere.

That summer and fall, NORTHCOM provided airborne firefighting during an intensive wildfire season in the western U.S. and disaster relief after Hurricane Isabel struck the eastern seaboard.

Since its establishment, NORTHCOM has responded to hundreds of disasters, including hurricanes, wildfires, pandemic influenza outbreaks and an interstate bridge collapse. In 2010, it participated in Operation Unified Response following the Haiti earthquake and Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

This summer, widespread wildfires in the West and Hurricane Isaac in late August dominated much of NORTHCOM's activities.

"Our vision is that, with our trusted partners, we will defend North America by outpacing all threats, maintaining faith with our citizens and supporting them in their times of greatest need," said Army Gen. Charles H. Jacoby Jr., the current commander. "We view our missions as a sacred trust by our government and our citizens," he said. gt

New York Military Forces Respond to Sandy

By Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

Members of the New York Army National Guard's 204th Engineer Battalion work to clear streets in Far Rockaway on Nov. 7. The Queens community was battered by Hurricane Sandy when it hit on Oct. 30. The Guard engineer Soldiers have been working to clear debris left by the storm. Photo courtesy of 204th Engineer Battalion.

NEW YORK-- The numbers are tremendous.

More than 4,400 Soldiers and Airmen, as well as members of the New York Guard and New York Naval Militia drove 1000 vehicles more than 400,000 miles as part of New York State's response to Hurricane Sandy's collision with New York City and Long Island on Oct. 29/30.

Guardsmen and women delivered more than 2.3 million emergency meals and hundreds of thousands of bottles of water, and passed out 150,000 blankets to New Yorkers in need, while fueling more than 24,000 government vehicles.

Army National Guard helicopters flew more than 305 hours of missions to carry key supplies, fly VIPS and conduct aerial surveillance, while the New York Air National Guard employed C-130s, C-17s and HH-60 helicopters to meet missions requirements.

"The New York Army and Air National Guard, along with our New York Guard and New York Naval Militia, stood at the ready as Hurricane Sandy began making its way to our great state," said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. "And the moment New Yorkers needed them, the thousands of men and women of the New York National Guard left their homes and families to help their fellow New Yorkers devastated by this deadly storm.

"Guard members were there to rescue flood victims, clear debris, and deliver food, water, and gasoline. I want to commend and thank each member of the New York National Guard for their time, extreme dedication and professionalism, " Cuomo added.

But the response to Hurricane Sandy, is, above all, the story of individual National Guard Soldiers and Airmen doing every job they were asked to do and more.

As the storm rolled in on Monday, Oct. 29, eight members of the 106th Rescue Wing's 103rd Rescue Squadron launched Zodiac boats into 90 mile per hour winds to rescue people in the Long Island community of Atlantic Beach.

"The water in the roads was knee-high to waste—in some places, chest deep," Capt. Glyn Weir told Air Force Times.

On Staten Island the Soldiers and Airmen of Joint Task Force Empire Shield, who normally provide security in transportation hubs, drove their F-150 civilian pickups into rising flood waters to rescue 39 people, including a month-old baby.

At Long Beach, Staff Sgt. Joshua Flint and Spec. Jacob Jurkowski from the 206th Military Police Company used their LMTV to rescue 36 people from rising flood waters as the storm struck. First they rescued a stranded 3-person water rescue team, then they pulled six people out of stalled vehicles. Finally, Flint and Jurkowski picked up 27 local residents stranded in basements and on rooftops as the storm raged.

The Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery helped police and firemen evacuate more than 800 people after the storm hit the Rockaway area of Brooklyn. The Soldiers worked almost non-stop for 96 hours despite being cold, wet, and tired, said Lt. Col. Mike Hoblin, the battalion commander.

"It was hard physically and mentally, but at this hard time there was no time to feel tired… Being able to work with other teams, like NYPD, FDNY, and EMT…made me feel like one whole big family came together, " said Staff Sgt. Goanergis Vargas, a members of Battery B, 1-258th Field Artillery.

Soldiers from the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, the 42nd Infantry Division, and the 27th Brigade Combat Team learned how to identify and mark downed power lines and worked with utility crews in Rockland, Westchester and Putnam counties for a week to get the power back on.

Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion 101st Cavalry, the 1st Battalion 258th Field Artillery and 1st Battalion 69th Infantry did house-to-house wellness checks, and Air National Guard Airmen were plugged into Army units to help plus up their numbers.

Members of the 102nd Military Police Battalion set up an assembly line at a Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services storage site to unbox, service, fuel and test hundreds of generators to power polling places without electricity on Election Day. Then teams delivered those generators and were on-site hours before voting began on Nov. 6 to start them up and keep them running.

There was also lots of thinking outside of the box to get the mission done.

Need to get 40 humvees from Fort Drum to New York City and Long Island where they are needed? Solution: Bus 80 Airmen from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base to the Military Area Training Equipment Site at Fort Drum and have them drive the humvees down.

Need electricity at the Lexington Avenue Armory to keep the mission going as Hurricane Sandy hits? Solution: Work with the producers of the Victoria's Secret Show, which already has equipment set up, to hook their generators up to the Armory's power system.

Need to move four HEMTT fuelers downstate from Albany so you can put non-leaded gas in city emergency vehicles but you don't have drivers? Solution: Load the vehicles into C-17s from the 105th Airlift Wing and fly them down to New York City.

Need to accommodate up to 2,000 Soldiers in New York City? Hire a company called Deployed Resources to build a Logistics Support Area at Floyd Bennet Field with sleeping quarters, showers, DFACS and finally laundry service.

Operation Sandy marked the first time that large numbers of National Guard units from outside New York were called upon to assist in a response. Military Police, transportation and truck companies from Ohio, Delaware, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania—bringing with them more than 700 troops and 300 vehicles—responded to the disaster.

Smaller teams from Kansas and West Virginia also came to provide specialty assistance in medical care and power generation. A Georgia Army National Guard CH-47 was also pressed into service to carry vital supplies.

Operation Sandy also marked the first time that Active Duty Soldier, Sailors, Airmen and Marines responded to a state emergency under the command of a New York Army National Guard general.

Brig. Gen. Michael Swezey, the commander of Joint Task Force Sandy, was named a dual-status commander and more than 700 Active Duty troops, mostly doing engineering work as "Task Force Pump" reported to him.

Marines coming ashore from the USS Wasp to assist on missions on State Island also fell under Swezey's command. **gt**

Members of the New York Air National Guards 174th Attack Wing bring food and water to a local woman on Staten Island in New York on Nov. 2, 2012. The food and water was provided to people who needed assistance after hurricane Sandy took down power lines and caused massive destruction to many homes in the area leaving families desperate for help. The unit members were taking the food to those who could not make it to their local emergency response location. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy M. Call, 174th Attack Wing.

AIR MOBILITY COMMAND
Newburgh
Stewart State Forest
Hudson Highlands
West Point
Highland Falls
Peekskill
Bear Mountain State Park
Montrose
Stony Point
Croton-On-Hudson
Mt Kisco
Bedford
Ossining
Chappaqua
Sloatsburg
Wesley Hills
New City
Pleasantville
Armonk
Spring Valley
Hawthorne
Nanuet
Nyack
Tappan Zee
Tarrytown
Valhalla
Pearl River
Darien
Stamford
White Plains
Scarsdale
Port Chester
Palisades Interstate Park
Harrison
Mamaroneck
Yonkers
New Rochelle
Bayville
Oyster Bay
Halesite
Huntington
Glen Cove
Fort Lee
Bronx
Port Washington
Syosset
Montclair
Bloomfield
Livingston
Secaucus
Manhattan
Melville
East Orange
Hicksville
Hoboken
Mineola
Millburn
Newark
Queens
Garden City
Levittown
New York
Jamaica
Elmont
Hempstead
Union
Massapequa
Elizabeth
Bayonne
Valley Stream
Freeport
Westfield
Brooklyn
Oceanside
South Oyster Bay
Clark
Linden
Inwood
Long Beach
Jones Beach
Colonia
Staten Island
Woodbridge Township
Lower Bay
Perth

NY Military Forces; There When Needed

Clockwise- STATEN ISLAND-- New York Air National Guard Master Sgt. Thomas Moade from the 174th Attack Wing out of Syracuse leads other members of the 174th, as well as members of the New York Army Guard from Newburgh, N.Y., in taking water and cases of food to local residents here, Nov. 2. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy M. Call, 174th Attack Wing. CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, PEEKSKILL-- New York National Guard Soldiers store relief supplies for Hurricane Sandy victims here, Nov. 7. Photo by Sgt. First Class Becky Rapp, 42nd Infantry Division band. STEWART ANGB, Newburgh--Utility vehicles and crews from California drive off the apron here after they were off-loaded from Air Force Air Mobility Command Aircraft on Nov. 1. The trucks were flown from March Air Force Base to Stewart to help restore the electrical system in New York and New Jersey following Hurricane Sandy. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint Force Headquarters. NEW YORK-- Members of the New York Army and Air National Guard and New York Naval Militia work together to evacuate a patient from Bellevue Hospital on Oct. 31. Photo by Warrant Officer Ubon Mendie, New York Guard. BROOKLYN— New York Military Forces, as well as supporting relief agencies erected a Logistical Support Area at Floyd Bennett Field to support New York National Guard operations in New York City in response to Hurricane Sandy. Photo by Col. Pat Center, Joint Force Headquarters. QUEENS, NY-- New York Army National Guard Soldiers of the Western New York based 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry distribute FEMA emergency food supplies to residents of Breezy Point Nov. 3. The Soldiers are among 4,400 New York State military forces on duty as part of New York's response to Hurricane Sandy. Photo by Lt. Col. Ben Richardson, 2-101st Cavalry. LONG BEACH, NY-- Soldiers and Airmen with the New York Army and Air National Guard provide relief support and cleanup to residents following severe damage caused by Hurricane Sandy on Nov. 2. Photo by Senior Airman Christopher S Muncy, 106th Rescue Wing.

Guard Responds to Sandy with Joint Action

Clockwise- STEWART ANGB, Newburgh. N.Y.--Utility vehicles and crews from California drive off
Thursday,Nov. 1. The trucks were flown from March Air Force Base to Stewart to help restore the
Force Headquarters. BRENTWOOD, N.Y. – New York Army National Guardsmen assembled and
Sandy. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo mobilized more than 2,800 of New York's volunteer
Sandy. Photo by Spc. J.p. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division Public Affairs. NEW YORK, N.Y.-- Sol
water to local residents in the Lexington Avenue Armory area on Thursday, Nov. 1. Photo by Lt.
Soldiers Specialists Christofer Cardinali and Stephanie Gomez explain heating instructions for
was severely damaged by flood waters sustained from Hurricane Sandy, causing massive mud
STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.--New York Army National Guardsman Sgt. Adama Ilbouda, left, and New Y
distribute fuel at the Staten Island Armory, Saturday, Nov. 3, 2012, to those affected by Hurrica
Emergency Management Agency and distributed at various armories throughout the New York

f the apron here after they were off-loaded from Air Force Air Mobility Command Aircraft on
e electrical system in New York and New Jersey. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Joint
prepared 800 generators to be used at polling locations in the areas affected by Hurricane
military forces to help civilian authorities in recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane
diers from the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion 69th Infantry hand out food and
Col. Jim Gonyo, 1-69th Infantry. NEW YORK, N.Y.--New York Joint Task Force Empire Shield
Meals Ready to Eat to Nancy Cunningham outside her home, here, Nov 2. Cunningham's home
residue, lack of electricity, and destruction. Photo by Warrant Officer Ubon Mendie, NY Guard.
ork Air National Guard's 274th Air Support Operations Squadron Tech. Sgt. David Tayler, right,
he Sandy. The fuel, available at no charge to those who need it, was provided by the Federal
k and northern New Jersey areas. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy National Guard Bureau.

Western Region Counterdrug Supports Binghamton

By Tech. Sgt. Brandy Fowler, 107th Airlift Wing

BINGHAMTON, NY— Travelling from Buffalo to Binghamton the Soldiers and airmen of New York State's Western Region Counterdrug showed up to support their community and the 29th Annual Chris Thater Memorial bike race, August 25-26, 2012.

Attracting more than 1,500 participants and more than 10,000 spectators, the event is dedicated to Chris Thater, an avid cyclist and Binghamton native, who was killed by a drunk driver nearly thirty years ago.

As a part of the Broome County STOP-DWI Program the annual event is aimed at heightening awareness about the deadly consequences of drinking and driving and fits right in with the mission of the New York State Counterdrug Program.

"It's the focus of counterdrug to talk to kids about staying off of drugs but also encourage them for doing well in school and staying on a positive track," Sgt. Dennis Sincebaugh, a Soldier assigned to the Western Region Counter Drug program said.

Taking about an hour to set up, counterdrug personnel erected a 27 foot mobile rock wall and outfitted each kid with a bandana, a harness and a helmet.

"When you're helping the kids put on their gear, it's really a great time to get to know them," Sincebaugh said. "I'm always asking how they are doing in school and re-enforcing the importance of good grades," Sincebaugh adds.

The rock wall, sometimes seen at carnivals and fairs as mere entertainment, serves other vital roles for the youth of the communities that the program serves.

"It's about giving these kids an alternative to getting into trouble," Spc. Justin Chernogorec, a veteran of the New York State Counterdrug program adds. "It challenges them with a task and the kids leave with a feeling of accomplishment," Chernogorec adds.

The New York National Guard Counterdrug Task Force (CDTF) facilitated a rock wall at the Chris Thater Memorial, an annual event to support DWI awareness. Staff Sgt. Dennis Sincebaugh educates a child on the rules of the wall before allowing the climb. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matthew Bates, 107th Airlift Wing.

The wall frequently sees both children and parents taking on the challenge side-by-side, however, not every child is so lucky.

"Some kids show up with no parental supervision," Sgt. Scott Kramer, NCOIC, NY Counterdrug, Western Region said. "These are the kids that need the most mentoring," Kramers adds. "It's good for them to see us out there in uniform doing something for them."

According to the programs Western coordinator, Maj. Scott Golden, the program will soon see a name change, as well as an increase in responsibilities and reach.

Golden adds that the program title will soon change from Drug Demand Reduction, or DDR, to Civil Operations.

"Counterdrug is going through some changes," Golden said. "We are gearing up to serve the public more efficiently by sharing information across multiple agencies. These Soldiers and Airmen are soon going to be working even closer with outside agencies to establish the needs of the communities and to evaluate the efficiency of the programs through statistical data," Golden concluded. gt

107th Trains Army Guard for Homeland Response

By Story and photos by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

The operational company of the 42nd Infantry Division of the Army National Guard arrived ready to train with the 107th Airlift Wing's C-130 loadmasters. Airman 1st Class Limina guides the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV), onto a C-130 aircraft driven by Army Guard Sgt. Albi, Oct. 20, 2012. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing.

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The 107th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard provided the 42nd Infantry Division of the New York Army National Guard rapid deployment cargo training here, October 20.

Despite wet and cold weather, the operational company of the 42nd Infantry Division from the Buffalo Masten Avenue Armory arrived ready to train with the 107th's Airlift Wing's C-130 loadmasters. The Army brought all of the mobile equipment they would use for a state emergency when called up by the governor.

"Our unit is the first to set the stage for others when called up for emergencies in the state, said Sgt. Major Edwin Garris, 42nd Infantry Division.

The loadmasters briefed the Solders on what the training task would be for the day.

"Use this training opportunity to understand how to load and secure your equipment on the C-130 aircraft," said Master Sgt. Timothy Griffin, 107th Airlift Wing C-130 loadmaster who led the training. "Our loadmasters and crew chiefs are here to assist you so when you need to respond you're ready," said Griffin.

One of the priority equipment to be loaded is the AN/TSC-185 Satellite Transportable Terminal (STT). The terminal is an optimized, over-the-horizon communications vehicle ideally suited for tactical communications missions with a very short set up time.

"Without this satellite we can't do our job in the field," said Sgt. Holly Lindstorm of the 42nd Infantry Division.

This training mission at Niagara was to test and gauge if all of the 42nd's equipment could fit onto a C-130 aircraft for their Homeland Response Force mission. The Airmen and Soldiers train together so when a real state or federal emergency happens they are ready to go.

"It's important we have the 107th at Niagara," said Army Sgt. Major Edwin Garris. "We can depend on them to help us respond in a short amount of time," he said.

The 107th loadmasters benefitted from this training as well. They got the chance to work with the Army's equipment and load engine running vehicles, tasks they are required to train in.

"Overall, this was highly valuable training received by all parties involved. Success is the only way to describe what was accomplished," said Griffin. **gt**

NY National Guard Helps Seize Millions in Marijuana

By J.p. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division

Sgt. Chris Worthington, a member of the Washington County Sheriff's Office, watches the take off of a New York National Guard UH-72A Lakota during a multi-day, multi-agency drug eradication mission Aug. 28 in Washington County, N.Y. The helicopter, used in conjunction with the New York Counterdrug Task Force, is used to spot marijuana plants from the air. Photo by Spc. J.p. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division.

WASHINGTON COUNTY, NY-- With the help of their friends in the sky, more than $35 million in drugs were taken off the street this fall by law enforcement agencies in New York's northeastern counties.

Law enforcement agencies from the Rensselaer, Montgomery, Fulton, Schoharie, Washington, Greene, Putman and Warren counties worked with the New York Counterdrug Task Force to seize illicit drug supplies over the course of 19 joint operations.

A New York National Guard UH-72A Lakota helicopter served as the eyes in the sky during each operation. Counterdrug pilots contributed 120 hours of flight time to law enforcement agencies during these operations this fall, although they do not directly arrest or keep any information on individuals.

Metrics gathered by Counterdrug report 652,000 lbs, or 11746 plants, were seized during the months of July, August and September. These operations led to 44 arrests and the seizure of 11 weapons.

"It makes you feel that you're actually accomplishing something, keeping it away from kids," Harold Spiezo, a member of the Washington County Sheriff's Office, said during a 33-officer operation Aug. 28 in Washington County.

Marijuana plants are often hidden in cornfields, where the plants grow hidden among the tall stalks, unbeknownst to the owners of the field or to passing cars. Pilots in the helicopter are trained to spot the marijuana plants from the sky and then relay that information to law enforcement officers on the ground.

Law enforcement officers then travel to the location and seize the plants, as directed by the pilots from the sky.

"I don't know if it could be done without the bird," Jeff Dempster of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation said. "He's the eyes in the skies, above it all, and he directs the officers on the ground to where the plants are."

This year is the first year Counterdrug has been able to offer the UH-72A Lakota helicopter. Flight time for Counterdrug missions helps keep pilots sharp for other missions throughout the year. Counterdrug typically flies 100 hours annually at no cost to the agencies they assist.

"We have certain types of specialized equipment that we lend out to law enforcement agencies to help them fight drug trafficking in our communities," said Col. Richard J. Sloma, Counterdrug Coordinator. This helicopter is one of them."

"We had a pretty high rate of crops that were confiscated," Sloma said. "It means that we're helping our law enforcement partners take dangerous substances off the street, take the weapons off the street, and put people away that are contributing to harm in our communities. **gt**

NY National Guard Members and Families Participate in PGA Military Appreciation Day

Story and photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

FARMINGDALE—Eleven New York National Guard Airmen and Soldiers rubbed elbows with some of the country's top golfers-- and five National Guard spouses and mothers-to-be got new baby supplies—during the Barclay's Tournament Military Appreciation Day here on August 22.

Thanks to the Professional Golf Association's Birdies for the Brave program and Operation Shower, a group which throws baby showers for the pregnant spouses and partners of deployed servicemen, the Guardsmen and women and spouses got to enjoy a unique day at a world-class sporting event.

Birdies for the Brave is a PGA Tour Charities Inc. program aimed at supporting service members and military families. The charity raises money for veterans and military support. The program also provides opportunities for service members and military families to participate in professional golf events.

The National Guard members and spouses were also honored during a ceremony held as part of the Military Appreciation Day at the Barclay's Tournament hosted at Bethpage State Park August 23-26.

The Birdies for the Brave program also offered complimentary admission to the tournament for active, retired, and reserve military members.

The Guard men and women took turns caddying for pro golfers competing for a $1.44 million first place play-off. It gave them a great chance to watch expert golfers play, said Air National Guard 2nd Lt. Shannon Pingatore.

"I'm starting to get into golf, so I figured it would be a great opportunity to come out here, meet some pros, get some advice, and of course, support the troops," said Spec. Rachel Ruiz, a member of the 42nd Signal Company.

It was exciting to be out on the course with the pros, said Sgt. 1st Class Armondo Torres, a member of Farmingdale-based Company D 1st Battalion 69th Infantry, who caddied along with two other members of his company.

The Soldiers and Airmen also got the opportunity to meet Gen. Craig McKinley, the outgoing chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the first officer in that position to sit on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Gen. Craig McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and Major General Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York, pose with five New York Army National Guard spouses who attended a baby shower hosted by the PGA and Barclay's Bank during Military Appreciation Day at The Barclay's PGA Tour golf tournament at Bethpage State Park on Wednesday, August 22. They are (from left) Samantha Hahn, Kim Antal, Jessica Metzger, Nicole Campbell and her daughter Savannah Campbell, and Jennifer Lyman.

McKinley, along with Major General Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General of New York, visit the event to express the thanks of the military for the support the PGA has shown veterans.

Nobody serves and sacrifices in hope of recognition, said Sgt. 1st Class Jason Lehman, a member of the 204th Engineers who was also one of the caddies for the day. But, he added "getting a little recognition and appreciation is nice."

While the Soldiers and Airmen were out on the Bethpage Black Course with world-class golfers, five pregnant spouses of National Guard Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan and Kuwait were treated to a baby shower.

The event—hosted by actress Melissa Joan Hart, who currently stars in the TV show "Melissa and Joey" was hosted by Barclays Bank, the sponsor of the golf tournament and by the Birdies for the Brave organization.

Forty pregnant spouses and partners of deployed service members—most from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst-- were treated to lunch and presented with useful baby-related items, including car seats.

"I think it is more than I ever imagined," said Samantha Hahn, whose husband Spec. Peter Hahn, is assigned to Headquarters Company of the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

I'm grateful to the PGA for doing this for us, said Kim Antal, the wife of Sgt 1st Class Troy Antal, a member of the 2nd Battalion 108th Field Artillery.

This is a great event for our Soldiers and Airmen and their families, Murphy said. It's great of the PGA to do this for the military and their families, he added. **gt**

New York National Guard Strengthens Relationship with South Africa

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo, Guard Times Staff

PRETORIA, South Africa – Senior military leaders from New York and South Africa met to share perspectives and build relationships during a week-long international trade and air show, here, Sept. 19-24.

Representatives from the New York National Guard took advantage of being at the Africa Aerospace and Defense Airshow and Exhibition to meet with their counterparts from the South African National Defense Forces.

"New York's partnership has been strengthening over the past nine years, and meeting face to face is an important aspect to continue building these relationships," said Col. Franz Michel, who oversees the State Partnership Program.

Major General Roy Andersen, Chief of the South African National Defense Reserve Forces, echoed these same sentiments.

"We have built a strong relationship with New York and having these personal meetings allows us to plan for future opportunities."

New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Karanlall Brijbukhan and Spec. Sebastian Petion with the 442 Military Police Company from Queens, N.Y. discuss their M1117 Armored Security Vehicle's capabilities with members of the Young Lions, a South African Youth Development program. The unit is part of a U.S. military contingent displaying aircraft and equipment during the Africa Aerospace and Defense Airshow and Exhibition at the South Africa National Defense Force's Waterkloof Air Force Base.

(from left) Major General Roy Andersen, Chief of the South African National Defense Reserve Forces, Brig. General Debbie Molefe, Director Defence Reserves, Chaplain Gen. Andrew Jamangile, Major Gen. Verle Johnston, the commander of the New York Air National Guard and Col. Ray Shields, the Director of Joint Staff for the New York National Guard meet to discuss state partnership program initiatives. The New York delegation is here as part of a U.S. military contingent displaying aircraft and equipment at the Africa Aerospace and Defense Airshow and Exhibition, Sept. 18-23, 2012.

"This interaction is very important. Meeting in person and establishing a level of trust and respect allows us to be effective," Andersen added.

The State Partnership Program is a National Guard initiative that encourages relationships, enhances international security and builds capacity across all levels of society with developing nations. Each State and territorial National Guard is partnered with the military of a developing friendly nation.

Participation in this air show is part of the New York National Guard's on-going relationship with South Africa.

The air show is hosted every two years and is comprised of nearly 60 civilian and military aircraft and vehicle demonstrations from some of the biggest names in aviation and the defense industry.

In addition to sharing aircraft and equipment capabilities, the meeting participants discussed several areas of interest, to include the New York National Guard's emergency management capabilities and reintegration programs.

"We have found the National Guard's resiliency and Yellow Ribbon programs to be exceptional and we wish to model these initiatives," Andersen said.

Identifying the interest and recognizing the mutual benefit, New York has invited representatives to meet with program experts in the future.

"Based on these meetings, our plan is to get our folks together to advise and help them develop a program that meets their specific needs," Michel said.

"Our primary focus is identifying future training opportunities that will benefit both our services," said Major Gen. Verle Johnston, commander of the New York Air National Guard. "I'm pleased that we were able to accomplish this." **gt**

JTF-4 Conducts Simulated Hurricane Response

By J.p. Lawrence and Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

TROY -- Outside it was a sunny, beautiful day, but inside the Glenmore Road Armory, New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from the 42nd Infantry Division and 109th Airlift Wing wrestled with the challenges resulting from a hurricane hitting the Albany area.

Along with members of the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard, two state defense forces, the Guardsmen and women were testing their decision-making process as part of Operation Rainbow Storm, an annual domestic operations exercise.

"The purpose of this exercise is to practice and train on our ability to manage operations within the Albany Capital region during a disaster for the governor and the people of this area," said Col. Dennis Deely, the 42nd Infantry Division's operations officer. "We do this training so that we are familiar with operations between the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, the Naval Militia and the New York Guard."

The New York National Guard divides New York State up into six Joint Operating Areas, or JOAs, with Army and Air National Guard units sharing responsibility for aiding civil authorities in each region during a domestic emergency. The units in each JOA are expected to hold one joint exercise annually.

Members of the four New York military services which normally train separately came together during the exercise.

While the bulk of the exercise involved command post operations and communications exercises, two real world training missions were executed to test coordination and iron out joint operating procedures.

The scenarios were built around some of the challenges New York emergency responders faced in August and September 2011 when Tropical Storms Irene and Lee hit the state, Deely said. Cascades of rain resulted in rising flood waters that cut off roads and stranded residents.

In one scenario the National Guard and Naval Militia -- a state force composed of members of the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps Reserves who volunteer to perform state missions when called -- teamed up to deliver food and water to local residents stranded by rapidly rising flood waters.

Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division mustered supplies of food and water and delivered them to a boat landing on the Troy waterfront. Waiting for them were two boats, manned by members of the New York Naval Militia. A flight engineer from the 109th Airlift Wing, handled communications with Joint Task Force headquarters.

The multi-service crew roared off to Campbell Island, which is about three miles up the Hudson River, and delivered its cargo.

LANSINGBURGH--New York Naval Militia Patrol Boat 230 underway with a NewYork Guard Search and Rescue Team on the Hudson River here on Sept. 14 carrying a New York Guard Search and Rescue Team during domestic operations exercise conducted by the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard. Photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff.

Then a call came for the next mission: a search and rescue request for missing persons. Civilians stranded on an island by rising flood waters after the bridge washed out, were lost.

Members of the New York Guard's Search and Rescue Team, 2nd Emergency Response Battalion, 10th Brigade, responded from their headquarters in another part of Troy.

The New York Guard volunteers, who train on their own time and are paid only when called to state duty by the governor, clambered into the boat to find the missing civilians. Led by New York Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Czurlanis, a graduate of the Search and Rescue school and a resident of Clifton Park, N.Y., they divided the island into zones and commenced a search for the missing civilians.

Overseeing these efforts were troops at the Troy armory, where officers and noncommissioned officers from both the 42nd Infantry and 109th Airlift Wing worked through communications and operational issues together.

In a real disaster, each New York county has civilian emergency operation centers to handle disaster response. If these centers identify a resource they need, but cannot provide locally, they call the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

These state officials goes through their list resources, and if they have a request that only the New York National Guard can fulfill, they call the Guard's Joint Operations Center, which forwards that request to the units who will take care of it.

The unit that can best take care of a request may be an Air National Guard unit, if the request is for a weather report, an Army National Guard engineer unit, if the request is for clearing a road, a Naval Militia unit if the request is for a boat, or a New York Guard unit for a search and rescue team.

"We're all working on the same process," said Air National Guard Col. Walter Wintsch, the Joint Force 4 commander. "You can look around and see Army and Air Force people talking together, so I think it's working pretty well."

Training to work together now will help units respond quicker during real disasters, Deely said. The quicker units work together, the sooner people get supplies or get helped during a disaster.

"The key thing on this training is that it makes us quicker to respond and more able to respond," Deely said. "This is how we train to make sure everyone is working together, as fast as we can." **gt**

NY Guardsman Commemorate Fallen at Ft. Bliss 9/11 Retreat Ceremony

Story and photos Master Sgt. Kelly McCargo, 1st AD Public Affairs Office

The 1st Armored Division Honor Guard case the National Colors during the 9-11 Retreat and Remembrance Ceremony at Fort Bliss, Texas, Memorial Circle, Sept. 11.

FORT BLISS, Texas-- More than 200 Soldiers, Veterans and El Paso City Officials gathered to commemorate the victims of 9/11 and in remembrance of Fallen Soldiers of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, Sept. 11.

The 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Dana J.H. Pittard, thanked Soldiers and Veterans for their service and remarked how the military has grown due to their contributions and sacrifices.

"Thank you for coming today … as we remember the nearly 3,000 men, women and children that lost in the attacks 11 years ago, and we also honor more than 6,000 U.S. servicemembers who have given their lives defending this Nation. We also recognize our resilient American spirit. Everybody over the age of 17 remembers what they were doing when our country was attacked 11 years ago … when our country was attacked many of you here, and millions of Americans were upset, and I think many of us, and some of you Soldiers here, decided to enlist and serve their country after that attack.

"I think so many of us said just as our President, George W. Bush, said, 'Not Again; Not on our watch will our country be attacked again …,'" Pittard said.

"Today we also have to recognize our first responders; the police firefighters and emergency responders that went UP the stairs, as others were coming down.

"We said 'Not on our watch' and since that occurred, we haven't been attacked again," Pittard said. "And that is not by accident or by happenstance. It's not by accident that the leaders of Al Qeada are either dead, or on the run or captured … the reason why [another attack] has not occurred because Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and civilians—both here and abroad—were on-point at all times!"

"Ensuring that the different plots, different attacks against our country by enemies of American and of freedom, do not take place. We are thankful for that. But that doesn't happen by accident, we are keeping our eye on the ball and in focus," Pittard said.

A special guest speaker was a New York Army National Guardsman at Fort Bliss preparing to deploy to Afghanistan … a guardsman who was also a first responder at "Ground Zero" 11 years ago.

"Thank you all for honoring me by allowing me to share some thoughts as we commemorate this somber but binding event as a reminder of why we are fighting," said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Bien, 101st Expeditionary Signal Command, Battalion Command Sergeant Major.

"Most of us here were probably too young to remember the day President Kennedy was killed. As I was growing up it seemed like every one from that generation knew exactly where they were and what they were doing when they heard that terrible news. I could never understand it—until now. It seems like every generation has an unforgettable moment in time … and for me it was September 11, 2001.

Bien said he first heard news of a plane crashing into the World Trade Center while he was in a Pine Bush, New York True Value hardware store purchasing wall paint.

The clerk asked if he had heard about it.

"I said it must have been some 'cowboy' showing off in a Piper Cub or something," he said. **gt**

Unalarmed he returned home where his neighbor asked the same question. Curious he checked the news and said he was surprised at the size of the hole in the Trade Center building.

And as he watched the television, the other plane struck the building beside it.

"My neighbor ran over and asked if I had the TV on, and we both stood in my living room as we watched in shock," he said.

While watching the reporting he thought to himself, "We had just been attack! But this can't be possible—America doesn't get attacked!"

"Once it clicked in my brain that America was under attack, I put on my [Battle Dress Army Uniform], packed a duffle bag, called my wife and drove to my Armory where I met most of my Cavalry Troopers. It was kind of funny how we all responded without getting orders—but that's what minutemen do."

Bien and his fellow Soldiers drew weapons, Meals Ready to Eat, and Chemical Protective masks, or Pro masks. He called their commanding officer to report a headcount then squeezed as many Soldiers "as possible" into military vehicles, and drove to their battalion headquarters at Staten Island.

Once there they boarded the Staten Island Ferry bound for Manhattan.

"We packed as many more Soldiers onto a ferry … by approximately [3 p.m.] 101st Cavalry Regiment was on its way to New York City," Bien said.

"The half-hour ferry ride felt like hours—filled with anxiety," Bien said. "As the ferry rocked towards Battery Park, I tried to imagine what the Soldiers of D-Day felt like as they neared the Shores. Of course there were no bullets flying at us right now, but we're at war aren't we?"

"It was late afternoon by the time we got to Manhattan and it was about a 15 minute march to the hole where the towers used to stand," he said. "We marched through what seemed like inches of soot and ash. There was burnt paper floating through the air like morbid confetti. Smoke and dust got thicker with each block. If you ever mixed cement and inhaled at the wrong moment, then you know what I was tasting. The sour acrid smoke made us happy for once that we had brought our Pro masks.

"As we walked into the square we saw a surreal hazy scene. When I saw the pile of twisted iron I thought to myself I'm on a Hollywood movie set for a horror movie. NYPD, FDNY, EMTs and other rescue crews were already there on top of the pile. There were burnt out skeletons of cars and firetrucks in the street and smoke," Bien said.

The 101st Troops joined "Bucket Brigade" teams which normally haul water to and from but instead he said it was concrete, steel, sheet rock and plastic. Eventually the holes became so deep they lost sight of the volunteer rescuers who went down looking for survivors.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Deleon Weston (left) and his wife, Doris (center) congratulates guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Bien, 101st Expeditionary Signal Command, Battalion Command Sergeant Major. Bien and his previous unit, D Troop, 101st Cavalry Regiment, was one of the first military units to report to Ground Zero, September 11, 2001.

There were other rescue crews out there looking for ways to get down to the survivors but the steel was still too hot to walk on even with the firemen continually spraying them with their hoses, he said.

"As night fell, FEMA, Salvation Army, Clergy and counselors began setting up tents and lights. As we worked through the night, some[personnel] in the hole and some on the perimeter. As I went around checking on my Soldiers I remember so many things totally out of place, but now somehow seem quite logical. Like spray painting on the walls with directions to the morgue. The McDonalds, opposite tower number one, with its windows blasted out—ironically Burger King had come in and set up shop and started feeding troops. The firehouse had its entire front blown out but there were already volunteers there setting up a soup kitchen, and the church next to it which didn't even get a scratch.

"Throughout the night more National Guardsmen, police and fire began to arrive, and I was amazed to see responders not just from out of town but from other states and even Canada. I think that's when it struck me— it wasn't just New York City that was attacked but it was America that was attacked ..."

Within days, Bien said every inch of the chain-link fence surrounding Ground Zero, was covered with flyers, posters and pictures begging for information about missing friends and loved ones.

Bien and his Soldiers volunteered for two weeks, until being recalled. He returned to work, but as a New York State investigator he was allowed to return due to his familiarity with the rescue operations.

He also learned about numerous co-workers and close friends that either lost their lives or loved ones during the tragedy.

He, along with America, closely watched the news about what was to happen next.

"It became a nightly routine to watch the news and listen to which active and guard units were to deploy. I can't begin to explain the number of emotions that I experienced when I learned my unit was being sent to Iraq—finally …

Bien previously deployed to Iraq as a First Sergeant with D Troop, 101st Cavalry Regiment, and is soon deploying to Afghanistan as a Command Sergeant Major with his fellow New York Army "Minutemen."

"Sometimes I stop in awe seeing an entire Army, and think about being all the way on the other side of the globe and think about how this all started," Bien said.

"Sometimes I think 'it took a tragedy to pull this entire Nation together' sometimes I just think about the sunny morning when I was just buying paint," Bien said. "But let me say thank you for not forgetting why we fight." **gt**

1-258th Artillery Conduct Raid Training

Story and photos by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

FORT DRUM-Seven months of training and preparation by the artillerymen of the 1-258th Field Artillery climaxed in 46 minutes on a hot July day as two M119A2 howitzers sling loaded in underneath UH-60 helicopters sent eight rounds downrange at their target.

Sixteen minutes later the howitzers were being hauled out of the landing zone by UH-60 Blackhawks of the 3-142nd Aviation and 34 minutes later the two guns, the crewmen and the advance party were all back on the pickup zone in the assembly area after conducting a textbook artillery raid.

Soldiers get set to hook their 105 mm howitzer to a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter via a prepared static line on Fort Drum, N.Y., July 17. The Soldiers are assigned to 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery, New York Army National Guard; the helicopter crew is assigned to Army Aviation Support Facility 3 in Latham, N.Y. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Infantry Division.

After years of learning to use 105mm, M119A2 light towed howitzers instead of the 155mm, M109A6 self-propelled guns many of the battalion's veterans had once trained on, and deploying to Iraq doing MP duties the 1-258th FA now had a firm handle on a key light artillery task, said Lt. Col. Michael Hoblin, the battalion's commander.

This successful Annual Training event demonstrated that the battalion can fulfill a key mission task, even in a resource constrained environment, because of the quality of the non-commissioned officers, Hoblin said.

Training in conducting an air assault artillery raid is so critical to an M119A2- equipped artillery battalion that it should be done annually instead of just every three or four years, said Staff Sgt. William Torres, the section chief of Battery B's Gun 5.

An artillery raid is conducted when a critical target is outside the normal 14 kilometer range of the 105 millimeter rounds fired by the M-119 towed howitzer, explained Maj. Pete Mehling, the executive officer of the 1-258th. The drill calls for using the lift capabilities of the UH-60 Blackhawk to move howitzers, ammunition and gun crews into a position-often behind enemy lines-which brings the high-value target into range.

In a full-up artillery raid a platoon of infantrymen is air assaulted in first to secure and hold the landing zone. AH-64 Apache or OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopters accompany that initial assault to provide overwatch and security.

An advance team from the artillery battalion follows and uses GPS technology to determine the proper place for each gun. Then the UH-60s lift in the guns, crews and ammunition. Once the guns are in place they fire rounds downrange and the helicopter and gun crews scramble to extract the guns and Soldiers before the enemy can react.

Getting ready to conduct an artillery raid as part of 2012's AT meant getting Soldiers qualified at the 10-day Air Assault Course or the five-day-long Sling Load Inspectors Course, Mehling explained. The Soldiers who completed that training provided the expertise B Battery needed to plan and conduct the artillery raid.

Training in air assault tactics, techniques and procedures began in January and ran through April, Mehling said. The battalion's officers and NCOs conducted training with aviators from the 3-142. Officers studied air assault tactics, while NCOs worked on the hands-on skills of organizing the operation.

Early on, the decision was made to select two gun sections from Battery B to conduct the mission, Mehling said. All of the battery's Soldiers got the training, ensuring that there was a critical mass of knowledge. But since only two guns would conduct the actual mission all eight guns in the battery competed against each other to be the best, Mehling explained. The competition kept everybody on their toes, he added.

By July 16 the two best sections had been picked and both the aviators and artillerymen were ready to go.

At 1245 the advance party lifted off from the friendly LZ and eight minutes later was on the ground at the LZ which was supposed to be behind enemy lines. At 1315 the two guns were on the ground and the crews were ready to start shooting. The first round went downrange at H-46 minutes and all rounds were fired-tightly around the target-at H+50 minutes. It is important to note that special considerations were taken due to this being a training exercise at Fort Drum which added time to the execution of the mission.

Just a little over 90 minutes after the mission had started the exercise was complete and the 1-258 had another vital skill they could offer to the ground combat units the battalion supports, Mehling said. **gt**

42nd ID Soldiers Have Fun during Family Day

By J.p. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division

The Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarter and Headquarters Battalion attend family day at the Sullivan Jones VFW Post in Poestenkill, N.Y. Aug. 12. Events included a rock wall, bounce house and clown and were provided by members of the 42nd Infantry Division Family Readiness Group and others. Photo by Spc. J.p. Lawrence, 42nd Infantry Division.

POESTENKILL, N.Y.-- The Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarter and Headquarters Battalion made the most of a summer afternoon during family day at the Sullivan Jones VFW Post in Poestenkill, N.Y. Aug. 12.

Fun was the mission of the day for these Soldiers. The day was marked by the smell of burgers and hotdogs cooking, by the sight of Daisy the Clown smiling, and by the sound of children laughing as they tumbled down the waterslide and splashed water upon their parents.

All of this was meant to make the day as enjoyable as possible for the Soldiers and their families, said Lisa Dethomasis, a member of the 42nd Infantry Division Family Readiness Group.

The FRG is a program that sponsors family events and supports military families during crises or times of need, Dethomasis said, as she gave out bags of school supplies.

Dethomasis said she joined in 2002, when her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Frank Dethomasis, was deploying.

A quick glance showed her husband taking in the flavored ice stand nearby. As the admin non-commissioned officer poured more and more syrup onto his treat, Soldiers, clad in their civilian garb, introduced their families to their peers as they all waited in line for food.

And all around, Soldiers did what the sunny summer day demanded of them. They played horseshoes and cheered when a shoe clanked as it hit stake. They played volleyball and watched as their valiant slaps at the ball proved futile. They listened to the DJ as he played disco and country music. They gawked at Daisy the Clown as she got out of her custom-painted clown car.

They also bought raffle tickets in the hope of winning big. Tina Spears, FRG head, tore off tickets as she stood behind a row of bags, each labeled with prizes a Soldier could win.

Spears has been in the FRG since last August, and for her, giving back is no abstract concept. Spears said that her friends in the FRG and in the military helped her get back on her feet after a fire last April.

"I can't give back financially, but I can give my time," Spears said. "If I can help in any kind of way, it's great to be able to do that."

Yes, fun was the mission for today. And that mission was accomplished. gt

New York Medics on the Job in Germany

Story and photos by Spc. Rachel Sanzo - 42nd Infantry Division Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, GERMANY-- Seven New York Army National Guard medics traveled 4,000 miles to help care for patients at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) here.

The Soldiers with the 466th Area Support Medical Company (ASMC) from Queensbury, NY, located at the edge of the Adirondack Mountains, arrived August 13 to provide medical support for Soldiers deploying to Kosovo. They will be on the job until Sept. 3.

The New York National Guard Soldiers are filling in for Reservists from the 4203rd United States Army Hospital Unit from Nashville, T.N. Those medics will deploy to Kosovo with the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Carolina National Guard in September. The deploying medics are currently receiving additional medical training in other areas of Germany.

When the Reserve medics identified their need for help, the 466th ASMC was happy to provide their assistance.

"We're really excited to be helping out here in Germany," said Sgt. 1st Class William C. Vincent, a Queensbury resident and a medic with the 466th ASMC . "I'm glad that our unit was the one they called, and that they trusted us enough to take over for them."

The temporary medical clinic staff is composed of three physician assistants and four medics, and contains enough troop medical clinic sets to treat between 500 to 700 patients, depending on the amount of treatment they require.

"Our clinic is what we call a level one clinic, meaning that we can perform minor surgical operations," said Maj. Peter N. Fish, a Staten Island resident and the officer in charge of the 466th ASMC team. "Most of our patients will probably be treated for respiratory infections, orthopedic issues, and minor fractures. If they require any treatment beyond that, we will refer them and provide transportation to a local civilian hospital."

Fortunately for the 466th ASMC, their medics and physician assistants have only had to treat a handful of Soldiers for minimal injuries and ailments since they arrived in Hohenfels.

New York Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class William C. Vincent and Sgt. Michael P. Boulerice, medics with the 466th Area Support Medical Company from Queensbury, administer an IV to a patient at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center medical clinic here, August 22, 2012.

"The less action that happens in our medical clinic, the better," Fish said. "As long as we're bored, it means that our Soldiers are healthy and well cared for. We will train and learn how to treat Soldiers the best we can in our down time."

When it comes time for the Soldiers of the JMRC medical clinic to depart Hohenfels and head back home, the 4203rd Tennessee Reserve Soldiers will be heading to Kosovo for the start of their deployment.

"We're glad we've had the opportunity to help out these Soldiers," said Maj. Warren Sheprow, a physician assistant who lives in Queensbury. "We're happy to have met them and sincerely hope they return home safely." gt

NY Engineers Refurbish Historic Fire Tower

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Wheeler, 138th PAD

BEACON, N.Y. -- Trekking up the 1600 feet of rugged, unforgiving terrain of Mount Beacon, Citizen-Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 1156th Engineer Company spent two weeks sharpening their skills, as well as learning new ones refurbishing the fire observation tower located at its summit.

"The project request started out as a complete overhaul for the tower to include painting, adjusting handrail heights, adding fencing, and rebuilding the cabin atop the tower," said Capt. Daniel L. Colomb, commander of the 1156th Engineer Company.

"We are basically trying to make it safer," said Spc. Osse Jean-Pierre, a carpenter assigned to the 1156th who also performs part-time general maintenance in his civilian job. "We replaced some rails, changed all the top panels, and painted it so it won't rust."

Built in 1931 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005, the Mount Beacon Fire Observation Tower requires serious repairs and updates to modern building codes before state engineers can OK it for public use.

"It's all about preserving a historic site that showcases the beauty and heritage of the Mid-Hudson Valley," said Colomb. "Thousands of people walk the trails around Mount Beacon each year. Some use the trails for exercise and some simply enjoy a nice hike or picnic with family and friends."

Mount Beacon, located near the City of Beacon, is the highest point in the Hudson Highlands chain of hills. The Mount Beacon fire tower, used until 1975 for fire-spotting duties, commands a 75-mile view of the Hudson Valley and Connecticut.

History aside, this project has gotten the community involved and excited about this project.

"I've heard stories from hikers and local residents that describe their excitement in getting to finally go to the top and visit the tower after all these years," Colomb said. "One gentleman even told me how excited he was to take his father up the mountain to see the tower that he hasn't seen since he was his son's age."

"We have a retired Sgt. 1st Class that comes up here every day," said 1st Sgt. Gregory Sinclair. "He is very excited about getting up there just for the view."

Staff Sgt. Marco Padilla and Spc. Osse Jean-Pierre of the 1156th Engineer Company, New York Army National Guard, repair and replace railings on the Mount Beacon fire tower Sept. 7, 2012 (Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Wheeler, 138th PAD)

Colomb also added that the community at large is happy to see progress come from the many donations made to the historical society and specifically the Beacon Fire Observation Tower restoration project.

Community support notwithstanding, projects like these benefit the Soldiers, both personally and professionally.

"These community based projects are priceless training opportunities for my Soldiers," Colomb said. "Not only are they able to train and exercise their skills, but they are also able to do it in a 'real life' environment."

"I get a feeling of accomplishment and feel good because we are doing something good for the community," said Jean-Pierre. "Personally I love doing things to help other people, especially something I can use at my civilian job."

"The biggest thing about this project is that it's something different," Sinclair said. "It's nice for these guys and for the unit to do something for someone other than the military.

"When we do something at Camp Smith (New York's state training facility) who sees it? Not many, but when we do something like this, thousands of people will be able to use it and enjoy it," Sinclair said.

The project helped the engineer Soldiers learn to adapt, which helps prepare them to respond to state emergencies or challenges on active duty, Colomb said.

"Training piece aside, the biggest thing these projects provide my Soldiers is critical thinking and problem-solving skills," Colomb said. "There is no great way to train a Soldier to react to the many situations they may encounter in a natural disaster or war-time situation. These projects give my Soldiers that ability."

No strangers to serving both the military and civilian communities, the Soldiers of the 1156th have had a busy year, he added.

He cited responses to two tropical storms, construction projects and various training scenarios in New York and Puerto Rico. **gt**

Signal Soldiers Hone Skills in Mexican Desert

Story and photos by Sgt. Trisha Pinczes, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP MCGREGOR, New Mexico -- A New York Army National Guard Soldier from the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion pulls security in a 360-degree formation with other Soldiers from the unit, after the sighting of an improvised explosive device, during a counter-IED training exercise on August 30. Soldiers from the 101st are currently going through pre-mobilization training at Camp McGregor prior to a deployment to Afghanistan.

CAMP MCGREGOR, New Mexico -- Their mission is to link far-flung units together with state-of-the-art communications technology, but the men and women of the New York Army National Guard's 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion (ESB) are learning to cope with heat, dust, and field conditions here in the New Mexico desert.

With the temperature at 94 degrees, conditions reflect that of the upcoming battlefield, said 1st Lt. John Santana, the commander of Company A.

"We do have Soldiers that will be going out with other units in teams of three, five, or ten going out in support of MP (military police) and infantry units," Santana said.

Twenty-eight miles out in the desert, the signal Soldiers are focused on basic infantry skills, as well as their communications mission.

The 101st ESB is being trained for deployment to Afghanistan by Task Force Redhawk, an element of the 5th Armored Brigade which trains units that are deploying overseas.

Santana said he feels it is important for his Soldiers to train on basic combat skills as a signal battalion.

"Their main mission is signal communications but they have to be prepared to defend their position if need be, and so this training is critical for our Soldiers, as well as infantry and any other Soldier in the Army," Santana said.

Having previously deployed to both Iraq and Kuwait, Staff Sgt. Delia Medrano, a communications specialist, said the training is similar to what they will experience in country.

"Training in this temperature, with the equipment is what it will be like in Afghanistan," she said. "As signal Soldiers we don't get to do the hands-on training that much and it's important for where we are going."

Essential equipment testing is being conducted along with a culminating field exercise in order to accurately make sure all their communication gear is set for the upcoming mission.

"We made sure that all of our equipment is in working order," Santana said. "We will later take it out to a location in the field, set it up and communicate with the equipment, tear it down and bring it back in."

The importance of being prepared and trained on the equipment was stressed by Medrano as well.

"Having our equipment ready means we can go over there and serve everybody," she said. "We can fix all of our mistakes here so we don't make them when it counts."

Individual Soldiers are learning everyone else's job, so no matter who is available they can always get the job done, said Sgt. 1st Class Ramon Anderson, the Platoon Sergeant and team supervisor. gt

New York Engineers Lay Foundations in Germany

Story and photos by Spc. Rachel Sanzo - 42nd Infantry Division

HOHENFELS, GERMANY-- A construction vehicle transports gravel to the helicopter landing zone at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center here, Aug. 15. Seventy-eight New York Army National Guard Soldiers with the 827th and 152nd Engineer Companies from the 204th Engineer Battalion, Walton, N.Y. traveled to Hohenfels to aid in troop construction projects on the base's pre-deployment training area as part of their annual training, August 5-24.

HOHENFELS, GERMANY--- The crunch of ten-ton vehicles on gravel and the din of voices over radio calls can be heard as New York Army National Guard Soldiers carry out their annual training at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) here.

Seventy-eight Soldiers with the 827th and 152nd Engineer Companies from New York's 204th Engineer Battalion from Walton, traveled to Hohenfels to assist and chip away at troop construction projects (TCPs) August 4 to 25, 2012.

"Our mission here in Hohenels is to aid in TCPs in order to improve the realism of training areas for Soldiers participating in overseas deployment training," said Capt. Chad Clark, the commander of the 827th from Chester, N.Y.

At the JMRC in Hohenfels, units conduct pre-deployment training in authentic environments that mirror the setting and culture of Soldiers' deployment destinations. Features of the Center include a helicopter landing zone to transport Soldiers to and from training areas within Hohenfels, realistic villages occupied by experienced actors imitating citizens, and various other logistical facilities.

One of the goals of the two engineer companies throughout the duration of their training involves building upon the site's preexisting helicopter landing zone (HLZ). The Soldiers will work to raise the elevation of the HLZ two and a half meters, in accordance with training needs.

Additionally, the 827th and 152nd will work to lay foundations for logistical facilities that future units deployed to Hohenfels will build upon and integrate into upcoming training missions.

"All of our projects are supporting units who will deploy," Clark said. "We're creating buildings for them to utilize, and improving the landing pad that they will utilize during their pre-mobilization training."

Although the members of the 204th Engineer Battalion will only remain in Hohenfels for a couple of weeks, the projects they are undertaking are ongoing and will involve many more hours of manpower before they are completed. Additional units will be sent to Hohenfels for up to two years before the HLZ and buildings are finished.

"The work we're doing here is laying the footprint so future units that come in will have a good idea of the work that we've done, and the work that still needs to be done," said Lt. John Scott, the officer in charge of construction with the 827th from Albany.

According to Scott, the progress on the landing zone and logistical facilities should be 33 percent complete by the time the engineer companies depart Hohenfels, thanks to the work of the current engineers on site and those who came before them.

"Our sponsors and advisors have been ecstatic with the work we've done," said Clark. "They say that we've really embraced the concept of this pad. And as for our guys, they've jumped right in and have made great strides in getting it to where we want it to be."

When it comes time for the engineer Soldiers to depart Hohenfels and head back home, their time spent overseas will definitely be a time to remember.

"It's definitely been a plus to be doing our annual training away from the drill shed floor at home," said Pvt. Jean Thompson, an equipment specialist with the 827th from Almond, N.Y. "But we, like many other units that will come in after us, are just here to chip in a little bit until the project is done." gt

Oasis in Desert Prepares Sergeants Major to Lead

Story and photos by Sgt. Trisha Pinczes, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT BLISS, TEXAS-- An oasis in a desert best describes the atmosphere as you walk under the archway into center court of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy here.

It's an island in a sea of grass with a walkway that leads to each educational center where students learn the skills necessary to lead future generations of Soldiers.

"The Academy's mission and purpose is to develop agile and critical thinking leaders," said Charles Guitte, the director of training . "It is all about leader development, they need to understand the skills, knowledge and attributes of what it takes to, first of all be a Soldier, and then start learning the traits of being a leader."

The Sergeants Major Academy was established in 1972, and started educating sergeants major in January 1973 .

The Academy was given the mission of standardizing non-commissioned officer training across the Army, which resulted in the creation of the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC), which is now known as the Warrior Leader Course (WLC).

The Academy also conducts training courses for newly named Command Sergeants Major.

Although the Academy teaches to one standard level of completion, each individual has different attributes to bring to their organization, as well as improvements that can be made, Sgt. Maj. William Backscleider, chief of curriculum development said.

"Be a Steward of yourself, know what your strengths are and know what your weaknesses are," he said. "Capitalize on your strengths but improve on your weaknesses."

Along with self-development, operational force units and the Academy, Soldiers will have what they need to be good leaders, Guitte said.

"Institutional training is only one of the three pillars of life," he said. "We are not the foundation; we are one of the three pillars that provide the tools for Soldiers to learn."

Connecting the three pillars is part of what we do at the Academy, Guitte said.

And self-development allows Soldiers to continue getting education and developing leadership skills in-between the formal schooling that precedes a new leadership position.

FORT BLISS--Sgt. Maj. William Backscheider, the chief of curriculum development of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, explains how they support enlisted Soldiers from Cpl. to Command Sgt. Maj. throughout their careers in order to build great leaders, Aug. 31.

"There are elements that the operating force says is important that Soldiers don't do in the organizational level," he said. "We do it at the institutional level and we bridge that gap with what we call Structured Self-Development through a lifelong continuum."

Soldiers need to choose to be a leader and not told to be one, Sgt. Maj. David Wilkinson, training doctrine education director said.

"We provide a platform for them to learn," Wilkinson said. "The bottom line is we want the Soldier to have two options, they can be willing to learn or they can be told to learn."

Being able to make the right decision based on the situation, instead of being told what decision to make is key, he explained.

"We want them to exit here knowing that there is a set of tools that they can rely on to find the answers," Wilkinson said. "We've shown them what the tools look like to get the right answer instead of just telling them what right is."

As the Soldiers leave the Academy, their goal is for the skills they learned to have an effect on the future leaders as well, Guitte said.

"Hopefully what they took away from their institutional training they are now bleeding that down to their junior leaders and infusing that," he said.

Becoming leaders is not just to further the enlisted side but to also bridge the gap between non-commissioned and commissioned officers so they can better work as a partnership, Guitte said.

"We have to blend the non-commissioned officers so that they are compatible with their commissioned counterpart," Guitte Said. "We are educating today's leaders for tomorrow." **gt**

138th PAD Trains at Ft. Bliss; Guantanamo Bound

Story and photos by Sgt. Jonathan Monfiletto, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT BLISS--Soldiers assigned to the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, answer questions from Sgt. Trisha Pinczes, of the 138th Public Affairs Detachment, during a training exercise at Camp McGregor, N.M. Soldiers from the 101st conducted counter-improvised explosive device training, while Soldiers from the 138th practiced their public affairs skills.

FORT BLISS, Texas – Eight Soldiers from the 138th Public Affairs Detachment of the New York Army National Guard are here preparing for their deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by covering other units training for their own missions, Aug. 30.

The Soldiers are currently stationed at Fort Bliss awaiting the start of their nine-month tour of duty at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, and in the meantime are conducting public affairs missions while other units conduct missions to prepare them for deployments to Afghanistan.

Seven members of the 138th spent the day at Camp McGregor, N.M., interviewing, photographing and videotaping the 488th Military Police Company of the Maine National Guard and the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, also of the New York Army National Guard.

Both units are training at Camp McGregor before they ship out to Afghanistan. The 488th performed detainee operations exercises in preperation for duties at Parwan Detention Facility, while the 101st practiced counter-improvised explosive device movements and will head to Kandahar.

During those training exercises, the 138th underwent training of its own as Soldiers worked as media escorts, interviewed Soldiers from the other units and took photographs and video footage of the exercises.

Later that day, a couple of Soldiers also interviewed and photographed officials from the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, while another group covered a news conference and a concert given by the pop duo Karmin.

Soldiers of the 138th continued their training with more photography, videography and interviews with Soldiers of the 101st working in their tactical operations center.

The 138th received its training under the guidance of Task Force Redhawk of 5th Armored Brigade and 1st Army Division West.

The 138th will head to Guantanamo Bay in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo where they will conduct public affairs operations.

The 138th will publish 'The Wire', a weekly Guantanamo Bay newspaper, while also supporting press briefings, responding to media inquiries, writing hometown news releases and releasing photos for military and civilian publications. **gt**

Task Force Iron Returns from Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpt. Jason Uhlig, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment

ALBANY-- New York Army National Guard Soldier Spc. Stephen Freiberger reunites with family during the homecoming of the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry from Afghanistan at Albany International Airport Sep. 23. The battalion deployed to Afghanistan as Task Force Iron, conducting security missions in various bases. The first elements of the battalion returned from demobilization at Camp Shelby, Miss., bringing some 200 Soldiers home to their families. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

UTICA --New York Army National Guard Soldiers from Task Force Iron, a task force built around the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment based here, returned home in late September after some 100 days of combat operations in western Afghanistan. The task force returned from deployment as part of the ongoing drawdown of U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

While in Afghanistan, the Task Force was responsible for enhancing the capability of Afghan National Security Forces to secure Highway One from Herat City to Nimroz Province. The unit conducted 577 combat missions over the course of the summer fighting season, including combined operations with Afghan soldiers and police, as well as with NATO partners from Italy and Slovenia.

"Our biggest accomplishment has been the mentorship we provided to our Afghan partners in the Army and Police," said Lt. Col. Joseph L. Biehler, commander of Task Force Iron. "We helped them improve their abilities and professionalism to provide security for the population along approximately 200 miles of the most important highway in Afghanistan."

Task Force Iron included most of the Utica-based 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, as well as an intelligence platoon from the Syracuse-based 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and a team of joint terminal attack controllers from the Syracuse-based 274th Air Support Operations Squadron. The unit mobilized in late January with the 27th IBCT and trained for three months at Camp Shelby and Fort Irwin, Calif., before deploying to Afghanistan in early May 2012. The Task Force is the last major U.S. ground unit to have served in Regional Command-West, an Italian led area of operations that includes Baghdis, Farah, Ghor and Herat Provinces.

"We will be leaving here knowing that the Afghan Security Forces have made great strides in improving both the security and quality of life for thousands of Afghans here in western Afghanistan," Biehler said. "Task Force Iron has the distinct honor of being the last U.S. ground task force in western Afghanistan as our nation approaches the end to all direct combat operations here in 2014."

Units returning with Task Force Iron include the Headquarters and Headquarters Company from Utica, Company B from Peekskill, Company C from Gloversville and Leeds, Company D from Ithaca and Company E, 427th Brigade Support Battalion from Glenville.

A small number of Task Force Iron Soldiers will continue to serve in Afghanistan in support of other U.S. units in the country. In addition, more than 250 Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry, including all of Company A from Geneseo, N.Y., continue to serve in Kuwait. All battalion Soldiers are expected to redeploy to the United States in January 2013. **gt**

Standard Automotive Tool Set: More than a New Tool Box

Story by Charissa Nichole Gray, Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM)

WASHINGTON -- Unit mechanics must have their tools at hand to be able to keep unit vehicles operational. In the past, two tool sets provided most of these tools—Shop Equipment, Automotive, Maintenance and Repair, Organizational Maintenance, Common Number 1 and Common Number 2.

These sets could come packaged in as many as 75 crates. Units had to purchase tool chests and cabinets for organizing the tools. The tools often became jumbled in drawers, making it difficult to find the ones needed to perform a task.

Recognizing the problems that the available tool sets presented, the Army's Office of the Chief of Ordnance initiated the development of a single containerized tool set. Developed by the Product Manager, Sets, Kits, Outfits, and Tools (PM SKOT), the resulting set is known as the Standard Automotive Tool Set (SATS).

SATS is a containerized shop set system that consists of a core tool set and supplemental modules that can be tailored to a unit's specific maintenance mission. It replaces the most common organizational and direct support tool sets. SATS provides a more deployable, mobile, and mission-capable tool load that supports Army transformation and two-level maintenance.

The picture above shows the Tools in the Standard Automotive Tool Set (SATS) deployable container. The picture below shows the storage configuration of the SATS container. Photo courtesy of Product Manager for Sets, Kits, Outfits, and Tools.

By providing Soldiers with a common tool set, SATS enables maintainers to perform two-level maintenance and repairs on all military vehicles and ground support equipment.

The tools are easier to inventory, transport, and use than the old sets. The fielding of SATS eliminated 474 redundant or obsolete components and offers units not only a lifetime warranty on the tools themselves, but a secure, protected container that is deployable.

The goal during SATS development was to make it easier for maintenance Soldiers to inventory, transport, and use their tools led to the innovative container. With SATS, tools come to the user in tool cabinets that include PM SKOT's standard foam cutout organization system. This makes SATS much more user friendly than the old automotive tool sets.

The system reduces the tool set inventory time, for example, from more than 40 hours to only two hours for each tool set. Because the tools are kept in drawers with foam cutouts that give the tools specific storage locations, inventory is as easy as opening a drawer and looking for empty slots.

By creating an organized tool set in a single container, PM SKOT also solved mobility problems. SATS can be transported by a single prime mover. It is more portable than its predecessors and can be deployed quickly with minimal preparation. gt

109th Air Wing Returns to the Pole

New Season for Operation Deep Freeze

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SCOTIA -- The New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing kicked off its annual support for the National Science Foundation in Antarctica as ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules aircraft headed for Antarctica on Oct. 16 and 17.

These aircraft will support the National Science Foundation's research in the Antarctic, running supplies and people to field camps across the continent and the South Pole station.

Two aircraft departed on the five-day, 11,000-mile trip to Antarctica on each day. A total of six ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft will be on the ice from October to February. About 120 members of the New York Air National Guard will be deployed to Antarctica throughout the support season.

The Airmen deploy for 30 to 60 days each, working two 12-hour shifts to cover 24-hour operations, six days each week. They work a half-day on Sunday.

The ski-equipped LC-130s operated by the 109th Air Wing are the only aircraft in the U.S. military capable of landing on snow and ice, according to Wing officials. This is the 24th year that the 109th will support operations in Antarctica.

Based at the United States Antarctic Program at McMurdo Station, the 109th AW is slated to fly more than 350 missions across the continent, with more than half of those moving passengers, cargo and fuel to the South Pole, officials said. The majority of supplies that reach the United States Amundsen-Scott Base at the South Pole are ferried there by the 109th AW.

Despite the cold, the maintenance crews normally attain a high reliability rate for each aircraft, allowing the flight crews to carry as much cargo as possible to remote Antarctic outposts. The wing accumulates roughly 3,000 hours of flying time in the 16-week season. This is almost as much as most Air National Guard C-130 units fly in a year, officials said.

All maintenance performed on the aircraft is done outside on the snow and ice without the use of hangars. This requires maintainers to undergo specialized training for both maintenance procedures and personal extreme weather survival training.

U.S. military support for Operation Deep Freeze is a Pacific Command responsibility organized as Joint Task Force -Support Forces Antarctica. The Joint Task Force includes cargo and fuel tanker ships provided by Military Sealift Command; active-duty and Reserve C-17 Globemaster III support from the 62nd and 446th Airlift Wings at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.; the ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules flown by the 109th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard; and Coast Guard icebreakers and the Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One to provide critical port services at McMurdo Station.

The wing accumulates roughly 3,000 hours of flying time in the 16-week polar season. This is almost as much as most Air National Guard C-130 units fly in a year.

The airlift part of Operation Deep Freeze operates from two primary locations, with C-17s situated at Christchurch, New Zealand, and LC-130 Hercules forward based at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, beginning in late October. The mission is expected to return all aircraft and personnel back to Scotia in March 2013. gt

An LC-130 Hercules from the New York Air National Guard takes off for this year's mission to Antarctica in support of Operation DEEP FREEZE, October 16. The wing will be deployed this year until March 2013 for support to the National Science Foundation. Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.

New Planes: 105th Receives Extended Range C17s

By Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURGH -- Aircrews of the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing now have the capability to travel farther with two new C17 Globemaster aircraft fitted with extended range fuel tanks.

The airlift wing received the second of two C-17 cargo aircraft with extended range fuel tanks October 9. The first extended range aircraft was delivered to the wing in late September.

The two new aircraft will "immediately increase our capability and ability to provide vital airlift to Air Mobility Command, the Department of Defense and New York State," said Wing Commander Col. Timothy LaBarge.

The typical range of a wing C-17 could be from Stewart to California, but with the extended fuel tanks, the plane could fly without refueling all the way to Hawaii, LaBarge explained.

"Receiving this upgrade to the C-17 fleet is critical to our defense and homeland security operations, as well as the strength of the Stewart Air National Guard Base," said U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "As one of the Hudson Valley's largest employers ... this is an important step that can help strengthen our equipment and missions here at Stewart."

Stewart now has nine C-17s, which have replaced the Vietnam War era C-5s. gt

New York Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Brian Burns prepares the nose area of C-17 Tail Number 10188, formerly assigned to Joint Base Charleston, for painting with 105th Airlift Wing markings on Wednesday, October 10. The plane, the second of two extended range C-17s, arrived at the base on Tuesday, Oct. 9. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.

And New Names: 174th Renamed Attack Wing

By Maj. Jeffrey D. Brown, 174th Attack Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SYRACUSE -- The New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing became the 174th Attack Wing here Sept. 9.

The new name for the historic unit reflects the change of mission from flying fighter aircraft to operating the MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft, which the wing has done since December 2009.

The new designation was requested by unit leadership shortly after the unit ended its F-16 Fighting Falcon mission with the last F-16 departing Syracuse in March 2010.

"When we ended our proud 60-year history of flying fighter aircraft, it was decided to request a change in our designation to more closely align with our new mission," said Col. Greg Semmel, 174th Fighter Wing Commander. "We selected the 'Attack' designation because it mirrors the organization nomenclature already used by all three Air Force active duty MQ-9 squadrons."

Along with the change in name of the wing, the 138th Fighter Squadron, a sub-organization under the wing which operates the MQ-9 combat mission, also changed its name to the 138th Attack Squadron.

Currently, three other Air Force squadrons which operate the MQ-9 have already been designated as attack squadrons. Importantly, the 174th Fighter Wing and 138th Fighter Squadron will retain their history and lineage after redesignation. gt

The 174th Fighter Wing was established in 1947 as the first Air National Guard flying unit in New York. It currently flies the state-of-the-art MQ-9 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The newly redesignated 174th Attack Wing will continue its combat mission as well as its multiple training missions, including operating the Field Training Detachment (FTD) which trains all Air Force personnel on MQ-9 maintenance procedures, and the Formal Training Unit (FTU) which provides initial qualification training to MQ-9 aircrews. Archive photo.

105th Airlift Wing Conducts Mass Vaccination

Story and photos by Sr. Airman Deanna De Laura, 105th Airlift Wing

New York Air National Guard Nurse, Capt Glenda Tyson prepares Flu inoculation during a point of distribution exercise at the 105th Airlift Wing in Newburgh, Oct. 13. Nearly 400 members of the wing received their seasonal flu vaccine during the exercise. The goal for the National Guard Bureau is to achieve 100% inoculation before the end of the calendar year.

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURGH -- The 105th Airlift Wing's Medical Group conducted a vaccine distribution exercise here with about 400 Airmen, October 13.

The exercise, conducted in the wing's fuel cell hangar, is an annual requirement for the medical group to test and evaluate the group's ability to set up a Point of Distribution (POD) upon notice of a Public Health Emergency and vaccinate unit members in a timely manner.

"The Medical Group was able to set up a POD and provide vaccinations to the 105th Wing members in a timely and efficient manner", said Lt. Col. Mukesh Roy, Public Health Officer for the 105th Airlift Wing. "We were able to vaccinate just under 400 unit members during the three hour exercise.

During the exercise unit members where lined up, evaluated and vaccinated in a matter of minutes. For the purposes of this exercise, the flu vaccine was administered.

"Seasonal flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses", said Roy. "Approximately 5-20% of U.S. residents get the flu each year."

He also added that it is very important that all military members have their immunizations up-to-date to prevent diseases and illness with a simple vaccination.

For more information visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website at www.cdc.gov/flu. gt

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURGH -- Soldiers from the Army's 5th Squadron 15th Cavalry, based at Fort Benning, Ga. offload a Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle and a Stryker Infantry Fighting Vehicle, Sept. 19 from the cargo area of the C17 Globemaster III. The vehicles were being shown to cadets at the United States Military Academy during "Branch Week" at West Point. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURGH -- The last C-5A Galaxy remaining with the 105th Airlift Wing, tail number 0001, departs on its final take-off roll as it leaves home for the last time Sept. 19. The wing conducted its transition from the C-5A Galaxy to the C-17 Globemaster III over the past two years and will fly nine C-17 aircraft when the transition is complete in early 2013. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran, 105th Airlift Wing.

Above, Pararescue Jumpers test their marksmanship skills on the range during the week-long Pararescue Rodeo. Below, a PJ looks up during a rappel event. PJ Stands for Pararescue Jumper, the specialists trained to jump into water or hostile terrain to retrieve downed Airmen. Teams from across the country participated in the week long competition hosted by the 106th Rescue Wing at Westhampton Beach. Opposite page, a PJ drags a mannequin as a combat casualty during the competition.

Pararescue Rodeo Competition

Rescue Wing Hosts Training for Guardian Angels

Story by Staff Sgt. Eric Miller, 106th Rescue Wing
Photos by Sr. Airman Christopher Muncy, 106th Rescue Wing

WESTHAMPTON BEACH-- Members of the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing hosted pararescue teams from across the nation for the bi-annual PJ Rodeo Competition here Sept. 20.

The week long competition simulates real world scenarios testing the core skill sets of each rescue team. Event scenarios include Tactical Combat Casualty Care, Military Free-fall and Static-line parachuting Operations, Tactical Carbine and Pistol marksmanship, Zodiac Boat Operations, Maritime Navigation and High Angle / Confined-Space Rescue Operations.

The goal of the competition is to foster teamwork, and esprit de corps among the Guardian Angels, while sharing valuable tactics, techniques or procedures learned from deployment.

"Teams have the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency and expertise during this grueling week of competition, testing their abilities and honing their skills," said Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Baker, a pararescueman assigned to the 103rd Rescue Squadron. "This is a great venue for them to share lessons learned from real world combat experiences and review each other's tactical techniques and procedures." **gt**

106TH RESCUE WING

Crews of the 107th Airlift Wing conduct countermeasure training using flares over Lake Ontario Sep. 25.

107th Lights Up Night Sky over Lake Ontario

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The 107th Airlift Wing went on another night formation training mission Sept. 25, this time fully loaded with live flares to be used in a training scenario.

A "flare" is an aerial infrared countermeasure used to defeat infrared homing (heat seeking) surface-to air or air-to-air missile. Two C-130 aircraft took off from the Niagara Falls Reserve Station and headed north over Lake Ontario to complete their live-fire flare training. Approaching the restricted airspace over the lake reserved for their use, the Navigator readied the defensive systems, the Loadmasters pulled the safety pins, and the Pilots positioned the aircraft in the proper formation position. Once in the area, the aircrew dispensed their flares in reaction to simulated threats, lighting up the skies over Lake Ontario.

"The 107th AW is fortunate to have the Military Operating Area right in our backyard. This affords our aircrews the opportunity to train the way we fight. The lessons learned today, prepare us to operate in hostile environments around the globe," said Lt. Col. Kevin Grom the 107th AW's Chief of Tactics.

The 107th continues to train day and night on aerial tactical missions in preparation for "real world" operations. This past year while deployed to Afghanistan this training proved critical, as flares were often used in reaction to threats in theatre while providing tactical airlift support for U.S. and NATO forces. **gt**

Niagara Crews Take to Skies over Fort Drum

Story and photos by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The 107th Airlift Wing completed a week of aircrew training at the Niagara Falls Reserve Station and Fort Drum in August. The training involved cargo loading, air drops, tactical low level flying and night vision training for the pilots.

"This training helps with our future deployments," said Lt. Col. John Patterson, a wing C-130 pilot.

The 107th flies the C-130 aircraft which is used to airlift personnel and cargo to any location worldwide. The aircraft can also provide air drops in very remote spots, which require low level tactical flying.

"We scheduled a good week's worth of training for our guardsmen on cargo drops and recovery," said Master Sgt. Timothy Griffin

107th C-130 loadmaster. "Aircrew, Tactics, Maintenance, and Scheduling remained flexible all week and coordinated multiple profile changes based on needs, sometimes as late as crew brief time," said Griffin.

"This training helps with our future deployments"

-- Lt. Col. John Patterson, C-130 pilot.

When flying over the drop zone at Fort Drum's training areas, the navigator gives the green light for the loadmasters to cut the cargo strip and the training cargo flies out the back door of the C-130 aircraft.

Aircrews would air drop during the day and recover at night. This involved performing a night tactical landing and with engine running, loadmasters and aerial port personnel, would rapidly load the cargo onto the aircraft.

There were three ship formations scheduled the entire week during the day, as well as multiple single ship aircraft during the night performing airdrops and recovery of the airdropped equipment and simulated mass supply loads. On return flights back to Niagara, pilots trained using night vision goggles and performed another airdrop and tactical landing at the Niagara Falls Reserve Station.

Aircrews performed 23 total sorties for the training.

This type of training prepares crews to fly in adverse environments when deployed overseas. The training also provided benefits to Airmen serving with a variety of wing functions, including the Command Post, Aerial Port, Drop Zone personnel, maintenance and communication sections.

"In total, this was a very detailed plan that had many key personnel assigned to it," said Master Sgt. Timothy Griffin, a 107th C-130 loadmaster. "Everyone was a valuable asset to making this week of training come together." **gt**

Tech Sgt. Philip Smith and Senior Airman Joe King, C-130 loadmasters of the 107th Airlift Wing secure training cargo back on the C-130 aircraft recovered from an earlier cargo drop at Fort Drum, N.Y. Crews from the wing conducted airdrop training August 22.

New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. John Patterson, a C-130 pilot for the 107th Airlift Wing, trains using night vision goggles during a training flight Aug. 22. Pilots from the Niagara Reserve Station fly local training missions for future deployments that may require night operations..

Mock MQ-9 Cockpit at NY State Fair

By Maj. Jeffrey Brown, 174th Attack Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SYRACUSE -- For the first time ever, the public had the opportunity to fly simulated training missions in a MQ-9 Reaper cockpit as part of Hancock Field Air National Guard Base's extensive military exhibit at the 2012 New York State Fair.

The New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing displayed a mock-up of the ground-based cockpits that National Guard pilots use to fly MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) in the skies above Afghanistan from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse.

The interactive cockpit allowed fair viewers to get some idea of what it is like to be a pilot providing air support to American and allied troops on the ground halfway around the world.

The wing also displayed a 1:6th scale model of the MQ-9 Reaper aircraft as well as full-size models of the munitions carried by the aircraft.

The MQ-9 can provide an eye-in-the-sky for American troops as well as fire weapons when needed.

The 174th Attack Wing not only operates the MQ-9, but also trains MQ-9 mechanics and pilots and sensor operators for the entire Air Force.

A team from the 109th Airlift Wing, which flies supplies and personnel to Greenland and the South Pole in support of science missions, was also on hand at the booth. The fair ran from August 23 to September 3. gt

A student pilot and sensor operator man the controls of a MQ-9 Reaper in a ground-based cockpit during training. The 174th Attack Wing created a mock cockpit of the MQ-9 for visitors to the New York State Fair in Syracuse this year. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ricky Best, 174th Attack Wing.

Firefighers from the 174th Attack Wing respond to a simulated aircraft fire as part of a large scale Tri-County Major Accident Response Exercise (MARE) held August 11. The exercise involved two simultaneous events, a building collapse, simulated chemical spill and bomb search in downtown Syracuse and a simulated plane crash and fire at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

Accident Exercise in Syracuse

Story and photo by Lt. Col. Catherine Hutson, 174th Fighter Wing

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SYRACUSE -- It is early Saturday morning. As you approach Syracuse Hancock International Airport you see smoke coming from the shell of an aircraft. Next you notice fire trucks and emergency response vehicles of all shapes and sizes. You wonder what happened and hope everyone is safe.

Fortunately, everyone is safe because this response on August 16, on an old unused runway, is part of a large scale Tri-County Major Accident Response Exercise (MARE). This exercise involved two simultaneous exercise events, a building collapse, simulated chemical spill and bomb search in downtown Syracuse and a simulated plane crash and fire at the airport.

For many members of Hancock Field Air National Guard Base, located adjacent to the commercial airport, it was another chance to support the community and further develop critical partnerships during an emergency. The New York Air National Guard unit joined 49 agencies and over 500 emergency workers to support the two locations.

Members of Hancock Field supported the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the airport EOC, and stood up the 174th Fighter Wing's EOC.

"This is a great opportunity to see how the county EOC is run so when Hancock Field is supporting an incident in the county for real we know what to expect," said Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Scanlin, serving in the County Emergency Operations Center.

In addition, unit personnel provided Emergency Management and Safety guidance and assisted with support to family members. As part of the mutual response agreement, members of Hancock Field's fire department were quick to respond to the simulated airplane crash. They helped put out the fire and respond to the simulated victims ensuring proper treatment and movement to a medical facility.

Many of the pretend victims were members of the 174th Attack Wing's student flight. The new Airmen had the opportunity to have moulage paint applied to provide a more realistic experience for the first responders. Many also acted as friends and family members of potential victims.

The exercise was the culmination of two years of planning for Madison, Oswego and Onondaga counties that involved several key personnel from Hancock Field. gt

Rescue Wing Fire Training

WESTHAMPTON BEACH - Firefighters with the 106th Rescue Wing train to remove victims from a burning aircraft at FS Gabreski Airport on August 15. Photo by Sr. Airman Christopher Muncy.

New Maintenance Commander in 174th

By Capt. Anthony Bucci, 174th Attack Wing

HANCOCK AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, SYRACUSE -- Airmen of the New York Air National Guard's 174th Maintenance Group welcomed their new commander August 11.

Col. Greg Semmel, commander of the 174th Attack Wing, officiated the ceremony that welcomed Lt. Col. Michael Smith and praised outgoing commander and wing vice commander Col. John Balbierer.

"Change is a constant, and today we celebrate change with this ceremony," Semmel said.

Semmel noted that Balbierer took over the Maintenance Group in May 2008 just in time for the unit's last deployment as an F-16 unit.

"Col. Balbierer executed the mission successfully and demonstrated his leadership in accomplishing this task," Semmel said.

Balbierer served as the Maintenance Group Commander from 2008 to 2012 when he assumed the position of wing vice commander.

"I want to salute all of you in the maintenance group for helping me get the job done and putting me in this position as vice commander, just remember I will always be a maintainer in my heart," Balbierer said.

"The 174th has a distinct history of excellence and I will work with all of you to continue that tradition," Smith said. gt

Air National Guard Lt. Col. Michael Smith (right) receives the 174th Attack Wing Maintenance Group guidon from Wing Commander Col. Greg Semmel during a change of command August 11. Photo by Staff Sgt. James N. Faso, 174th Attack Wing.

The 107th Maintenance Group received a new commander, Col. Kevin Rogers, the former deputy commander of the same group, as he moved up to his new position Oct. 13 during a change of command ceremony.

Hard work, New Command

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The 107th Maintenance Group received a new commander, Col. Kevin Rogers, the former deputy commander of the same group, as he moved up to his new position here Oct. 13. A change of command ceremony was held in which he was also promoted to colonel.

On hand to pin on the eagle insignia were his wife, Antonina, and sister, retired Air Force Master Sgt. Madonna Rogers.

Col. Rogers will be in charge of the maintenance group whose main mission is keeping the C-130H2 flying and mission ready.

"This is truly a humbling experience now being in charge of this group," said Col. Rogers. "It was never in my plans when I first joined the Air National Guard."

Col. Rogers joined the 107th Airlift Wing in 1984 as an enlisted Airman in the base supply section. He has studied hard and worked his way up the ranks. Col. Rogers graduated from the State University of New York College at Buffalo in 1990 then received his commission as an officer in 1991.

The outgoing commander, Col. Robert Kilgore, is leaving the 107th for an assignment at state headquarters as the director of plans and programs and commander of homeland response for the state.

"The maintenance group is one of the best in the Air National Guard and you're in good hands for the future having Col. Rogers leading," said Col. Kilgore. gt

9/11 Remembrance Enlistment

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

The 107th Airlift Wing remembered 9/11 by enlisting new members into the unit. Seven new Airmen joined the Air National Guard Sept. 11. Col. Jim McCready swears in the new airman while Chief Master Sgt. Dave Wohlebon holds the American flag for the ceremony. From left to right are Airman 1st Class Kirsten Peyton, Airman Lauren Libassi, Airman 1st Class Catherine Stoddard, Airman 1st Class Thomas Leaming, Senior Airman Shannon Carr, Airman Kyle Druzbik, and Airman John Danvir.

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The 107th Airlift Wing remembered the terror attacks of 9/11 by enlisting seven new Airmen to the unit here, September 11.

As a tribute to the spirit of service to community in the aftermath of 9/11, the anniversary observance of September 11 is a National Day of Service and Remembrance. Many members of the 107th Airlift Wing, then a refueling unit, were called to state active duty and many more served overseas for contingency operations around the world.

Seven new Airmen lined up in front of a C-130 aircraft just back from Afghanistan for the ceremony.

Wing Commander Col. Jim McCready performed the enlistment oath while family members witnessed the ceremony.

"My father influenced me by being there every step of the way and answering any questions I had," said Airman Kyle Druzbik.

"I'm very proud of my son who made this decision all on his own to join the Air National Guard" said Christopher Druzbik.

The seven new recruits will enter various career fields in the unit, including operations management, security forces, aerospace maintenance and even a C-130 pilot.

"I'm happy to join the unit and will be going to pilot training. I was in seventh grade when 9/11 happened," said Airman 1st Class Kirsten Peyton.

"This was very cool and very nice," said Airman 1st Class Catherine Stoddard.

"This was a memorable day for all," said Tech. Sgt. Krystalore Stegner 107th Recruiter at the enlistment ceremony for the newest members of the wing. "I'm happy to serve with these new men and women. I wish them all the best of luck in their careers!" **gt**

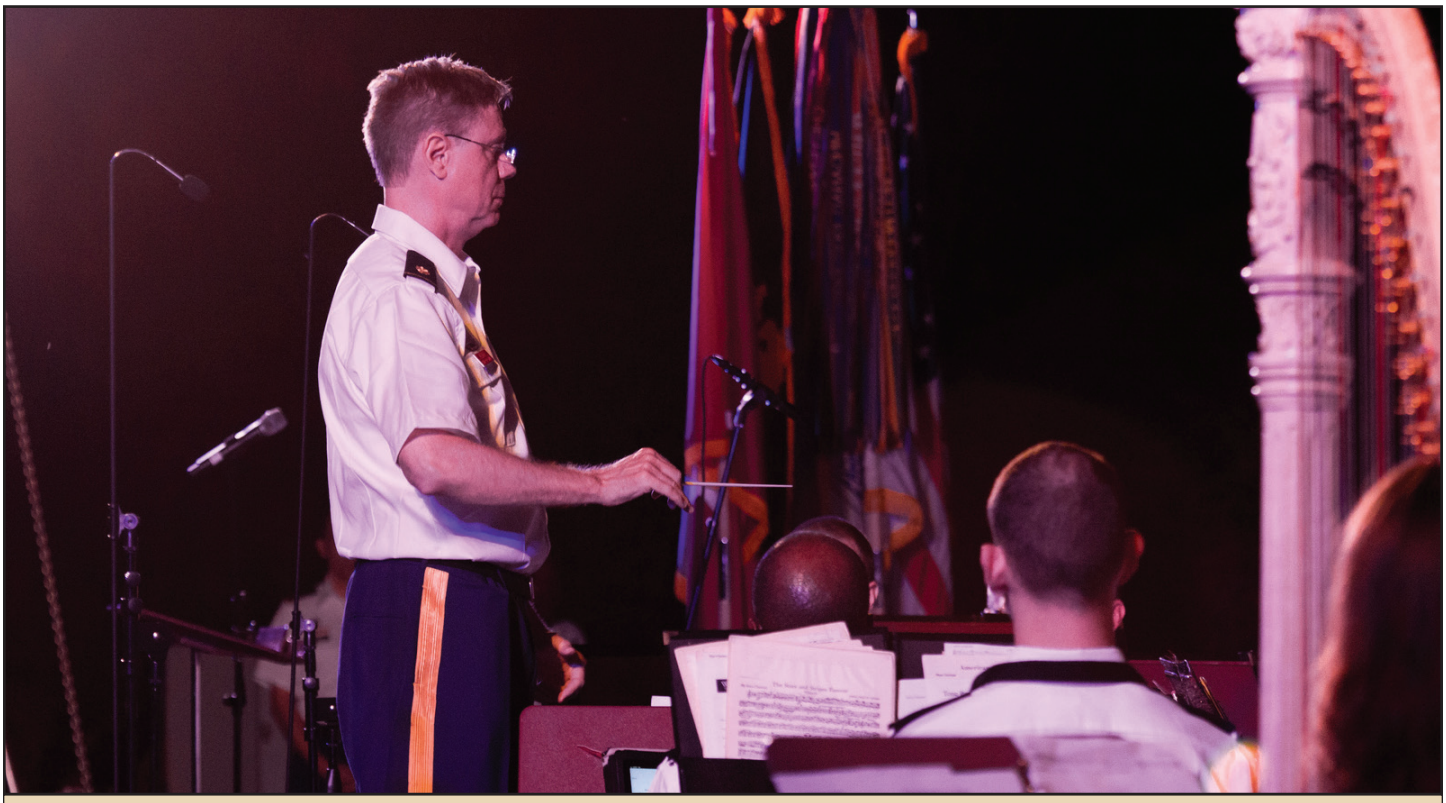
'Spider' Dorsey Retires

HANCOCK FIELD, SYRACUSE --New York Air National Guard Col. Charles Dorsey (right), retiring Wing Vice Commander, receives the Legion of Merit medal from Col. Greg Semmel, 174 Attack Wing Commander, during a ceremony here, August 2. Dorsey retired after 29 years of service, flying both the A10 and F16. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Call, 174th Attack Wing.

Band Leader Finale for West Point Performance

'Tone Poem on Taps' played for Labor Day Concert

By Warrant Officer Ubon Mendie, New York Guard



New York Guard Maj. Douglas Hedwig conducts the Army West Point Band in concert Sept. 2. Hedwig led the band in a performance of his original composition, "Tone Poem on Taps" as a tribute to the original bugle call known as "Taps," first created in 1862. Photo courtesy of Master Sgt. Susan Davidson, U.S. Army Band.

WEST POINT – The New York Guard's band leader, Maj. Douglas Hedwig, conducted the United States Military Academy Band here at Trophy Point September 2, in the premiere performance of his own composition entitled "Tone Poem on Taps."

The Labor Day weekend concert performances were a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Supported by the West Point Museum, there were Civil War reenactors, as well as family activities. The concert series featured the Hellcats, the Jazz Knights and the U.S. Army Concert Band.

More than 13,000 people attended the performances.

Hedwig prepared his composition as a tribute to the creation of one of the nation's most recognizable bugle calls, "Taps."

"Taps was composed during the Civil War in June 1862 by New York Brig. Gen. Daniel Butterfield," Hedwig said. "Gen. Butterfield is buried at West Point, so it is altogether fitting that the premiere of this new work take place at West Point, performed by one of the finest musical organizations in the world – the United States Army Band at West Point."

Hedwig has served five years as commander and conductor of the New York Guard's 89th Band and retired from service with the New York Guard this fall.

"It was a great honor and privilege to conduct the world renowned West Point Band, one of the finest musical organizations in the world for this occasion," Hedwig said.

Dr. Hedwig recently retired as Professor of Music at The City University of New York in Brooklyn. Prior to that, he was a trumpeter with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York City for 27 years, recorded over 40 albums in classical, jazz and popular music idioms, and performed with many of the biggest names in the New York music scene.

Hedwig composed the official march of the New York Naval Militia (the "New York Naval Militia March"). In addition, he composed the "New York Guard March" in 2007, based on the original song, "The Good Old N.Y.G.," composed by Maj. Charles Clanton of the New York Guard in 1916. His compositions have been performed by the 42nd Infantry Division Band and the Maryland Defense Force Band, as well as other musical organizations.

Hedwig has served additionally as a volunteer with New York City Fire Department as a bugler with the Fire Department of New York (FDNY), sounding "Taps" at many memorial services for firefighters who died on September 11, 2001. He has also volunteered those bugle services with the New York Military Forces Honor Guard. gt

New York Guard Col. Brian Farley (center) passes the 10th Brigade colors to the New York Guard Chief of Staff, Col. Larry Bishop, who will then pass the colors to Col. David Molik (right) the new commander of the 10th Brigade, New York Guard. Sgt. Maj. Thomas Czurlanis (left) later receives the colors on behalf of the organization.

Capital District Guard Brigade Changes Command

Story and photo by Maj. David Greenwood, 10th Brigade, New York Guard

TROY – Volunteers of the New York Guard's 10th Brigade welcomed their new commander, Col. David Molik, of Ballston Spa, during a change of command ceremony at the South Lake Avenue Armory Sep. 15 .

Molik succeeds Col. Brian P. Farley from Albany.

Farley received the New York State Conspicuous Service Medal for his actions as commander of the 10th Brigade since 2003, leading the brigade at Fort Drum during Operations Phoenix Warrior and Patriot East, supporting and preparing Army, Army National Guard, Air Force, Dutch and Belgian Air Forces in their training for combat operations.

Farley was acting brigade commander during the New York Guard's historic response following the terror attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11 and led the brigade during the many support missions for the New York National Guard.

He is a practicing attorney in his civilian career and moves on to new responsibilities as the Deputy Chief of Staff for the New York Guard at the Camp Smith Training Site.

Colonel Molik has more than 15 years of service with the New York Guard, including support operations for the National Guard for the crash of TWA Flight 800 in 1996, the North Country Ice Storm of 1998, the 9/11 response to the terror attacks at the World Trade Center and more recently, the disaster response training exercise Vigilant Guard in 2009.

Molik is a Supervising Administrative Law Judge with the NY State Office of Children's and Family Services and a graduate of SUNY Buffalo and SUNY Buffalo Law School. gt

Joint Training on New York Waters for Naval Militia

VERPLANCK-- Members of the New York Guard's Search and Rescue Team board New York Naval Militia Patrol Boat 301 at the Viking Boat Yard here on August 1. The New York Naval Militia patrol boat transported the team up the Hudson River to West Point in a joint operation conducted as part of Operation Trojan Horse, an interagency maritime security exercise conducted in New York City and on the Hudson River. The exercise gave the two state defense forces experience in working with each other. Photo by Eric Durr, NY National Guard Public Affairs.

Opposite Page Top Photo:
ROCHESTER -- New York Naval Militia patrol boat PB 281 with Informations Technician Garrett Aldershoff on the port bow and Information Technician Chief Steve Adams at the helm, embarks forward air controllers from the New York Air National Guard's 274th Air Support Operations Squadron. The joint training supported the maritime employment of MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted vehicles over Lake Ontario Sep. 2. Photo by Commander Don McKnight.

LANSINGBURGH- New York Naval Militia Patrol Boat 230 heads up the Hudson River towards Campbell Island with a New York Guard Search and Rescue Team on board during an exercise here on Friday, Sept. 14. The exercise simulated the Naval Militia and New York Guard working together to locate and rescue people stranded in a flood as part of a domestic operations exercise conducted by the 42nd Infantry Division and the 109th Airlift Wing. Photo by Eric Durr, NY National Guard Public Affairs.

107th Mentoring in Cybersecurity

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lloyd, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- Once again the 107th Airlift Wing steps up, this time to mentor Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) cadets at Lewiston-Porter High School.

The mission is called CyberPatriot, the national high school cyber defense competition created by the Air Force Association to inspire students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science disciplines. Members from the 107th Communication Flight offered their technical skills to the young cadets. The 107th's unique experience in cybersecurity provided a good way to give back to the community by mentoring future Air Force officers.

"They have the computer expertise to pass on to the students for the competition that we are in which is a cyber computer defense competition," said Col.Lance Dickinson (JROTC) Commander.

The 107th Communications flight has been enhancing their cybersecurity skills for the Air National Guard. Utilizing their years of experience, Chief Master Sgt. Mark Grier Plans Chief, Master Sgt. Joel Micoli Cyber Technician and Staff Sgt. Brad Gilder Cyber Technician, volunteered to help the high school cadets.

Cybersecurity is a real threat facing the U.S. today. Teaching the high school students how to combat vulnerabilities gives them the opportunity to see how the Air National Guard helps to prevent these attacks, explained Grier.

"This has been a terrific opportunity for us to utilize our skills in a different way, while helping our local community," Grier said. "Working with Col. Dickinson and these future Airmen has been a great experience. I hope we can continue this relationship in the future."

The competition will be held in November with more than 1,200 teams from across the country. The team has an adult coach and the 107th members are working as advisors to the team. They meet with the students once a week at their school to provide technical training and guidance, while preparing them achieve to the goals of the team.

"I think it's pretty cool to have the Air Force here to help us" said Brian Boyd, Cadet Airman of the JROTC program. He is one of the three members of this high school team.

"I like the Air Force and I want to be in it," said Ashlee Roell, Cadet 1st. Lt.

With the help of the 107th Airlift Wing the students hope to achieve the goal of reaching the national finals in March 2013 in Maryland.

"I'm honored to be working and learning along with the Air Force and hope someday I will be along their side when I'm older," said Cadet Airman 1st Class Matt O'Connor. **gt**

Honoring Arthur

ALBANY -- Brig. Gen. Anthony P. German, Chief of Staff of the New York Air National Guard, and Command Sgt. Major Frank Wicks, New York National Guard Command Sergeant Major, commemorate the 183rd anniversary of the birth of President Chester A. Arthur, 21st President of the United States, during a ceremony held at the Albany Rural Cemetery, Oct. 5. President Arthur, a former school teacher, lawyer, Republican politician and member of the New York National Guard, became president on Sept. 19, 1881 when President James Garfield died from a bullet wound suffered at the hands of an assassin on July 2, 1881. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Wheeler, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

Junior ROTC Cadet Brian Boyd is at the controls while Master Sgt. Joel Micoli explains counter measures to be taken during Cybersecurity training at Lewiston-Porter High School, Oct. 16. Matt O'Conner, Ashlee Roell and Chief Master Sgt. Mark Grier observe the task. Members of the 107th Airlift Wing Communication Flight mentored the cadets for the national high school cyber defense competition.

Salute to Guard for Keeping Communities Safe

Story by Guard Times Staff

New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. Steven Fukino, center, and New York Naval Militia Commander Don McKnight speak with former New York City fireman Bill Massena and his guest at the Colonie Senior Services annual ceremony to "Remember those who keep us safe." The event highlights the contributions of first responders to safeguard their community. Photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters.

COLONIE -- Representatives of the New York National Guard joined with local law enforcement, firefighters and emergency medical technicians Sept. 5 as the Colonie Senior Service Center honored first responders in "Remembering those who keep us safe."

The event, first began on the first anniversary of 9/11, was held at the Belltrone Living Center here, near the National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters.

"It was an opportunity for us to remember the horrific event as a senior community," explained Executive Director of CSSC Edward Neary. "Then we expanded it into an opportunity to thank the local first responders, those people who keep us safe in our community."

Thanking the many diverse first responders in the group, Colonie Town Supervisor Paula Mahan praised their collective efforts.

"As supervisor, I want to say I am very, very proud of the work that is done by our people here in town … that help us and support us," she said.

Speaking on behalf of the National Guard was New York Air National Guard Lt. Col. Steven Fukino, the Director of Domestic Operations, with oversight for the planning and operations of National Guard in disaster response.

Fukino spoke about the contributions of the National Guard's support to first responders, providing a variety of resources and manpower during domestic emergencies. Fukino highlighted the New York National Guard's homeland roles from September 11, 2001 through the response to Tropical Storms Irene and Lee in September 2011.

"We have the utmost gratitude and appreciation for all first responders for their bravery, sacrifice and dedication," Fukino said in his remarks to more than 100 residents of the center. "We, like the first responders, are dedicated and hardworking men and women who accept personal risk to ensure everyone's safety and protect the liberties and freedoms we cherish."

Colonie Chief of Police Steven Heider reminded the audience that members of the National Guard serve both at home and overseas.

"We have our men and women in Afghanistan or in the Middle East every single day. We should not forget about the great job that they do," Heider said. "We wanted to recognize you for all that you've done for us." **gt**

Going to the Chapel, Gonna Get Married

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR -- New York Army National Guard Spc. Michael Williams, left, assigned to Company E, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation Regiment, marries Alexandria Coon at the Chaplain Duffy Chapel here, Oct. 12. Officiating the ceremony was Chaplain Candidate (1st Lt.) Mark Getman, the battalion chaplain. Approximately 20 close friends and family of the couple attended the ceremony, who then took family and wedding photos in the chapel and on the installation. The chapel at Camp Smith is available for use to all service members of the New York National Guard, in coordination with the Camp Smith Chaplain. Photo by Andy Cox Photography, courtesy of Spc. Michael Williams.

Bucket List for a Boss Lift

Story and photo by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

INDIANAPOLIS—It was rainy. It was cold. It was grey.

But 27 representatives of Albany area companies said they had a great day as they flew in a New York Air National Guard C-17, learned more about National Guard capabilities, and even got a spin around the Indy 500 race track at 100+ miles per hour.

"I truly had a "bucket list" day," said Tammy Crawford, a hiring manager with DA Collins Companies in Wilton.

The unique Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve "Boss Lift" on Friday, Oct. 19 was made possible by Panther Racing, the Indianapolis based racing company which fields a New York Army National Guard-sponsored car in the Indianapolis 500 and other events on the Indy car racing circuit.

As part of the sponsorship deal, Panther Racing hosts Boss Lifts events for employers from around the country.

Boss Lifts, in which employers get to see Guard Soldiers and Airmen in action, are one of the best ways for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR) to tell the story of the Guard, said retired Command Sgt. Maj. John Willsey, an ESGR contractor. This ESGR event was unique because the participants got to travel out of state – on a 105th Airlift Wing C-17 – and because it was hosted by a commercial enterprise.

Panther Racing has a close relationship with the National Guard and the military, said John Barnes the managing partner and CEO of the company. Panther Racing's #4 car wears the National Guard's ACU color scheme and promotes the Guard at races.

Karen Schoonmaker, a recruitment specialist for COARC speaks with a representative of the Indiana National Guard's Civil Support Team during the Oct. 19 Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Boss Lift to learn about the roles and capabilities of the Citizen Soldiers that live and work in their community. COARC is a nonprofit agency that provides programs and services to over 500 individuals with developmental disabilities in Columbia County, New York.

His team is also happy to host employers at ESGR events so he can personally emphasize the importance of giving jobs to members of the Army and Air National Guard who need them, Barnes said. Guardsmen are smart and dedicated workers, Barnes said.

A wounded National Guard veteran who is confined to a wheelchair is one of his best workers, he emphasized to the New York employers.

The Capital Region employers day began at 5 a.m.—just like it does for Guardsman, Willsey told them—and ended after 7 p.m. They experienced a two hour ride on a GSA bus, a flight in a C-17 Globemaster III, including a visit to the flight deck, and had a chance to get hands on with gear used to respond to a chemical, biological, or radiological incident.

At the Panther Racing building the employers were briefed on the National Guard's CERFP—CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package—got a chance to look at Indiana National Guard equipment, and also heard from Maj. Gen. Martin Umbarger, the Adjutant General of Indiana. New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. David Martinsen, the Army National Guard AGR NCO of the Year, and Air National Guard Master Sgt. Jeffrey Lamarche, the Air National Guard Honor Guard Manager of the Year were recognized for their accomplishments with Hometown Hero Awards from Panther Racing. New York Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Kevin Bradley, who escorted the employers on the trip, also spoke about the important role having a good boss plays in letting Guard members serve.

JR Hildebrand, Panther Racing's driver who finished second in the 2011 Indy 500, emphasized how much he's learned from the National Guard Soldiers and Airmen he's met because of Panther's relationship with the Guard. He's met Soldiers who have been in desperate combat and that's a humbling experience, Hildebrand said.

"The presentation was excellent and was delivered loud and clear," said Bill Lia, president Albany's Lia Auto Group. "I was certainly surprised at some of the numbers regarding the number of unemployed and underemployed Guardsmen."

After the presentations the employers visited the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, where each person got a chance to go around the 2 and a quarter mile track twice in a car driven by a professional race car driver. At speeds hitting more than 115 miles per hour, but far less than the 230+ that the Indy cars normally drive, the Capital Region employers got a taste of what it's like to negotiate the track for real.

The National Guard has a very powerful message, said Michael Keegan, the President of the Hudson Valley Division of M &T Bank. Putting employers on a National Guard plane so they can see the Air Guard in action, and exposing them to some positive stories while giving them a unique experience like riding in a race car, really drives that story home, Keegan said.

The Boss Lift was "very effective," Crawford said.

"There is a much greater chance that the participants will talk about and relay the information to other people. Having started the day not knowing much about the National Guard, planes or cars, I certainly learned a lot," she added. gt

Chasing the Sunset Back to Base

SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN -- Aircrews from the New York Army National Guard's Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment return from a seven-hour flight toward Kandahar. The unit operates CH-47 Chinook aircraft in support of forward operating bases here with missions for battlefield circulation and combat air assault. Photo courtesy of Capt. Eric Fritz.

Troops Host TAG in Bagram

BAGRAM, AFGHANISTAN -- New York National Guard Command Sgt. Major Frank Wicks and Maj. Gen. Patrick Murphy, the Adjutant General, pose with members of HHC 427th Brigade Support Battalion during a visit to Afghanistan Oct. 13-19. The two leaders met Soldiers and Airmen from Co. B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation, the 105th Security Forces Group, the 109th Airlfit Wing, the 14th Finance Detachment, Joint Force Headquarters and the New York Strategic Transition Team, as well as the 427th. The logistics Soldiers of the 427th are playing a key role inventorying and moving equipment out of Afghanistan. Courtesy photo.

EXIT