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369th Sustainment Brigade

HARLEM’S BELOVED: CLIFFORD LEOPOLD ALEXANDER JR., FIRST BLACK U.S. ARMY SECRETARY, DIES AT 88

Black Enterprise, July 5:

An Army trailblazer has passed away.

Clifford Leopold Alexander Jr., the first Black Army Secretary of the United States, died at 88, Fox 5 News reports.

During the 1960s and 70s, the Harlem-raised and Ivy-league-educated pioneer made a significant mark on the civil rights movement. His dedication to addressing issues with the treatment of minorities and women in the Army laid the groundwork for advancing people of color in the Army and the United States combined.

Alexander’s life took him from an enlisted private in the National Guard to a foreign affairs officer under President John F. Kennedy and one of the highest civilian positions in the U.S. Army.

In 1977, Alexander became the 13th secretary of the Army, appointed by President Jimmy Carter. The role was historic as it was the first time a Black civilian was the head of any U.S. military branch, according to the news outlet.

As secretary, Alexander prioritized the advancement of Black people in the United States Army. He also promoted the transition of the United States to an all-volunteer Army force. This action encouraged recruitment after the Vietnam War, outside of the formal draft process, and elevated the role of women in the U.S. Army, per the National Museum of the United States Army.

At the time, Alexander argued that “the theory of a draft somehow cutting across all class and race lines in a society, and therefore being more equitable than a volunteer army, would not hold water… The draft always hit harder on poor people, and therefore it was not equitable.”

Born on Sept. 21, 1933, Alexander graduated cum laude from Harvard College in 1955 as the first Black president of the student council. In 1958, he earned his law degree from Yale Law School.

Alexander established his law career after enlisting as a private in the New York National Guard for six months. He joined the 369th Field Artillery Battalion and was stationed at Fort
Dix, New Jersey. After completion, Alexander became an assistant district attorney for New York County and served in this role until 1961.

In 1959, Alexander married Adele Logan, a historian and professor, and raised two children, Elizabeth and Mark Clifford Alexander.

Soon after, Alexander began working for community organizations in New York, including the Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited. His work there eventually took him to Washington, D.C. as a foreign affairs officer on the National Security Council in 1963.

From there, Alexander served as an advisor for President Lyndon B. Johnson from 1964 until 1967 and was later appointed as the chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

After leaving the Army secretary position in 1981, Alexander formed Alexander and Associates; a consulting firm focused on workplace inclusivity.


COVID19

NY National Guard Wraps up Federally Funded COVID-19 Mission

MilitarySpot.com, July 5:

LATHAM, N.Y. - More than 840 days after the first Soldiers and Airmen went on duty to stem an outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in New Rochelle, the New York National Guard’s federally supported COVID-19 mission came to an end June 30.

A force of 269 personnel will remain on state active duty to assist with logistics support and resolve outstanding financial accounts. But no Soldiers and Airmen will remain on federal duty.

The mission, which ran for almost 2 1/2 years, is the most extended domestic operations mission ever conducted by the New York National Guard.

The next longest was during World War I. At that time, 2,000 New York State Guard members were on duty from April 5, 1917, until the war’s end Nov. 11, 1918 — 585 days — to guard railroads, the Erie Canal, and the New York City water system.

From March 2020 to the end of June 2022, 7,077 uniformed men and women did everything from delivering 112,707 gallons of hand sanitizer to helping the New York City medical
examiner’s office recover the remains of 5,641 New Yorkers who died in their homes during the pandemic.

“I have been amazed by our service members and their work for New York State and our fellow citizens since March 2020 as we responded to the most significant pandemic in more than 100 years,” said Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the adjutant general of New York.

“All I can say to the 7,000-plus service members who served on the COVID mission over 28 months is — thank you,” Shields said.

While performing these duties, New York Army and Air National Guard men and women continued to meet their federal missions.

Over 600 Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division went to Kuwait in 2020 to command Task Force Spartan Shield. And throughout 2021 and 2022, New York Army Guard units prepared to deploy 2,800 Soldiers to the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

Meanwhile, the New York Air National Guard supplied research camps in Antarctica and Greenland in 2020, 2021 and 2022, contributed Airmen to Air Expeditionary Wings and deployed rescue assets to the Horn of Africa.

And in 2021, the New York National Guard deployed 1,723 Soldiers and Airmen in Title 32 status to assist in security missions in Washington, D.C., in the wake of the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

The initial COVID-19 mission required New York National Guard troops to provide school lunches to New Rochelle school district students. The school had been closed, and the goal was to ensure kids who relied on school lunches got them.

The mission extended to cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in 22 public buildings to destroy the virus. Then the mission expanded to testing people for COVID-19.

Then the pandemic became a national emergency, and every state stood up with Guard forces with federal funding.

Between March 8, 2020, and July 1, 2022, 5,420 New York Army National Guard Soldiers participated in the COVID-19 mission out of a force of 10,700. Out of the 6,000 New York Air National Guard members, 1,080 participated in the mission.

New York’s state defense forces — the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard — contributed 392 and 182 personnel to the COVID-19 mission.

The task of the troops changed as the pandemic changed.
Guardsmen worked in call centers, distributed over 50 million meals in New York City, collected health care forms from travelers at airports, and assembled millions of COVID-19 test sets.

New York National Guard Soldiers put up a field hospital in the Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York City and helped care for 1,094 COVID-19 patients. Then they turned the site into the largest vaccination clinic in the country and administered 647,973 shots.

The New York National Guard provided 485 Army Guard medics and Air Guard medical technicians to work in nursing homes to solve a staffing shortage.

The state-funded training of 400 military personnel as emergency medical technicians increases that pool of personnel. All but 66 of them became EMT certified.

By June 1, 2022, the New York National Guard had provided 747 personnel at 94 nursing homes.


NY National Guard Wraps up Federally Funded COVID-19 Mission

National Guard Bureau, July 1:

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About 10 percent of National Guard members are in violation of a federal vaccine mandate.

NY Times, June 30:

At midnight on Thursday, tens of thousands of National Guard troops who have yet to prove they have been vaccinated against the coronavirus became in violation of a direct order mandating their compliance.

As a result, they will no longer be able to drill with their units until they provide proof that they have been vaccinated or have received an exemption approved by military leaders.

More than 43,600 Guard troops — about 10 percent of the total force — have not provided documentation of vaccination. Some may have opted not to be vaccinated because of medical reasons or because they have requested an exemption. However, military leaders say they would not be immediately separated from the service when the midnight deadline arrived.

“We’re going to give every soldier every opportunity to get vaccinated and continue their military career,” Lt. Gen. Jon A. Jensen, director of the Army National Guard, said in a statement. “We’re not giving up on anybody until the separation paperwork is signed and completed.”

Of the approximately 330,000 members of the Army National Guard, 86.4 percent are fully vaccinated against the virus and 88.6 percent have received at least one dose of a Covid vaccine, according to a National Guard spokeswoman, Nahaku McFadden. For the 104,000 members of the Air National Guard, those rates are 94 and 94.2 percent.
The active-duty Army has a higher compliance rate, with 97 percent either fully or partly vaccinated as of June 23, and has discharged more than 1,000 soldiers for refusing to be vaccinated. As of June 22, the Navy had nearly 3,800 unvaccinated sailors and had kicked out more than 1,200 for refusing a shot, according to a statement.

A number of Republican governors have fought the federal vaccine mandate for their National Guards, and in December, the Oklahoma attorney general, John O’Connor, sued the Biden administration. Mr. O’Connor said in a statement at the time that the mandate was unlawful and did not “reflect the Land of the Free.” Two other states, Texas and Alaska, also filed lawsuits.

Federal officials have long said that governors have no legal standing to allow Guard members to refuse to comply with the military’s vaccine mandate. State officials and some legal experts, however, believe that unless National Guard members are federally deployed, they are under the jurisdiction of the governor of their state and therefore not subject to federal mandates.

The defense secretary, Lloyd J. Austin III, has remained adamant. In February, he rejected requests for vaccination exemptions for National Guard troops from the governors of Alaska, Idaho, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas and Wyoming.

“In making the decision to require vaccination against Covid-19 for service members,” Mr. Austin wrote in a letter to the governors, “I considered the thousands of hospitalizations and the hundreds of deaths among service members, civilians and their families related to Covid-19. Covid-19 takes our service members out of the fight, temporarily or permanently, and jeopardizes our ability to meet mission requirements.”

https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/30/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases

Members of the Tennessee National Guard push back on their COVID-19 vaccine mandate

WZTV Fox 17, Nashville, Tenn., June 29:

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (WZTV) — Members of the Tennessee National Guard worry they’ll be drummed out of the military effective Thursday if they don't get a COVID-19 vaccine.

They’re in a tough spot as they battle a federal mandate.

Demonstrators say losing soldiers would put us in a dangerous position.
However, hours after Wednesday’s rally, FOX 17 News received an email from the state saying they're now taking action after months of silence. The state says they have asked the Department of Defense (DOD) to approve exemptions, but there are still a lot of unknowns.

Those who FOX 17 News spoke with want everyone to know that these opinions are their own and not reflective of the DOD, U.S. Army or the Tennessee National Guard.

As the deadline loomed, some this morning were worried about their fate in the next 24 hours.

Major Clint Cannon says, “To a soldier, the hardest reality to face is that your time of service has come to an end. That reality is impossible to comprehend when it is done by force.”

But in a statement sent to FOX 17 News, the governor's office now says no one will be discharged Thursday as they await a response from the DOD.

According to the state, 7% of all Tennessee Guard members have yet to get vaccinated.

However, Captain Mickey Shelton says their numbers show as high as 10%.

“Which is 400+ service members, and that doesn’t include religious or medical exemptions, so you're looking at close to 800 or 1000 members here in our own state,” Captain Shelton says.

Shelton says discharging service members would leave the state in an unstable position.

“We respond to natural disasters, floods, tornadoes, sometimes COVID pandemic, sometimes riots, so it's so important that we don’t deplete our force. We are that security. Are they saying it’s okay that we don’t need a specific number of troops, and can we do without those troops?”

And after 14 years in the Tennessee National Guard, Major Cannon and other guard members ask for more action from the state against the federal mandate.


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**New York Air National Guard**

**National Guard MQ-9 Reapers Join Indo-Pacific Exercise**

ANG.mil, July 5:
ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam – Exercise Valiant Shield 2022 included MQ-9 aircraft in exercise operations for the first time May 25-June 20.

The 119th Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard and the 174th Attack Wing, New York Air National Guard, launched, flew and recovered MQ-9 Reaper aircraft to provide mission-critical awareness during the exercise at Andersen Air Force Base.

Valiant Shield 2022 was a 12-day joint field training exercise (FTX) to enhance integration between U.S. military forces by conducting joint operations at sea, on land, in air, and cyberspace.

Members of the 119th Wing and 174th Attack Wing partnered to demonstrate the capabilities of the MQ-9 Reaper in an overseas location.

Pilots and sensor operators from multiple units also participated by flying the MQ-9 from ground control stations at bases in the continental United States.

“It’s the first time we have had the MQ-9 participate in dynamic force employment in the heart of Indo-Pacific Command, which makes this a significant exercise,” said a sensor operator of the 119th Wing.

With its extensive loiter time and sensor capabilities, the MQ-9 provides awareness that other aircraft cannot.

“One example of the MQ-9 providing maritime domain awareness for Exercise Valiant Shield was a simulated kill chain exercise where the MQ-9 was able to identify, target, and track the asset by using full-motion video and disseminating intelligence of a tier 1 target,” said 119th Wing MQ-9 Pilot 1. “Without the MQ-9 being in this kill-chain exercise, it would not have gone well.”

One of the key takeaways has been learning what it actually means to team-build,” said 119th Wing MQ-9 Pilot 2 participating in the exercise. “It has been incredible to see how the team has come together and succeeded in some very challenging tasks.”


Rome airman receives promotion

Daily Sentinel, July 2:
ROME — Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Shields, adjutant general for New York, has announced the promotion of Nicholas Spine, of Rome, to the rank of first lieutenant at 224th Air Defense Group in recognition of his capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Spine is an air weapons officer with the 224th Air Defense Squadron.

The 224th Air Defense Group is comprised of the 224th Air Defense Squadron and the 224th Support Squadron, located in Rome, and Detachment 1 and Detachment 2 that serve in the Washington, D.C. area. The 224th ADG provides the forces to conduct the Eastern Air Defense Sector’s (EADS) mission. Part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the Sector is responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S.

Air National Guard promotions are based on overall performance, attitude, leadership ability and development potential, the announcement said, adding the promotions additionally recognize the best qualified airmen and attract and retain the highest caliber citizen soldiers for a career in the New York Air National Guard.


The New York National Guard is the state’s executive agency responsible for managing New York’s military forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.


109th Airlift Wing Hosts German Air Force Officer

NationalGuard.mil, July 7:

By Jaclyn Lyons, 109th Air Wing/Public affairs

SCOTIA, N.Y. – The New York National Guard’s 109th Airlift Wing hosted a German Air Force officer in June as part of the Military Reserve Exchange Program.

MREP enables Guard and Reserve Airmen and Soldiers, both officers and enlisted, to train with select allied nations. It helps participants increase their knowledge of foreign reserve forces and demonstrates continued support of NATO members and their militaries.

Oberstleutnant Heiko Radermacher spent two weeks touring and learning about the various missions, skill sets and operating styles of New York Air National Guard units.
Radermacher is the equivalent of an Air Force lieutenant colonel. He is the deputy maintenance commander from 31st Tactical Wing, a unit in Western Germany near Cologne that flies the Eurofighter.

Radermacher’s first choice to visit was a fighter unit, similar to the one he works at in Germany. He wasn’t sure what to expect when he matched with an Air National Guard mobility unit.

“I had no clue before what the Air National Guard did. I thought you did the drill once a month and an exercise once a year and that was it. I wasn’t aware of the steady work doing all of the operations, how many people are full-time working every day,” Radermacher said.

The program matched Radermacher with Capt. Joshua Bowers, wing executive staff officer for the 109th Airlift Wing. Bowers was also a prior enlisted crew chief and began his career as an officer in maintenance.

The program matches service members, but once personnel are at the unit it is up to the hosting member to set up tours, training and schedules.

“The objective of the program is to see how the other side does it and then see what you can take back with you, positives and negatives,” Bowers said. “When you’re at a unit for a long time, you get in the habit of, ‘this is the way it’s done.’ It’s not until you go see something else that you learn there is more than one way to do it. Your aperture opens, and you can recognize there is a whole lot more going on than only what you see.”

In addition to his time at the 109th, Radermacher toured the 174th Attack Wing, the 105th Airlift Wing and the Department of Military and Naval Affairs.

During the visit, the officers realized they had much more in common than they thought.

“We have different organizational structures, but we are doing the same stuff and we do it nearly the same way. We traveled to different maintenance shops, propulsions, avionics, fuels, talking in detail — we are nearly the same,” Radermacher said.

The foreign MREP participants spent three days touring Washington, D.C., Annapolis, Maryland, and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to learn more about America’s history and culture before reporting to their assigned units.

“This is such a great program — to see the Capitol, experience the culture and important places to the history of the United States, be immersed in the English language,” Radermacher said. “I don’t speak English on a daily basis. I can listen and read it OK, but it was nice to practice speaking it.”

As part of the program, Bowers will travel to Germany in the fall to visit Radremacher’s unit and see how they operate.
“I’ve always been interested in international relations. The point of the program is to start relationship-building,” Bowers said. “If down the road we are in Germany and need something, we have some connections — you can’t do it all — but you have to know who can do what. The relationship-building is critical on the local level, national level and international level.”


NEAR DEATH IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ATLANTIC: PARARESCUEMEN AWARDED MEDALS FOR HIGH-STAKES TAMAR RESCUE

Coffee or Die Magazine, July 6:

The HC-130 King flew low over the Atlantic Ocean under a ceiling of dense clouds. Open water stretched for hundreds of miles, and the sun was sinking over the horizon. In the plane’s cargo bay, a team of New York Air National Guard pararescuemen and combat rescue officers lined up at the rear of the plane as the ramp lowered. Wind roared into the cabin.

More than a thousand feet below, two crewmen clung to life aboard the Tamar, a Slovenian bulk cargo carrier. Two of their shipmates had already died after an explosion in the ship’s forward storeroom. The two survivors needed immediate medical aid for severe burns.

For Lt. Col. Sean Boughal, one of the jumpers that night, the 2017 mission was just another day on the job.

But we’re responding when it’s somebody’s worst day,” Boughal told Coffee or Die Magazine. He remembered a mantra he’d learned from his pararescue instructor: “Someday when somebody is having their worst day, you better have your best day.”

So the PJs did what they do best — they jumped.

A ONCE-IN-A-DECADE MISSION

In early June, the seven members of the team who jumped to the Tamar were awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for heroism for the challenging mission more than five years prior. Five were pararescuemen, or PJs, with the New York Air National Guard’s 103rd Rescue Squadron. Two were combat rescue officers, or CROs, the officer equivalent of PJs in the Air Force.

“The amount of complexity in that mission just can’t be overstated,” said Col. Jeffrey Cannel, commander of the 106th Rescue Wing and the pilot of the HC-130 on the Tamar mission
April 24, 2017. “The fact that these guys had to do that, all out there, alone and unafraid, getting it done, was just a testament to their skill and ability.”

The medal honors airmen who distinguish themselves through heroism, service, and meritorious achievement.

On June 4, the seven jumpers were awarded the medal during a ceremony at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base, according to a late June press release from the New York National Guard. The pararescuemen who received the award were Master Sgt. Jordan St. Clair; Senior Master Sgt. Erik Blom; Master Sgt. Jedediah Smith; Staff Sgt. Michael Hartman; and Master Sgt. Bryan Dalere. Dalere, who is now in the Alaska Air National Guard, was not at the ceremony. Two CROs, Boughal and Maj. Marty Viera, also received the medals.

“[The Tamar mission] really shows you what this country is capable of when we put our thoughts together,” Boughal said.

The captain of the Tamar sent out the distress call shortly before 7 a.m. An explosion had rocked the 625-foot vessel, some 1,700 miles off the east coast of New York, close to halfway into a trip across the Atlantic from Baltimore to Gibraltar. Four seamen were critically injured.

Boughal was in the middle of a workout that Monday morning, running on a treadmill, when another member of the 103rd Squadron walked in and told him the Coast Guard had received a call about an explosion in the Atlantic. It wasn’t clear yet that the 106th Wing would be called on to help, but Boughal hopped off the treadmill and started assembling his team.

Several of the airmen were still at home when Boughal called, while others were practicing confined space rescues or shooting at the range.

The team coordinated with a local hospital to get enough IV fluids and other medical supplies to treat men with burns covering more than 50% of their bodies, then loaded up the HC-130 with two inflatable boats rigged with cargo parachutes. Then they took flight.

The Tamar rescue marked the first open ocean jump mission for the 106th Rescue Wing in 15 years. It was a huge change of scenery for Boughal, who had previously served in Afghanistan. But the team trained so often that sitting on the HC-130 was as comfortable to him as sitting in his living room.

Five hours after lifting off from their base on Long Island, the plane dipped below the clouds, bringing the Tamar into view. During the flight, the team learned that two sailors had died and the two injured men likely had just hours to live if they didn’t work fast.

As the HC-130 circled the boat to judge for winds, the team donned drysuits and sturdy swim fins, then helped each other strap on parachutes. When the plane turned to make another pass, they lined up behind the boats on the rear ramp, waiting for the final green light. When it
came, the team pushed out the boats, then, one after another, leaped off the ramp toward the cold Atlantic waters.

‘OUR AMERICAN FRIENDS WILL DO THE JOB’

As the PJs jumped, they were being watched by eyes around the world. The explosion on the Tamar had become a huge news story in Slovenia, and Slovenian President Borut Pahor was tracking the rescue efforts closely. One surviving crewman was from the Philippines, and the other was from Slovenia.

During the rescue, Pahor’s mother called him and asked if there was any hope the injured men would survive.

“Listen,” Pahor told her. “If anybody, our American friends will do the job.”

Once the team splashed down, they found themselves in 15-foot waves that tossed the inflatable boats back and forth as the rescuers climbed aboard, their red and green chem lights and flashing beacons signaling their locations in the dark. They retrieved their bundles of supplies from the waves and made for the Tamar, climbing a rope ladder up the side of the ship, arriving at the side of the injured men around 9 p.m.

Smith, a physician assistant in his civilian job, created a makeshift intensive care unit. The crewmen were badly burned on their faces, arms, legs, and hands, St. Clair recalled in a press release from the 106th Rescue Wing.

“Their lives were absolutely at risk,” St. Clair said.

The airmen knew they were in it for the long haul. The ship was still two days away from the range of Portuguese search and rescue forces. So pain management became a priority.

After inserting a breathing tube into one sailor and placing him on a ventilator, the airmen started a rotation of 90-minute shifts watching over their patients. To deal with the severe burns, they debrided the sailors’ wounds, cutting away dead tissue. In some areas, the swelling from burns threatened to cut off circulation and permanently damage the patients’ dexterity and mobility. To relieve the pressure, the medics performed escharotomies, precise slits in badly burned tissue to allow blood circulation.

The second sailor’s airway was so severely burned that the PJs eventually had to perform a cricothyrotomy, a risky procedure usually performed only in hospitals, in which a medic cuts a slit in a patient’s throat to insert a breathing tube.

St. Clair performed the procedure as calmly and methodically as if “he was tying his shoelaces,” Boughal said.

Three days after the initial explosion, the Tamar was near enough to land for a helicopter to reach it. With the use of a rope system, the patients and three of the airmen were hoisted into
the helicopter. A few hours later, the helicopter touched down in the Azores and the crew moved the patients to a fixed wing plane for a final flight to the Portuguese mainland. After three days of intense care, the 106th team was no longer responsible for the wounded sailors.

Finally, the airmen were able to take a breath and appreciate the work they had done.

“We were able to make a difference in the lives of two men,” St. Clair said. “Those two men are alive and enjoying life today because of our ability to provide a capability that very few organizations can.”

As a direct result of the pararescue team’s care, both injured sailors survived with minimal long-lasting injuries. About a month after the rescue, Pahor presented nearly 20 members of the wing with Slovenia’s Medal for Merit in the Military Field.

Maj. Michael O’Hagan, a spokesman for the 106th Rescue Wing, told Coffee or Die the rescue was a testament to American forces’ willingness to risk their own lives to save anyone in need, even citizens of other nations.

“We’re willing to risk ourselves to save a stranger when we have no skin in the game,” O’Hagan said. “It’s just purely to do the right thing and to save a life.”

https://coffeeordie.com/tamar-rescue-air-national-guard/

Airmen receive awards for work at EADS

Rome Daily Sentinel, July 6:

ROME — The 224th Air Defense Group at the Eastern Air Defense Sector has recognized several New York Air National Guardsmen for outstanding performance.

The airmen included:

• Tech. Sgt. Javon Wimberly, of Sherrill. Wimberly has received the Air Force Achievement Medal.

A cyber transport systems technician at 224th Support Squadron, Wimberly successfully integrated more than 200 radar feeds into EADS air picture, expanding the picture by hundreds of square miles and maximizing security for presidential flights and other critical national events, according to the award announcement.

He also managed the restoration of 21 mission-critical cameras in the National Capital Region and oversaw an equipment inventory of 317 items worth more than $2.6 million, guaranteeing 100% asset availability.
• Sgt. Laura Fontana, of Rome. Fontana has received the Air Force Commendation Medal and Air Force Achievement Medal.

A Security Forces craftsman at the 224th Support Squadron, Fontana received the Commendation Medal for her work as the unit’s security manager over a two-year period, where she processed security clearances for 40 airmen and more than a dozen visitors. She also spearheaded a new Security Forces radio program and ensured all equipment complied fully with communications security directives.

Fontana received the Achievement Medal for her outstanding effort in December 2020, when she completed 240 training exercise and evaluation outlines that established the initial performance metrics for data-driven decision making within Security Forces, the announcement added.

• Tech. Sgt. Michael Carson, of Clinton. Carson has received the Air Force Commendation Medal.

A client systems craftsman at the 224th Support Squadron, Carson enabled EADS continuous operations by coordinating solutions for 5,000 trouble tickets in the last four years. Carson also facilitated $750,000 in computer upgrades, implemented a new Air Force operating system for more than 300 users and dozens of iPhones, and coordinated 271 ceremonies as the 224th Air Defense Group Honor Guard program manager.

• Lt. Col. Peter Fitzgerald, from Cleveland. Fitzgerald has received the Meritorious Service Medal.

A traditional, part-time Guardsman with the 224th Support Squadron, Fitzgerald developed an innovative technical solution that improved the unit’s communications security while reducing computer hardware, the announcement said.

Fitzgerald also played a key role in a major project that separated mission information and training information on EADS operations floor and provided significant contributions to five higher-headquarters projects.

The 224th ADG is comprised of the 224th Air Defense Squadron and 224th SPTS, located in Rome, and Detachment 1 and Detachment 2 that serve in the Washington, D.C. area. The 224th ADG provides the forces to conduct the Eastern Air Defense Sector’s (EADS) mission. Part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the Sector is responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S.


The New York National Guard is the state’s executive agency responsible for managing New York’s Military Forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army
National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.

https://romesentinel.com/stories/airmen-receive-awards-for-work-at-eads,137467

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New York Army National Guard

'You took a beam of light from this world': Liverpool man sentenced in Boonville crash

Utica Observer Dispatch, July 7:

Nearly two years ago, Sarah Stinebrickner woke up from a coma to find her life forever changed.

One of the drivers in a two-car collision that killed two people on Sept. 12, 2020, in Boonville, Stinebrickner was one of three people who spoke before the sentencing of the other driver, 24-year-old Rakwan Marshall of Liverpool, Wednesday in Oneida County Court.

Marshall was convicted by a jury in May of two counts of second-degree manslaughter and one count of second-degree assault, both felonies, as well as various vehicle and traffic violations.

On Wednesday, Oneida County Judge Robert Bauer issued Marshall the maximum sentence of five to 15 years in state prison for each count of manslaughter, seven years in prison and three years post-release supervision for second-degree assault, which will run concurrently; as well as a total of $1,050 in fines for various traffic violations.

Marshall was driving south on state Route 12 in Boonville when he moved into the northbound lane to pass a vehicle and struck a car head-on, New York State Police reported at the time. Prosecutors later said he had reached a top speed of 100 miles per hour seconds before the crash. He was indicted on charges relating to the crash a year later.

As part of the proceedings Wednesday, three people were permitted to deliver statements.

Stinebrickner, whose statement was read out loud by Oneida County Assistant District Attorney Rebecca Kelleher as she stood beside her with a neck brace and cane, said she had undergone multiple surgeries and still has more scheduled, while even basic tasks like getting dressed now require assistance from her children. She can no longer work, and she's in chronic pain, she said.
Even worse is the loss of her sister, 42-year-old Cary Cronisier, of Boonville, who had been the passenger in her vehicle and died in the crash. They were inseparable, she said. She didn't think this was how she'd lose her best friend.

"You didn't just take a life, you took a beam of light from this world," she said.

Marshall's passenger, 19-year-old Yairis Brito of Utica, also died 11 days later from injuries in the crash, prosecutors previously reported. Brito's cousins Ninamarie DeJesus and Jazmarie Lucas — though more like sisters to her, they both said — also spoke at the sentencing.

"She was the light of the family," DeJesus said. "And she'd light up the room."

Both cousins described a 19-year-old just starting adulthood, who had been eager to become a teacher.

"She will never be able to graduate college and be that teacher she wanted to be since the age of five," Lucas said.

Stinebrickner, DeJesus and Lucas all asked Marshall receive the maximum sentence. Lucas also asked Marshall not be allowed to drive upon release.

Before his sentencing, Marshall apologized to Cronisier and Brito's families. His attorney, Krystal Harrington, said the incident was one of unusual circumstances and there were questions as to who was driving and the level of intoxication Stinebrickner was under.

"Ms. Harrington, you're not delivering a closing argument," Bauer cut in.

Harrington went on to say Marshall had been a college student and member of the Army National Guard, with a fiancée currently expecting their son.

"This tragic mistake should not define who Rakwan was as a person," she said.

Addressing Marshall, Bauer said his was a difficult case.

"You seem to be a person who could have done great things with your life," he said. "And yet some of your actions shock the conscience as so, so selfish."

He went on to note that Marshall had continued to drive after the accident, even though he'd been ordered not to, and received tickets for traveling at speeds of 75 and 91 miles per hour.

"You learned nothing from this," he said.

As part of his sentencing, Bauer added he would advise the Department of Motor Vehicles to not reissue Marshall a license.
New York Army National Guard Member From Hudson Valley Dies

Hudson Valley Post, July 8, 2022:

The Hudson Valley is mourning the loss of a New York Army National Guard Member with a "heart of gold."

Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro announced late Thursday that flags were lowered at Dutchess County buildings in memory of Dutchess County Public Works Highway Division employee Patrick Sullivan who passed away on July 6.

"Our hearts are heavy as we mourn the death of Dutchess County Public Works Highway Division employee Patrick Sullivan. Patrick's was a second-generation Dutchess County Government employee, joining DPW in 2013, serving most recently as Bridge Maintainer with the Highway Division Bridge Crew. He was a dedicated employee and his easy demeanor and friendly smile made him a valued co-worker. He will be sorely missed by his Dutchess County Government family," Molinaro stated."

Patrick Ian Sullivan of Poughkeepsie passed away at the age of 29 on July 6, 2022, at Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital as a result of complications from injuries sustained in a bicycle accident, according to his obituary.

"Our prayers are with Patrick’s loved ones during this difficult time. We share in the sorrow of his passing and extend our sincere condolences to all of his family and friends," Molinaro added.

Sullivan was born in Poughkeepsie in March 1993 during a snowstorm. He attended Arlington and Spackenkill High Schools and was said to be a gifted athlete.

He served in the New York Army National Guard and at the time of his death was employed by the Dutchess County Department of Public Works, Highway Division, as a bridge maintainer.

"He loved to fish, commune with nature and listen to music," his obituary states. "Patrick was a free spirit with a heart of gold and was loved, and always will be loved by many, many people."

A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, July 10 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Timothy P. Doyle Funeral Home, 371 Hooker Ave, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.
His burial will be private.

2022 Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition to be held in Tennessee

Clarksville Online, July 3:

Nashville, TN – From July 24th-29th, 2022 fourteen of the nation’s best National Guard junior enlisted Soldiers and noncommissioned officers will be participating in an intensive, six-day competition throughout Tennessee to determine who will be named the Army National Guard’s best-of-the-best.

The annual Army National Guard Best Warrior competition determines which junior enlisted Soldier and NCO from the National Guard’s 54 states and territories will represent more than 330,000 guardsmen at the Army Best Warrior competition this fall.

“Tennessee has the honor of hosting the competition this year and we’re proud to showcase our state and all it has to offer,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Dale Crockett, Tennessee’s State Command Sergeant Major. “We have developed a rigorous competition that will challenge each competitor both mentally and physically through dynamic and realistic scenarios that take advantage of Tennessee’s unique training areas. The Soldiers at the National level are all world class athletes and motivated professionals that are masters of the fundamentals. This will be a hard-earned victory for the Soldiers that win, and awesome experience for all that compete.”

The competition has more than 30 evaluated events conducted primarily in Smyrna and Tullahoma with other events in Lynchburg, Milan, Murfreesboro, and Nashville.

“This year is unique because it is the first time Tennessee has hosted this event, and also the first year our NCO and junior enlisted won at the regional level,” said Crockett. “Competitors and visitors will be able to experience the rich culture of Tennessee while determining who will represent the National Guard.”

All participants are winners of their state’s competition who then won their area’s regional competition. The nation is divided into seven geographical regions and those winners, seven Soldiers and seven NCOs, are now competing at the national level in Tennessee.

The competitors this year are from the following states: New York, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Minnesota, Texas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Oregon, Hawaii, and Utah.
Each will be tested on marksmanship and weapons skills, day and night land navigation, a combat fitness assessment, obstacle course, survival swimming, Army warrior tasks, a 16-mile ruck march, board interviews, and a myriad of other Soldier tasks that include various stress-induced combat scenarios.

Tennessee will also feature, for the first time, an intensive “valor run” for the competitors. It is a nearly four-kilometer run consisting of six stations they will each need to complete. Each station highlights a different Medal of Honor recipient. When the competitor arrives, they will read the recipients’ citation and then traverse a course that recreates the tasks the recipient performed to earn the Medal of Honor.

“Competitions like this inspire our Soldiers to strive for excellence and to find their limits, and exceed them,” said Crockett. “Tough realistic training is critical to ensuring our Soldiers are prepared to fight and win our nation’s battles, and these highly trained and disciplined Soldiers are role models for our formations to emulate.”


Alex Hammond takes leave of absence as Waddington supervisor

WNYT Ch 7 News, July 5, 2022:

WADDINGTON, New York (WWNY) - Waddington’s town supervisor is being called to active military service and will be deployed overseas.

Alex Hammond will be taking a leave of absence as supervisor as of July 10. Deputy Supervisor Travis McKnight will take over while he’s on leave.

Hammond is an officer in the New York Army National Guard. Now a captain, he was most recently deployed to the COVID-19 mass vaccination site at SUNY Potsdam.

A news release from the town didn’t say where he will be deployed.

https://www.wwnytv.com/2022/07/05/hammond-takes-leave-absence-waddington-town-supervisor/