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## **106th Rescue Wing**

### **REGISTRATION OPENS FOR THE FIFTH ANNUAL TUNNEL TO TOWERS TOWER CLIMB NYC AT ONE WORLD OBSERVATORY SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2019**

**Globe News Wire, Feb. 11, 2019**

Honorary starters will be Carmella Raguso and Rebecca Briggs, whose husbands were killed in the line of duty in Iraq

New York, NY, Feb. 11, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation, established in memory of a fallen 9/11 firefighter, announced Monday that it had opened registration for the Fifth Annual Tunnel to Towers Climb NYC at One World Observatory at One World Trade Center.

Since 2015, participants from around the world have joined first responders, veterans and catastrophically injured service members on prosthetic legs to climb 104-stories - 2,226 steps to reach the finish line at the top of the One World Observatory.

Once again this year, the event is part of the Vertical World Circuit, an annual race up the tallest buildings in the world. Elite climbers from around the globe will race to the top of the building that symbolizes strength, hope and the resiliency of the American spirit. The event is limited to 1000 participants, so it is imperative to register now to secure a spot in this year's climb.

The entry fee for all participants is \$100 and there is a mandatory \$250 minimum fundraising requirement. Money raised from this event will support the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Tower Foundation and the Captain Billy Burke Jr. Foundation.

The honorary starters for this year's Tunnel to Towers Tower Climb NYC will be Carmella Raguso and Rebecca Briggs, widows of two American heroes lost in Iraq.

Tech Sgt. Dashan Briggs and Master Sgt. Christopher Raguso were members of the 106th Air National Guard. Briggs and Raguso were lost in March 2018 when their helicopter crashed in Iraq. Following the deaths of these two heroes, Tunnel to Towers paid off the mortgages on both families' homes as part of the Foundation's Gold Star Family Home Program.

To learn more about the climb and register for the event go to [T2TCLIMB.org](http://T2TCLIMB.org).

Watch highlights from the 2018 Tunnel to Towers Climb NYC at One World

Observatory at One World Trade Center.

**ABOUT THE STEPHEN SILLER TUNNEL TO TOWERS FOUNDATION:** The Siller Family started the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation to honor the memory of their brother, Stephen, a New York City firefighter who lost his life on September 11, 2001. The Foundation continues Stephen's legacy by supporting our nation's military and first responders and their families. To date, the Foundation has spent over \$100 million to support those who sacrificed protecting our country. To learn more go to [Tunnel2Towers.org](http://Tunnel2Towers.org).

**ABOUT THE CAPT. BILLY BURKE JR. FOUNDATION:** The Foundation honors the heroism of FDNY Capt. Billy Burke Jr., who sacrificed his life on 9/11 to save others, and supports and honors the sacrifices of our military men and women devoted to protect our freedoms.

<https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/02/11/1716712/0/en/REGISTRATION-OPENS-FOR-THE-FIFTH-ANNUAL-TUNNEL-TO-TOWERS-TOWER-CLIMB-NYC-AT-ONE-WORLD-OBSERVATORY-SUNDAY-JUNE-2-2019.html>

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## **53rd Troop Command**

### **Ben Franklin Elementary School Student Surprised by Dad's Homecoming**

**Tap Into Yorktown, February 8, 2019**

SHRUB OAK, N.Y. - Chris Larkin had waited long enough.

After finishing a nine-month tour in the Middle East and spending a few more days in Texas, the specialist with the New York National Guard just wanted to see his son, Sean, who was in a different grade the last time they were together.

So, after deplaning in New York City on Thursday, Jan. 31, the elder Larkin wasted no time, heading straight toward Ben Franklin Elementary School, where he planned to surprise his son, a second-grade student.

He had been planning this surprise visit with school teachers and administrators for a while, but his Thursday arrival even caught them off guard. Larkin was expected home the following week, but his command pulled strings and expedited his return.

Before boarding a plane that morning in Fort Hood, Larkin shared his early arrival plans with school officials, who made last-minute preparations to ensure that Sean was surprised. Larkin arrived at the school around 2:05 p.m. when his son was in the library with the rest of his class.

The plan worked.

Sean was caught off guard, leaping into his father's arms and embracing him for nearly a minute before introducing him to his classmates.

"I'm very surprised," Sean said afterward. "I saw someone over there taking a picture and then I'm like, 'Why are people having cameras taking pictures?' And then all of a sudden, I'm like, 'Is this a dream or is this real life?'"

The students peppered Chris Larkin with questions, turning his surprise appearance into an impromptu show and tell. He was prepared, wowing the students with the different currencies he acquired in countries like Qatar.

"This is amazing," Larkin said of the homecoming.

Sean was thrilled to have his dad home.

"I feel very good," Sean said. "My dad has been gone for a very long time. I really like it that he's home now."

## Background

Larkin is a member of the New York Army National Guard's 101st Expeditionary

Signal Battalion, which has headquarters in Yonkers and elements in Peekskill and Orangeburg. He and about 300 other soldiers returned to Texas from Kuwait on Jan. 25.

The unit left the Hudson Valley from Stewart Air National Guard Base last March 17. They trained for 45 days before deploying.

Larkin's battalion provides communications support to military units across large distances using satellite communications technology. He served nine months in support of Operation Inherent Resolve (military operations in Syria against the Islamic State) and Operation Spartan Shield (building the militaries of Middle Eastern nations). The 101st soldiers also supported Operation Freedom's Sentinel, the ongoing mission in Afghanistan against Al-Qaeda remnants.

His unit provided communications support at seven locations and manned a dozen communications hubs across U.S. Central Command's area. The soldiers took part in three major exercises in Egypt and Qatar and also managed tactical communications for the Army Theater Wide Air Defense Artillery

Brigade's Patriot missile sites in the Persian Gulf region.

The New York National Guard soldiers also provided secure computer communications to military units operating in southern Afghanistan.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/yorktown/articles/ben-franklin-elementary-school-student-surprised-by-dad-s-homecoming>

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## **Soldier Returns Home to Surprise Kids During Black History Month Event**

**Spectrum NY1, Feb. 09, 2019**

A wonderful moment in the Bronx as a soldier surprises his children after being overseas for nearly a year.

Specialist Robert Goins, a New York Army National Guardsman last hugged his children 11 months ago when he was deployed to Kuwait and Egypt.

His 8-year-old son Jayden and 6-year-old daughter Allana had no idea he was coming home. Which made the reunion, at a Black History Month event at their school, PS 111 an even bigger surprise.

"I wanted him to come home Thanksgiving or Christmas," said Jayden Cortes Goins, Robert's son.

The youngest of the children, 3-year-old Elijah was overjoyed to get hugs and kisses from daddy as well.

"They missed him a lot. The little one especially, mom can I speak to my dad, it was kind of hard sometimes. So having to explain it to a three year old that right now that you can't talk to your dad, it was kind of hard," said Anistaisa Goins, Robert's wife.

And then it finally hit her. Her husband, the father of the family, is no longer half a world away.

"Definitely the most challenging thing I have ever done, being away from my family. By far," Robert Goins said.

City Councilman Andy King helped to arrange the surprise reunion.

Goins joined the National Guard in 2016.

"Serving our community, serving abroad we are truly grateful and thankful," City Councilman Andy King said.

Goins attended PS 111 on Baychester Avenue himself. The 30-year-old soldier told the students to get their education and listen to their teachers.

As a part of the Black History Month event he told them about Black soldiers who helped to break down racial barriers in the military.

"So I want you to remember his name Henry Johnson. That is the person that we studied, while I was overseas, while I was aboard. Representing this patch here, the Harlem Hell Fighters," Goins added.

Specialist Goins says the only thing he wants to do now is constantly hug his kids, to make up for all of those special days he has missed in last year.

He says this homecoming was priceless.

<https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2019/02/09/soldier-returns-home-to-surprise-kids-during-black-history-month-event>

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## **Adjutant General**

### **On the Bright Side: Guard commander, Oneonta native calls it a career**

**The Daily Star, Feb 9, 2019**

A decorated major general from Oneonta celebrated 36 years of service in the Air Force and the Air National Guard at his retirement ceremony last week.

Anthony German's last assignment was as special assistant to the director of the Air National Guard. He is the former commander of the 109th Airlift Wing in Schenectady.

The expert navigator has logged more than 4,900 flying hours across the globe and many in Antarctica. Last year the National Science Foundation named a glacier after German in recognition of his work, which included coordinating military support for research efforts in the Antarctic and Greenland.

German said he decided to join the Air Force in 1982 as a college graduate with no job.

"I wanted a skill and I wanted to learn how to fly airplanes," he said. He spent six years on active duty as a navigator before joining the New York Air National Guard in 1989.

German recounted some of his adventures to The Daily Star, including work with the 109th in Antarctica. The New York National Guard continues annual migrations to the South Pole, with pilots flying the only ski-equipped planes in the military.

He was the mission commander for the rescue of Jerri Nielsen, a doctor who self-diagnosed and treated her breast cancer at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station during the southern winter of 1998, at a time when the station is physically cut off from the rest of the world. German's team landed at the station in the spring several weeks earlier than planned despite adverse weather conditions. Nielsen lived 10 years following the rescue.

German said his military service has brought him to five continents and involved support in South American drug wars.

"We were everywhere," he said, including one Christmas in Saudia Arabia.

"He inspires the youngest airman to the highest ranking colonel," said his friend William Gizara, the 109th Airlift Wing's public affairs superintendent. "He always had a way of boosting your morale so you want to do the mission."

"We still have people volunteering to serve their country and I think that's an amazing thing" considering the length of America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. "They deserve to be motivated in a positive way."

All three of German's sons have followed in his military service, and two are members of the New York Air National Guard.

"It was a decision that they had to make, and I told them they would make their own path," he said.

German has maintained a taste for the cold and the outdoors. He celebrated his retirement with ice fishing on Great Sacandaga Lake on Wednesday and said he looks forward to spending more time in nature.

[https://www.thedailystar.com/news/local\\_news/on-the-bright-side-guard-commander-oneonta-native-calls-it/article\\_b3e19b3a-658a-5292-9bb7-e8b31a096d1d.htm](https://www.thedailystar.com/news/local_news/on-the-bright-side-guard-commander-oneonta-native-calls-it/article_b3e19b3a-658a-5292-9bb7-e8b31a096d1d.htm)

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## Armories

### **Election upset means village finally might get Freeport Armory**

Newsday, Feb. 14

Some village leaders have sought the transaction since 2011, when the state Division of Military and Naval Affairs vacated the building.

ALBANY — After eight years of political wrangling, two gubernatorial vetoes and an election upset, the former Freeport Armory could emerge from legal limbo with a new owner.

Under a bill state legislators recently introduced, New York would transfer ownership of the former National Guard site to the Freeport Village government.

It's a transaction some village leaders have sought since 2011, when the state Division of Military and Naval Affairs vacated the building. Further, handing over old armories to local governments is the formula the state has followed for years, including sites in Riverhead and Huntington.

But it wasn't the course sought by Earlene Hooper, the former state Assembly member who represented Freeport. She repeatedly sought to transfer ownership to a church-affiliated nonprofit she favored.

The State Legislature twice approved a Hooper bill to give the building and land to the Cedarmore Corp., a nonprofit that shares space with Zion Cathedral Church of God in Christ, across the street from the former armory on Babylon Turnpike, for \$1. Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo vetoed the bill in 2013 and 2014, citing strong opposition in the community.

In 2015 and 2017, Hooper tried to revive her bill but pulled it each time amid an Assembly vote when it became clear it would fail.

Fast forward to September 2018: Hooper, a 30-year legislative veteran, lost to newcomer Taylor Raynor in a Democratic primary. Later, Raynor (D-Hempstead) easily won the general election in the overwhelmingly Democratic district.

On Feb. 11, Raynor formally submitted her bill in the Assembly to give the armory to Freeport. It is co-sponsored by Sen. John Brooks (D-Seaford), who introduced an identical version in the Senate in January.

"This bill would allow the property to be conveyed to the Village of Freeport and put to public use by the municipality," the sponsors said in a memo with the bill. "In the wake of



superstorm Sandy, the Village of Freeport sustained millions of dollars of damage to its Department of Public Works, and this transfer would permit, among other things, the village to relocate . . . [that department] to an area outside of the flood zone.”

In an interview, Raynor said the bill was a top priority for her. She said she wanted to "make sure the armory is serving the community and ensure that it belongs to the Freeport community."

Freeport Mayor Robert T. Kennedy once drove to Albany to deliver a 1,000-signature petition opposing transfer of the armory to the church group. He said he has been working with Raynor on the legislation to give the 3-acre parcel to the village.

The mayor said that if and when the transfer is complete, he will seek community opinions on what could be an array of uses.

Said Kennedy: “I’ve been waiting for this for several years.”

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/state-senate-cuomo-freeport-armory-1.27304939>

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## **Eastern Air Defense Sector**

### **Central NY-based Air National Guard unit gets new commander**

**New Jersey Herald, Feb. 15, 2019**

ROME, N.Y. (AP) — A New York Air National Guard unit that's part of the nation's air defense system now has a new commander.

Col. Paul Bishop formally took command Thursday of the 224th Air Defense Group during a ceremony held at the Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome in central New York.

Bishop, who lives in nearby Oriskany, has served in the Air National Guard for 30 years, with previous assignments that included service with the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse as an F-16 avionics maintenance specialist. In 1991, he served in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm.

The unit he now commands provides the forces for the Eastern Air Defense Sector, part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, also known as NORAD. The sector provides coverage for the eastern U.S.

<https://www.njherald.com/article/20190215/AP/302159982#>

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## Community News for Feb. 15, 2019

Observer Dispatch, Feb. 15

### REGION

Award winners announced by National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group and Eastern Air Defense Sector

The Eastern Air Defense Sector and the New York Air National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group have named their annual award winners for 2018.

The 224th Air Defense Group is composed of the 224th Air Defense Squadron and 224th Support Squadron, 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 mission.

Part of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, the Sector is responsible for the air defense of the eastern U.S.

This year, EADS recognized outstanding performers in seven categories: company grade officer (junior officers below the rank of major), senior noncommissioned officer, noncommissioned officer, junior enlisted airman, honor guard program manager, and civilians in two categories.

Local award recipients are as follows.

- Staff Sgt. Michael Carson, Clark Mills: Outstanding Honor Guard Program Manager. A computer systems technician at the 224th Support Squadron, Carson volunteered to lead the Honor Guard as an additional duty. As program manager, Carson trained and supervised 15 Airmen, coordinated 35 funeral details and 28 color guard events, and orchestrated honor guard support for assumption of command and retirement ceremonies.
- Master Sgt. Myles Macey, Utica: Outstanding Senior Noncommissioned Officer. A cyber mission systems Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge (NCOIC) at the 224th Support Squadron, Macey oversaw a major systems upgrade and supervised the installation of more than 30 new servers. He also successfully led the unit's first-ever information assurance validation, which required the inspection of nearly 500 security controls.
- Tech. Sgt. Thomas Silva, Yorkville: Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer. The NCOIC of exercises and training at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, Silva played a key role in planning

Sector support for more than 20 Presidential flights. Silva organized the unit's first continuation training plan and volunteered for more than 40 extra assignments.

- Senior Airman Amberly Sherman, Rome: Outstanding Junior Enlisted Airman. A tracking technician at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, Sherman was primary tracker during the State of the Union address, helped coordinate 19 Presidential movements and volunteered for 12 additional assignments. Selected to attend a 1st Air Force leadership course, she participated in a ceremonial wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C.
- Diane Burton, Sherrill: Outstanding Civilian (Category I). An administrative assistant at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, Burton developed an effective feedback tracker to correct deficiencies identified by EADS Inspector General. Burton directly enabled travel for 90 EADS members, scheduled and managed 130 medical appointments, and tracked the performance records of more than 170 Airmen.

<https://www.uticaod.com/news/20190215/community-news-for-feb-15-2019>

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## **Central NY-based Air National Guard unit gets new commander**

**WBNG, Feb. 15**

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<https://wbng.com/news/new-york-news-from-the-associated-press/2019/02/15/central-ny-based-air-national-guard-unit-gets-new-commander/>

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## **EADS, Air National Guard salute winners of annual awards**

**Rome Sentinel, Feb. 8, 2019**

The Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS) and the New York Air National Guard's 224th Air Defense Group (ADG) have named their annual award winners for 2018, the National Guard announced.

The winners "distinguished themselves by going above and beyond our high standards. I congratulate them on their outstanding accomplishments and thank them for their efforts." said Col. Emil Filkorn, commander of EADS, based at Griffiss park.

The 224th ADG includes the 224th Air Defense Squadron and 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 EADS' mission, which includes being responsible for air defense of the eastern U.S. as part of NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command).

The award recipients:

. Senior Airman Amberly Sherman, Rome, Outstanding Junior Enlisted Airman -A tracking technician at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, she was primary tracker during the State of the Union address, helped coordinate 19 Presidential movements and volunteered for 12 additional assignments.

Selected to attend a 1st Air Force leadership course, she participated in a ceremonial wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington, D.C.

. Master Sgt. Myles Macey, Utica, Outstanding Senior Noncommissioned Officer - A cyber mission systems noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge (NCOIC) at the 224th Support Squadron, he oversaw a major systems upgrade. He also led the unit's first-ever information assurance validation, which required inspection of nearly 500 security controls.

. Tech. Sgt. Thomas Silva, Yorkville, Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer -The NCOIC of exercises and training at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, he played a key role in planning sector support for more than 20 Presidential flights. He organized the unit's first continuation training plan and volunteered for over 40 extra assignments.

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. Diane Burton, Sherrill, Outstanding Civilian (Category I) – An administrative assistant at the 224th Air Defense Squadron, she developed a feedback tracker to correct deficiencies identified by EADS Inspector General. She directly enabled travel for 90 EADS members, scheduled and managed 130 medical appointments, and tracked performance records of more than 170 airmen.

. Steve Barry, Baldwinsville, Outstanding Civilian (Category III) – An information technology specialist with the 224th Support Squadron, he implemented an immersive cyber training program for the unit's computer technicians. Other achievements included leading an upgrade of the unit's Battle Control System, analyzing 14 technical manuals for Air Combat Command, and organizing and conducting a three-week training course for cyber airmen.

. Capt. Andrew Conklin, Fairfax Station, Va., Outstanding Company Grade Officer -The weapons and tactics chief at EADS Detachment 1 in Washington, D.C., he authored a 32-page crew tactical coordination checklist and led a re-write of a NORAD operational document. Other accomplishments included integrating U.S. Coast Guard personnel into operations and leading Detachment 1's participation in several high-level exercises.

In addition to its New York Air National Guardsmen staffing, EADS includes a Canadian Forces detachment, Army and Navy liaison officers and federal civilians. It employs about 400 overall.

<https://romesentinel.com/stories/eads-air-national-guard-salute-winners-of-annual-awards,72245?>

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## **Emergency Response**

### **Emergency Response Unity in Crisis**

**Citizen- Soldier Magazine, February 13, 2019**

When Hurricanes Florence and Michael struck the southeast coast of the United States late in the summer of 2018, Army National Guard Soldiers, civilian first responders and everyday residents banded together to offer shelter, food and aid to those most impacted by the storms' devastation.

#### **Hurricane Florence**

Over 6,600 National Guard members, sent from at least 28 States, were sent to support the States of North and South Carolina in recovery from Hurricane Florence. That type of unity is what South Carolina's Adjutant General MG Robert Livingston described as the most effective tool in alleviating the destruction of hurricanes. "Everything is unified," he said.

## Landfall

At a quarter after seven o'clock in the morning on Sept. 14, 2018, the eye of Hurricane Florence made landfall on the coast of North Carolina, near Wrightsville Beach. The storm lingered. It crept over the landscape at just 6 miles-per-hour (mph), but with maximum sustained winds estimated at 90 mph - making it a slow-moving, yet deadly, Category 1 Hurricane, according to the National Hurricane Center.

Thirteen States were unified in sending service members to join the more than 3,000 North Carolina National Guard members activated in response to the massive storm. Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Wisconsin National Guards sent Soldiers and Airmen to support North Carolina's recovery effort. Air support vehicles included CH-47 Chinooks sent by five States; Black Hawk helicopters sent by 11 States; additional helicopters sent by the U.S. Coast Guard and other rotary wing aircraft sent by the North Carolina State Highway Patrol.

"I would put it right up on the scale with Hurricane Matthew. Along the coast, there was a lot of surge and wind damage. Then, once the storm stalled a little bit, the rain just heavily impacted southeastern North Carolina," said SGM Robert Bowen, acting command sergeant major of 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team, North Carolina Army National Guard.

At the height of the relief effort, 50 aircraft were used in 346 missions, resulting in the rescue of over 440 citizens and 127 animals. National Guard members and first responders moved more than 685,000 pounds of supplies and equipment during the response.

"We switched over during the storm to what we call "all-purpose support packages." That's [when we] go out and do multiple different things, rather than just specializing in one area. That allows the State counties and the National Guard the flexibility to do anything from food distribution, to security, to transportation needs, to even flooded-area rescue."

Of the missions completed by the North Carolina National Guard, most were east of Interstate 95 and included search and rescue, swift-water rescue support, sandbag operations, commodities distribution, evacuations and support to local law enforcement and first responders.

Days after the storm had passed, North Carolina's State CSM Russell Prince assured citizens that the National Guard was still working on their behalf.

"Remember, no mission is complete until you are returned to the arms of your loved ones back home," he said in a video posted on the North Carolina National Guard Facebook page.

As their neighbors to the north worked hard to mitigate storm damage, South Carolina was responding to its own challenges from Florence. To meet the impending danger, the South Carolina National Guard mobilized 2,200 Soldiers and Airmen in advance of the storm making landfall. "Team South Carolina," as it was named, also included 3,000 Department of

Transportation workers and hundreds of State police and public safety officers. By the time Florence reached the shores of South Carolina, 35 emergency shelters were already open and taking in residents.

During the response, South Carolina Guard Soldiers filled and delivered sandbags to several counties in the northeast region of the State to protect infrastructures in advance of flooding after Hurricane Florence downgraded to a Tropical Storm. One-ton sandbags were applied to prevent flooding in the Pee Dee Region in the northeast. Soldiers from the 218th Brigade Support Battalion worked day and night to fill, load and move more than 1,500 sandbags to Lake Busbee in Conway, South Carolina, to assist with flood prevention along federal Highway 501. In all, over 10,000 linear feet of barrier material and 126,000 sandbags were positioned within the larger Highway 501 corridor, according to an Army report.

The South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (SC-HART) was a critical asset on duty in response to Hurricane Florence. SC-HART is a mixed team made up of rescuers from South Carolina's Urban Search & Rescue Task Force 1 along with pilots and aircrew from South Carolina Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 151st Aviation Unit.

"We have been able to combine State and National Guard capabilities to not only support the citizens of South Carolina, but of the [entire] Nation as well," CW4 Tripp Hutto told fellow South Carolina Army Guard photojournalist SGT Brad Mincey. "This is why we have the HART team, to provide a capability to the State of South Carolina that didn't [previously] exist to our citizens. We blend our aviation expertise and military assets with civilian first responder expertise and assets and we have a well-oiled, all-purpose search and rescue capability."

MG Livingston recognized the contribution of the HART team during the Hurricane Florence response and went on to emphasize the level of integration the South Carolina National Guard has with civilian counterparts.

"If you look at our HART teams," he said, "[There are] military aircraft, military operators and civilian swimmers. They come out to the fire departments in South Carolina. If you look at my sandbagging operations, we've got locals, we've got Guard Soldiers, we've got contractors. That partnership comes from years of rehearsal, years of planning, and unfortunately for us, years of actually going through these disasters."

## Hurricane Michael

Different from Hurricane Florence, Hurricane Michael came fast and furiously into the Florida Panhandle as a Category 4 storm. It did not linger, but moved quickly, ravaging the land over which it passed. Hurricane Michael made landfall between St. Vincent Island and Panama City, Florida, early in the afternoon of Oct. 10, 2018. With winds reaching 155 mph - just 2 mph shy of a Category 5 hurricane, the highest possible hurricane classification - Hurricane Michael was the strongest hurricane to come ashore along the Florida Panhandle going back over 150 years.

Over 3,700 Soldiers and Airmen were mobilized in response to Hurricane Michael - with over 1,000 being mobilized prior to landfall. Service members included 148 personnel from eight States - Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York and Ohio.

All combined, the out-of-State units brought five Chinook choppers, six Black Hawk choppers and 36 tactical vehicles for use in the response effort. Operations included search-and-rescue, boat teams, transportation, logistical support and aviation support.

Florida National Guard's Dual Status Commander BG Rafael Ribas spoke about his directive to Soldiers to keep the essentials properly prioritized as they approached the disaster response.

"Number one with everything we do, of course, is safety," he said. "As [Soldiers] began search and rescue, the next [priority] was to assist our citizens. Subsequent [to that] was establishing points of distribution and the security element. Finally, [our priority] was to remain in constant contact with the local leadership. That is so important because it ensures unity of effort."

That unified effort included support from active duty units working in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Before the hurricane made landfall, 2,216 active-duty personnel - responding with 32 helicopters, 240 high-water vehicles and 32 swift-water boats - were in position, ready to begin mitigation tactics.

"We are surrounding the storm," said Gen Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy, commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command. "This is no small feat given the unprecedented size and strength of [Hurricane] Michael."

The storm soon entered the State of Georgia. Nine hundred Georgia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from 38 separate units participated in the relief effort. While early on, Mitchell and Seminole Counties in the southwest region of the State were some of the hardest hit by the storm, Baker County, Calhoun County, Decatur County, Dougherty County, Miller County, Lee County and Terrell County were also impacted by the hurricane.

"We ran PODs [points of distribution] for the Georgia Emergency Management Agency and FEMA" said LTC John Low, deputy commander for the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. "We ran nine across southwest Georgia. We also took trailers from metro Atlanta with FEMA supplies and ran those down to the PODs. We had a transportation company doing that. And then our engineer battalion did a lot of route clearance."

Units also used High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles as "mobile PODs," delivering supplies to rural areas where farmers were trapped by downed trees and smashed farm vehicles.

In addition to running PODs, Georgia National Guard members conducted route clearance, traffic control and movement operations to and from locations in southwestern Georgia where most of the damage in the State occurred.



"We had more than enough Soldiers answer the call. In the end that was a good news story, that we had more than enough people to do what we needed to do," remarked LTC Low. "We got down into the affected areas really before any other assets could be down there. I think it was a Guard success story -helping the civil authorities help the citizens in their time of need. And then as they got on their feet, we were able to roll back and head back home. So I think it's a good success story for the Guard."

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## **Military Museum**

### **Exhibit at New York State Military Museum tells the story of the 258th Field Artillery**

**Hudson Valley 360, Feb. 8, 2019**

**SARATOGA SPRINGS** - The history of the New York National Guard's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment is the subject of a new temporary exhibit at the New York State Military Museum, 61 Lake Ave., Saratoga Springs.

The exhibit employs photographs, uniform items, and artifacts donated by a member of the unit in World War II to tell the story of the 258th Field Artillery from 1784 to the 21st Century.

The battalion traces its history back to an artillery company organized in New York City in 1784 under the command of Capt. Jacob Sebring. In 1789 the company escorted General George Washington when he arrived in New York City for his inauguration as the nation's first president.

Since then the unit has been known as the "Washington Grey's" and the Washington family coat of arms is incorporated in the unit's regimental crest.

That independent company was combined with other artillery companies to form a regiment of New York State Artillery in 1809.

Since then the Soldiers of the 258th Field Artillery have served in the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War and in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The exhibit also showcases the service of World War II PFC Charles Brown, an Olean resident who served in the 258th Field Artillery during World War II.

Brown recently donated items from his service, including records of the 258th's World War II missions to the museum.

Brown's items in the exhibition include a small statuette given to him by a young girl in Heerlen, Holland, in early November 1944, a captured German canteen, and a knife damaged by German shrapnel in August 1944 near Le Teilluel, France.

Objects from the Museum's collection are also included in the exhibition including a Model 1899 dress coat worn during the unit's designation as the 8th Regiment, an enlisted man's distinctive dress coatee from the 1950s, and several headgear including a pre-Civil War dragoon helmet featuring George Washington's image on the plate.

The museum's collection of over 25,000 artifacts tell the story of New Yorkers at war from the Revolutionary War to today.

<https://www.hudsonvalley360.com/article/exhibit-new-york-state-military-museum-tells-story-258th-field-artillery>

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## **New York Army National Guard**

### **The Army National Guard's First Muster**

**Citizen-Soldier Magazine, February 11, 2019**

The oldest component of the United States Armed Forces, the Army National Guard, has always been the cornerstone of our Nation's defense. "Always Ready, Always There," is more than just a motto - it's the foundation for the role Citizen-Soldiers have played starting with the Nation's early colonial beginnings up to today's Global War on Terror. Whether serving during a natural disaster or civil disorder or fighting enemies at war, the Army National Guard has a long and proud history of being there whenever needed. This is not surprising since the force was created, out of necessity, by citizens to protect citizens.

The Army National Guard, originally known as the militia, began in the 1630s. Originally, British settlements in North America were primarily limited to areas along the Atlantic coast. As colonists expanded west into the interior of the country, they often faced armed conflict with local Native American tribes.

Colonists were generally responsible for their own defense, so they organized into separate militia companies made up of the colony settlers in the region.

Because most of the colonists were English settlers, they were influenced by the British militia system and adopted it in the North American colonies.

The English believed that every free man that was capable had a duty to defend their country. The colonists, adopting this same mindset, would require all males between the ages of 16 and 60 to possess arms and be prepared to participate in the defense of their communities. Many of the early colonial militias would even drill once a week. Some settlements often provided guards with instruction in the evenings to sound the alarm if the militia was needed.

In the area of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, conflict between the settlers and Native Americans steadily increased, particularly with the Pequot tribe. By 1636, the town militias and the colonial government began enhancing military readiness. The colonial militia forces in Massachusetts consisted of only 10 infantry companies that ranged from 60 to 200 men per unit. With the conflict growing, the General Court in Boston, Massachusetts - which functioned as the colony's legislature - ordered the militia companies around Boston to form militia "regiments" on Dec. 13, 1636. While most British colonies had organized militia companies before 1636, Massachusetts was the first to organize companies into regiments. The enhanced organization increased the efficiency and responsiveness of the Massachusetts militia.

The Massachusetts General Court created the North, South and East Regiments, organizing units by geography for easier command and control covering the colony. The "regiment" would later become the basic unit structure for the Continental Army and all other colonial military organizations. Today, the lineage of four Army National Guard units can be traced back to those original regiments, and they are the oldest units in the United States

military. All still assigned to the Massachusetts Army National Guard, they are the 101st Engineer Battalion, the 101st Field Artillery Regiment, the 181st Infantry Regiment and the 182nd Infantry Regiment.

The Act legislated on Dec. 13, 1636, by the Massachusetts General Court, is widely considered the birth of today's Army National Guard, and it is the date we officially celebrate.

After the Act became Massachusetts law, the regiments were formed and the first regularly scheduled militia drill, known as the "First Muster," took place in 1637. Although the exact date is not known, the First Muster of the East Regiment occurred on the village green in Salem, Massachusetts, while the other regiments would also hold musters at later dates throughout the colony. The First Muster event is commemorated by the Massachusetts Army National Guard every year on the first Saturday in April.

At these musters, the colony leaders would teach the latest in military tactics, which the unit members would then practice. The training and preparedness taught the settlements how to successfully war against the Pequot tribes. The regular musters for training also unified the citizens of the settlements under a common purpose, and it enhanced their cohesiveness.

The militia system that began in Massachusetts soon spread to other colonies along the East Coast. Militias in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maryland, Rhode Island and Virginia were used to defend colony land, each adapting local customs and flavor. By the 1700s, the militias were key organizations in the American Colonies and were critical to the defense of the 13

Colonies. They would also make up the core of the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

By the 1800s, militias remained a key component of our national defense, and eventually the term "Army National Guard" came to replace "militia." The new name came as a tribute to Marquis de Lafayette, Gen. George Washington's trusted confidante during the Revolutionary War. In 1825, Lafayette visited the United States and was greeted by many of the local militia units, including the 2nd Battalion of the 11th New York Artillery. Holding great admiration for him, the 11th New York decided to adopt the title of "National Guard" in honor of Lafayette and France's "Garde Nacional de Paris."

The 2nd Battalion would later become the 7th Regiment and was prominent in the line of march when Lafayette made his final visit to New York before returning to France. As he was leaving, Lafayette noticed that the unit was named after his old command. To honor this, he exited his carriage and shook the hand of each officer present as he walked down the line. The unit naming gained attention and as the United States continued to grow, several State militias adopted the name Army National Guard until it finally became official in the 1880s.

<https://citizen-soldiermagazine.com/the-army-national-guards-first-muster/>

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## **PFOA Issue**

### **Newburgh says EPA's water safety action plan just a drop in the bucket**

**Times Herald Record 2/14/19**

CITY OF NEWBURGH — The federal Environmental Protection Agency's intention to set safety limits on two toxic chemicals that contaminated the City of Newburgh's primary water source years ago does not go far enough for city officials in Newburgh.

"The city wants there to be additional action," Newburgh's interim City Manager Joe Donat said Thursday evening. "We knew this (EPA's plan) was coming, we are not surprised, though it's unfortunate."

Newburgh's former primary water source, Washington Lake, has been closed since May 2016 due to levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate, commonly referred to as PFOS, that were twice the advisory standard for drinking water set by the EPA. A month after the lake was closed, Newburgh started using state funds to buy water from the Catskills Aqueduct.

The high level of PFOS in Washington Lake has been tied to the use of firefighting foams at nearby Stewart Air National Guard Base.

The EPA's current standard for advisory limits of PFOS and PFOA is 70 parts per trillion found in drinking water, but many activist organizations believe the threshold should be much lower. The New York State Drinking Water Quality Council recommended in December that the state allow public water supplies to contain no more than 10 parts per trillion of PFOA or PFOS.

"I appreciate the fact that the EPA is finally getting in the game on PFOS and PFOA cleanup criteria, but we need an enforceable drinking water standard to protect our communities right now," said Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney in a statement issued Thursday. "I urge the EPA to act quickly to protect people's health. I'm going to continue watching this process like a hawk."

EPA's action plan announced Thursday by the agency's acting Director Andrew Wheeler outlined intentions to set more strict maximum contamination limits, list PFOS and PFOA as hazardous substances, monitor the PFAS family of chemicals in drinking water, and make recommendations for cleaning up contaminated sites.

Donat said he was unsure if EPA's new plan does anything to help Newburgh right now.

"The City of Newburgh will remain on the course that it's on, working toward a solution, regardless of what the EPA does or doesn't do," Donat said.

<https://www.recordonline.com/news/20190214/newburgh-says-epas-water-safety-action-plan-just-drop-in-bucket>

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## **World War I**

### **Photos capture excitement of welcome back parade in 1919**

**Times Union, February 14, 2019**

The National Guard and the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs look back at the parade welcoming the returning "Harlem Hell Fighters" in New York City, 100 years ago, Feb. 17, 1919.

According to their press release, the African-American soldiers of the New York National Guard's 15th Infantry Regiment didn't get a parade when they left for World War I in 1917.

There were New York City parades for the Guardsmen of the 27th Division and the 42nd Division and the draftee soldiers of the 77th Division.

But on Feb. 17, 1919, when those 2,900 soldiers came home as the “Harlem Hell Fighters” of the 369th Infantry Regiment, New York City residents, both white and black, packed the streets as they paraded up Fifth Avenue.

<https://blog.timesunion.com/history/photos-capture-excitement-of-welcome-back-parade-in-1919/3049/>

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