

107th Airlift Wing

[Closing statements set in former bar manager's murder trial:](#)

Associated Press: Jan. 20, 2015

[Former bar manager guilty of murder in death of patron:](#)

Associated Press; Jan 21, 2015

[Jurors wrap up day 1 of deliberations without verdict in Basil murder trial:](#)

ABC Seven: Jan. 20, 2015

[Testimony ends in murder trial of former Buffalo bar manager:](#)

Associated Press : Jan. 16, 2015

[Jury in Jeffrey Basil Trial Will Consider Murder Charge:](#)

Time Warner Cable News; Jan. 16, 2015

174th Attack Wing

[New York Air National Guard Members Honored For Combat Service:](#)

Madison County Courier: Jan. 17, 2015

[Military notes: Cayuga County-area servicemen promoted, honored for service:](#)

Auburn Citizen; Jan. 17, 2015

Armories

[Local Church Makes Old Things New:](#)

Time Warner Cable News : Jan. 19, 2015

Counter Drug Task Force

[Bitcoin Exchanger Gets Four Year's Jail for Selling Bitcoins for Silk Road Drug Buys:](#)

Lawfuel.com: Jan. 21, 2015

Iraq War

[Times Union:](#)

Duty Calls: New York, Louisiana Guardsmen commemorate fallen soldiers: Jan.18, 2015

Military Museum

[Veterans roundtable Saturday:](#)

Saratogian: Jan.21, 2015

[NY State Military Museum hosting combat veterans roundtable:](#)

QAssociated Press: Jan. 23, 2015

New York Army National Guard

[New York artillerymen brave frigid conditions during exercises :](#)
nationalguard.mil: Jan. 22, 2015

[Military Date Night Special Set for 'Amira & Sam' Screenings \(Exclusive\):](#)
Hollywood Reporter; Jan. 21, 2015

[Area residents promoted by National Guard:](#)
Lockport Union -Sun & Journal: Jan. 21, 2015

107th Airlift Wing

Closing statements set in former bar manager's murder trial

Associated Press: Jan. 20, 2015 :

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — A jury is scheduled to hear closing statements in the murder trial of a former Buffalo bar manager charged with killing a patron last year.

Jeffrey Basil's defense attorney and Erie County prosecutors will make their statements Tuesday in state Supreme Court before the case gets handed over to the jury.

The 36-year-old Basil is charged with second-degree murder and first-degree manslaughter.

Prosecutors say he shoved 28-year-old William Sager down a flight of stairs at Mollys Pub early on the morning of May 11. Sager, a member of the New York Air National Guard, suffered severe head trauma and died at a Buffalo hospital in late July.

Basil admitted to shoving Sager, but said he didn't intend to kill him.

On Friday, the judge refused to dismiss the murder and manslaughter charges.

<http://www.leaderherald.com/page/content.detail/id/777620/Closing-statements-set-in-former-bar-manager-s-murder-trial.html?isap=1&nav=5040>

[Return to top](#)

Jurors wrap up day 1 of deliberations without verdict in Basil murder trial

ABC Seven: Jan. 20, 2015 :

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - The jury heard closing arguments Tuesday before beginning to work to determine the fate of Jeffrey Basil, who is charged in the death of National Guard

Airman Bill Sager. But a guilty verdict in this case doesn't necessarily mean a murder conviction.

Jurors can rule on five different charges in connection to Bill Sager's July death. Some of those charges, and possible verdicts, don't carry that much prison time.

Basil, the former manager of Molly's Pub, shoved Sager down a flight of stairs inside the bar last May. The 28-year-old Airman remained in a coma for two months before he passed away.

During closing arguments on Tuesday, defense attorneys focused on Basil being intoxicated.

Andrew LoTempio argued that the case isn't about whether or not Basil is a likeable guy. The result of his actions resulted in something horrific, LoTempio said, but he says his client acted on impulse – on panic.

The defense attorney noted that during jury selections, the jurors noted they could put aside excessive drinking and character flaws. He says Basil, who LoTempio called an alcoholic, was drunk and just because he was walking or talking doesn't mean he was coherent.

"Never in Basil's wildest dreams" did he imagine Sager's fall would lead to his death, LoTempio said. And because his client never intended Sager to die, which is required to convict him on a murder or manslaughter charge, he should not be found guilty of either.

"Nobody's asking you to walk Basil out the door. He is responsible," said LoTempio. But he added a push proves frustration, loss of control, a lack of judgment – but not intent.

"The prosecution has to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, what the intent of Jeffrey Basil was," said John Elmore, a local injury attorney.

Intent is important for both the murder and manslaughter charges, according to Elmore. Intent to kill would mean murder. Intent to seriously hurt would mean manslaughter. Both, Elmore says, are hard to prove.

"I think it will be very, very difficult to find the intent to kill. By a person's conduct, I think it'll be a little easier to prove they were reckless," Elmore said.

LoTempio says Sager was drunk, having fun but being "bothersome" and that Sager's condition "is playing a role on this." He says Sager was "stumbling and bumbling" and invading personal space. LoTempio says the staircase Basil pushed Sager down was dangerous, but it doesn't constitute a weapon.

The jury can convict on lesser charges, only if they do not find proof of murder or manslaughter. Other charges include reckless manslaughter. That means Basil was aware of the risk of death, but disregarded it when he pushed Sager. That would require a sentence of up to 15 years in prison.

The other option is criminally negligent homicide. That only carries a sentence of up to four years in prison.

Elmore believes the jury will convict on one of the lesser charges, under manslaughter.

LoTempio asked jurors to pay attention to the instructions for each charge. He said they should consider two charges: criminally negligent homicide and tampering with evidence.

But if convicted of murder, Basil could spend 25 years to life in prison. For manslaughter, intent to seriously injure, Basil could spend up to 25 years behind bars.

And prosecutors say that's exactly what Basil should be convicted of because everything points to intent.

Christopher Belling said Basil's intoxication level was minimal. The witnesses called all said Basil was acting fine. He then re-played a jailhouse phone call recording where Basil told his father that he was not drunk.

Belling said Basil launched Sager with 370 pounds of force, and Sager's head hit the floor at 17 mph, cracking it like an egg. He argued that if Basil was too drunk to know what he was doing, he would not have been able to coordinate a push with such force.

The prosecutor said Basil made the choice to push Sager at the opening of the stairs, and he then made the choice to tamper with evidence in an attempt to hide his crime.

Belling said the lesser charges the defense is asking for involves "unintentional conduct" - but Basil knew what he was doing and had full intent.

Prosecutors say video of the shove proves Sager's fall was not an "accident" and that Basil's attempt to tamper with evidence proves that. "You don't need to cover up an accident," he argued.

Belling said this case is all about intentional conduct and the jury should render the verdict of guilty as charged.

After both sides were heard, Justice Penny Wolfgang charged the jury, explaining each of the charges to them, before allowing them to begin deliberations. She noted that intoxication is not a defense for criminal charges, but it can be considered.

Six men and six women began deliberating Basil's fate, while four alternate jurors were kept in a different area.

While deliberating on Tuesday, the jury sent three notes. The first asked for the definition of second degree murder and intent. The second asked to allow jurors to see video of Basil shoving Sager again.

Jurors watched that video from the edge of their seats with their hands covering their mouths, like they were deep in thought. At one point, one juror gestured to another while the video was playing and discussed a point quietly.

A third question went unanswered Tuesday. The court chose to postpone the answer until Wednesday morning, when jurors will continue deliberating at 9:30 a.m.

Justice Wolfgang dismissed three of the alternates Tuesday. One will stay in case of an emergency.

<http://www.wkbw.com/news/closing-arguments-set-to-begin-in-basil-trial>

[Return to top](#)

Testimony ends in murder trial of former Buffalo bar manager

Associated Press : Jan. 16, 2015 :

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Testimony has wrapped up in the trial of a former Buffalo bar manager charged in the death of a patron last summer.

The defense lawyer for 36-year-old Jeffrey Basil and Erie County prosecutors rested their cases Thursday in state Supreme Court. Closing statements are scheduled for Tuesday, with deliberations to begin afterward.

Basil was manager of Mollys Pub when 28-year-old William Sager Jr. was shoved down a flight of stairs inside the bar. Authorities say Basil was the person who pushed Sager, who died from brain trauma nearly three months after being injured.

Basil was charged second-degree murder, manslaughter and tampering with the bar's video surveillance system so it couldn't be used as evidence.

Sager was a crew chief with a New York Air National Guard unit based in Niagara Falls.

http://www.thedailystar.com/news/state/testimony-ends-in-murder-trial-of-former-buffalo-bar-manager/article_c0bc1f69-a171-512b-b540-dbe8db83c01c.html

[Return to top](#)

Jury in Jeffrey Basil Trial Will Consider Murder Charge

Time Warner Cable News; Jan. 16, 2015 :

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- What was going through Jeffrey Basil's mind when he shoved William Sager Jr. one May 2014 night at Molly's Pub? That's what it will come down to when the jury decides his fate next week.

"He knew exactly where he was pushing Bill Sager when he pushed him off that staircase," said Christopher Belling, the prosecuting attorney in the case.

"No one intended, I repeat, intended, to kill anyone, and no one intended to seriously injure anyone," said Joel Daniels, Basil's defense attorney.

Basil is charged with second degree murder, which means he's accused of intending to cause Sager's death, and first degree manslaughter, which accuses him of intending to seriously injure Sager. He is also charged with tampering with physical evidence, in relation to the bar's surveillance video which was found in the trash.

Friday, Basil's defense attorneys asked the judge to dismiss all three charges against him, claiming the prosecution hasn't offered sufficient proof, but Daniels said he does believe there's proof both Sager and Basil were drunk.

That contradicts what Basil himself said in phone calls from jail played for the jury - that he wasn't drunk.

The judge denied the defense's motion to dismiss, but did grant some of their other requests. If the jury does not find Basil guilty of murder, then they can consider the first degree manslaughter charge. If they don't find him guilty of that, they can convict him of second degree manslaughter, also called reckless manslaughter. If they don't do that, they can consider criminally negligent homicide. Finally, they can convict Basil of reckless endangerment in the second degree, which is a misdemeanor.

Closings arguments are scheduled to begin Tuesday.

<http://buffalo.twcnews.com/content/news/800919/jury-in-jeffrey-basil-trial-will-consider-murder-charge/>

[Return to top](#)

Former bar manager guilty of murder in death of patron

Associated Press; Jan 21, 2015:

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) - A state Supreme Court jury has found a former Buffalo bar manager guilty of second-degree murder for pushing a patron down a flight of stairs, causing fatal head injuries.

The Buffalo News reports (<http://bit.ly/15zTjMH>) Jeffrey Basil faces up to 25 years to life in prison when he's sentenced on Feb. 23.

Prosecutors say the 36-year-old Basil shoved 28-year-old William Sager backward down stairs at Molly's Pub early on the morning of May 11. Sager, a member of the New York Air National Guard who was engaged to be married, died at a hospital in late July.

Basil admitted shoving Sager, but said he didn't intend to kill him.

Prosecutor Christopher Belling said the physics of the push indicated intent to kill.

Defense attorney Joel Daniels said he plans to appeal.

<http://www.njherald.com/story/27905988/former-bar-manager-guilty-of-murder-in-death-of-patron>

[Return to top](#)

174th Attack Wing

New York Air National Guard Members Honored For Combat Service

Madison County Courier: Jan. 17, 2015 :

(Syracuse, NY – Jan. 2015) Members of the New York Air National Guard received recognition for their service in a combat zone on Saturday Jan. 10 during the 174th Attack Wing Hometown Heroes Salute ceremony for all units on the Air National Guard Base in Syracuse.

Some 80 members of the wing received a Hometown Heroes Salute at the ceremony.

Madison County Airmen recognized for supporting overseas contingency operations as part of the 174th Attack Wing included:

Master Sgt. Michael Adams from Bridgeport

Technical Sgt. Timothy Cullipher from Bridgeport

Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Morse from Lenox

Sr. Airman Daniel Sullivan from Oneida

Staff Sgt. Charles Vollmer from Chittenango

Technical Sgt. Carl Wolicki from Earlville

The Hometown Heroes program recognizes Airmen who mobilized and supported contingency operations such as Operations Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan for 30 or more consecutive days either serving overseas or here in the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001.

“We recognize the tremendous service and sacrifice of our Airmen and their families supporting the wide variety of missions here in the wing,” said Col. Greg Semmel, 174th Attack Wing Commander. “Our Hometown Heroes salute is a great opportunity to thank them for that service.”

Airmen receive a framed letter from the Chief of the National Guard Bureau containing a Hometown Heroes salute challenge coin. Children of the deployed Airmen will also receive unique Hometown Heroes Salute dog tags.

The Air National Guard initiated the program in August 2008 to celebrate and honor our Airmen, families, communities and those special supporters who have significantly contributed to supporting our Airmen and the Air National Guard mission.

The 174th Attack Wing was established in 1947 as the first Air National Guard flying unit in New York State. It currently flies the state-of-the-art MQ-9 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The wing conducts 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.

<http://madisoncountycourier.com/?p=60000>

[Return to top](#)

Military notes: Cayuga County-area servicemen promoted, honored for service

Auburn Citizen; Jan. 17, 2015 :

Members of the New York Air National Guard were recognized for their service in a combat zone Saturday, Jan. 10, at the 174th Attack Wing Hometown Heroes Salute ceremony for all units on the Air National Guard Base in Syracuse.

Recognized Airmen for supporting overseas contingency operations as part of the 174th Attack Wing included:

- Tech. Sgt. Shawn Badman, from Owasco
- Master Sgt. Leanne Holmes, from Cato

- Tech. Sgt. Gerald Redmond, from Auburn
- Staff Sgt. Caleb Schreiber, from Weedsport
- Master Sgt. Scott Schreiber, from Weedsport

The program recognizes Airmen who mobilized and supported contingency operations, like Operations Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, for 30 or more consecutive days, either serving overseas or in the United States since Sept. 11, 2001.

"We recognize the tremendous service and sacrifice of our Airmen and their families supporting the wide variety of missions here in the wing," said Col. Greg Semmel, 174th Attack Wing Commander, in a news release. "Our Hometown Heroes salute is a great opportunity to thank them for that service."

LATHAM | Maj. Gen. Patrick A. Murphy, adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership:

- Lamor Henry, from Auburn, serving with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 102nd Military Police Battalion, is promoted to the rank of sergeant.
- Benjamin Kitt, from Auburn, serving with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 102nd Military Police Battalion, is promoted to the rank of specialist.
- Joshua Stmartin, from Port Byron, serving with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 102nd Military Police Battalion, is promoted to the rank of staff sergeant.

http://auburnpub.com/lifestyles/military-notes-cayuga-county-area-servicemen-promoted-honored-for-service/article_6648e5cc-ea72-59da-9630-cd0773f19eb9.html

[Return to top](#)

Armories

Local Church Makes Old Things New

Time Warner Cable News : Jan. 19, 2015 :

ROME, N.Y. -- What was once a place for soldiers and military tanks will soon be a building filled with worship and prayer.

The New York Army National Guard Armory was built in Rome in 1957, fully equipped with garage ports, a shooting range, and even a fallout shelter.

But it's other characteristics that had Life Church keeping their eye on it for years.

"This would be a great facility. The location is central, right in the center of the city, it has quite a bit of acreage and again, we want to do whatever we can do to be an outreach to the community," said Daniel Sanbor, pastor of Life Church in Rome.

The armory closed in 2011 and sat vacant until it went up for auction at the end of 2013. A few developers were interested in the property at the time and came to the auction ready to bid.

Sanborn said, "Because of circumstances, some affiliates that we have, my father who's kind of influential in the city, when they saw them there they just decided, 'You know what, we're not going to bid against you.'"

They got the property for \$99,000 and through the generosity of their congregation, they were able to purchase it completely debt free.

Renovations kicked off during the summer. A few walls were taken down, most of the building was cleaned and received a fresh coat of paint.

"We've actually had the prisoner work crew come in for about three weeks they basically painted the facility," said Sanborn.

Church officials said they're renovating one room at a time, focusing on the new sanctuary first. Once that's complete, they'll move onto the classrooms and offices, providing them space not only for Sunday worship but for community outreach as well.

Sanborn said, "It's great that God has moved us into a bigger space and a bigger building but I feel, and we feel, that the ministry God has for our church goes beyond the building."

Church leaders say they hope to have their congregation moved into the facility in the next couple months, but say there's still a lot of work that needs to be done.

<http://centralny.twcnews.com/content/news/801627/local-church-makes-old-things-new/?ap=1&MP4/>

[Return to top](#)

Counter Drug Task Force

Bitcoin Exchanger Gets Four Year's Jail for Selling Bitcoins for Silk Road Drug Buys

Lawfuel.com: Jan. 21, 2015 :

Preet Bharara, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that ROBERT M. FAIELLA, a/k/a “BTCKing,” an underground Bitcoin exchanger, was sentenced today to four years in prison for his role in knowingly transmitting nearly \$1 million in Bitcoins intended to facilitate drug trafficking on “Silk Road,” a black-market website designed to enable users to buy and sell illegal drugs anonymously and beyond the reach of law enforcement. FAIELLA pled guilty in September 2014 before U.S. District Judge Jed S. Rakoff, who also imposed today’s sentence.

According to the allegations contained in the Complaint, the Indictment, the Superseding Information, and statements made in other documents filed in Manhattan federal court and related court proceedings:

From about December 2011 to October 2013, Faiella ran an underground Bitcoin exchange on the Silk Road website, a website that served as a sprawling and anonymous black market bazaar where illegal drugs of virtually every variety were bought and sold regularly by the site’s users. Operating under the username “BTCKing,” Faiella sold Bitcoins – the only form of payment accepted on Silk Road – to users seeking to buy illegal drugs on the site. Upon receiving orders for Bitcoins from Silk Road users, he filled the orders through BitInstant, a company based in New York, New York. BitInstant was designed to enable customers to exchange cash for Bitcoins anonymously, that is, without providing any personal identifying information, and charged a fee for its service. Faiella obtained Bitcoins with BitInstant’s assistance, and then sold the Bitcoins to Silk Road users at a markup.

With the knowledge and active assistance of Charles Shrem, the Chief Executive Officer of BitInstant, Faiella exchanged nearly \$1 million in cash for Bitcoins for the benefit of Silk Road users, so that the users could, in turn, make illegal purchases on Silk Road.

In addition to the prison sentence, Faiella, 55, of Fort Myers Beach, Florida, was sentenced to three years of supervised release and was ordered to forfeit \$950,000, representing the amount of funds involved in the offense that were intended to promote illegal activity.

FAIELLA’s co-defendant, Shrem, was sentenced to two years in prison by Judge Rakoff on December 19, 2014.

Mr. Bharara praised the outstanding investigative work of the DEA’s New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force, which comprises agents and officers of the U. S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York City Police Department, Immigration and Customs Enforcement – Homeland Security Investigations, the New York State Police, the U. S. Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Marshals Service, New York National Guard, Office of Foreign Assets Control, and the New York Department of Taxation and Finance. Mr. Bharara also thanked the FBI’s New York Field Office.

The prosecution of this case is being handled by the Office's Complex Frauds and Cybercrime Unit. Assistant United States Attorney Serrin Turner is in charge of the prosecution, and Assistant United States Attorney Andrew Adams of the Money Laundering and Asset Forfeiture Unit is in charge of the forfeiture aspects of the case.

<http://www.lawfuel.com/bitcoin-exchanger-gets-four-years-jail-selling-bitcoins-silk-road-drug-buys>

[Return to top](#)

Iraq War

Times Union

Duty Calls: New York, Louisiana Guardsmen commemorate fallen soldiers: Jan.18, 2015:

A contingent of current and former New York Army National Guard soldiers completed a somber war mission.

Lt. Col. Sean Flynn of Albany led the current and former members of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry soldiers on the mission to Houma, La.

They helped commemorate eight Louisiana Army National Guard soldiers who were killed in action in the Iraq war 10 years ago.

They laid a wreath outside the Louisiana National Guard unit's armory in Houma on Jan. 10. Flynn's soldiers also participated in a memorial held inside the armory.

The Louisiana Army National Guard soldiers were killed in combat while serving with the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry in Iraq in 2004-2005

In the armory and posted under the words "Never Forget," the photos of the eight Louisiana soldiers hang – Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Comeaux, Staff Sgt. Christopher Babin, Sgt. Bradley Bergeron, Sgt. Huey Fassbender, Sgt. Armand Frickey, Sgt. Warren Murphy, Sgt. Paul Heltzel and Sgt. 1st Class Peter Hahn.

Under each photo rests a pair of combat boots, helmet, dogtags and weapon.

"The ceremony was filled with emotion, some of it heartbreaking and some of it joyous," said Spc. Megan Zander, a Louisiana Army National Guard spokeswoman.

Flynn led retired Col. Geoff Slack, who commanded the 69th Infantry in 2004-05, Lt. Col. Chris Daniels, the operations officer for the Troy-based 42nd Infantry Division and the 69th Infantry Headquarters company commander in Iraq, Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Seifert, the

senior enlisted advisor for the Camp Smith Training Site and former platoon sergeant in Iraq, Sgt. Maj. Frank Tooker, the battalion's operations sergeant major and a company first sergeant in Iraq and Michael Drew, former commander and then captain of Company A in 2004-05, also participated in the Louisiana memorial.

Flynn commanded a rifle company during the battalion's Iraq deployment and took command of the battalion in 2014. He also served in the Afghanistan war.

Six of the soldiers, all members of the Houma-based Company C. 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry, were killed on Jan. 6, 2005 when their Bradley Armored Fighting vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device while on patrol in Baghdad.

The other two Louisiana soldiers were killed later in 2005 while serving with the 69th Infantry on "Route Irish," the road from Baghdad International Airport to Baghdad's "Green Zone," which the New York Army National Guard battalion was responsible for securing.

Flynn's 69th Infantry served in Iraq as part of Louisiana's 256th Brigade Combat Team. Company C, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry, had been assigned to the New York battalion to provide a Bradley equipped company. The unit was dubbed "Task Force Wolfhound" after the official mascot of the 69th Infantry.

The Houma wreath-laying is part of a yearlong series of memorials that the 69th Infantry has scheduled to commemorate the deaths of 19 soldiers during the unit's deployment to Iraq in 2004-2005. Another 78 soldiers were wounded.

While the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry is headquartered at the Lexington Avenue Armory in New York City, Army National Guard soldiers from the Capital Region, Long Island, Buffalo and the Hudson Valley served with the unit in Iraq.

Other memorials were held on Nov. 29, 2014 for Staff Sgt. Christian Engeldrum and Pfc. Wilfredo Urbina of Company A, Dec. 1 for Sgt. David Fisher of Watervliet and a member of Company D, and Dec. 3 for Staff Sgt. Henry Irizarry of Headquarters Company.

<http://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Duty-Calls-New-York-Louisiana-Guardsmen-6024321.php>

[Return to top](#)

Military Museum

Veterans roundtable Saturday

Saratogian: Jan.21, 2015:

SARATOGA SPRINGS -- The New York State Military Museum will host a Veterans Roundtable program at 1 p.m. Saturday featuring five Saratoga County combat veterans from World War II to the Global War on Terror. Participating veterans are:

- Manny Perez of Wilton, who fought during the Battle of The Bulge, was captured and spent several months in a German POW camp.
- Bob Garland of Ballston Spa, who served in Korea and Vietnam and made more than three dozen jumps as a member of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team.
- Dave Wallingford of Malta, a former Marine Corps captain who was seriously wounded in Vietnam during a fire fight in March 1969. He was inducted last year to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.
- Bob Nevins of Saratoga Springs, who flew more than 500 helicopter missions over South Vietnam from July 4, 1970 to July 4, 1971. He founded and is director of the Saratoga WarHorse program.
- New York Army National Guard Major Shawn Tabankin of Rexford, served tours in Iraq in 2004, and Afghanistan in 2012.

Journalist Paul Post of The Saratogian will moderate the panel discussion. The public is invited to this free event.

<http://www.saratogian.com/general-news/20150121/veterans-roundtable-saturday>

[Return to top](#)

NY State Military Museum hosting combat veterans roundtable

Associated Press: Jan. 23, 2015:

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. (AP) — The New York State Military Museum is hosting a roundtable discussion featuring combat veterans whose experiences span five U.S. wars from World War II to the war on terrorism.

The event begins at 1 p.m. Saturday at the museum located in downtown Saratoga Springs. Paul Post, a reporter for The Saratogian newspaper, will moderate the panel discussion as five vets relate their personal experiences.

The participants include 90-year-old Manny Perez of Wilton, who served in the Army during WWII and was taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bugle.

The other panel members are Korea and Vietnam veteran Bob Garland of Ballston Spa, Vietnam vets Dave Wallingford of Malta and Bob Nevins of Saratoga Springs, and Iraq and Afghanistan veteran Maj. Shawn Tabankin of Rexford, a member of the New York Army National Guard.

<http://www.sfchronicle.com/news/article/NY-State-Military-Museum-hosting-combat-veterans-6034941.php>

[Return to top](#)

New York Army National Guard

New York artillerymen brave frigid conditions during exercises

nationalguard.mil: Jan. 22, 2015:

January 22, 2015 —

FORT DIX, N.J. - Scathing winds that cut across open, frozen fields turned temperatures in the mid-teens into something that felt closer to zero degrees as 303 Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion 258th Field Artillery conducted dry-fire exercises recently.

The exercise in the field was the culmination of months of training and preparation for the annual certification of the battalion's 16 M119 howitzer crews over the frigid Jan. 9-11 training weekend.

Seventy fire-support Soldiers from the 27th Infantry Brigades maneuver battalions and other units also participated in the training weekend. Training on the Light Counter Mortar Radar and Q-36 counter battery radar system, used to direct fire against enemy mortar and artillery weapons, also took place.

The cold weather meant the Soldiers had to adapt but they kept training anyway, said Maj, Brendan Gendron the 1-258th's operations officer.

"Battle rhythms (were) adjusted based on Soldier exposure," Gendron said. "Our ultimate concern is the health and safety of every Soldier from the field grades to the gun lines."

These adjustments and provisions included everything from using alternate oils and lubricants, additional considerations for gun powder and tube temperatures, to wearing cold weather gear, available hot coffee and hot chocolate and a warming tent.

Gendron also ensured that each artillery battery followed the 15-30 standard; 15 minutes on the field followed by 30 minutes in the warming tent.

Over the course of the very cold weekend, the need to rotate Soldiers in and out of warming tents meant there wasn't enough time to conduct live fire operations, said Lt. Col. Dave Feeley, the battalion commander. The battalion will conduct that training in May, Feeley said.

The training at Fort Dix, though, set the battalion up for success later, Feeley said.

"Everything becomes a challenge in this weather, you just have to embrace it," said Sgt. Sean Durst, a Gunner with Battery A.

In his six years with the 1-258th he's learned that preparing and rehearsing every step of the certification process in the preceding months is essential for success, and even slight deviations can turn into major disruptions, Durst explained.

Sgt. Danny Pena, a gunner who has spent five years with Bravo Battery, 1-258th FA, added that not only knowing your role, but knowing the role of everyone on your team is crucial.

They watch each other in their battery as well as the other batteries on the line, and are ready to help when it's needed, he said.

"We ensure everything from the smallest tool to the biggest piece of equipment is ready. We do spot checks and eye-on checks, from gun to gun and down the line," Pena said.

Team building and the ability to anticipate each other's actions and movements is essential to a functional artillery unit, Pena added.

To gain this unique ability, they spend as much time together as possible. Every drill and annual training they're together from sunup to sundown, he emphasized.

"Sections are always together," Pena said. "We're like a small family, and that's how we like it."

While the battalion was able to certify the gun crews on the dry-fire requirement, the severe, cold weather stopped them just short for live firing certification.

However, the extreme weather provided a valuable opportunity for cold weather training that might not have otherwise been available to them, Gendron said. The battalion was able to have its gun lines and Q36 Radar support fully set up, operational and mission ready in adverse conditions, he said.

<http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/ArticleView/tabid/5563/Article/12990/new-york-artillerymen-brave-frigid-conditions-during-exercises.aspx>

[Return to top](#)

Military Date Night Special Set for 'Amira & Sam' Screenings (Exclusive)

Hollywood Reporter; Jan. 21, 2015:

For the opening weekend of Drafthouse Films' Amira & Sam, all active-duty military service members and veterans can bring a date to the movie for free.

After presenting a valid military ID at the box office, service members will receive free admittance with the purchase of another ticket for Amira & Sam. This "Military Date Night" will be held at 15 select theaters across the country, beginning on January 30.

Amira & Sam, starring Martin Starr (Sam) and Dina Shihabi (Amira), tells the unlikely love story of an American war veteran and an Iraqi refugee.

The two meet in New York City when Sam reunites with his unit's former Iraqi translator, who is Amira's uncle. When Amira runs into immigration trouble, Sam offers to keep her at his apartment. The couple's relationship strengthens, but financial and cultural obstacles threaten their ability to stay together.

The film is the feature debut of writer-director Sean Mullin, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a captain in the New York Army National Guard, where he was a first responder during the attacks on Sept. 11.

Unlike current box office hit American Sniper, Mullin doesn't focus on the narrative of a soldier coming home from war battling PTSD. Instead, he creates a story showing the complex reality facing veterans and immigrants in the United States today.

"America was built on the backs of immigrants and protected by the courage of veterans, yet both of these groups have grown increasingly marginalized in today's society. I decided that the best way for me to explore such complex issues in the context of an independent film was to create an intimate love story with universal implications," said Mullin.

Below is a list of all of the theaters participating in the "Military Date Night" special. The offer is valid through each theater's opening weekend. There will also be in-theater Q&A's with talent from the film in L.A. and New York.

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/military-date-night-special-set-765314>

[Return to top](#)

Area residents promoted by National Guard

Lockport Union -Sun & Journal: Jan. 21, 2015 :

National Guard promotions

Several local members of the New York Army National Guard have received promotions in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Promoted were:

- Joshua Ross of Ransomville, serving with the 105th Military Police Company, promoted to the rank of sergeant.
- Nataisia Johnson of Lockport, serving with Company A, 642nd Support Battalion, promoted to the rank of sergeant.
- Luke Aitchison of Gasport, serving with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, promoted to the rank of specialist.
- James Hilson of Middleport, serving with the Headquarters and Service Company, 642nd Support Battalion, promoted to the rank of specialist.
- Brandon Britt of Lockport, serving with the Intelligence and Sustainment Company, 42nd Infantry Division, promoted to the rank of captain.

Phillips graduates

Army Pvt. Ryan E. Phillips has graduated from Basic Combat Training at Fort Benning, Ga.

During the nine-week training period, Phillips received instruction in drill and ceremony, weapons, rifle marksmanship and bayonet training, chemical warfare, field training and tactical exercises, armed and unarmed combat, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, and Army history, traditions and core values.

Phillips is the son of Cheryl and Dana Phillips of Newfane and is a 2014 graduate of Newfane.

National Guard re-enlistments

Two local residents have reenlisted as members of the New York Army National Guard.

- Sgt. Robert Gotts, Middleport, has re-enlisted to continue service with the 105th Military Police Company.
- Sgt. Thomas Pietkiewicz, Lockport, has re-enlisted to continue service with the Company D (Forward Support Company Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Target Acquisition), 427th Brigade Support Battalion.

Otis N. Arterberry

Army Pvt. Otis N. Arterberry has graduated from Basic Combat Training at Fort Benning, Ga.

During the nine-week training period, Arterberry received instruction in drill and ceremony, weapons, rifle marksmanship and bayonet training, chemical warfare, field training and tactical exercises, armed and unarmed combat, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, and Army history, traditions, and core values.

Arterberry is the son of Monyette Y. Helm of Wilson and Otis B. Arterberry of North Tondawanda. He is a 2011 graduate of Lockport High School.

http://www.lockportjournal.com/community/area-residents-promoted-by-national-guard/article_fadd02a3-1648-560f-99f8-c7cc32810dde.html

[Return to top](#)
