

Commander's Call

Welcome home 109th Airlift Wing warriors

By Col. Karen Love
109th Mission Support Group commander

This Skibird issue gives me the awesome opportunity to welcome, recognize and thank our Air and Space Expeditionary Force 3/4 (AEF) deployers and their families.

Since August 2006, the 109th Airlift Wing has deployed more than 80 109th Mission Support Group Airmen to several desert locations supporting the Global War on Terrorism for about four to nine months, while still setting records in Antarctica with Operation Deep Freeze.

109th AW Airmen deployed from every MSG unit to include the aerial port flight, communications flight, civil engineer squadron, contracting, logistics readiness squadron, mission support flight, services flight and security forces squadron to AEF 3/4.

The service these Airmen and their families provided to our nation, state and unit cannot be adequately expressed simply in this column. We are truly grateful for their sacrifices. (Note that the 109th AW currently has more than 20 members deployed for AEF 5/6. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.)

The AEF concept is not unknown to the Air National Guard. The 109th AW has been active in sending Airmen to the desert since before Sept. 11, 2001. Since 9/11, the 109th AW has had Airmen continuously



Col. Richard Edwards/File photo

deployed to the Middle East to support the Global War on Terrorism. We are proud of the contributions we continue to make to the Air Force's support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. We are grateful to all our Airmen, their families, their employers and our communities for the support.

Most of our community members are aware of the 109th AW role in Antarctica and Greenland. They know proudly of our "Pole to Pole" mission but not what we do for our state and nation. Few realize that 109th AW Airmen not only deployed to New York City after 9/11 but flew missions to aid in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attack. Our Airmen are keenly aware that our nation has been attacked and deeply want to support our nation's efforts at supporting the war effort.

To showcase what we are doing in the Middle East, I asked Lt. Col. Rich Edwards, the 109th CES commander to share his thoughts in this column.

More than 40 of our civil engineers deployed to Iraq for more than 120 days. They left Sept. 11, 2006, and returned Jan. 24, 2007, to a heroes welcome. We need to know their story. They made a difference over there.

Colonel Edwards: "Having returned from an incredible deployment to Iraq, I am honored to pass on some of my thoughts and experiences. While I was deployed I had an opportunity to watch a movie called 'Mr. Smith Goes to Washington' starring Jimmy Stewart (a great movie that I recommend to everyone). Stewart plays an average guy that goes to Washington as a senator to make a difference.

"When he arrives he learns how cruel and nasty politics can be. Inspired by the concept of liberty, and doing the right thing, Mr. Smith fights the mighty Goliath as only a truly inspired man can do. The outcome is for you to discover by watching the movie.

"As a squadron commander, my job is to lead and inspire my people. While that



Col. Karen Love/File photo

sounds like a great job (and it is) it can be a daunting task and a huge responsibility. Inspiration is different to all of us. What inspires one person or group of people may not inspire others.

"We hear so much about the negative things happening in Iraq, but we saw it very differently while we were there. As I watched the people of Iraq risk their lives to vote and build their nation, I wondered why so many Americans can't get inspired to support these people. Becoming a police officer, military member or even a firefighter puts you and your family's lives at risk of death; you can see why those positions would be hard to fill. But they are not. Thousands of young Iraqis were joining the military and the police force. Their inspiration is to live free. We met these people and saw their inspiration in their eyes and their actions.

"I have also seen the inspiration in the eyes of our military. The base I served at in Iraq had nearly 10,000 U.S. and coalition forces. My position as the Base Civil Engineer allowed me the privilege of meeting many people from the U.S., Australian, Romanian and Iraqi armies.

Everyone I met was there to do his or her job and supported this cause. I never heard of anyone who was not committed or was not there to finish the job. We all worked extremely hard, endured numerous attacks and lost some of our brothers to a cowardly enemy. But we know the consequences of

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109th Airlift Wing



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On the cover:

The illustration depicts the many 109th Airlift Wing women working various jobs around the base. Photo illustration by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

not getting this done. If the bully wins they keep coming back. This is no longer a war. It is a gang fight, and the gangs must be eliminated so the good people can go on with their lives.

“While you are deployed, the support that you get from home is an amazing thing. Long days and incredibly hard times seem to melt away when you know that friends and family are thinking about you. E-mails from someone you care about build your spirit and drives you on. Cards and letters from school kids telling you that you are a hero makes you realize that this ‘war on terror’ must be won. The kids are the ones at stake. Not only our kids, but the kids of the world.

“Thank you everyone who thought about us and continue to support those who are still deployed. You will never know how much that means to everyone who is away. We really appreciate your support, and we know how hard it is on all of you when we are away. Those of you who deployed and have not thanked your family and friends need to go hug them the next chance you get.

“People who are inspired are a force. Without inspiration, we fall into complacency. That is the worse place to be because we are vulnerable to anything. I don’t know what inspires you. I do know an inspired person when I see one. I have seen it in many faces across the world.

“I have seen it in the Iraqi police cadet leaving for the academy. I have seen it in the average Iraqi citizen that stood up to an



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Family and friends wait to welcome home 109th Airlift Wing Airmen returning from a deployment.

evil dictator. I have seen it in the men and women of the U.S. military. I have seen it in the men and women of the 109th AW who perform an amazing mission in Antarctica. And I have seen it in our enemies. Make no mistake; they are inspired in their quest. Inspired by evil, but still inspired.

“What inspires you? Maybe you know someone who has overcome the odds. Maybe you are one of those people and you are the inspiration for others. Maybe your inspiration is doing your duty and serving our great county.

“Or maybe it is providing a better world for our kids. If you aren’t sure what your inspiration is, look around, and find it. Only you can do that. What inspires you in your life? When you find it, share it. Be the one who people look to and live your life in a way that will inspire others. Inspired people will defeat this evil and give hope to people who need it. This world, our country and the 109th AW need people who are inspired.”



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Master Sgt. Dale Trumbull is welcomed home by family after a deployment with the 109th Civil Engineer Squadron to Southwest Asia.



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Master Sgt. Timothy Eldred hugs his daughter, Melissa, while wife, Cheryl, looks on. Sergeant Eldred returned home from a deployment with the 109th Civil Engineer Squadron to Southwest Asia.

Families, friends welcome troops home

By Jill Bryce
Gazette Reporter

Family and friends gathered in a small corner of the Albany International Airport on Feb. 5 to offer a warm homecoming to members of the Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing.

The 13 members of the Security Forces Squadron, based in Glenville, returned home after being deployed for two months of active duty in Kuwait supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

The return and departure of troops has become a nearly constant sight at Albany International Airport these days as the war in Iraq continues.

Several years ago there were yellow ribbons on trees; today the planned group homecomings are popular nationwide. Military personnel and families say it helps show the troops they are supported.

"The homecomings validate what they are doing. They join the military to serve their country. The homecoming is the process that tells them we appreciated their service," said Col. Karen Love, the mission support group commander who was at the airport Monday with families as they waited for their loved ones to return.

The families met in the Observation Deck and chatted among themselves as they listened for updates about when the troops would arrive.

A chaplain was on hand, and cookies and other refreshments were available. The troops were expected back at 2:45 p.m., but ran late and didn't arrive at the airport until about 3:30 p.m.

Lt. Col. Sharon Stepp agreed the gatherings for the troops, with their homemade welcome home signs and American flags, might not seem like a big deal to civilians, but said they make a huge difference to the troops, who greatly appreciate the efforts.

"The airport has been terrific," said Stepp.

Susan Roth of Amsterdam was at the airport Monday waiting for her youngest son, Senior Airman Dan Roth, to return. She said she felt it was very important to



Gazette Photo by March Schultz

Senior Airman Daniel Roth of the 109th Airlift Wing Security Forces, greets his mom Susan Roth at the exit gate in the Albany International Airport at 3:30 pm on Feb. 5. Roth was stationed in Kuwait for the last two months. Both are residents of Amsterdam.

'It gives you a feeling that what we are doing is the right thing.'
*-Senior Airman Dan Roth
109th Security Forces
Squadron*

welcome him in person. The two hugged each other when he came through the gate.

It's been a long couple of months. The Christmas tree is still up at the Roth home in Amsterdam. It's been up since mid-December, she said, as she awaited the safe return of her two sons, who were both deployed for the holiday. Her older son, Jim Roth, also in the 109th Airlift Wing, arrived home in mid-January.

When her sons were gone, her biggest worry was their safety. "He's my baby," she said of Dan. "They weren't supposed to be in harm's way."

Now that her boys are home, she can breathe a sigh of relief and celebrate Christmas.

"The biggest thing was we did our job. We are liberating the country. We are there to complete our mission. It gives you a feeling that what we are doing is the right thing," said Dan Roth, who admitted he was very happy when he saw his family at the airport.

Whether a servicemember has been deployed for 60 days, 90 days, six months or two years, ultimately it's touching for them when they see familiar faces to greet them, said Stepp.

Love said that the point of gathering together is to make the homecoming special for members of the 109th Airlift Wing and their families.

"It feels great to be back, I've missed the kids and my wife," said Stephen Coonradt of Delmar.

He arrived from Kuwait in the morning, but returned to the airport later in the day so he could gather with the other airmen from his unit for their homecoming.

Women's History Month

'Generations of women moving history forward'

By Maj. Paul Cannon
Military Equal Opportunity chief

March was designated as Women's History Month to ensure that information about the myriad ways that generations have moved history forward would be part of our children's education.

The year's theme celebrates the wisdom and tenacity of prior and future generations of women and recognizes the power of generations working together.

The purpose of women's history is not to idealize women. On the contrary, the stories of women's achievements present an expanded view of the complexity and contradiction of living a full and purposeful life.

Learning about the extraordinary achievements of women helps recognize women's vast accomplishments and diminish the tendency to dismiss and trivialize who women are and what they accomplish. In celebrating women's historic achievements, the theme presents an authentic view of history. The knowledge of women's history provides a more expansive vision



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Then-2nd Lt. Kelly Davey fills out paperwork. She is a navigator with the 139th Airlift Squadron.

of what a woman can do. This perspective can encourage girls and women to think larger and bolder and can give boys and men a fuller understanding of the female experience.

How are our children -- girls and boys alike -- going to understand the importance of women to American culture and history if their education includes little or nothing about the significance of women's contributions?

The year 2007 presents special opportunities to highlight some critically important events in women's history, including the 50th anniversary of the

integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., and the 30th anniversary of the National Women's Conference in Houston.

In 1957, the integration of Central High School helped ignite the Civil Rights Movement, and in 1977, the Houston Conference marked a high point in the influence of the Women's Rights Movement on the formation of government policy.

Military history also enjoys significant accomplishments. In 1968, the first Air Force woman is sworn into the Air National Guard with the passage of Public Law 90-130, which allowed the ANG to enlist women. In 1971 the first Air Force woman was promoted to brigadier general, and another Air Force woman completed Aircraft Maintenance Officer's School and became the first woman aircraft maintenance officer.

Also in 1971 the first woman was assigned as a flight surgeon in the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve. And a staff sergeant became the first female technician in the Air Force Reserve.

In 1980 the first women graduated from



Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Ford

Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Ray cares for an "injured civilian" during a Top Off Exercise. She is assigned to the 139th Airlift Evacuation Squadron.

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the service academies, and in 1982 the Air Force selected the first woman aviator for Test Pilot School. In 1986 for the first time in history, the Air Force Academy's top graduate was a woman. Some 40,000 American military women were deployed during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Two Army women were taken prisoner by the Iraqis. The Air Force Reserve selects its first woman senior enlisted adviser, and Congress repeals laws banning women from flying in combat.

In 1994 the Air Force Reserve had its first woman fighter pilot, and in 1999 an Air Force lieutenant colonel became the first woman to command the space shuttle. In 2001 an Air National Guard security force woman became the first woman to complete the countersniper course, the only military sniper program open to women. In 2003, the Israel Defense force unveiled its first "all woman" combat squadron.

If we don't promote woman's history, who will? Here are a few suggestions for promoting and celebrating National Woman's History Month in the community:

Ask your local schools and school boards what they are doing for National Woman's History Month. Suggest that they encourage



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike T. Smith

Tech. Sgt. Eleanor Barcomb of the 109th Aerial Port Flight is welcomed home by former wing commander Col. Max DellaPia.

students to write an essay or draw a picture about the theme, "Generations of Woman Moving History Forward". Encourage projects designed to help students at every grade level discover, recognize, and celebrate the ways that generations work together.

Recognition of these historic anniversaries presents special opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate the courage, determination, and steadfastness of the women who spearheaded these events and in so doing moved history forward both in the military and in society as a whole.

Black History Month

Black history: Military tradition continues

By Master Sgt. Kevin McWashington
301st Aerospace Medicine Squadron

FORT WORTH, Texas (AFNEWS) -- Teacher, historian and author Carter G. Woodson proposed a time to celebrate nationwide Negro History Week in 1915.

His proposal later became Black History Month, celebrated every February.

One purpose of Black History Month is to recognize past events that affect us today. Some events receive great attention. Others are more subtle, receiving little fanfare, yet they are just as important in shaping and molding America.

War Department General Order No. 143 is one of those less-remembered but important events. Issued May 22, 1863, the order established the Bureau of Colored Troops.

In his article, *First to Fight*, author John Raymond Gourdin wrote, "Prior to the establishment of the Bureau, colored regiments were organized and supported by state governments in free states and in areas in Confederate states occupied and controlled by Federal troops. However, after the establishment of the Bureau, those regiments that were previously raised by state

governments and carried state designations were redesignated as regiments of United States Colored Troops and assigned a USCT number."

Although no longer considered colored, many Americans of African descent continue to agree with the fundamentals and principles established by General Order 143. Accepting the opportunity to serve, defending the borders and upholding the integrity of law permeate through those who continue the tradition of military service today. (*Courtesy of Air Force Reserve Command News Service*)

From the Command Chief

109th AW invests in enlisted supervisors with its own course

By Chief Master Sgt. Charlie Lucia
Command Chief Master Sergeant

Our Wing will be conducting its first “109th AW Enlisted Supervisors Course” located on our base from May 15 to 17. This is a direct result of an initiative by your Chief’s Council.

This is not a professional military education course, but a course developed by 109th AW members, specifically for our enlisted wing members. This course has the potential to help our members who are already in supervisory position, and also prepare our future enlisted supervisors.

The Enlisted Supervisors Course is another example of the desire senior enlisted leaders have to develop informed and technically competent managers.

The course has been approved and is supported by the Wing Commander, Col.

Tony German. How exciting it is to know that each of the selected individuals will be instructed in the core concepts of leadership providing them with a better understanding of the dynamics of leadership and enhance their confidence to positively affect their work areas as well as improve their personal management skills.

Group commanders and squadron supervisors are currently working on the nomination and selection process for their areas. Seating will be limited for this course presentation, current estimate is about 45. I would encourage you to remain interested if not selected, as the Chief’s Council will conduct additional classes at future dates yet to be determined.

I look forward to participating in this course and interacting with those in attendance.



File photo

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (1st Lt.) Sung Hee Lee
Chaplain

When I was told to write this article, I was shocked. By any standard, I am not qualified to write this article. After all, I have been in the Air National Guard for only a couple months, and there are too many things that I do not know about being a guardsman (at least, not yet).

I still have no idea what most of those abbreviated words mean, except for two: BDU and UTA. BDU means the camouflage uniform and UTA is drill days, right? Now I am sure that the readers can easily grasp how much of a struggle I went through before typing the first word of this article. After much thought, I came to remember that there is a very descriptive image of Christians as servicemembers in the Bible. The Apostle

Paul, in his letter to the believers in Ephesus, commands:

“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:13-18)

This is fascinating. Not many people

know that the Scripture has such an accurate description of military uniform of that time. But here it is. The Apostle Paul sees the followers of God as soldiers of heavenly kingdom in the battle for God’s righteousness.

Most of us are civilians in our everyday lives. However, when we put on our BDUs on the drill days, we suddenly have a different set of mind. Even as a rookie chaplain like myself, I felt something different as I buckled my BDU. I cannot yet illustrate what it is I felt different, but surely there was something different within by putting on my uniform.

And I am wondering ... What if all believers of God put on the uniform of God’s Kingdom? How is it going to change us? How is it going to change our lives and our beloved ones? Can you imagine? What if we buckle up the BDU of God’s kingdom?

From the Family Support Center

Marriage Enrichment Seminar

“For couples who want to make their marriage the best it can be.”

Deployments put a strain on any relationship and especially a marriage relationship. Any issues in a relationship before deployment are still there when you return. You have also added the strains of being apart and now reuniting. Your marriage may be great and you just want to take it to the next level. Spend one day learning how to make a marriage in the military work and make it better than you could imagine. Led by 109th Chaplain staff for couples affected by AEF and ODF deployments.

Pick a date, register and attend a day of fun learning! Continental breakfast and lunch provided

The following seminars are FREE due to the contributions from Family Support, 109th Airlift Wing and Church organizations.

Saturday, March 17
Cornerstone Community Church in Malta, NY
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, April 21
East Glenville Community Church in Glenville, NY
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, April 28
Good Tidings Conference Center in the Catskill Mountains (Cornwallville, NY)
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Marriage Enrichment is education, not therapy. Most of us learned to read with the help of a teacher. We took tennis lessons, piano lessons or at least watched a t.v. show on how to remodel the bathroom before digging in. But when it comes to loving relationships, we just assume we'll know how to do it. The fact is that most of us didn't learn relationship skills in a direct manner from qualified sources. Most of us simply picked up bits of information from people who had good intentions, but lacked expertise. Worse, some passed on advice that was downright wrong. When it comes to loving the most important people in our lives, no one can ever learn too much.

To register, or for more information, contact the Family Support Center

Letter to the Editor

I just viewed the PBS Special on your squadron and I must tell you that I was very moved by it.

During the late 60s I was attached (Navy) to VQ4 and air crewed on EC130Q's, while the mission was different our craft spent time

in Iceland and a couple of times we had to put into the air field on Greenland to make repairs.

So watching the special brought back a lot of those memories, and I just wanted your CO to know that I want to give a thank

you to your group for the job you do in the conditions you people have to work in. I wish I was 40 years younger; that was a great time in my life.

Great Job!

John Parrish

Center for the Intrepid opens its doors

By Rich Lamance
Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO (AFNEWS) — An aircraft carrier that sparked the spirits of a nation following the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor during the dark, early days of World War II has become the namesake of the world's most technologically advanced rehabilitation center for amputees and burn victims unveiled during an emotional-packed ceremony in San Antonio on Jan. 29.

The Center for the Intrepid, a four-story, 65,000 square-foot facility adjacent to Brooke Army Medical Center and two new Fisher Houses were officially opened during a two-hour dedication ceremony.

Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain, along with the Chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Peter M. Pace; the Honorable Gordon England, Assistant Secretary of Defense; Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey; and Secretary of the Department of Veteran Affairs, the Honorable R. James Nicholson, made remarks during the dedication.

More than 3,200 guests included senior military leaders, major contributors, many of the injured servicemembers from Brooke Army Medical Center and several celebrities that included Rosie O'Donnell, Michelle Pfeiffer, with a performance by John Mellencamp.

"We are here to dedicate, not a memorial, but a monument to the determination and courage of the steadfast men and women who serve selflessly," said Bill White, president of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, and master of

ceremonies for the dedication.

"It is a day of destiny, because it demonstrates forever the commitment of the American community to honor those who serve the twin pillars of freedom and democracy without regard to politics, personality or personal gain. This \$50 million 'state-of-the-world' physical rehabilitation center - all privately funded - is the largest single private contribution to our nation's wounded warriors in the history of our country."

The center will provide traumatic amputee patients, burn patients requiring advanced rehabilitation and those requiring limb salvage efforts with techniques and training to help them regain their ability to live and work productively.

The center's main departments include the military



U.S. Air Force photo by Daren Reehl

Staff Sgt. Justin Beil is escorted by Army Capt. Brian Freideline from Brooke Army Medical Center. Sergeant Beil is assigned to the 59th Medical Wing at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and will use the new facility on an out-patient basis.

performance lab, occupational therapy, physical therapy, prosthetics, case management and behavioral medicine. Much of the technology found in the new center can't be found anywhere else in the world.

A Gait Lab is fitted with 24 cameras on an automated truss which use infrared light to analyze human motion. A computer assisted environment, called CAREN, is a 21-foot simulated dome with a 300-degree screen that immerses patients using sensors and high-speed infrared cameras and a moving platform that reacts to the patients' movements.

According to Army Maj. Stuart Campbell, officer-in-charge of the physical therapy department, the center has a huge advantage where prosthetic fitting is concerned. The third floor of the center provides



U.S. Air Force photo by Daren Reehl

Arnold Fisher receives a standing ovation for his efforts as the driving force behind private donations of more than \$50 million to build the new Center for the Intrepid, a 65,000-square-foot rehabilitation center, and two new Fisher Houses that can house up to 42 families. More than 600,000 Americans donated to the foundation.

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Listen to your mother: She told you not to share towels!

By Maj. Melanie Howard
Health Promotion Officer

One year ago, Erin Sullivan (Knight Ridder News Service) wrote an article about a new problem in athletic facilities: infection of healthy people with a dangerous strain of the *Staphylococcus aureus* bacterium. Some of the examples she gave were frightening.

Seven college football players were hospitalized after they and three other members of their team developed *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph) infections.

A young man required skin grafts during treatment for staph infections that he and another football team member developed.

An intern in an athletic trainer's office had half of his calf muscle surgically removed in order to halt a staph infection that started after he scraped his leg against a table in the office.

What is surprising is not that someone developed a staph infection. Staph infections are not uncommon among hospitalized people or those

with weakened immune systems. What is startling is both that the infection has moved out of the hospital setting to the community and it is drug resistant. This special strain of staph is known community-associated methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (CA-MRSA).

MRSA

The most common form of the staph bacterium is carried by about one-third of the population in this country. Several decades ago, dangerous drug-resistant strains began to be found in hospitals and MRSA is now found widely in the community. About 2 million people in the U.S. carry MRSA on their bodies.

It is normal for bacteria to live on your skin or in your nose and MRSA is no exception. Staph bacteria only become a problem when they cause infection. What makes MRSA such a threat is that it does not respond well to the drugs (i.e., antibiotics) that are usually used to treat bacterial infections. It then becomes very difficult to remove the infection.

Furthermore, MRSA produces a toxin that kills the white blood cells that protect the body and it also destroys the body's tissue. When methicillin and other common antibiotic medicines do not work to kill the bacteria that are causing an infection, it becomes harder to get rid of the infection.

Outbreaks of MRSA hit sports teams because players often have cuts and scrapes and are in close contact. It is difficult to control because its early symptoms are mild and people may delay seeking medical attention.

The symptoms depend on what part of the body is infected. When MRSA is causing a wound infection, the skin in that area may be red or tender. It can be associated with a urinary tract infection, causing fever, back pain, frequent urination or burning when you urinate. MRSA can also cause pneumonia.

CA-MRSA commonly causes skin infections, such as boils, abscesses, cellulitis or a flesh-destroying condition called necrotizing fasciitis. Initially, the infections can look like insect bites. Since MRSA infections

can quickly become serious, it is important to see your doctor right away if you notice a boil or other skin problem.

How You Can Prevent Getting Infected With MRSA

It only takes a minute skin opening for MRSA to invade the body. Although it is almost always spread by direct physical contact, the bacteria can spread by sharing personal items, sports equipment or locker room facilities that have been contaminated and not fully disinfected.

To prevent infection

-- Throughout every day, wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

-- Keep open wounds clean and covered with a bandage and avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.

Avoid sharing whirlpools, towels, sheets, washcloths, soap or razors.

-- Wipe locker room benches, mats, weight machines or any sports equipment before using. Do not use unlicensed tattoo artists.

Intrepid, from page 10

patients with prosthetic fitting, physical therapy and a gym, within the same area.

"If this was a civilian facility, a patient would be fitted with a prosthetic device, go to physical therapy at another location, work out in a gym and return to the get the prosthesis adjusted. Here it's

all done on one floor."

In the area of occupational therapy, the center focuses on restoring health and function following serious injury or illness. At the Center for the Intrepid, a fully furnished apartment has been created to give patients a real-world environment to practice everyday skills.

According to Capt. Florie

Gonzales, an occupational therapist with the center, the apartment is equipped with a computer workstation with state-of-the-art voice recognition, a fully equipped kitchen and bath and a comfortable living room that completely takes patients out of the hospital environment.

Besides a daily living

apartment, patients have a virtual driving simulator that helps them learn to adjust to driving without limbs in a virtual setting that parallels real driving experiences. Patients can also quantify their ability to qualify with weapons, using a Firearms Training Simulator that puts them on a "virtual range" using 9 mm and M-4 replicas.

A good mentor brings success

By Senior Master Sgt. Lou Salerno
109th Human Resource Adviser

A word that has become part of our daily language within the Air National Guard is transformation.

Our organization and culture are changing. We are being forced to maximize our skills and expertise to respond to the changes that are taking place within our mission, training, equipment and people.

Our commanders are being asked to make sure the right people are in the right places with the right skills. We realize working together builds partnerships, and this is the way to make us a strong, viable force in completing our mission. To get here, we need to make sure our guardsmen are prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Everyone needs to feel they are a valuable asset with something to offer. The reality is not everyone feels confident, and there are members of our unit who feel left out. We need to reach these individuals who have the least access and let them know that opportunities are available to make a difference and they are valued as team members.

The way to do this is through mentoring.

There have been a number of initiatives to make the mentoring process successful, and with all of these initiatives, the one that is most successful is each of us taking individual responsibility to pass on to others the skills to become successful.

Mentoring is about inclusion not

exclusion. A mentor is counselor, coach, guide, motivator, teacher, sponsor, adviser and a role model. What better way is there for an individual to form a bond where they can express their fears, frustrations and goals without fear of reprisal?

As mentors we help develop the plans and blueprints for someone to access the skills, knowledge and experience to reach their potential. Building a pipeline that encompasses all Airmen to grow, develop and become effective in their career field produces the capabilities needed to achieve our mission readiness challenges for the 21st century.

Think about becoming a mentor and continue the tradition and heritage that make the Air National Guard great.

Alumni News

By Retired Lt. Col. Tom Noel
Alumni Representative

For about the last 10 years, Leland Scott has been writing the monthly Alumni News and has decided to step down this year. Lee has done an outstanding job the last decade, and the alumni members would like to thank him for a job well done and thank him for his service.

I have volunteered to write the Alumni News for *The Skibird* magazine for the next few years.

Last year's Christmas party was held Dec. 20 at the Rotterdam Elks Lodge on Curry Road in Rotterdam. In previous years, it was held at the Turf Tavern in Scotia, but since we needed a larger room it was decided to change the location.

More than 75 people attended. Everyone seemed to have a great time, especially me, being the individual that won the \$139.00 for the 50/50 drawing. Wow, what a Christmas gift!

Election of officers was held at our Jan. 17 meeting and the officers of The Alumni Association will be the same as last year. President, Milt Terwilliger; Vice President, Chuck Shatley; Secretary, Bob Guziar; and Treasurer, Gene Delong.

Congratulations to all the officers for a job well done during the past year. Thank

On behalf of the Alumni Association, we would like to say 'welcome home' to the returning troops of the 109th AW at Stratton Air National Guard Base.

you for your service.

Some of the upcoming events and functions to look forward to in the coming year are the annual St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage meal March 17, the Wednesday noon lunches starting in May and running through August, the annual summer picnic in July and the annual Christmas Party in December. Details for the previous functions and future events will be forthcoming.

Following are some of the retirement subjects and topics that I plan to write about on future issues of *The Skibird*:

Retirees wearing the service uniform on certain occasions; veterans rendering the hand salute rather than placing their hand over their heart when honoring the flag during special events; cheap lodging for veterans and military retirees offered by

the Manhattan New York City Club; and life after military retirement to include the New York Guard, 109th Airlift Wing Alumni Association, Firebird Association, Old Antarctic Explorers Association (OAEA), and Antarctic Deep Freeze Association (ADFA).

The members of the 109th Airlift Wing Alumni Association would like to send their condolences to the families of the following individuals who passed away last year: Howard E. Schultz, Howard W. Derrick, Brian G. DellaPorta, Philip A. Esposito, Robert A. Brown Sr., Warren J. Johnson, Herbert Squires, George Endries, Frank Pezze, James McGivern, Raymond P. Cetnar, Walter Klesac, Ted Cassell and Joseph Longobardo. I hope I didn't miss anyone.

On behalf of the Alumni Association, we would like to say "welcome home" to the returning troops of the 109th AW at Stratton Air National Guard Base. "Well done, and thank you for your service."

I hope many of you have a safe and happy New Year and made a New Year's resolution to drop in on the third Wednesday of the month to one of our meetings. We always look forward to seeing new faces. Until the next issue, stay happy, healthy and safe.

Legal Advice

By Staff Sgt. Amanda Blodgett
109th Legal Office

Many 109th members have questions about the document known as a “power of attorney” (POA).

In considering those questions, it is a good idea to understand the basics of what a POA is, and how and when it operates.

Generally, a POA is a document that allows someone else to act on your behalf. A POA is created and used when you know, or anticipate, you will not be able to manage your affairs and will need another person to do things for you. The POA names the person who will handle your affairs: the attorney-in-fact. Your attorney-in-fact has the legal power and authority to do things as if they were you, according to the POA.

There are two basic types of POAs: general and special. A general POA is a powerful document, granting very broad powers to your attorney-in-fact; it allows them to do almost anything you could do yourself. Because it grants such broad powers, it also opens you up to some risk. For instance, say you decide to give your friend a general POA to handle anything that comes up while you are temporary

duty. What if they decide to buy a new flat-screen TV and sign your name to the contract using the general POA? Whether you wanted the television or not, you are going to be responsible for paying for it since you were legally obligated via the POA. So when granting anyone a general POA, carefully consider the person to whom you are granting this power, the amount of authority you grant, and its duration.

A special POA is more limited in scope and typically allows your attorney-in-fact to do only specific things on your behalf. It is frequently required in financial or other sensitive arenas, such as when refinancing a house or to co-sign a joint tax return. Importantly, in the military, a special POA is required for anyone other than you to access to your pay records at the finance office. A special POA is also required to give consent to medical treatment for your children in your absence, in many real estate transactions, and in any situation where the agency/office/person you are dealing with requires it.

A Power of Attorney should also state the period of time it will remain in effect. Optimally, you want the POA to run for the period of time you actually need the document for example, one year. A POA will also normally terminate if you

become disabled, unless you have created a “durable” power of attorney. However, a durable POA does not terminate upon your disability and your attorney-in-fact may continue to act on your behalf. Additionally, in New York state a durable general POA cannot be used to make health care decisions for the grantor (person who signed it). A separate document known as a “Health Care Proxy” (also referred to as a “durable power of attorney for health care”) is required to make decisions about your health when you are not able.

Notably, due to deployment concerns and uncertainties, POAs for military members are frequently made durable

So, do you need a general POA, a special POA, or both? Do you need a Health Care Proxy? The answer is, like most legal answers, it depends; it depends upon the nature and purpose for it, the amount of time it is needed, the degree of trust between you and your attorney-in-fact, and in some cases your age and health. You should have a good idea of the things you will need to consider when making decisions about the need for Power of Attorney. As always, the staff at the Legal Office is available to help you determine what documents are best suited to meet your needs.

Firehouse Facts

By Master Sgt. John Saupp
109th Fire Protection

First of all, we would like to welcome back all the 109th firefighters and civil engineers. Everyone has made it home safe and sound. They all did a great job while deployed to Southwest Asia. We are glad they are back and have returned to duty here at Stratton.

The fire department recently placed in service a new P-30 rescue vehicle. This vehicle is a 2006 P-30 medium rescue truck made by Pierce. The P-30 replaces our old 1989 rescue vehicle. The new rig carries a full complement of rescue tools, equipment and emergency medical supplies.

The new 703 has responded to many emergencies since it has been placed in service. This vehicle responds to all emergencies on base as well as vehicle accidents and medical emergencies off base.

On Jan. 31 at 10:55 a.m., Engine 707 was dispatched to a working house fire in East Glenville. Upon arrival, Stratton firefighters worked alongside local firefighters from six other fire departments in battling this furious blaze.

Off-duty firefighters also responded with their local volunteer departments. No one was injured, but unfortunately the residence was a total loss. Crews rotated out from the base to the fire scene on this cold January day. All crews returned to the base at 4 p.m.

We would like to welcome Stratton’s newest firefighters: Staff Sgt. Mike Lazzari and Senior Airmen Mark Barkyoub and Ray Smith.

Sergeant Lazzari and Airman Barkyoub both transferred from the New York Air National Guard’s 106th Airlift Wing, and Airman Smith just completed his U.S. Air Force active-duty enlistment. We welcome all three firefighters to our ranks.

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Frank Shoemaker and Staff Sgt. Chris Menge. Sergeant Shoemaker was recently promoted to lieutenant at the Troy Fire Department, and Sergeant Menge was appointed as a firefighter at the Albany International Airport.

To submit an article or story idea to the Skibird, e-mail skibird@nyscot.af.mil, or call the Public Affairs office at 344-2396 or 344-2352.

Recruiting

By Master Sgt. Jim Reeves
Recruiting Office Supervisor

Another year in the books - 38 new unit members came our way as a result of your referrals for 2006! The GRAP program is getting stronger all the time. Eleven of those were GRAP enlistments, which totals \$22,000 in payments to our GRAP assistants! The Recruiting Team would like to personally thank everyone who has sent a referral our way. We appreciate all of the support you continue to give us. For more information on GRAP, head to www.guardrecruitingassistance.com or call us!

ANG Recruiting incentives/National Lead Referral Awards: The ANG has announced this year's national referral awards. These awards will be received by those who refer enlistments but cannot participate in the GRAP program.

- A. One Enlistment -- Backpack
- B. Two Enlistments -- Jacket
- C. Three Enlistments -- Wheeled cooler
- D. Four Enlistments -- MP3 player
- E. Five Enlistments -- Wrist watch

Technical Sergeant Vacancies are available for cross-training!

Bioenvironmental Engineering Apprentices survey and evaluate community and industrial workplace environments and recommend controls to keep environmental and occupational exposures within acceptable limits. You will be a part of the Aerospace Medicine team whose aim is to promote the health and well being of all Air Force personnel. Contact Captain Louie 344-2395 or benson.louie@nyscot.ang.af.mil for more on this position!

For more information on all vacant positions, contact Master Sgt. Dave Roe in Retention, or swing by the Recruiting Office for a complete list of vacancies. Check out our newly revised national website at www.goang.com for more

information on joining the Air National Guard and its benefits. Pass it along!

If you qualify for a merchandise award or a N.Y. State Medal or wish to make a referral, please contact Master Sgt. Jim Reeves, Tech. Sgt. Kim Bowman, Tech. Sgt. Andrew Stearns, Staff Sgt. Joanna Walters or Staff Sgt. Frank Davis.

LONGANDSUCCESSFULCAREERS in the Air National Guard often begin with a simple call to our Recruiting Office at 344-2454 or (800) 524-5070.

A graphic for the Air National Guard (ANG) featuring the text "NEW YORK GUARDING AMERICA, DEFENDING FREEDOM" above a large "ANG" logo. Below the logo is the text "AIR NATIONAL GUARD" and the phone number "1-800-524-5070". At the bottom, there are two website addresses: "SKIBIRD.US" and "GOANG.COM". The graphic also includes a small image of a soldier in uniform.

Who We Are

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Sung Hee Lee 109th Airlift Wing chaplain

Chaplain (1st Lt.) Sung Hee Lee first found interest as a guardsman when he was looking into an opportunity to provide ministry for U.S. military members.

"Because I am a solo pastor at a local church, I looked into the reserve side of the military, and I came to encounter the Air National Guard. And I really felt that this was it!" he said.

As a civilian, Chaplain Lee is a solo pastor at Bay Road Presbyterian Church in the Queensbury/Lake George area. Originally from South Korea, Chaplain Sung and his family were living in Texas when he was called by Bay Road. He has been at the church for three years.

"I thoroughly enjoy my ministry at church, and I am thankful that Bay Road

Church members unanimously support my ministry at the 109th Airlift Wing," the chaplain said. "I enjoy hanging around people, traveling, reading good books and playing with my daughter. I also enjoy meeting new people and getting to know them. So I am excitedly looking forward to getting to know more of our guardsmen here."

Although Chaplain Lee has only been with the Guard for two months, he has already gotten the opportunity to greet the 109th Airlift Wing's Airmen returning from deployments.

"It was the most rewarding experience to greet those Airmen and their families," he said. "I could see how much the families missed their husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters. It touches my heart so strongly to see those families reunited, and I was so thankful to be there to witness that."

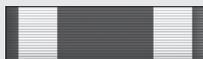


Photo by Staff Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Awards

Meritorious Service Medal

Maj Paul Dallemagne AS
 Maj Matthew Leclair AS
 Maj John Panoski AS
 Maj Richard Shearer CES
 Maj Jamie Sheppard OSF
 Maj Michael Steindl AS
 CMSgt Lynn Selden MXG
 MSgt Kenneth Kasper APF
 MSgt James Reeves MSF
 TSgt Joseph Tagliavia APF



Air Medal

Maj Philip Smith AES



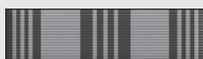
Air Force Commendation Medal

Maj Ronald Ankabrandt LRS
 Capt Patric Brew AS
 Capt Leroy Kinlocke AS
 Capt Jason Reape AS
 SMSgt Guy Yesse LRS
 TSgt Michael Blewitt AW
 TSgt Jennifer Conti AW
 TSgt Walter Holden MOF



Air Force Achievement Medal

Maj Judith Maloney LRS
 Capt Jeffrey Quinn LRS
 SMSgt Martin Herzog APF
 SMSgt Louis Salerno AW
 MSgt Diana Buehler APF
 MSgt Marsha Kovarovic LRS
 MSgt Mark Mann APF
 MSgt Christopher Rowe APF
 MSgt James Versocki APF
 TSgt Dennis Berg APF
 TSgt Michael Decker APF
 TSgt Timothy Driver APF
 TSgt Patrick Fitzgerald APF
 TSgt Scott Helmer APF
 TSgt Robert Irish LRS
 TSgt Barry MacDonald APF
 TSgt Jason Martin APF
 TSgt Anthony Morabito LRS
 TSgt Christopher Wood APF
 SSgt Jason Babiarz APF
 SSgt Michael Byerwalters APF
 SSgt Charles Chandler APF
 SSgt Michael Eldred APF
 SSgt Thomas Hegney APF
 SSgt Thomas Houck APF
 SSgt Kyle Hovak APF



Officer Promotions

Lieutenant Colonel

Christine Dicaprio-Yandik OG



First Lieutenant

Nicholas Garren AS
 Joshua Rogers AS
 Kelly Williams AS



Enlisted Promotions

Senior Master Sergeant

Brian Bik AMXS
 Steven Hadley LRS

Master Sergeant

Thomas Flynn AMXS
 Michael Fresina MSF
 Deborah Gardner MOF
 Richard Thomas SFS
 Christopher Wood APF
 Earl Rayner AW



Technical Sergeant

Amanda Blodgett AW
 Thomas Feeley SFS
 William Flansburg SFS
 Byran Hanus AMXS
 Jason Moore CES
 Joseph O'Connor CES
 Marc Porter SFS
 George Robinson SFS
 Andrew Stearns MSF

Staff Sergeant

Abraham Gadway AMXS
 Jeremy Kelley APF
 Abbey Melius MXM

Awards cont.

Air Force Achievement Medal cont.

SSgt Joseph McCarthy APF	SSgt Kelly Yerg APF
SSgt Glenn Mitchell APF	SSgt Scott Zapisek APF
SSgt Pantschyschak APF	SrA Robert Florio APF
SSgt Kyle Partlow APF	SrA Shawn Rulison APF
SSgt Matthew Pierce APF	SrA Luke Rider CES
SSgt Roy Richardson APF	SrA Leonard Smith APF
SSgt Kurt Schneid APF	SrA Ross Stepp APF
SSgt Terry Sommers AW	SrA Jessica Tomlinson APF
SSgt Mark Vanderwerken APF	SrA Jay Wilson MSF

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Photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Brett Bouchard

Mission statement

Provide the most professional theatre combat forces, ready to rapidly deploy statewide, worldwide and pole to pole.

Vision statement

A united military organization of empowered individuals building on our proud tradition of serving country, state and community; leaning forward, ready to meet combat and peacetime challenges throughout the world.