

## **Citizens Preparedness**

[Citizen Preparedness Corps training in Dryden this November:](#)

WHCU, October 30, 2024

[Tompkins offers disaster training in Dryden:](#)

Cortland Standard, October 30, 2024

## **Emergency Response**

[D.C. Is Prepping for Increased Security After the Election. What That Will Look Like Is TBD. :Several National Guard units have been in crowd control and riot training.:](#)

NOTUS.org, October 31, 2024

## **New York Air National Guard**

[New York Air Guard wing welcomes new HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopter fleet:](#)

Verticalmag. com, October 31, 2024

[First HH-60W Jolly Green II for New York National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing:](#)

The Aviation Geek Club, Nov. 1, 2024

[New York Air Guard Wing Welcomes New, High-Tech Helicopters:](#)

NationalGuard.mil, By Capt. Cheran Campbell, New York National Guard, October 28, 2024:

[New helicopters added at 106th Rescue Wing:](#)

Riverhead Revie2w, October 29, 2024

[New York Air Guard wing welcomes new, high-tech helicopters:](#)

US.AF. MIL,By Capt. Cheran Campbell, New York National Guard, October 30, 2024

## **New York Army National Guard**

[New York Army National Guard is tops in recruiting and retention for third year:](#)

Army.mil, October 28, 2024

[Air Guard Wing In NY Welcomes New Hi-Tech Helicopters:](#)

Aero News Network, October 29, 2024

[Duty Calls:](#)

Times Union, October 28, 2024:

[Palm Harbor resident promoted to major general:](#)

Tampa Bay Newspapers, October 28, 2024 :

## **State Partnership Program**

[New York Army Guard Chaplains Attend South Africa Symposium:](#)  
Nationalguard.mil and Army.mil, October 30, 2024

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### **Citizens Preparedness**

#### **Citizen Preparedness Corps training in Dryden this November**

**WHCU, October 30, 2024 :**

ITHACA, NY (CortacaToday) – The Citizen Preparedness Corps (CPC) equips community members with essential tools and resources to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from various disasters and emergencies.

The next training session in Tompkins County is scheduled for Wednesday at the Dryden Fire Department, located at 26 North Street on November 13th at 6:00 p.m.

Led by members of the New York National Guard in collaboration with experts from the state Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), these trainings are coordinated alongside local emergency management officials.

“With severe weather events becoming more frequent and more extreme, it’s more important than ever to be prepared for disasters,” stated Geoff Dunn, Community Preparedness Coordinator for Tompkins County Emergency Response. “This is a great opportunity to learn how to properly develop family emergency plans and stock up on supplies.”

A significant aspect of the CPC training is the distribution of NYS Disaster Preparedness Kits to participants (one kit per household). The training is provided at no cost, but attendees must register in advance at [www.prepare.ny.gov](http://www.prepare.ny.gov).

<https://cortacatoday.com/news/258852-citizen-preparedness-corps-to-host-training-in-dryden/>

**[Return to top](#)**

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#### **Tompkins offers disaster training in Dryden**

**Cortland Standard, October 30, 2024 :**

DRYDEN — Tompkins County’s Citizen Preparedness Corps will have a training session at 6 p.m. Nov. 13 at the Dryden Fire Department on North Street.

The session, led by New York ... *This item is behind a paywall.*

<https://www.cortlandstandard.com/stories/tompkins-offers-disaster-training-in-dryden,110325>

[Return to top](#)

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### **Emergency Response**

**D.C. Is Prepping for Increased Security After the Election. What That Will Look Like Is TBD. :Several National Guard units have been in crowd control and riot training.**

**NOTUS.org, October 31, 2024:**

*Note: This is being provided for situational awareness. NY was one of the states called by the reporter.*

National Guard soldiers across the country are preparing to help secure Washington, D.C., after Election Day. So far, no one has asked them to show up.

Now, almost four years after the unprecedented attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, Washington is anticipating heightened security after the presidential election to ensure a peaceful transfer of power. The actual plan, as it stands now, however, is tangled in a web of bureaucracy between the city, the Pentagon and the Secret Service.

For the greater part of the year, the National Guard and law enforcement have been prepping to protect the nation's capital in January 2025. NOTUS identified several National Guard units that have been undergoing riot and crowd control training, including those from New York and Virginia.

According to at least two of the units, preparations are underway to support the eventual request for assistance. D.C.'s police department has also sent out requests for a total of 4,000 police from across the country to augment the Metropolitan Police and Capitol Police departments.

All of these groups are waiting for the call to pack their bags for D.C.

Ultimately, the Secret Service is in charge of managing security concerns on Jan. 6, 2025, when the election results will be certified, and on Inauguration Day. Both days

have been designated as “national special security events.” However, the Secret Service hasn’t publicly asked for additional support beyond its own ranks.

For the National Guard to operate in D.C. an official “request for assistance” has to go through the office of the Secretary of Defense. It’s not clear where that request will come from.

The National Guard, Department of Defense and the D.C. mayor’s office all directed NOTUS to the Secret Service for questions about the scale of support the official “request for assistance” would need. The Secret Service did not respond to a request for comment.

But last week, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser said she may make the request to the Pentagon for additional National Guard soldiers.

“We may even do something that we haven’t done, a kind of advance, a preliminary request,” Bowser said last week. She’s considering making that request “to give DOD a little more time to make their plans.”

Unlike a state governor, Bowser doesn’t have direct access to National Guard units; she has to go through the Pentagon to make the request.

Either the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency or the Secret Service could make the request. The National Guard doesn’t know yet which one will.

“We don’t currently have a Request for Assistance, and we won’t speculate on potential requirements if and when an RFA comes,” a National Guard Bureau spokesperson told NOTUS in a statement.

For now, everyone is working toward ensuring they can have a “scalable response.” The goal is to be able to react to demands for Guard support quickly, from a few hundred to several thousand, but not overwhelm the city with troops.

“The Guard has leaned forward over the past year in terms of facilitating planning for how to support a mission in support of the inauguration,” Robert Carver, a National Guard spokesperson, told NOTUS. It’s not unusual for preparations to go on through most of the year gearing up for an inauguration, even without a request for assistance.

As Carver put it, “The Guard has been part of the inauguration of a president since the first inauguration honoring President George Washington.”

The logistics alone for having soldiers come to D.C. around these major events is challenging. Feeding and transporting several thousand people is a major

undertaking already being planned. Housing for the soldiers expected to come to D.C. is sparse.

“Hotel rooms are already at a premium,” Carver said.

Bowser’s office, too, is involved in the process, even though the Secret Service has taken charge overall.

“The United States Capitol Police are prepared to ensure a peaceful transfer of power at the Capitol,” Bowser said. “Regardless of the victor.”

She added that there is currently no perceived threat to the nation’s capital, though her office is debating options for increased presence.

“In many respects, our preparations for 2024 started on Jan, 7, 2021,” Bowser’s assistant city administrator, Christopher Rodriguez, said.

<https://www.notus.org/2024-election/washington-security-election-day-inauguration-jan-6-secret-service>

[Return to top](#)

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### **New York Air National Guard**

#### **New York Air Guard wing welcomes new HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopter fleet**

**Verticalmag. com, October 31, 2024 :**

The New York National Guard’s 106th Rescue Wing officially marked the arrival of its new HH-60W Jolly Green II search-and-rescue fleet during a ceremony Oct. 25 at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base.

The aircraft will replace the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters formerly flown by the wing. The new high-tech helicopters are more capable than the aircraft they replace.

“This is a momentous occasion which allows for us to reflect on where we are as an organization and where we are headed,” said Col Shawn P. Fitzgerald, 106th Rescue Wing commander.

The 106th Rescue Wing relied on the HH-60Gs when it responded to hurricanes and major storms during missions in Florida, Texas and North and South Carolina.

The HH-60G, nicknamed the “Golf” by pilots because of its HH-60G designation, was a great aircraft and played a role during the Persian Gulf War and in Afghanistan and Iraq, said Capt Nic Arosemena, a pilot in the wing’s 101st Rescue Squadron.

“Its contributions have cemented its reputation as a workhorse of the U.S. Air Force rescue community,” Arosemena said.

“The ‘Whiskey’ model you see before you may look almost identical to the Golf, but I can assure you, it is much different,” Fitzgerald said. “So much so that the training of our aircrew and maintainers requires months and additional intensive training and practical hands-on experience. It’s not an easy transition.”

MGen Michael W. Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard and a former commander of the 106th Rescue Wing, said the new helicopters are part of an effort to keep the wing combat ready.

“The addition of the 130-J, now the Whiskey, the construction that is going on here for your buildings, you guys are modernizing the wing to be ready for the 21st century Air Force that we need,” Bank said.

MGen Raymond F. Shields Jr., adjutant general of New York, said the modernization of the wing’s aircraft was important for the New York Air National Guard to respond to new challenges.

New York recently signed an agreement with the Swedish military to train together, alongside existing relationships with South Africa and Brazil.

Shields said the 106th Rescue Wing has been heavily involved in training with Brazil, and he expects the wing’s Airmen and new aircraft to conduct similar missions with Sweden.

During the ceremony, the wing leadership also honored Tech Sgt Michael Tassar, by naming him the first dedicated crew chief for the brand new HH-60W.

“As advancements in military aircraft technology continue, so, too, will the skills of myself and my fellow maintainers and aircrew,” Tassar said. “It’s an exciting time to be a part of the Air National Guard, especially within the 106th, where we are at the forefront of these innovations and ready to meet all challenges that lie ahead.”

The ceremony concluded with a HH-60W demonstration fly-by by the first crew qualified in the aircraft, LCol James Liston and Staff Sgt Joe Devito.

“Although we celebrate the arrival of our brand-new helicopter, we must always remember it is the Airman that makes the system work,” said Fitzgerald.

The 106th Rescue Wing is a New York Air National Guard unit stationed at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base, Westhampton Beach, New York.

The wing operates the HC-130J Combat King II and the HH-60W Jolly Green II search-and-rescue aircraft. The wing provides worldwide personnel recovery, combat search and rescue capability, expeditionary combat support, and civil search-and-rescue support to federal and state authorities.

This press release was prepared by the New York National Guard and distributed by the U.S. Air Force.

<https://verticalmag.com/press-releases/new-york-air-guard-wing-welcomes-new-hh-60w-jolly-green-ii-helicopter-fleet/>

[Return to top](#)

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## **First HH-60W Jolly Green II for New York National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing**

**The Aviation Geek Club, Nov. 1, 2024 :**

The New York National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing officially marked the arrival of its new HH-60W Jolly Green II search and rescue fleet during a recent ceremony at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base.

As told by Capt. Cheran Campbell, New York National Guard Public Affairs, in the article New York Air Guard wing welcomes new, high-tech helicopters, the aircraft will replace the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters formerly flown by the wing. The new high-tech helicopters are more capable than the aircraft they replace.

"This is a momentous occasion which allows for us to reflect on where we are as an organization and where we are headed," said Col. Shawn P. Fitzgerald, 106th Rescue Wing commander.

The 106th Rescue Wing relied on the HH-60Gs when it responded to hurricanes and major storms during missions in Florida, Texas and North and South Carolina.

The HH-60G, nicknamed the "Golf" by pilots because of its HH-60G designation, was a great aircraft and played a role during the Persian Gulf War and in Afghanistan and Iraq, said Capt. Nic Arosemena, a pilot in the wing's 101st Rescue Squadron.

"Its contributions have cemented its reputation as a workhorse of the US Air Force rescue community," Arosemena said.

HH-60W

“The ‘Whiskey’ model you see before you may look almost identical to the Golf, but I can assure you, it is much different,” Fitzgerald said. “So much so that the training of our aircrew and maintainers requires months and additional intensive training and practical hands-on experience. It’s not an easy transition.”

The HH-60W is designed from the ground up with integrated mission systems that improve situational awareness for aircrews conducting the CSAR mission in contested environments. The helicopters feature new multi-function displays to provide pilots with critical flight information.

Modifications to the HH-60W include a digital radar warning receiver; laser, missile, hostile fire warning; integrated chaff and flares; cabin and cockpit armor; externally mounted 7.62 mm and .50 caliber weapons; LINK 16 military tactical data link network; Situational Awareness Data Link; integrated cockpit and cabin displays; advanced communications; Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast; tactical moving map displays; upturned IR-masking exhausts; and efficient wide-chord rotor blades.

Maj. Gen. Michael W. Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard and a former commander of the 106th Rescue Wing, said the new helicopters are part of an effort to keep the wing combat ready.

“The addition of the 130-J, now the Whiskey, the construction that is going on here for your buildings, you guys are modernizing the wing to be ready for the 21st century Air Force that we need,” Bank said.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Shields Jr., adjutant general of New York, said the modernization of the wing’s aircraft was important for the New York Air National Guard to respond to new challenges.

### The 106th Rescue Wing

New York recently signed an agreement with the Swedish military to train together, alongside existing relationships with South Africa and Brazil.

Shields said the 106th Rescue Wing has been heavily involved in training with Brazil, and he expects the wing’s Airmen and new aircraft to conduct similar missions with Sweden.

During the ceremony, the wing leadership also honored Tech. Sgt. Michael Tessar, by naming him the first dedicated crew chief for the brand new HH-60W.

### First HH-60W Jolly Green II for New York National Guard’s 106th Rescue Wing

“As advancements in military aircraft technology continue, so, too, will the skills of myself and my fellow maintainers and aircrew,” Tessar said.



The ceremony concluded with a HH-60W demonstration fly-by by the first crew qualified in the aircraft, Lt. Col. James Liston and Staff Sgt. Joe Devito.

The 106th Rescue Wing is a New York Air National Guard unit stationed at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base, Westhampton Beach, New York.

The wing operates the HC-130J Combat King II and the HH-60W Jolly Green II search and rescue aircraft. The wing provides worldwide personnel recovery, combat search and rescue capability, expeditionary combat support, and civil search and rescue support to federal and state authorities.

### That Others May Live

Additionally, after the midair explosion of the Space Shuttle “Challenger” in 1986, the 106th Rescue Wing was designated to provide support for every shuttle launch thereafter. In October 1991, an HH-60 and a tanker flew to an endangered sailboat about 250 miles south of its base. The Pave Hawk and HC-130 dropped survival gear to the vessel, which was riding out the storm, and began their return to base. Both aircraft encountered severe weather conditions and the helicopter was unable to take on fuel.

The HH-60 was forced to ditch in the Atlantic Ocean about 60 miles south of the base in what would later become known as “the Perfect Storm”, and all but one member of the crew were saved by the crew of the United States Coast Guard cutter Tamaroa. TSGT Arden Smith, a pararescueman (PJ), lost his life fulfilling the squadron’s motto That Others May Live. The 106th Rescue Wing has assisted the state in battling the 1995 “Sunrise Wildfires” in the Hamptons, they were first on the scene after the crash of TWA Flight 800, and the recovery of the wreckage from the plane flown by John F. Kennedy, Jr., which crashed into the Atlantic Ocean in 1999. The squadron located the transponder of the wreckage of the plane underwater.

In 1998, the wing carried out the longest over-water rescue mission in an HH-60.

On September 11, 2001, the first ANG personnel on scene at World Trade Center were those of the 106th Rescue Wing.

<https://theaviationgeekclub.com/first-hh-60w-jolly-green-ii-for-new-york-national-guards-106th-rescue-wing/>

[Return to top](#)

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**New York Air Guard Wing Welcomes New, High-Tech Helicopters**

**NationalGuard.mil, By Capt. Cheran Campbell, New York National Guard,  
October 28, 2024::**

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"Its contributions have cemented its reputation as a workhorse of the U.S. Air Force rescue community," Arosemena said.

"The 'Whiskey' model you see before you may look almost identical to the Golf, but I can assure you, it is much different," said Fitzgerald. "So much so that the training of our aircrew and maintainers requires months and additional intensive training and practical hands-on experience. It's not an easy transition."

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"As advancements in military aircraft technology continue, so, too, will the skills of myself and my fellow maintainers and aircrew," Tassar said. "It's an exciting time to be a part of the Air National Guard, especially within the 106th, where we are at the forefront of these innovations and ready to meet all challenges that lie ahead."

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<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article-View/Article/3948094/new-york-air-guard-wing-welcomes-new-high-tech-helicopters/>

[Return to top](#)

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## **New helicopters added at 106th Rescue Wing**

**Riverhead Review, October 29, 2024 :**

The 106th Rescue Wing held a conversion ceremony at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach on Friday to commemorate its transition to a fleet of brand new Pave Hawk helicopters. The ceremony celebrated the official conversion to the HH-60W Jolly Green II.

The 106th Rescue Wing is a unit of the New York Air National Guard. The primary mission of these helicopters is to conduct combat search and rescue operations to recover downed aircrew or other personnel in conflict zones. But the aircrafts are also essential to other operations, including civil search and rescue, emergency

aeromedical evacuation, disaster relief, international aid and NASA space shuttle support. The new choppers join the recently added HC-130J Combat Kings, large cargo and transport planes already in use, making the 106th one of the Air National Guard's most modern units.

During the ceremony the wing leadership honored Tech. Sgt. Michael Tassar, a West Islip resident, naming him the first dedicated crew chief for the HH-60Ws.

"As advancements in military aircraft technology continue, so too will the skills of myself and my fellow maintainers and aircrew," Tech. Sgt. Tassar said. "It's an exciting time to be a part of the Air National Guard, especially within the 106th, where we are at the forefront of these innovations and ready to meet all challenges that lie ahead."

<https://riverheadnewsreview.timesreview.com/2024/10/122634/new-helicopters-added-at-106th-rescue-wing/>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **New York Air Guard wing welcomes new, high-tech helicopters**

**US.AF. MIL,By Capt. Cheran Campbell, New York National Guard, October 30, 3034 :**

WESTHAMPTON BEACH, N.Y. (AFNS) --The New York National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing officially marked the arrival of its new HH-60W Jolly Green II search and rescue fleet during a ceremony Oct. 25 at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base.

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<https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3951608/new-york-air-guard-wing-welcomes-new-high-tech-helicopters/>

[Return to top](#)

---

### **New York Army National Guard**

#### **New York Army National Guard is tops in recruiting and retention for third year**

**Army.mil, October 28, 2024 :**

LATHAM, N.Y. -- The New York Army National Guard was number one out of 54 state and territorial Army National Guards in recruiting and retaining Soldiers for the 2024 federal fiscal year.

This marks the third year in a row that New York has been tops in retaining Army Guard Soldiers while bringing new Soldiers on board.

Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general of New York, said a focus on Soldiers led to the recruiting and retention success.

“The New York Army National Guard has led the nation in recruiting and retention for the last four years because we focus on our people,” Shields said.

“Our commitment is demonstrated every day by the care, communication, and commitment to our Soldiers,” he added.

The assigned strength for New York’s Army Guard as of Sept. 30, 2024 – the end of the federal fiscal year—was 11,339. The New York Army National Guard’s strength at the start of the 12 month period, on October 1, 2023, was 10,970.

The New York Army National Guard’s authorized strength is 10,340 Soldiers, with a goal strength at the end of fiscal 2024 set at 11,140 personnel.

This means that despite Soldiers retiring or deciding to move on after one or two enlistments, the New York Army National Guard strength stood at 109 percent of the authorized figure.

The number of Soldiers was 101 percent of the strength goal set for New York's Army Guard.

The Army National Guard assigns a weighted score to state Guard's based on enlisted Soldier recruiting, officer recruiting, and Soldier retention and attrition in the force as Soldiers leave.

The New York Army National Guard scored 126.4 percent on this scale. The next highest state was Georgia with a score of 122.9 percent.

During fiscal year 2024 the New York Army National Guard recruiting team enlisted 1,519 Soldiers while another 200 officers and warrant officers joined the force.

Keeping New York's Army Guard full is important for readiness, according to Maj. Gen. Michel Natali, New York's assistant adjutant general, Army.

"Our recruiting and retention success directly contributes to the ability of the New York Army National Guard to respond to short notice or no-notice emergencies, most recently in response to hurricanes impacting North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida," Natali said.

Recruiting additional Soldiers also allows New York to expand its force structure, Natali said.

New York activated a new division artillery headquarters for the 42nd Infantry Division and created a finance battalion headquarters because there were enough Soldiers to fill those new units, he explained.

The activations of the 42nd Division Artillery and the 27th Finance Battalion are two recent examples in which personnel strength factored into force structure decisions, he said.

The 220 full-time Soldiers assigned to recruiting duty for the New York Army National Guard, take pride in their mission, according to Lt. Col. Josh Heimroth, the commander of the New York recruiting and retention battalion.

The recruiters are the "life-blood" of the effort to keep Soldiers in the National Guard and bring in new one's Heimroth said.

"The success of the New York Army National Guard's recruiting and retention battalion is a direct result of our highly-trained recruiters," he said.

“Their daily dedication, professionalism, and willingness to increase individual proficiency in the recruiting career management field has paid dividends,” he emphasized.

New York has also pushed more Soldiers into recruiting duty, Shields said.

“We invest additional recruiters and retention personnel above what we are authorized to ensure we focus on our highest priority,” Shields said.

“Other than Soldier safety, we have no higher priority than assigned unit strength.”

“Our success can be summed up in short - we care about our Soldiers, their families, and their personal growth, while welcoming new Soldiers to our team with open arms,” the adjutant general added.

The New York Army National Guard’s units include an Army division headquarters, a combat aviation brigade, an infantry brigade, sustainment brigade, and a brigade-sized troop command which encompasses many combat support and military police elements.

It is the fourth largest Army National Guard in the country.

Meanwhile, the New York Air National Guard is also putting an effort into filling it’s authorized strength of 5,822 Airmen.

The New York Air National Guard, with five air wings and an air defense sector, is the largest in the United States.

In fiscal 2023, the New York Air National Guard recruited 628 Airmen, the highest number of any of the nation’s state Air Guard elements.

Currently the New York Air National Guard has an assigned strength of 5,768 Airmen.

The New York Air Guard has increased its recruiting force from 26 to 33 production recruiters to help bring in more recruits, according to Lt. Col. Kristen Gibson, the New York Air National Guard’s recruiting and retention officer.

The New York Air Guard’s goal is to hire an additional four recruiters before the end of the calendar year, Gibson said.

The Air Guard recruiters are focusing on education benefit as a way to attract new Airmen, especially tuition assistance at State University of New York –known as SUNY- -colleges, she added.



We are focused on our partnership with high schools across New York State, and bringing counselors, teachers and coaches' information on our tuition-free SUNY education benefit," Gibson said.

"We pay the cost of SUNY tuition to eligible Airmen upon enlistment, and have a great partnership with SUNY to support our Airmen as they serve our country and accomplish their bachelor's degree at the same time," Gibson said.

[https://www.army.mil/article/280889/new\\_york\\_army\\_national\\_guard\\_is\\_tops\\_in\\_recruiting\\_and\\_retention\\_for\\_third\\_year](https://www.army.mil/article/280889/new_york_army_national_guard_is_tops_in_recruiting_and_retention_for_third_year)

[Return to top](#)

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## **Air Guard Wing In NY Welcomes New Hi-Tech Helicopters**

**Aero News Network, October 29, 2024 :**

The New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing marked the arrival on October 25 of its new HH-60W Jolly Green II fleet.

The new helicopters will replace the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters formerly flown by the Wing.

The Wing relied on the HH-60Gs when it provided search and rescue during major storms and hurricanes in Florida, Texas, and North and South Carolina. Members of the Wing said the Pave Hawk was also a great aircraft that played a vital role in the Persian Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

One of the Golf model pilots, Captl Nic Arosemena, said, "Its contributions have cemented its reputation as a workhorse of the U.S. Air Force rescue community."

Col. Shawn P. Fitzgerald, commander of the 106th Rescue Wing said, "This is a momentous occasion which allows for us to reflect on where we are as an organization and where we are headed."

Fitzgerald continued, "The 'Whiskey' model you see before you may look almost identical to the Golf, but I can assure you, it is much different. So much so that the training of our aircrew and maintainers requires months and additional intensive training and practical hands-on experience. It's not an easy transition."

The W models are more capable and incorporate a number of upgrades such as an integrated avionics suite with flight management system coupled with flight director,

weather radar, improved electro-optical/infrared camera and over-the-horizon tactical data receivers.

<https://www.aero-news.net/GetMoreFromANN.cfm?do=main.textpost&id=CB2CD26B-6CA3-47DF-8830-C383B69FBFA0>

[Return to top](#)

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## **Duty Calls**

**Times Union, October 28, 2024::**

Photo Caption: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christopher Hansen presents a retirement gift to Chief Warrant Officer 5 James McCauley, a standardization and Blackhawk instructor pilot, upon his final helicopter flight after 41 years of military service at the Army Aviation Flight Support Facility in Latham.

Lt. Col. Jean Marie Kratzer/New York Army National Guard

<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/duty-calls-photo-exhibit-honor-schenectady-19861093.php>

[Return to top](#)

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## **Palm Harbor resident promoted to major general**

**Tampa Bay Newspapers, October 28, 2024 ::  
Nov 01, 2024**

PEEKSKILL, N.Y. — Jack James, a Palm Harbor resident, was promoted to the two-star rank of Maj. Gen. in the New York Army National Guard during an Oct. 19 ceremony at Camp Smith's training site.

James, a 1992 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, has been named the new commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, one of eight divisions in the Army National Guard.

The 42nd Infantry Division consists of 5,400 Soldiers in the New York Army National Guard and 10,000 soldiers from other state National Guards. The division is headquartered in Troy, New York, near Albany.

James formerly served as the commander of the New York Army National Guard's 53rd Troop Command. He turned over command of that unit to Brig. Gen. Isabel Rivera Smith prior to his promotion ceremony.

Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the adjutant general of New York, praised James as an outstanding commander.

"Achieving major general is a huge accomplishment for anyone," Shields said. "It denotes a high degree of trust and confidence in the abilities, leadership and moral character of the individual."

In his remarks, James emphasized that he could not have achieved his rank and division commander position without the support of peers and subordinates in the Army and the support of his family.

"Today is not about me, it's about us; I would not be here without each and all of you," he said. "This is a responsibility, a privilege, and a real honor that I am so grateful to all of you for."

In June 2001, James left the active Army after deployments to Haiti and the Balkans and was starting a civilian career. But on Sept. 11, 2001, he watched the attacks on New York City and resolved to join the New York Army National Guard.

James is an Army aviator who has served in a number of leadership and staff positions during his career.

He has led American soldiers at the platoon, troop, battalion, brigade and general officer levels.

He has served as an attack helicopter platoon leader, attack helicopter troop commander, battalion operations officer, battalion executive officer, brigade operations officer, and battalion commander.

He led the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade from 2014 to 2019, thereafter serving as Commanding General, 53rd Troop Command and then Deputy Commander, 42nd Infantry Division prior to returning once again to command the 53rd Troop Command.

In addition to his overseas service, James has participated in responses to numerous domestic emergencies including Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy and others.

In his civilian career, James serves as a Vice President at New York Life Insurance Co.

[https://www.suncoastnews.com/news/palm-harbor-resident-promoted-to-major-general/article\\_91b6268a-9314-11ef-ac65-57397de706fe.html](https://www.suncoastnews.com/news/palm-harbor-resident-promoted-to-major-general/article_91b6268a-9314-11ef-ac65-57397de706fe.html)

[Return to top](#)

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### **State Partnership Program**

#### **New York Army Guard Chaplains Attend South Africa Symposium**

**Nationalguard.mil and Army.mil, October 30, 2024 :**

CAPE TOWN, South Africa - Two New York Army National Guard chaplains represented the U.S. military at an annual meeting of South African military chaplains in Cape Town Oct. 14-18.

New York National Guard State Chaplain (Col.) Douglas Brock and Deputy State Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Miller joined 200 South African Defence Force chaplains at the symposium held by Brig. Gen. E.T. Masweu, South Africa's chief of chaplains.

Brock and Miller attended the meeting as part of the New York National Guard's State Partnership Program relationship with the South African National Defence Force.

Chaplains representing nine of the 16 counties in the Southern African Development Communities also attended.

Brock said he and Miller were invited as a courtesy and to further the relationship between the New York National Guard and South Africa's military.

New York National Guard chaplains have visited South Africa in the past. In April, Brock and Miller took part in a regional chaplain's workshop conducted by Zambia's chaplain general, Brig. Gen. Rev. Dr. Henry Matifeyo.

Brock said visiting chaplain delegations were invited to speak to the symposium.

The topic of the symposium was "Unity in Diversity," Brock said. So, he spoke about the ways military chaplains use their calling to bring people within military units together.

Chaplains are at peace "because of our call from the divine," Brock said, and they get to "foster and grow peace."

Being present at these kinds of events strengthened the strategic partnership between the United States and South African militaries and allowed the two New Yorkers to learn from the experiences of African military chaplains, Brock explained.

“We get to see how other chaplaincies are doing their business, how other chaplaincies are fulfilling their call,” Brock said.

Masweu said he would like the New Yorkers to regularly attend his annual chaplain’s training events.

Brock said he would like to invite South Africa to send representatives to the New York National Guard’s Joint Chaplain Annual Sustainment Training in January.

New York has had a partnership with South Africa since 2003 under the Department of Defense National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program.

Ongoing engagements with South Africa include New York participation in the South African National Defense Force Combat Rifle and Soldier Skills Competitions, New York Army National Guard Military Police officers visiting the South African military police training center, firefighter exchanges, and other specialty staff and family readiness engagements.

The New York Air National Guard also regularly participates in the biannual African Aerospace and Defense Air Show at Air Force Base Waterkloof on the outskirts of Pretoria, South Africa.

[https://www.army.mil/article/280963/new\\_york\\_army\\_guard\\_chaplains\\_attend\\_south\\_africa\\_symposium](https://www.army.mil/article/280963/new_york_army_guard_chaplains_attend_south_africa_symposium)

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/State-Partnership-Program/Article/3951292/new-york-army-guard-chaplains-attend-south-africa-symposium/>

[\*\*Return to top\*\*](#)

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