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National Guard.mil, By Tech. Sgt. Ryan Campbell | New York National Guard | March 3, 2020:

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42nd Infantry Division

42nd ID Soldier is first Guard member chosen for DARPA fellowship
ARLINGTON, Va. – New York Army National Guard Capt. Steven Quinones is the first member of the Army National Guard to complete a fellowship with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

Quinones, a signal officer with New York's 42nd Infantry Division, was the first Guard member ever selected for the DARPA Service Chiefs Fellows Program. The work completed during the fellowship can lead to the development of future technologies.

The fellowship, from September to December, was established to immerse military officers and government civilians in science and technology research.

"I was recommended by a program manager from the Biological Technologies Office in DARPA after having facilitated part of their office off-site visit to New York City in 2018 while working for Joint Task Force Empire Shield," said Quinones, of Tappan, New York.

Quinones applied for the fellowship through Army Human Resources Command. It was funded by the National Guard Bureau, and he was put on active duty for the program.

"This sets a precedence for future Army National Guard officers to attend this fellowship," Quinones said.

Before becoming the division's current operations information cell officer in charge, Quinones enlisted in the Air Force in 2002, transferring to the Army National Guard in 2006 – first in Wyoming and then to New York in 2007. In 2010 he received his commission through Officer Candidate School.

DARPA was spawned by the 1957 launch of the Soviet Union's Sputnik 1, the world's first satellite. DARPA has more than 200 employees working on about 250 research and development programs.

"As a fellow in the program I gained insights into the goals and mission of the agency and a number of DARPA programs including aerial dragnet, urban reconnaissance through supervised autonomy and measuring biological aptitude," Quinones said.

The fellowship is designed to use the background of fellows to help refine technology under development. Quinones was able to use his experience as a signal readiness officer in various projects under development at DARPA.

"Through visits with DARPA's industry, laboratory and university partners, I witnessed the agency's critical role in strengthening the intellectual and industrial bases for the development of game-changing DoD technologies," Quinones said.
Quinones used his experience in Army communications networks and dense urban terrain operations to help develop a DARPA program to provide better communications on the battlefield.

Through DARPA, many popular technologies have been developed, such as the computer mouse, GPS, Siri, drones and the internet. Some new technologies DARPA is working on include bullets that can change direction in flight, flying trucks, robotic pack animals and high-grip materials that will allow Soldiers to climb walls.

"It's an experience that I will never forget," Quinones said. "Last and most importantly were the friendships and bonds formed with the other fellows from other branches of service as well as the DoD civilians."

42nd ID Soldier is first Guard member chosen for DARPA fellowship

Army.mil, By Tech. Sgt. Ryan Campbell | New York National Guard March 3, 2020::

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https://www.army.mil/article/233331/42nd_id_soldier_is_first_guard_member_chosen_for_darpa_fellowship

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**Naval Militia**

**100-year-old bell finds a home at the Military and Naval Affairs building in Colonie**
Senior Chief Boatswain’s Mate Elizabeth Spain rings the re-dedicated U.S.S. Flusser bell at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs in Latham on Tuesday, Feb. 25. Photo submitted
A 100-year-old ship’s bell was re-dedicated by the New York Naval Militia during a ceremony at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

The 40-pound bell once signaled the time on the U.S.S. Flusser, a destroyer used to train naval reservists in the 1920s, including members of the New York Naval Militia.

“The bell before you is the only remaining piece of the U.S.S. Flusser,” said Comdr. Don McKnight of the New York Naval Militia in his introductory remarks at the ceremony. “It has been nearly 90 years since this bell last performed its official functions onboard the naval combatant before the Flusser was decommissioned.”

Since the 15th century, bells aboard ships were used to signal the time of day so sailors knew when to go on duty. They were also used to indicate the ship’s location in fog and are rung to mark the moment when a captain or high ranking officer boards or leaves a ship.

The refurbished bell has been mounted in a new black walnut wood frame and will be used during New York Naval Militia ceremonies and will be displayed in the Division of Military and Naval Affairs building lobby.

The bell was re-dedicated 100 years to the day the U.S.S. Flusser was commissioned in Squantum, Massachusetts at the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Yard in 1920.

“A ship’s bell, foremost, establishes the rhythm of a ship,” said Rear Admiral Warren Smith, commander of the New York Naval Militia. “It is used for many purposes, but it is a reference point for life aboard ship.”

The New York Naval Militia is a component of the New York Military Forces, which also includes the Army and Air National Guard and the New York Guard, a state defense force.

The Naval Militia is composed of 2,800 current and former Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard members who agree to serve on state active duty when called by the state of New York. They put the skills they’ve honed in federal military service to work for New York.

The Naval Militia traces its history back to 1889 when a Provisional Naval Battalion was organized. That unit was formally mustered into State service as the First Battalion, Naval Reserve Artillery, on June 23, 1891. One year later the New York Naval Militia was called to active duty to protect steam ship passengers during the 1892 cholera quarantine at Fire Island.

Naval Militia members served in the Spanish American War and the conflicts since.

The New York Naval Militia also operates a fleet of 10 patrol boats which can assist law enforcement and the Coast Guard in New York’s waters.

The USS Flusser bell was mounted on the destroyer USS Flusser, built in 1919 by Bethlehem Shipbuilding in Massachusetts and commissioned Feb. 25, 1920.

The Flusser was armed with torpedoes and 4.5-inch guns. The ship was 314 feet long, had a crew of 114 men, and a speed of 35 knots. It was the third ship to bear that name.

The ship’s namesake was a Civil War naval officer, Lt. Cmdr. Charles W. Flusser, who was killed in action on April 19, 1864 when his ship, the USS Miami was in combat with the Confederate vessel Albemarle near Plymouth, North Carolina.

In 1925 the Flusser was assigned to U.S. Navy forces in Europe and toured 15 countries before returning to the U.S. and homeporting in Newport, Rhode Island.

At Newport the Flusser was used to develop destroyer tactics and also served as a training ship for reservists, including members of the New York Naval Militia.

In 1930 the ship was decommissioned and then scrapped in order to comply with an international treaty limiting naval armaments.

“The Flusser served in the Roaring 20s,” a time of great prosperity, optimism and technological innovation,” said New York Maj. Gen. Timothy LaBarge, commanger of the New York Air National Guard and senior officer present at the ceremony. “The Flusser and her bell keep that connection to a time of optimism and her legacy of affluence and prosperity.”

Somehow the bell of the Flusser made its way to New York. The bell wound up in the New York State Armory in Oswego, probably because at one time there was a Naval Militia unit located there. When the Oswego Armory closed, the bell was transferred to the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga.

With the Naval Militia began searching for a bell for its ceremonies, the museum agreed to loan the bell of the Flusser. Members of the Naval Militia volunteered their time to work on the refurbishment of the bell for its public display.

And with the striking of four bells at 2 p.m., the bell of the USS Flusser once again chimed in its official duties a century after decommissioning.

Story submitted by the state Division of Militrary and Naval Affairs.
New York Air National Guard

National Guard in urgent fight against member suicide

Washington Examiner, March 05, 2020:

When she was a commander at a National Guard unit in New York, Maj. Gen. Dawne Deskins grew concerned when a National Guardsman did not appear for work. A wellness check was immediately ordered.

The guardsman was found having attempted suicide but was saved.

The event shook the entire unit, making leadership and fellow guard members feel a sense of responsibility, Deskins told journalists at a press briefing Thursday to discuss the progress of suicide prevention programs in the Guard, where a suicide rate of 30.6 per 100,000 is the highest of all services.

“All commander would have at least one story like that, and it’s something you don’t ever, ever forget,” said Deskins, now the Guard’s director of manpower and personnel. “I see the faces that we lose to suicide.”

Deskins said 11 pilot programs now underway in nine states are developing a data-driven approach to change the way the National Guard looks at suicide. The culture shift aims to identify best practices, find metrics for early detection, and foster an environment of openness to discuss suicide and mental health.

“We really are a family in the National Guard,” she said. “It’s not unusual to have guard units that have generations within them, parents and children, and aunts and uncles, serve in the same unit. That makes this even more personal when you have a loss.”

The Guard is using $15 million in congressional appropriations over the last two fiscal years to finance the 11 programs and new proposals currently under consideration.

The state-specific pilots and data sets dig down to the county level to help the National Guard customize suicide prevention for a force that faces unique challenges not faced by the other services.
“Each state and each county has different problems that uniquely impact that county,” said Capt. Matthew Kleiman, a mental health practitioner who directs Warrior Resilience and Fitness for the Guard.

“We see our Guard members at varying rates. Sometimes we just see them on drill weekends,” he said, making it difficult to detect and treat mental health problems.

“We have people that live in a community that are maybe hundreds of miles from where they drill. That’s just the reality of it,” he added.

Kleiman said it was too early to assess lessons learned before pilot programs are complete in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, New Mexico, South Dakota, Montana, South Carolina, Georgia, and California, but there are some early signs of success.

A Massachusetts alcohol and drug abuse prevention program has turned the problem on its end, focusing on physical performance rather than treating mental health as a disease.

“When you look at behavioral health, so often there’s this mindset that someone who has a behavioral health issue is broken in some way and need to be fixed,” Kleiman said.

In the Massachusetts program, two events screened 800 service members, giving them an individualized performance program.

“When I say physical performance, we all know, in the military, what that means,” he said, referring to physical fitness tests and readiness. “You don’t have to be a broken person to benefit.”

Performance metrics that may help prevent suicide in the future, he explained, may include adverse actions following a deployment, such as a DUI or domestic abuse.

“Psychological fitness would also have performance measures, how resilient a person is, how they bounce back from a stressful situation,” he said. “We want to quantify performance in measurable terms.”


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WASHINGTON — Gen. Joseph Lengyel, the top commander of the National Guard, said Tuesday that he backs the idea of a Space Guard.

“I believe the space capability of the Air National Guard should move into the Space Force [at] the same time as all the other [space capabilities] of the Air Force moves over,” Lengyel told lawmakers at a House hearing on the Guard’s budget. “We can’t do that unless there’s a component for us to move into. For over a year, I’ve been advocating for a Space National Guard component.”

But Lengyel said a Space National Guard is still “under discussion.”

“One of the best things about us is what we do so well is mirror the culture of our parent services,” he said. “There will be a standard of being a space warrior in the future...The National Guard has been conducting space missions since 1995.”

Throughout the House Appropriations Committee hearing, Lengyel referred to service members in the military’s newest branch a “space warriors,” as the Defense Department continues to search for an official term to describe troops in Space Force.

Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., the ranking member of the House committee’s subpanel on defense, said the Defense Department is expected to give Congress a plan to integrate the National Guard and reserves with Space Force within two months.

The Guard’s space operators are now involved in a variety of operations, including space intelligence, homeland missions such as missile defense and offensive electronic warfare.

In February, other top Guard generals signaled strong support for adding a Space Force component. For now, there is only an Army and Air Force National Guard.

“Personally, I don’t see how we have a Space Force without a Space Guard,” Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael Loh, the adjutant general for the Colorado National Guard, told reporters last month at the Pentagon.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Torrence Saxe, the adjutant general for the Alaska National Guard, added: “I don’t think they would function very well if we didn’t have a Space National Guard.”

However, Guard planners have proposed limiting Space National Guard operations to nine states and territories that already have or will soon have space capabilities. They said attempting to have a Space National Guard in all 50 states and four territories, which all have Army and Air National Guards, would be costly for taxpayers.

The National Guard’s space operations force is small but growing, with some 1,100 Air National Guard troops in space operations and another 300 or so Army National Guard soldiers. It has units that conduct space missions in Colorado, California, Florida, Alaska,
New York, Ohio and Arkansas, and is in the process of establishing such units in Hawaii and Guam.


New York Army National Guard

Street Smarts: Tucson's Kilmer St. honors famed poet who sacrificed life in WW1

Tucson.com, March 1, 2020 ::
Mar 06, 2020

Tucson street is named for Joyce Kilmer, the poet famous for penning “Trees” — “I think that I shall never see / A poem lovely as a tree ...”

Alfred Joyce Kilmer, more commonly known as Joyce Kilmer, was born to Episcopalian parents, Dr. Frederick and Annie (Kilburn) Kilmer, on Dec. 6, 1886 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. His father was the inventor of Johnson & Johnson’s baby powder.

Kilmer attended Rutgers Preparatory School where he was editor of the school paper and spent many summers with his mother in England.

This was followed by his studies at Rutgers College and Columbia University in New York City; he graduated from the latter in May 1908.

The following month he married Aline Murray, stepdaughter of Henry Mills Alden, editor of Harper’s Magazine, who was from the nearby village of Metuchen, New Jersey, and they would go on to have a few children. She also later authored several books of poetry and children’s stories.

He went to work teaching Latin at Morristown High School in Morristown, New Jersey, and moonlighting as a writer of reviews, essays and poems. Over the next few years he became a famous editor, journalist and literary critic.

The couple moved to New York City where he was employed defining words for The Standard Dictionary at Funk and Wagnalls.

His first volume of poetry, entitled Summer of Love, was published in 1911 and featured poems about George Meredith, English novelist and poet, and Florence Nightingale, the famous nurse and social reformer, both of whom had recently died.
In 1912, James Daly, a Jesuit priest and English professor at Campion College in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, penned a letter to Kilmer to talk about literature. Kilmer and Daly corresponded and in time developed a close friendship. This relationship led Kilmer and his wife to convert to Catholicism the next year.

That same year, in 1913, Kilmer joined the staff of The New York Times and scribed his most famous poem and the work he is most well-known for, “Trees,” which first appeared in Poetry magazine:

“A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth’s sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree”

The following year a compilation was published in book form as Trees and Other Poems.

Kilmer wrote several other books as well, including The Circus and Other Essays in 1916 and Main Street and Other Poems and Literature in the Making, both in 1917.

He also edited Dreams and Images: An Anthology of Catholic Poets. Among these verse writers he wrote about were four Jesuits and he dedicated the volume to Father Daly.

When the United States entered World War I, Kilmer, then a well-known literary figure in the country, chose to sign up as a mere private in the Seventh Regiment of the New York National Guard.
In time, he requested help from Father Francis Duffy, the regimental chaplain, of the famous New York City “Fighting 69th” infantry regiment to transfer to his body of soldiers. The bard and priest became fast friends.

Kilmer was also aware that his enlistment would bring difficulties for his wife:

“I feel the pain of my sacrifice is hard on both of us, but I realize also that God wills me to do my duty in this manner and, therefore, I have every reason to believe that He will take better care of my wife and children than I should ever hope to do. I have considered this step I am taking from every side and I feel there is no doubt that I have an obligation to join the colors. I would be ashamed later on to look at the children if I don’t volunteer. However other married men feel about going, I consider my enlisting as a duty I owe to God and country.”

The Fighting 69th had a proud record of service in the U.S. Civil War, during which, according to legend, the military unit obtained the title “Fighting” from one of the most revered military generals of the time, Robert E. Lee.

Kilmer ascended the ranks quickly from private to sergeant and was soon after offered a commission as an officer if he was willing to transfer out of the Fighting 69th, at that point known as the 165th Infantry Regiment. The poet-soldier declined, saying he would rather be a sergeant in the 69th than an officer with another regiment.

Before leaving for the war, he experienced both heartbreak and felicity in a short period of time: His daughter Rose died and less than two weeks later his son Christopher was born.

His first job in the conflict was as a statistician, a “bullet-proof” job, as he called it, away from the action. Since this wasn’t why he signed up, he transferred to the regiment’s intelligence section and earned a reputation for his fearlessness on scouting missions against the front lines of the enemy forces.

On July 30, 1918, Sgt. Kilmer was scouting ahead of the other soldiers to try to locate German machine gun positions near the Ourcq River when he was shot and killed by a German sniper.

He was awarded the Croix de Guerre posthumously by the French government.

Frank H. Spearman, a fellow writer, shared his thoughts in the Los Angeles Times on Kilmer’s sacrifice soon after his death:

“Joyce Kilmer’s patriotism contained not even the alloy of ambition — it was refined gold. And it is for this — for his taking his place lowest at the table, for his modesty in choosing the simplest and most obscure service in the great army and walking straight to the trenches — that I lay this little wreath on the grave of a gentleman unafraid and a patriot undefiled.”
In 1930, in Tucson, Evo DeConcini, the future Arizona Supreme Court justice and namesake of the Evo A. DeConcini Federal Courthouse in downtown Tucson, recorded the Colonial Estates subdivision, which included Kilmer Street.

The subdivision’s naming streets after writers and poets was a continuation of street naming that began with J.M. Roberts a few years earlier in the nearby Country Club Heights subdivision.

Special thanks to James A. Williams, author of “Claiming the Desert: Settlers, Homesteaders and Ranchers in Oro Valley, Arizona 1865-1965.”

David Leighton is a historian and author of “The History of the Hughes Missile Plant in Tucson, 1947-1960.” He has been featured on PBS, ABC, Travel Channel, various radio shows, and his work has appeared in Arizona Highways. He named two local streets in honor of pioneers Federico and Lupe Ronstadt. If you have a street to suggest or a story to share, email him at

https://tucson.com/news/local/street-smarts-tucson-s-kilmer-st-honors-famed-poet-who/article_64b810fd-8ab9-5ba5-8fa7-1ad4fd08fa82.html

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THE PIC OF THE DAY: NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD GETTING SOME FIELD TIME SOFREP, Feb. 29, 2020:

SOFREP, Feb. 29, 2020:

Soldiers assigned to the New York Army National Guard’s, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 69th Infantry, assault a position during training at the 106th Rescue Wing, F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base in Westhampton Beach, N.Y., on January, 11, 2020. Soldiers of the 69th Infantry conducted ground combat-focused field exercises at the 106th RQW as part of their monthly training.


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30,000 U.S. soldiers sent into Europe without masks
Workers.org, March 5, 2020:

Published in the Italian web newspaper, Il Manifesto, March 3. Translation by John Catalinotto.

The United States has raised the coronavirus (COVID-19) alert for Italy to level 3 (“avoid nonessential travel”), bringing it to 4 (“do not travel”) for [the northern regions of] Lombardy and Veneto — the same as for China. American Airlines and Delta Air Lines suspended all flights between New York and Milan. U.S. citizens going to Germany, Poland and other European countries, at alert level 2, must “take increased precautions.”

However, one category of U.S. citizens is exempted from these rules: the 20,000 soldiers beginning to arrive from the United States in European ports and airports for the Defender Europe 20 exercise, the largest U.S. troop deployment in Europe in the last 25 years. Including those already present, about 30,000 U.S. troops will participate in April and May, flanked by 7,000 troops from 17 NATO member and partner countries, including Italy.

The first armored unit arrived from the port of Savannah, Ga., to that of Bremerhaven in Germany. Altogether 20,000 pieces of military equipment arrived from the USA in six European ports (in Belgium, Holland, Germany, Latvia, Estonia). Another 13,000 pieces are supplied by the U.S. Army in Europe from prepositioned depots, mainly in Germany, Holland and Belgium. These operations, reports the U.S. Army in Europe, “require the participation of tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians from many nations.”

At the same time, the bulk of the contingent of 20,000 soldiers arrives from the U.S. in seven European airports. Among these are 6,000 National Guard coming from 15 states: Arizona, Florida, Montana, New York, Virginia and others.

At the beginning of the exercise in April, reports the U.S. Army in Europe, the 30,000 U.S. soldiers “will spread through the European region” to “protect Europe from any potential threat,” with clear reference to the “Russian threat.”

Gen. Tod Wolters — who commands the United States forces in Europe and at the same time those of NATO as Allied Supreme Commander in Europe — assures everyone that “the European Union, NATO and the European Command of the United States have worked together to improve the infrastructure.” This will allow military convoys to move quickly along 2,500 miles of transit routes.

Tens of thousands of soldiers will cross borders to conduct exercises in 10 countries. In Poland, 16,000 U.S. soldiers will arrive in 12 training areas with about 2,500 vehicles. U.S. paratroopers of the 173rd Brigade stationed in Veneto and Italians in the Lightning Brigade stationed in Tuscany will go to Latvia for a joint launch exercise.

Defender Europe 20 is being conducted to “increase the ability to rapidly deploy a large combat force from the United States to Europe.” It is therefore carried out with timescales and procedures that make it virtually impossible to subject tens of thousands of soldiers to
COVID-19 health regulations and prevent them from coming into contact with the inhabitants during rest periods.

In addition, the U.S. Army in the Europe Rock Band will hold a series of free concerts in Germany, Poland and Lithuania that will attract large audiences.

The 30,000 U.S. soldiers, who “will spread through the European region,” are in fact exempted from the preventive COVID-19 regulations that apply to civilians. The assurance given by the U.S. Army in Europe that “we are monitoring the Coronavirus [COVID-19]” and that “our forces are in good health” is enough.

At the same time, the environmental impact of a military exercise of this magnitude is ignored. U.S. Abrams tanks will participate, weighing 70 tons, with depleted uranium shells. Each tank consumes 400 liters of fuel per 100 km, producing heavy pollution to deliver maximum power.

In this situation, what are EU and national authorities doing, what is the World Health Organization doing? They put the mask on over their eyes, as well as over their mouth and nose.

https://www.workers.org/2020/03/46670/

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**New York National Guard**

**Memorial to 39 NY National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who died in combat unveiled**

*Hamlet Hub, Feb. 28, 2020 :: Mar 06, 2020*

New York National Guard leaders unveiled a memorial to 39 New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who have died in Afghanistan and Iraq since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 at Camp Smith Training Site on Thursday, Feb. 27.

The 150 people who attended the event included local government leaders, Soldiers, Airmen, veterans and family members of the Army and Air National Guard members commemorated by the memorial.

The memorial, located at the training site's O'Brien Hall guest housing facility, features photographs of each of the Soldiers or Airmen silhouetted against an American flag. The photographs are mounted on a wall painted as an American flag just inside the entrance to the building.

Additional photographs will be added it necessary.
The first death commemorated took place during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the most recent deaths—four Airmen of the 106th Rescue Wing killed in a helicopter crash in Iraq—occurred in 2018 during operations against the Islamic State.

Six of those pictured had ties to the lower Hudson Valley.

The permanent memorial replaces a temporary one, which was initially located in the building and added to as Soldiers, and Airmen were killed or died of wounds in combat zones over the years.

"Because so many New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen pass through Camp Smith during training, we felt this would be an appropriate place to remember the Soldiers and Airmen who have been called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001," explained Lt. Col. Robert Zizolfo the training center manager.

In his remarks Major General Ray Shields, the Adjutant General of New York, said that the memorial wall is also a way to mark the sacrifice that the families of the men and women pictures have made.

"We can never thank you enough for sharing your loved ones with our nation's military forces," Shields said.

Shields pointed out that New York Guard Airmen and Soldiers were the first members of the military to engage in what the military calls the Global War on Terror.

On Sept. 11, 2001, New York Air National Guardsmen assigned to the Eastern Air Defense Sector in Rome, New York responded when notified that four airliners had been hijacked and began scrambling fighter planes. That evening New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the Lexington Avenue Armory in Manhattan were on sight at the ruins of the World Trade center, Shields said.

Since then the New York National Guard has sent its 42nd Infantry Division to Iraq and its 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan. New York Air National Guard members have repeatedly deployed as part of Air Expeditionary Wings and the New York Air National Guard's 107th and 174th Attack Wing fly remotely piloted aircraft on combat patrols every day, Shields said.

In addition, Shields added, 650 members of the 42nd Infantry Division headquarters will begin deploying to locations in the Middle East in the next week or two.

One of the military veterans present for the event was retired Col. Jeff Slack who led the New York Army National Guard's first Battalion, 69th Infantry in Baghdad, Iraq in 2004 and 2005.

The photographs of 11 Soldiers who served under Slack's command are on the wall.

"To not be here would be impossible," Slack said.
Soldiers and Airmen with Hudson Valley ties pictured on the memorial include Technical Sgt. Joseph G Lemm, a Brooklyn resident; Staff Sgt. Louis Bonacasa, from Coram; and Staff Sgt. Todd J. Lobraico, Jr. a New Fairfield Connecticut resident.

Lemm, Bonacasa and Lobraico were all members of the 105th Airlift Wing's 105th Security Forces Squadron, based at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh.

Lemm and Bonocasa were killed on Sept. 5, 2015 outside Bagram Air Base when a suicide bomber detonated a motorcycle filled with explosives at a checkpoint. Lobraico was killed by small arms fire Sept. 5, 2013, when insurgents attacked his patrol near Bagram Air Base.

All three Airmen were awarded the Bronze Star for Valor for their actions during those incidents.

Also pictured on the wall are two members of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry from the region who died in Iraq in 2005.

Sgt. Kenneth VonRonn, a Bloomingburg resident, died on January 6, 2005 in Baghdad Iraq from wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device struck the Bradley fighting vehicle that he was riding in.

Sgt. Anthony N. Kalladeen, a student at State University of New York, Purchase, was killed on August 8, 2005 in Baghdad following an attack in which the Humvee he was riding in was struck by two improvised explosive devices.

In addition, Poughkeepsie resident Sgt. Mark Palmateer, who was killed in Afghanistan on June 26, 2008, while serving with the New York Army National Guard's 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, is memorialized.

Palmateer died when improvised explosive devices, small-arms fire, and rocket-propelled grenades fighting took place near Forward Operating Base Shank.

Camp Smith Training Site, located in the Town of Cortlandt, is the New York National Guard's premier training site. The New York National Guard has used the location for training since the 1880s.


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Veterans

Cuomo appoints NY panel to select site for first state veterans cemetery
A five-member committee will be tasked with overseeing the establishment of New York's first veterans cemetery.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo named Jim McDonough, director of the state Division of Veterans' Services, chair of the panel. The other members are Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, commissioner of the state Division of Military and Naval Affairs; RoAnn Destito, commissioner of the state Office of General Services; Erik Kulleseid, commissioner of the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; and Rossana Rosada, New York secretary of state and chair of the state cemetery board.

The panel will lead the site selection process for the cemetery and create an action plan outlining how the site will be operated.

Cuomo included the creation of the state's first veterans cemetery in his 2020 State of the State agenda.

"It is our obligation to ensure that the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect this great nation are honored with a dignified place to rest alongside their fellow service members in New York," Cuomo said.

New York is one of the few states without a state veterans cemetery, according to Cuomo's office. There are approximately 681,000 veterans living in New York, and more than 70% of them are at least 55 years old.

An obstacle to creating a state veterans cemetery has been a law that requires 15 years' worth of perpetual care costs to be collected before the site selection process can commence. Cuomo announced last year that he would introduce legislation to remove the funding mandate.

The bill is included in Cuomo's executive budget proposal this year.

McDonough, a retired Army colonel, wants the panel to collaborate with other state agencies and local stakeholders.

"We owe our veteran families nothing less than our best efforts to ensure that additional dignified burial options for New York's veterans become a reality this year," McDonough said.

There are at least two counties in upstate New York that have expressed interest in hosting the state's first veterans cemetery. Oneida County wants to be considered for the site. Seneca County, which is home to Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery, is also a potential candidate.
Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery is located in Romulus on a 162-acre property that previously hosted the Sampson Naval Training Station and Sampson Air Force Base. The cemetery opened in 2011.

State Sen. Pam Helming, who represents Seneca County, supports designating Sampson as the first state veterans cemetery. State Sen. Rob Ortt, who served with the Army National Guard in Afghanistan, also believes Sampson should be the site of a state veterans cemetery.


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