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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Be Ready to be Busy and Learn a Few Lessons

As 2017 came to a close, our New York Military Forces were busy helping to respond to three different hurricanes while continuing our regular training and missions.

We had more than 700 Soldiers and Airmen on duty, deploying, waiting to deploy, moving people and equipment, and packing over 5,000 boxes with donated supplies.

The operations tempo for 2018 will not let up. The Air Guard will keep flying missions and deploying Airman and many of our Army Guard units will find their training schedule kicked into high gear. And snow storms will happen. Domestic operations missions will pop up.

So as we head into 2018, make sure you take time to be with your families. Spend time with the special people in your life and make sure you let them know how much you appreciate their support so you can continue to serve.

I've written before about the importance of getting to know each other and really talking. As I was preparing for a Veterans Day talk I came across a story that I think, makes the case for this kind of communication.

The article, written by James Moschgat, who is now on the staff of the Air War College, is called "A Janitor's Ten Lessons in Leadership." In it, Moschgat relates how nobody paid much attention to old Bill Crawford, the janitor who cleaned his dorm while he was a cadet at the Air Force Academy in 1976.

At 58, Mr. Crawford was an old man to the cadets in their early 20s. He was shy, he was quiet, and he was the janitor.

Then one day in 1976, Moschgat realized that Bill Crawford had received the Medal of Honor as a private in the Army in Italy during the Italian campaign. Shy, quiet, Bill Crawford had single-handedly attacked fortified German positions repeatedly before he was wounded and taken prisoner.

Moschgat and his fellow cadets realized that Mr. Crawford was more than just a janitor. He was a hero, a veteran Soldier, and he had lessons to pass on.

Once the cadets found out who he was they invited him to squadron functions and learned from him, even as he continued to keep their building spotless.

Moschgat said he learned ten important things from Mr. Crawford, who died in 2000, and I would like to pass them along. Here are his lessons:

- **Be cautious of labels.** The labels you place on people may define your relationship to them and bound their potential. Sadly, and for a long time, we labeled Bill as just a janitor, but he was so much more. Therefore, be cautious of a leader who callously says, "Hey, he's just an Airman." Likewise, don't tolerate the O-1, who says, "I can't do that, I'm just a lieutenant."

- **Everyone deserves respect.** Because we hung the "janitor" label on Mr. Crawford, we often wrongly treated him with less respect than others around us. He deserved much more, and not just because he was a Medal of Honor winner. Bill deserved respect because he was a janitor, walked among us, and was a part of our team.

- **Courtesy makes a difference.** Be courteous to all around you, regardless of rank or position. Military customs, as well as common courtesies, help bond a team. When our daily words to Mr. Crawford turned from perfunctory "hellos" to heartfelt greetings, his demeanor and personality outwardly changed. It made a difference for all of us.

- **Take time to know your people.** Life in the military is hectic, but that's no excuse for not knowing the people you work for and with. For years a hero walked among us at the Academy and we never knew it. Who are the heroes that walk in your midst?

- **Anyone can be a hero.** Mr. Crawford certainly didn't fit anyone's standard definition of a hero. Moreover, he was just a private on the day he won his Medal. Don't sell your people short, for any one of them may be the hero who rises to the occasion when duty calls. On the other hand, it's easy to turn to your proven performers when the chips are down, but don't ignore the rest of the team. Today's rookie could and should be tomorrow's superstar.

- **Leaders should be humble.** Most modern day heroes and some leaders are anything but humble, especially if you calibrate your "hero meter" on today's athletic fields. End zone celebrations and self-aggrandizement are what we've come to expect from sports greats. Not Mr. Crawford—he was too busy working to celebrate his past heroics. Leaders would be well-served to do the same.

- **Life won't always hand you what you think you deserve.** We in the military work




Maj. Gen.
Anthony German

hard and, dang it, we deserve recognition, right? However, sometimes you just have to persevere, even when accolades don't come your way. Perhaps you weren't nominated for junior officer or airman of the quarter as you thought you should—don't let that stop you. Don't pursue glory; pursue excellence. Private Bill Crawford didn't pursue glory; he did his duty and then swept floors for a living.

- **No job is beneath a leader.** If Bill Crawford, a Medal of Honor winner, could clean latrines and smile, is there a job beneath your dignity? Think about it.

- **Pursue excellence.** No matter what task life hands you, do it well. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "If life makes you a street sweeper, be the best street sweeper you can be." Mr. Crawford modeled that philosophy and helped make our dormitory area a home.

- **Life is a leadership laboratory.** All too often we look to some school or PME class to teach us about leadership when, in fact, life is a leadership laboratory. Those you meet everyday will teach you enduring lessons if you just take time to stop, look and listen. I spent four years at the Air Force Academy, took dozens of classes, read hundreds of books, and met thousands of great people. I gleaned leadership skills from all of them, but one of the people I remember most is Mr. Bill Crawford and the lessons he unknowingly taught. Don't miss your opportunity to learn.

I think these are lessons worth learning. Don't miss out when your own Mr. Crawford comes into your life. 

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Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Freyn, incoming senior enlisted advisor with the 153rd Troop Command Brigade, stands at attention during the brigade's Change of Responsibility Ceremony at Camp Smith, N.Y., Nov. 4, 2017. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



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 Maj. Gen. Anthony German, THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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FRONT COVER: Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation made friends with local residents while providing food and water to isolated locations on Puerto Rico in response to Hurricane Maria. Photo by Spc. Nicholas Fengarinas, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation. See our story on page 11.
 BACK COVER: Loadmaster Senior Master Sgt. David Vesper and Airman 1st Class Ryan Rhoads load cargo onto an LC-130 "Skibird" at Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station on Nov. 9, 2017. The loadmasters are deployed to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze from the 109th Airlift Wing. Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt. See our story on page 24.

FACES of the FORCE

Guard Leader Recognized by Latina Style Magazine

By Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. - New York Army National Guard, Col. Isabel Rivera Smith, the chief of staff for the 53rd Troop Command, has spent her 32-year career admiring the efforts of trailblazing women and Latinos in the military who paved the way for her.

Now, she has been recognized for serving as the role model for others to follow.

Smith, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the more than 4,100 Soldiers in the 53rd Troop Command, was presented with the 2017 Latina Style Distinguished Military Service Award on September 15, 2017.

She is the first New York National Guard member to receive this award since it was introduced in 2004.

Latina Style is a national magazine, which focuses on contemporary Hispanic women, their accomplishments and issues.

Smith, a resident of Goshen, N.Y., was surprised when she found out about the award.

"It's an honor to receive this award and this recognition proves how important diversity is in the military," Smith said.

Smith is currently serving in Puerto Rico as part of the National Guard's efforts to help the island recover from Hurricane Maria.

Smith is putting her operations and logistics experience to work along with her Spanish language skills as a liaison officer working with Puerto Rican officials and the National Guard's Joint Enabling Team, which coordinates National Guard response to disasters.

Launched in 2004, the National LATINA Symposium brings together the largest gathering of Latina leaders in the nation. A highlight of the symposium is the Distinguished Military Service Awards Luncheon honoring Latinas serving in the Armed Forces.

The award recognizes women in the military and the Department of Defense civilian workforce who, through their service, have enhanced the role of Latinas in their organization.

"I was confident in nominating Col. Smith because she is a great example to all of our Soldiers," said Brig. Gen. Michel Natali, commander of the 53rd Troop Command, New York Army National Guard. "The fact that she progressed from private to colonel gives her an

innate understanding of our Soldiers at every level."

Smith is proud of her Puerto Rican heritage and for being a part of the growing diversity in the senior ranks of the military.

"I'm proof that it's possible to be a Latina woman and get to my level; I've done it and so can you," Smith said.

Major Tony Plata, who served under Smith for several years, echoed the same sentiment.

"Seeing a Latina as a senior ranking officer is important, not only for Hispanics, but for women as well. With hard work, dedication, and commitment to service the rank of colonel is achievable for all," Plata said.

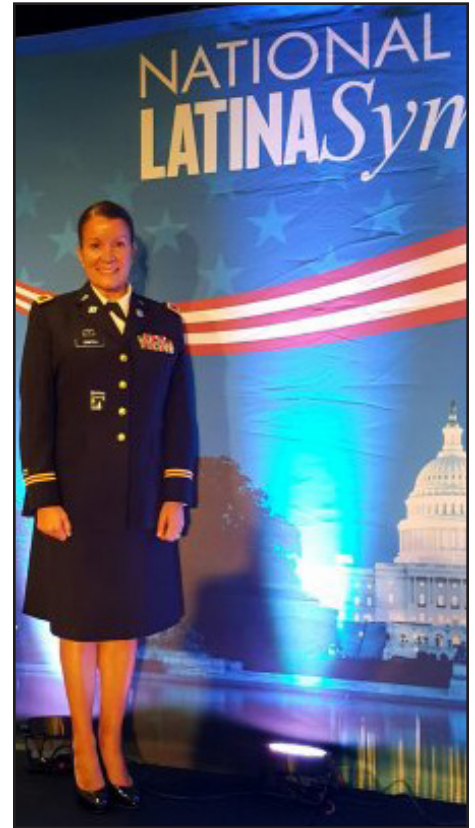
While diversity is part of the solution, Smith believes it's not the only answer. She has risen throughout the ranks because of her tireless work ethic and outstanding leadership ability.

"Her highly effective leadership abilities are firmly rooted in that understanding and experience," said Natali. "She is completely dedicated to the Army and our Soldiers and personifies all that we need in our Senior Leaders."


Smith's personal philosophy on leadership is a culmination of age and experience, and transcends what's only visible on the outside of those she manages.

"Diversity is about recognizing individual differences and as a leader it's also about the genuine care and concern demonstrated towards our Soldiers in our formations."

Ultimately, times are changing, admits Smith. "Good leaders will adapt to this change and if I somehow removed some barriers for women



Col. Isabel Rivera Smith, chief of staff of the 53rd Troop Command, has been recognized by Latina Style Magazine for her accomplishments. Smith received the award during a Sept. 15 ceremony in Washington, D.C. Courtesy photo.

and minorities by receiving this recognition, I'm pleased. "Be true to what's in your heart," says Smith, "and you can achieve anything." 

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Giaquinto is new Senior Enlisted Advisor for NY

By Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

LATHAM, N.Y., – Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, was the first woman to serve as Command Chief of the New York Air National Guard's 5,800 members when she took on that job in 2016.

Now she's got two more firsts to her name.

In October, she became the first Air National Guard member -- and the first woman -- to serve as the top enlisted advisor to the Adjutant General.

She's now the senior NCO dealing with issues impacting the enlisted Soldiers of the 10,300-member New York Army National Guard as well as the New York Air National Guard.

"I'm looking forward to getting out and about and learning about the Army, meeting the Soldiers, and hearing their stories," Giaquinto said.

Giaquinto started off her military career wearing green; as an enlisted Soldier from 1984 to 1987 in Germany. That, though, is a lot different than serving in a joint position at a senior level, she said.

Giaquinto replaced Command Sgt. Major David Piwowarski who was also the Command Sergeant Major of the Army Guard.

Piwowarski will serve as Command Sergeant Major for the Army Guard, while Giaquinto wears two hats as New York's senior enlisted leader and Air Guard Command Chief.

The switch makes Giaquinto competitive for top enlisted positions at the national level, explained Major General Anthony German, the Adjutant General.

"Command Sgt. Major Piwowarski has been in the position for the last two years, he did a great job, and he is now competi-

tive at the national level to be the Command Sergeant Major of the National Guard or any other position the Army needs," German said. "So to be fair, on the Air Guard side I wanted to make sure we were competitive on the national level."

Giaquinto has the skills to go out into the field, learn what Soldiers and Airmen are concerned about and speak on his behalf, German said.

Giaquinto played a key role in putting together classes to help Guard Airmen learn what they need to know to advance their careers, German said. He's challenged her to look into doing the same thing for Army Guard Soldiers, German added.

After leaving the Army in 1987, where she served as an administrative specialist at United States Army Europe Headquarters in Heidelberg, Giaquinto had a ten year break in service. In 1997 she joined the 109th Airlift Wing.

She served in information management, administration and human resources jobs at the 109th between 1997 and 2011. She also deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2013 she was named Command Chief for the 109th Airlift Wing, a position she held until 2016.

"I am pretty excited that I am the first female in this job," Giaquinto said.

"I hope it breeds awareness that just because it has never been held by a female, and it has never been held by an Air Guard member, that doesn't mean that it can't," she added.

"We have to get out of the mindset that just because that's the way



Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, the senior enlisted advisor to the Adjutant General of New York, speaks to members of the 107th Attack Wing in Niagara Falls, N.Y. on Oct. 17, 2017. Giaquinto is the first woman and the first Air National Guard member to hold that role in New York. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Campbell, 107th Attack Wing.

it has always been doesn't mean that is the way it has to be. People should be selected for ability and potential, for diversity of thought and experience, and not judge a book by its cover," Giaquinto said.

As state Command Chief, she's been visiting Air Guard units around the state "talking to Airmen and hearing their stories," Giaquinto said.

She brings what she learns -- "that they are constantly training to be mission ready, supporting domestic ops and supporting the war on terror, while still pursuing professional development"—back to German and other Air Guard senior leaders.

"Now I'll be doing the same thing on the Army side," Giaquinto said. "I want to make sure the command sergeants major, the sergeants major and all the other NCOS, have everything they need

to be able to train, mentor and develop their Soldiers." It will be more challenging meeting Army Guard Soldiers because they are spread out in more than 40 locations around the state, while the Air Guard's personnel are centralized at five bases.

Giaquinto thinks her experiences as an Active Duty Soldier, and traditional and full-time Air Guard member will help her relate to New York's Soldiers and Airmen.

"I joined the Air National Guard as a single mom with a full-time civilian job, so I know what it is like to be in the military with young children," she said.

She's also part of a dual military family—her husband Chief Master Sgt. Mark Giaquinto is a member of the 109th Airlift Wing.

"My situation helps me relate to Soldiers, Airmen and family members too," Giaquinto said. **gt**

WWII Soldier Shares Artillery History with Troops

Story and photo by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.- How many artillery rounds does it take for a New York Army National Guard artillery battalion to help win World War II?

According to 93-year-old Charlie Brown, a WWII veteran of the 258th Field Artillery Battalion, the answer is 33,902.

That's the number of rounds Brown and his unit fired during ten months in combat from the Normandy Beaches in July 1944 to the heart of Germany in May 1945.

Brown, from Olean, New York, visited the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs November 20, 2017 to meet with museum director Courtney Burns and current 258th Field Artillery members to discuss his experiences and display a collection of artifacts and details about his service in the war.

Brown, a 19-year old private first class who served in the battalion headquarters battery, kept detailed notes and records.

Brown's service included five European battle stars for the battalion's 302 days in combat and the crossing of nine rivers on his path from Utah Beach in Normandy on his way towards Berlin.

His original documents and details about the movement and combat operations of the 258th Field Artillery shed new light on the experiences of a New York Soldier in WWII.

Brown shared his copy of the original letter to allied troops for

"That's one thing about the 258th Field Artillery--we weren't backing up for anybody. We may have gone sideways once or twice, but never backwards."

-- Pvt. Charlie Brown, WWII Veteran, 258th Field Artillery

the invasion of Normandy, his notes regarding the battalion's movements and combat actions, and a captured Hitler youth flag during the unit's drive towards Berlin.

"It's a tremendous resource," said museum director Courtney Burns. "Not only the documents that he has brought but the stories that he's bringing with them, so we're going to be able to conduct an oral history interview with him and have him actually explain what all this stuff is, so that it'll be available for future researchers."

Brown took time to discuss his experiences and share unique documents, photos and artifacts of his service with the modern descendants of the battalion, Lt. Col. Peter Mehling and Capt. Steven Kerr, the commander and operations officer of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery, based in New York City.

"The photographs of the batteries in action are especially important since so few for this unit exist," Burns said.

When the battalion broke out from the Normandy beachhead in the summer of 1944, Brown kept notes showing how many miles the battalion advanced each day and the number and type of artillery rounds fired.

"The maps and overlays presented are priceless," Mehling said after looking over the battalion's movements through Europe.



World War II Army veteran Charlie Brown of Olean, N.Y., displays his captured Hitler Youth battle flag from his combat experience in Europe as part of the 258th Field Artillery Battalion with Lt. Col. Peter Mehling, right, and Capt. Steven Kerr, left, the commander and operations officer of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, New York November 20, 2017.

"Those documents convey with complete detail how the battalion fought from Normandy to Magdeburg. This data and level of detail simply does not exist for many units."

The 258th would go on to serve in the Hurtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge before their drive into Germany took the battalion to the Elbe River.

What does Brown consider among his most important artifacts? A simple two-dollar bill.

"I had a two-dollar bill, and every country I was in, I'd pull it out and write it down," Brown explained. "Starting in Scotland, then Wales, then England and on into France, Belgium, Holland and finally Germany. So this two-dollar bill has got all sorts of dirt on it from pulling it out of my pocket



The 155mm self-propelled howitzer used by the 258th Field Artillery in World War II.

everywhere I went," he said.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same," Mehling said. "For my service in Iraq and my Soldiers, it's remarkable how the American Soldier is an American Soldier no matter what country, what decade."

Brown's documents, overlays and data not only add to the museum, but bring life to the WWII narrative of the 258th Field Artillery and its history, Mehling said.

"The names change, the uniform and the equipment changes, but the Soldiers just stay the same all the time. It's amazing," Mehling said. **gt**



Hellfighters March in NYC Veteran's Day Parade

NEW YORK -- Soldiers from the 369th Sustainment Brigade, based at the Harlem Armory and Camp Smith Training site, prepare to step off for the the New York City Veterans Day Parade along Fifth Avenue on November 11, 2017. The brigade returned from a overseas deployment this past summer. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff.



Top Recruiter Recognized

ALBANY, N.Y. -- Sgt. First Class Robert Gross from Company C, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, receives the Top Producing Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year and Recruiter of the Year award, from Command Sgts. Maj. David Piwowarski, at right, and Althea Robinson Haddo at the Association of the United States Army's Soldier Recognition dinner, here Sept. 23, 2017. Photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters.



Wreath Laying Remembers Rainbow Vets

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- New York Army National Guard Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division Main Command Post Operation Detachment, known as a MCP-OD, placed a memorial wreath at the 42nd Infantry Division memorial located in front of the New York State Armory located at Fort Drum, November 11, 2017. The 42nd Division memorial there and at Fort Dix commemorates the unit mobilization for Iraq in 2004. Courtesy Photo.

Guard Prepares for WWI Warfare in 1917-1918

By Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. -- By November of 1917 the 27,000 Soldiers of the New York National Guard's 27th Division had said goodbye to their families, marched through New York City, and were ready to get down to serious training.

They did this at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, just outside the city of Spartanburg.

Work had only begun in July and by the end of August, along with news 1000 buildings, 37 miles of pipe were installed, and 18,000 electric lights put in place. The Army ordered 629 cast iron stoves, 72,000 kegs of nails, and 6,119 doors for the work.

Total cost of the project was \$2, 223,223.59 in 1917 dollars, which works out to \$40 million in 2017 money.

The division had to fix and rebuild the five-mile long road that connected Camp Wadsworth with Spartanburg.

The "Snake Road", a typical country dirt road, was in terrible repair. The 22nd Engineers shored up the sides of the road, widened it, filled potholes, built bridges, and generally put it in better shape.

The division had been organized in 1908 with three brigades of three regiments each.

The Army's plan for fighting the World War called for a "square" division of two brigades with two regiments each. Suddenly there were excess officers and excess men.

Major General John F. O'Ryan picked the best officers from the nine regiments to lead the four regiments he now had in his division. The Soldiers in the other five regiments filled gaps in the chosen regiments and were joined newly formed logistics and support units.

The main business at Camp Wadsworth was learning the 1917 way of war.

British and French Army instructors taught the Americans how to deal with trench warfare and the art of throwing a grenade.

A British training team passed on the latest in physical fitness training, which were shared in a train the trainer concept.

These British physical fitness trainers, O'Ryan noted, used a version of the game "Simon Says" to teach the raw American Soldiers to think on their feet and respond only to the right orders. Commands like "forward march"



New York National Guard Soldiers of the 27th Infantry Division training at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, feed their company mascot sometime in 1917. The 27,000 Soldiers of the division trained at Camp Wadsworth, just outside Spartanburg, from September 1917 to April 1918 before deployment to France for service in WWI. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

prefaced with the words "O'Grady says" were to be obeyed, while commands without those words first were to be ignored.

An especially important class was training for men who drove teams of horses towing wagons and who packed gear on a horse.

In 1917 4,000 horses towed a division's artillery, hauled machine guns, and carried ammunition and food. Men who had never worked with horses before had to learn.

The division built a trench system like those that stretched across Europe. Division engineers dug a trench system of eight miles of trenches covering a front of 700 meters.

World War I trenches were more than just a single ditch. Behind the front line trenches were trenches designed to protect troops and supplies moving forward and second and third line of defense trenches. In addition, these trenches zig-zagged to ensure that one bomb or grenade injured and killed only a small number of Soldiers. The trench system also included dug-outs and bomb shelters.

Infantry battalions and machine gun detachments would spend up to 72 hours in these practice trenches learning how to keep them repaired, put out listening posts, and even use the toilet facilities.

Division Soldiers lived in the trench system, while fighting off mock raiders.

In spite of, the need to learn trench fighting, the division focused training on "open warfare": infantrymen maneuvering for position and using rifles and grenades to engage the enemy after breaking through the trenches.

General John J. Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Force, insisted that American Soldiers were riflemen and that the key to victory would be their ability to employ that rifle to kill Germans. O'Ryan trained his New York Guardsmen with this in mind.

The division stayed at Camp Wadsworth from September 1917 until May of 1918. Then the New York Guardsmen left for Europe where they would fight with the British in Flanders. 

Passing the Torch of Service in Niagara Falls

Former 107th CO Enlists Great-Grandson, recalls Career

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Ryan Campbell, 107th Attack Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION, N.Y. -- A former commander of the 107th Attack Wing and World War II and Vietnam War veteran returned to Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station to swear in his great-grandson during an enlistment ceremony on Nov. 20, 2017.

Col. Laverne Donner, age 96, the third commander of the 107th, enlisted Airman Daniel Hertel into the 107th where he will serve as an intelligence specialist.

"It feels pretty good, feels like a big family," Hertel said. "I'm looking forward to growing as a person and going from a teenager to an adult."

Donner served as the wing commander from 1969 to 1972, when the 107th was organized as both a tactical fighter group and a fighter-interceptor group.

It feels good to have a family member join his old unit, Donner said.

Donner joined the U.S. Army Air Forces after the U.S. entered World War II.

"It was World War II and I was drafted but I'd already gone through all the paperwork for the (flight) cadet program," Donner said. "So they said, 'We'll ship your paperwork over to Ft. Niagara, just go down there.'" Things though would soon be underway for the future colonel.

Being a newly commissioned pilot, the war would send Donner to all parts of the world as one of the Army Air Corps' newest fighter pilots. His first assignment though didn't quite get him into the thick of it just yet.

"We got sent to Panama to get more time, since in cadet training we only had 10 hours in the P-40," said Donner. "We checked out the P-39s down there and we were doing submarine patrol so I got a battle star on my American Service Medal."

Donner then found himself in a new unit that would later become one of the Air Force's elite special operations wings: the 2nd Air Commando Group. The group was organized to conduct long range air strikes against the Japanese in Burma.

"We trained in Florida for seven months or so, we were flying P-51s then," said Donner. "I think I've flown every model ever made of the P-51 which was a grand airplane and it kept getting better."

The China-Burma-India Theater was next. Donner spent 31 days on a troop ship heading to India.

"I got more sea time than a lot of the Navy guys," joked Donner. "We moved from the rear base in India to right on the border of Burma in Bangladesh."

Finally in position, Donner took his P-51 Mustang, "Tombstone Jake," into action.

With the immense flying range of the P-51, Donner and his fellow pilots were able to carry out strikes over great distances. For a time during the war, nothing could match it.

"We flew all the way over to Bangkok and there was a strike on that airfield," said Donner. "At that time we would all just spread out and because I was in the tail end of everything, well the guys that went down the runway or the parking ramp they got the glory. I think I strafed the



Cols. Gary Charlton, left, and Robert Kilgore, vice commander and commander of the 107th Attack Wing, stand with retired Col. Laverne Donner, former commander of the 107th from 1969 to 1972, and his grandson Daniel Hertel whom he just swore in, at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, N.Y., Nov. 20, 2017. Donner was shown a drawing of him from his time as commander on display in the operations group.

outhouse, maybe it was the dining hall, I don't know."

After the war Donner flew a Stearman biplane crop duster for a couple of years. Then the New York Air National Guard formed the 107th Fighter Group, including the 136th Fighter Squadron, at Niagara Falls Air Base in 1948.

"It was the chance to fly again so I signed up," Donner said.

In 1968 the 136th Fighter Group was tapped to mobilize and deployed to Vietnam. This would be the second time going to war for Donner. This time he would be flying "Marilyn," his F-100C Super Sabre, into action.

"We went to Vietnam, I led the flight over and back and it went well, we had hundreds and hundreds of missions there," Donner said. "Went through a year over there, and between World War II and Vietnam I had 315 combat missions."

Serving as commander of the 107th left an impression on Donner. As he reflects, he has choice words for his three years in command.

"It was terrible," said Donner with a laugh. "As you can imagine they were always getting into trouble, which got me into trouble."

Although it has been many years since Donner was in command, there is still a great appreciation for him throughout the wing.

"It feels like he really belongs here, and his belonging here makes me feel more welcomed," Hertel said.

Enlisting his great-grandson was really special, Donner said.

"It hits you right in the old heart," he said. "I just hope that he has one half of the good times that I had with the outfit. I'm sure he will." **gt**

THE JOINT FORCE

Over 300 Airmen respond to Caribbean hurricanes

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

GABRESKI AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - Three hundred and five New York Air National Guard Airmen were kept busy in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria as they flew federal cargo missions, and took part in on the ground response to the storms which hit the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Sept. 6 and Sept. 20.

Maria, which went directly over Puerto Rico, did more damage than Irma, which passed north of the island, but the New York Air National Guard went into action almost immediately after Hurricane Irma passed through the Caribbean

The 106th Rescue Wing, based here at Westhampton Beach, Long Island, only two weeks before had sent 126 Airmen, three HH-60 Pavehawk helicopters and two HC-130 search and rescue aircraft to Texas to assist in post Hurricane Harvey rescue operations, quickly deployed the same package to Puerto Rico on Sept. 7.

More than half of the 128 Airmen who deployed to Puerto Rico had been on the Texas mission.

In Texas, the 106th made more than 546 rescues using helicopters and Zodiac boats because of the flooding. In Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, there was no flooding, so instead of conducting search and rescue missions, the team wound up evacuating American citizens from the Dutch side on the island of St. Maarten.

The St. Maarten mission kicked off when the 106th was asked to extract a diabetic American woman—Teirni Clendenin—who was running out of medication because the power was off.

The wing flew a CH-130 into the tricky St. Maarten airport, flown by a pilot who had landed there in his civilian airline capacity job, and then Capt. Chad Evans and Senior Master Sgt. Tom Pearce walked through the streets of the city, dodging looters and armed gangs to extract Clendenin and her husband, according to Major Edward Boughal, a 106th Rescue Wing Combat Rescue Officer.

When the plane left, they took out other Americans who had been at the airport seeking a way out.

The crews of the two 106th HC-130s, along with aircrews from the Kentucky Air National Guard and the Puerto Rico Air National Guard, then launched a three-day non-combatant rescue operation, coordinated jointly by the Department of State and Department of Defense. The effort, commanded by the 106th contingent, extracted more than 1,580 Americans from the island; 500 of those Americans were carried out in 106th Rescue Wing aircraft.

The two-week mission demonstrated the flexibility of the 106th Rescue Wing, Boughal said. The wing was originally tasked to conduct search and rescue but was able to seamlessly shift into an evacuation role.

“The hardest part was having to deal with a very dynamic situation on the ground in St. Maarten, as the island was completely devastated and people were desperate,” Boughal said.

Air Guard Hurricane Response Continued on Page 15



Members of the 106th Rescue Wing help evacuees from the destroyed airport on St. Maarten onto a HC-130 as they prepare to evacuate them to San Juan, Puerto Rico, Sept. 10, 2017. The New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing, staging out of San Juan with the 156th Air Lift Wing provided evacuation support to 1,500 stranded Americans on St. Maarten. Below, Master Sgt James Brucculeri, a loadmaster with the 103rd Rescue Squadron, ushers evacuees onto the HC-130 on St. Maarten headed to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Courtesy Photos.



Army Guard Aircrews Fly to Support Puerto Rico

Story by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff



SAN JUAN, P.R. - During forty days in Puerto Rico, 60 aviation Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard flew 369 hours while conducting 216 missions, and delivered 223 pallets of food, 324 pallets of water and 382 passengers to help the island's residents recover from Hurricane Maria.

"If supplies were available to hand out to the people, we were pushing it out to them," said Lt. Col Jason Lefton, the battalion commander of 3rd Battalion, 142nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, who led the team.

"When available, we delivered baby formulas, diapers and other baby sundries, pre-mature baby medicines, insulin, feminine hygiene products, over the counter medication and tarps," Lefton said.

The crews also transported doctors and nurses to isolated communities and inserted Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel and security forces where necessary, he added.

Operating from a staging site outside of San Juan at Isla Grande, where the Dominicci Airport is located, the 3-142nd Aviation team provided air movements and moved supplies to areas that couldn't be reached by road because of missing bridges and

wash outs.

The task force deployed pilots, crew chiefs, mechanics, flight operations personnel and a small headquarters element for personnel and logistics support.

"The Soldiers of the battalion kept their morale high and worked hard and effectively," said Capt. Andy Shaw, the battalion logistics officer.

The mission began September 28, when four UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters were loaded onto three C-17s flown by the New York Air National Guard's 105th Airlift Wing at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Ronkonkoma, N.Y.

The final group of aviation Soldiers, and two UH-60s, returned from the deployment on November 7.

In addition to integrating with the Puerto Rico National Guard, the aircraft and crews flew and worked with other contingents from New York: the New York State Police, the Fire Department of New York, the New York Police Department, and Homeland Security Investigations and Customs and Border Protection teams based in New York.

Rebuilding Puerto Rico has been the unit's opportunity to serve fellow Americans. The storm

destroyed roads, homes and cut vital resources like water and electricity to citizens there, Lefton said.

His team was also reinforced with CH-47 helicopters flown by Army Guard aircrews from Pennsylvania and Georgia, Lefton said.

These CH-47 crews conducted sling-load operations to reinforce the dam holding back the Guajataca Reservoir in the northeast section of the island.

Overall, the aviation Soldiers

performed wonderfully, Lefton said.

"The mission was successfully completed in Puerto Rico and it is exactly what we signed up to do in the National Guard, I am proud of all the Soldiers. While we are always prepared for austere conditions our team never complained and continued to be dedicated aviation professionals," Lefton said. **gt**



Above and at top, Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation unloads supplies from a UH-60 helicopter during a relief mission in Puerto Rico Oct. 16, 2017. The 3-142nd Aviation deployed 60 Soldiers and four UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to Puerto Rico to assist in the island's recovery from Hurricane Maria. Courtesy photos.

53rd Troop Command Steps up for Hurricanes

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y.- In the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria which devastated the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, the New York National Guard sent 400 Soldiers to help the islands. 351 came from the 53rd Troop Command.

Meanwhile, other 53rd Soldiers ran a major statewide relief supply collection effort directed by New York State Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

Of the 648 Soldiers involved in the mission, 114 were still on duty- including 41 in Puerto Rico, on Dec. 1, according to Maj. John Harder, the 53rd's personnel officer.

"The 53rd Troop Command was the primary force provider of military police and engineer assets who responded to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as well as personnel efforts to collect donations," said Lt. Col. Jody Lupo, the Troop Command operations and training officer.

"They did an amazing job," said Col. Isabel Smith, 53rd Troop Command's chief of staff.

"The ability to put forth a thorough response effort spanning across multiple domestic and overseas locations, requiring hundreds of Soldiers with various job specialties, highlights the caliber of our Soldiers," Smith said. "We're always here, always ready, whenever we're needed."

The 53rd Troop Command is comprised of multiple, specialized logistics and sustainment units, and was uniquely adept to handle the specific needs of the relief efforts, Smith said.

The 648 Soldiers who responded to the hurricanes were from 32 different units.

First out the door were 98 Soldiers from the 105th Military Police Company who left for St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands, a week after Hurricane Maria had passed the Caribbean on September 28.

The 105th Military Police Company conducted police assistance missions and returned home at the end of October.

Smith and four other 53rd Troop Command Spanish speaking officers also deployed to Puerto Rico to assist a National Guard staff assistance team in coordinating support efforts.

The 442nd Military Police Company and

152nd Engineer Support Company went to Puerto Rico.

The 442nd Military Police Company deployed 128 Soldiers to Puerto Rico. They conducted security missions on the island of Vieques and delivered relief supplies. 442nd Military Police Soldiers took part in several relief operations to remote villages with aircrews from New York's 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation.

The bulk of the 442nd MP Company Soldiers returned to New York in early November but 40 volunteered to remain behind conducting security missions until Dec. 15.

The 152nd Engineer Support Company deployment required Soldiers to travel by airlift while preparing and shipping some 36 outsized engineer vehicles to Puerto Rico by sealift, a first for any New York National Guard disaster response effort.

The engineers deployed 113 Soldiers to Puerto Rico from Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station Oct. 18-19. The company's heavy equipment shipped from the Crowley Liner facility at Petty Island in Pennsauken, New Jersey on Oct. 13.

The company conducted road clearing missions on the island and the bulk of the company returned to New York on Nov. 15. A small element remained in Puerto Rico to ship vehicles and returned home on Nov. 23.

The unprecedented scope of damage in the Caribbean required flexibility and creative thinking from leaders at all levels, Lupo said.

National Guard leaders and staffs encountered challenges in all phases of the response: from recalling troops to scheduling movements



Spc. Shannon Lichten, a member of the 442nd Military Police Company provides water to a resident of Barceloneta, Puerto Rico during a mission in October. The company deployed more than 120 Soldiers to conduct security missions in Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria. Courtesy photo.

out of state and sustaining forces 1,600 miles away from home station armories and operating in austere conditions.

"It was the first time we really had to quickly project people and equipment specifically for a State Active Duty mission outside of New York... on such a large scale," said Capt. Luke Udell, 153d Troop Command logistics officer.

Every issue encouraged creative problem solving, Lupo added. Everything from identifying volunteers with long-term availability to utilizing both military and civilian air and sea vessels were outside of the norm, but essential to ensure a quick response.

"We've been tested in ways that differ from a typical natural disaster response," Lupo said. "Every step of the way became more challenging - especially with limited connectivity; reaching back to your home station and higher-ups isn't just around the corner anymore."

In the end the mission came down to Sol-

Troop Command Continued on Page 14



Sgt. Cory Goodman, 827th Engineer Company, checks tie downs before more than three dozen engineer vehicles from the 152nd Engineer Support Company in Buffalo were shipped by barge at the Crowley Liner facility at Petty Island in Pennsauken, New Jersey on October 12, 2017. The mix of high mobility trucks, humvees, and construction equipment were needed in Puerto Rico as part of the recovery efforts after Hurricane Maria. Photo by Kryn Westhoven, New Jersey Army National Guard.

One Canine Rescue Changes Life for NY Soldier

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times* Staff

ST.CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - Lots of Soldiers bring back a deployment souvenir, but New York Army National Guard Spc. Stefanie DeManincor's souvenir from the U.S. Virgin Islands has four legs, a happily wagging tail, and answers to the name of Ava.

DeManincor, who lives in Scottsville, New York, just south of Rochester, was one of 98 members of the 105th Military Police Company who deployed to St. Croix in September.

Operating from a Virgin Islands Police station in Frederickstead, the MPs conducted patrols, curfew enforcement and set up traffic control points to assist the island's police.

"We did whatever they needed us to do," said DeManincor, a traditional National Guard

Soldier who works at Paychex in Rochester.

Next door to the police station there was roofless abandoned building where a dozen dogs were "hanging out." The Soldiers tried to make friends with the dogs.

One of those dogs was Ava, a six-month old, brown and white, female pit bull mix, that DeManincor first saw wagging her tail at her from a balcony on that building.

"You could tell how friendly she was," DeManincor said. "She would come up to us and let us pet her. She was the most friendly one."

The dog was covered in fleas and ticks, but DeManincor was won over. Ava was less fearful than the other dogs, she said, but that made it likely that she would wander off and get hurt.

DeManincor wanted to adopt and take Ava home. But that meant finding the right people.

Fortunately, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had a response team in St. Croix after the storms to deal with abandoned and stray animals.

DeManincor found Joel Lopez, the ASPCA's director of field operations, who was heading the team on St. Croix. Lopez found Ava on the side of the road eating a bag of potato chips and looking sad. He took Ava to an emergency shelter the ASPCA had established on the island.

Lopez located the owner of Ava and the other dogs, who surrendered rights to them.

DeManincor visited Ava in the animal shelter, got the dog the required shots, and signed adoption papers for the dog from the shelter.

Next was getting Ava back to New York.

That problem was solved by retired Navy Cmdr. Sali Gear, a former Navy pilot, a native of St. Croix and Virginia Beach, Virginia, resident who runs a non-profit called Island Dog Rescue.

Island Dog Rescue is basically herself and one other person, Gear said. They work to convince islanders to spay and neuter their

dogs, and they also work to find homes on the mainland for unwanted Virgin Islands dogs.

Gear chartered a plane to fly 20 dogs from St. Croix to Florida. These were "community dogs," those dogs with an owner but were separated and needed care. Ava fell into this category.

She was especially happy to help DeManincor bring Ava to her new home, Gear said.

Ava and three other dogs then traveled in a van to Charleston, South Carolina, where a horse trainer friend kept Ava on her farm. Gear then flew her own plane and brought Ava back to her house in Virginia Beach for two weeks.

"Ava was so loved by everyone," Gear said.

When DeManincor got back from deployment, she was ready to drive to Virginia Beach to pick up Ava, but Gear had a better solution.

A Navy captain offered to fly Ava to State College, Pennsylvania, in his private plane. That cut DeManincor's drive from 10 hours to 4.

So after three flights, and a few weeks, Ava was with her new owner on Nov. 3.

What Gear and Island Dog Rescue did was tremendous, DeManincor said. She couldn't afford to ship the dog on her own, and Gear provided photos of Ava while she was still on duty in St. Croix.

Now she and Ava are home in Scottsville together.

"I was lucky. It all ended up working out in my favor," DeManincor said.

DeManincor also said she felt lucky to be able to go on the mission to St. Croix.

"The mission was what I feel was a once in a lifetime experience," she said.

"Just being in the unit I have done a lot of cool things. This is probably ranking as the coolest thing I've done," DeManincor said.

"You have to embrace the suck sometimes. But I have gotten a lot of great things out of being in the Army so far," she added. **gt**



Spc. Stefanie DeManincor, a member of the 105th Military Police Company, with Ava, the stray dog she adopted during her deployment to the U.S. Virgin Islands. DeManincor and 97 other members of the 105th MP Company deployed to St. Croix to provide security assistance. Photo courtesy ASPCA and Spc. Stefanie DeManincor.

53rd Troop Command Continued from Page 12
diers like Spc. Abraham Matute.

Matute, a plumber and heavy equipment operator with the 1156th Engineer Company, had just returned from a year-long deployment to Iraq when he got the call asking for volunteers to help the victims of Hurricane Maria.

Without hesitating, he packed his bags and was on a plane three weeks later for Puerto Rico with the 152nd Engineer Company.

"I was honored to be able to serve my country twice in less than a year; once for combat and once for humanitarian reasons," Matute said.

Matute recalled being part of a convoy that spent over two hours getting to a remote village in the mountains of Puerto Rico that had been cut off by debris and broken roadways. With no power, no running water and little food supply, the villagers still offered

the Soldiers what little food and coffee they had in appreciation for their help.

"When you see people that have next to nothing offer you the very last of their food, you can't help but feel proud and motivated to continue to help," Matute said. **gt**



New York Air National Guard Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing's Base Defense Squadron board one of the wing's C-17s at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, N.Y. Oct. 6, 2017 heading for the Island of St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Airmen conducted security duties on the island as part of the response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Courtesy photo.

While the 106th Rescue Wing deployed boots on the ground, the 105th Airlift Wing based in Newburgh, N.Y., provided C-17 airlift for domestic operations missions, while the 109th Airlift Wing at Scotia, N.Y. provided additional C-130 airlift support, moving personnel and equipment.

The 105th Airlift Wing also transported crews and aircraft of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation from Long Island to Puerto Rico, and moved the three HH-60s and many of the 106th Airmen to Puerto Rico as well.

The wing launched 17 support missions from Stewart Air National Guard Base and conducted over 100 sorties in support of the operation.

The 105th moved 326 personnel, and transported 54 vehicles and 41 pallets of supplies. This was more than 231 tons of cargo.

This cargo included one of the P23 fire trucks assigned to Stewart, which was moved to Puerto Rico for use at the airport there. This was the first time the wing had ever moved that type of equipment.

The 105th also deployed a number of its troops for relief missions.

Seven 105th Airmen deployed with a satellite communications system to the Virgin Islands to help reestablish communications there.

The 105th Base Defense Squadron also deployed 40 personnel to the island of St. Croix to assist in providing security.

The wing also sent seven personnel to Rafael Hernandez Airport in Puerto Rico to work with eight members of the 109th Airlift Wing conducting aerial port operations there.

The 109th Airlift Wing also flew troops and equipment to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The wing had 35 aircrew on duty, flying 37 sorties. The wing provided 110 flying hours, even as the unit prepared to launch its own missions for Operation Deep Freeze, its federal Antarctica support mission.

The 109th moved 208 personnel and 122 tons of cargo flying those missions.

Back here in New York, the men and women of the Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS) also played a role in the hurricane relief missions being flown in the Caribbean by the Air Force, Air Guard and Air Force Reserve, providing communications, command and control for deployed aircraft. **gt**

Hurricane Support by the Numbers

- 48 New York Naval Militia**
- 98 New York Guard**
- 305 Air National Guard**
- 822 Army National Guard**
- 890 Members on SAD**
- 383 Members on Title 10/ Title 32**
- 29 Pax in Carribean**
- 129 Pax at Home Station**
- 140 Pax in U.S. Virgin Islands**
- 210 Pax at other Continental US location**
- 336 Pax in Puerto Rico**
- 5 NYNG Donation Stations**
- 195 UH-60 hours flown**
- 300 NYANG hours flown**
- 336 Short Tons flown by NYANG**
- 350 Pallets delivered by UH-60**
- 500 Civilians evacuated by NYANG**
- 534 Military Pax moved by NYANG**
- 2,974 Pallets of Goods Shipped**
- 5,199 Pallets of Goods Collected**

As of Nov. 30, 2017

Soldiers, Airmen Donate Time for Trees for Troops

Story by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Lambert, 109th Airlift Wing

BALLSTON SPA, N.Y. – New York National Guard Airmen and Soldiers volunteered their time to fill up a delivery truck with donated Christmas trees bound for military families on Monday, at the Ellms Family Farm here.

This is the 13th year that the National Guard troops turned out alongside veterans and Patriot Guard Riders to assist Ellms in the nationwide Trees for Troops initiative. Some three dozen volunteers were on hand to support the packing of trees with donated decorations and loading them for shipment.

"Having that little slice of home is a great reminder of how much the homefront cares," said Chip Ellms, owner of the tree farm and coordinator of the event.

Approximately 150 trees donated by 15 local tree farms in Upstate New York were loaded onto a FedEx truck headed to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where they will be distributed to military families.

The Ellms family grows almost 800 trees per acre on 50 acres on the farm north of Albany. The operation started in 1983 and has grown to become a year-around agro-tourism attraction.

The Ellms trees added to more than 200,000 trees donated since 2005 by the national pro-

gram of the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation. The program, in partnership with FedEx, delivers farm-grown trees to U.S. military personnel and their families from all branches stationed at more than 60 bases around the globe.

Many of the National Guard volunteers have previously deployed during the holidays and spoke about the impact this kind of event can have on a deployed Soldier or Airman. Other volunteers have also been the family member missing their loved one.

Airman 1st Class John Lawlor, a medical technician assigned to the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, part of the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, New York, knows first-hand what it's like to be without a family member on Christmas.

"My whole life, my father has been away every year so it hits close to home for me; people truly do care," he said.

Lawlor's father, Chief

Master Sgt. John Lawlor, is also assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, and has deployed annually as part of the support of Operation Deep Freeze to Antarctica; the mission coincides with the holiday season every year.

Among the other volunteers was Edward Czuchrey, a Patriot Guard Rider and retired Air Force master sergeant.

"I think it's a wonderful thing these folks do for the veterans; we do anything we can to help," Czuchrey said. **gt**



More than a dozen New York Air National Guard Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing in Newburgh also volunteered their time to load donated Christmas Trees on November 27 in Cornwall, N.Y., as part of the national Trees for Troops effort. The trees are destined for military installations and families across the country. Photo by Staff Sgt. Julio A. Olivencia Jr., 105th Airlift Wing.



New York Air National Guard Master Sgt. Jennifer Dipppo, right, from the 109th Airlift Wing, helps load donated Christmas trees with volunteer Soldiers and Airmen and local veterans, at Ellms Family Farm, Ballston Spa, N.Y., Nov. 27 2017. Some 36 personnel helped load about 150 Christmas trees bound for military installations around the country. This was the 13th year that the farm has participated in participated in the Trees for Troops event. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff.

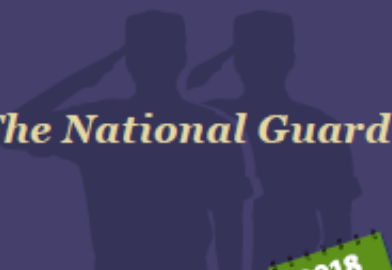


The Blended Retirement System Opt-In Decision

Traditional Guardsmen

Non-Regular Retirement

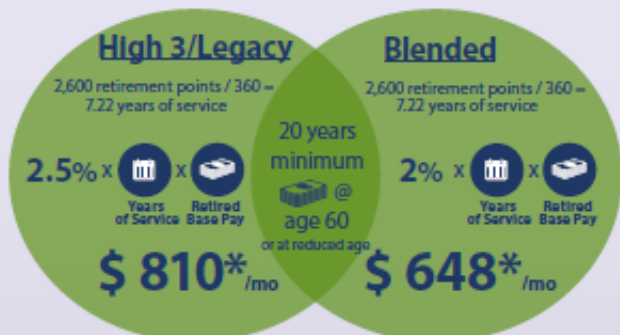
The National Guard



2018
1 Jan - 31 Dec

Develop Policy 2016 → Member Training 2017 → Irrevocable Member Decision

Pension Comparison



- New accessions after January 1st, 2018 will be automatically enrolled in the Blended Retirement System
- If you have 4,320 points or higher, you are NOT eligible for the Blended Retirement System

**Estimate based on E7 retiree with 20 "qualifying years" and 2,600 pts. Actual amounts may be higher or lower based upon rank, age, and time in grade.*

TSP Comparison

Service Member TSP contributions count towards the annual internal revenue code limit per person (**\$18,000** for 2017) of the income you may elect to defer under all employer-sponsored retirement plans during a tax year.

Current TSP

No government matching

Blended TSP

Government matching and automatic contribution of 1%
100% vested with 2 years of service
Over 26 years of service not eligible for match

You Contribute	DoD Auto Contribution	DoD Matches	Total
0%	1%	0%	1%
1%	1%	1%	3%
2%	1%	2%	5%
3%	1%	3%	7%
4%	1%	3.5%	8.5%
5%	1%	4%	10%

Blended Retirement ONLY

Lump Sum

The Lump Sum is a cash advance against your retired pay.
Decision made at retirement.

Optional **advance of 25% or 50%** of retirement pay with reduced pension through age 67

Option **available at age 60** or reduced age at retirement

Discounted present value, not full value.
Initial discount rate **6.99% for 2018 retirees**

VA disability compensation could be offset

Continuation Pay (Service Determined)

Members of the Uniformed Services are eligible to receive a one-time, mid-career bonus payment in exchange for an agreement to perform additional obligated service. This one-time bonus payment is in addition to any other career field-specific incentives or retention bonuses.

Window of eligibility **8-12 years of service**

Minimum 3 years of service commitment

Member may receive:

Drill status: **.5 to 6 months** of equivalent active duty base pay
AGR / Career status: **2.5 to 13 months** base pay

Resources

When it comes to your



SEEK

Professional Advice



Find your nearest Personal Financial Counselor: www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil
Financial counseling by phone, chat, and in-person: www.militaryonesource.mil
Take the mandatory "Opt In" course on JKO or through Military One Source
<http://jko.jten.mil/courses/brs/opt-in/launch.html>

Visit www.dfas.mil for military pay charts and military TSP contributions
To learn more about the Thrift Savings Program, eligibility and contributions, visit www.tsp.gov

For more information on your benefits visit <https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil>

You can find additional information at <http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement>

Sources: Fiscal Year 2016 and 2017 National Defense Authorization Acts

Created: 3/2017
OPR: NGB-J1

Boy Scouts Experience Guard Life in Queensbury

Story and photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters

QUEENSBURY, N.Y. - New York Army National Guard played host to 308 Boy Scouts, Scouters and Scout parents Sept. 29-Oct 1, as the Turning Point District Scouts held a fall camporee at the armory.

Scouts and Scout leaders got the chance to meet with Soldiers and learn more about the Army National Guard during a day of activities on Sept. 30.

The Scouts got the opportunity to utilize an electronic rifle range, learn about equipment like the iRobot 510 Packbot employed by the 1108th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, and chow down on MREs.

Throughout the day, each Boy Scout Troop rotated through three main events; the electronic weapons range, archery, and climbing a rock wall, courtesy of Bravo Company of the New York Army

National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion.

Along with the physical activities that the scouts could do, they also had the chance to complete merit badges like First Aid.

Scouts also engaged in a "Humvee Pull" to see which troops could pull a vehicle furthest and fastest.

At the end of the day on Sept. 30, Scouts were recognized in an award ceremony. They also got a lesson in how to properly retire the colors at the end of the day.

"I'd have to say, the educational aspect of it [was the best part], I really liked that," said Scout Cameron Grover of Troop 6004, from Glens Falls.

This event came together thanks to the work of Staff Sgt. William Valenza who has a history of working with the Boy Scouts, and Staff Sgt. Nick Scialdone, one of the recruiters.



Boy Scouts attempt to pull a Humvee during their Guard Life experience at the Queensbury Armory, on Sept. 30, 2017.

"[Staff Sgt. Valenza] knew about the camporee... and there was some talk back and forth because sometimes scouts will go into the military, so with the relationship of the Scouts and the Guard, it worked out perfectly," said Robert Bingham, the Turning Point District Commissioner.

Valenza's two sons, Mitchell and Andrew Valenza had both been a part of Boy Scouts and made it to Eagle. Valenza has worked with Scouts as a merit badge counselor prior to this event, and continues to contribute to scouting even after his sons had moved on, Bingham explained. **gt**

EOD Battalion selects its Best Warrior

Story and photos by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters

GLENVILLE, N.Y. - An early morning start and cold wind didn't stop five Soldiers competing to be the Best Warrior from the 501st Ordnance Battalion on October 22, 2017.

When it was over, Spc. John Iseman, of the 1108th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) was tapped to represent the battalion at the next level of New York's Best Warrior competition.

Also competing were:

- Sgt. Kevin Baker, assigned to the 1427th Medium Truck Company
- Sgt. Alexander Sheldon, assigned to the 466 Area Medical Support Company
- Spec. Chelsie Bulkowskit, assigned to the 466 Area Medical Support Company

And Spec. Elicia Avery, assigned to the Headquarters Detachment of the 501st EOD Battalion.

The competitor's first task was a Physical Fitness Test at 0600, followed by a 10k ruck march.

"The physical part was what I was very confident on," Bulkowskit said. "I was fine on the PT test, and it was the ruck march that got me and ever since then I've been pretty much drained."

Bulkowskit finished the Ruck march in an hour and thirty nine minutes.

The second part of the competition was demonstrating knowledge of Soldier tasks, which included leading a squad, conducting first aid, Nuclear/Biological/Chemical contamination response, hand and arm signals, disassembly and reassembly of a M249, and making radio calls.

Each Soldier had twenty minutes to complete each task.

The final tasks of the day were a board of review and a written exam. The Soldiers were asked questions ranging from Army National Guard regulations to current events.

"A lot of these tasks we don't do on a regular basis," Iseman said. "So it's a good structure to improve on our Soldier skills. Next we'll be

going to the brigade level competition, and we'll win." **gt**



1108th Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Company Spc. John Iseman receives the 501st Ordnance Battalion Soldier of the Year award from Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Conklin following the unit's Best Warrior Competition in Glenville, N.Y., Oct. 22, 2017.

Rochester Aircrews Home from Afghanistan

By Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff



Soldiers of Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th General Support Aviation Battalion show their colors during the unit's deployment in Afghanistan from January to October of 2017. Twenty members of the Rochester based unit flew more than 130 combat missions during their deployment, returning home November 8. Photo courtesy of the 3rd Battalion, 126th General Support Aviation Battalion.

ROCHESTER, N.Y. - During an eight-month deployment in Afghanistan which ended on Oct. 20, New York Army National Guard aviators and pilots from Company B, 3rd Battalion 126th aviation flew over 6,000 personnel and one million pounds of critical cargo.

18 of the 20 Soldiers received the Air Medal with C for combat. The other two Soldiers were awarded the Bronze Star.

The company operates the CH-47F Chinook heavy lift helicopter and half the company is based at the Army Aviation Support Facility at the Rochester International Airport.

The CH-47F is invaluable in Afghanistan because of its lifting ability and because it can operate at higher altitudes than other helicopters.

The other half is part of the Maryland Army National Guard based in Edgewood, Maryland.

The Soldiers arrived at Fort Bliss, Texas for out processing on Nov. 2 and returned to New York on Nov. 8.

The Soldiers conducted battlefield circulation, aerial resupply and tactical insertion

missions. They also conducted air assaults and extracted personnel and equipment when required.

The unit operated in seven Afghan provinces—Nangarhar, Kabul, Logar, Paktiya, Khost, Sarobi, Laghman and Parwan—in eastern Afghanistan.

These missions directly supported both conventional forces and Special Forces of the United States military and Afghanistan in action against the Taliban and the Islamic State.

This was the third Afghan deployment for the Rochester based detachment of B Company.

The unit deployed to Afghanistan in 2007 and 2008. For their performance on that deployment the company was recognized as the Army National Guard aviation unit of the year for 2008 by the Army Aviation Association of America (known as Quad A).

Among those achievements was participating in the largest Air Assault operation in that country since 2002.

In 2009 the detachment's pilots and other Soldiers trained Canadian Forces pilots to oper-

ate the CH-47 because all of that country's CH-47s were already deployed to Afghanistan. The detachment also sent Soldiers and helicopters to assist in the response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

In June 2011 a helicopter assigned to the company plucked a motorboat stuck in the Niagara Falls rapids from the lip of the falls before it could go over.

In August and September 2011 CH-47s assigned to the detachment were used to move Federal Emergency Management Agency supplies during the National Guard's response to Tropical Storm Irene.

Following Superstorm Sandy in November 2012 the Soldiers of Company B once again used their CH-47 helicopters to move critically needed supplies from other locations to New York City during the New York National Guard response to the storm

In 2012 and 2013 the Soldiers deployed once again to Afghanistan to move troops and supplies across the country. **gt**

Warfighter Challenges 42nd Infantry Division Staff

Story and photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, P.A. - 475 New York Army National Soldiers started a war on Oct. 2 as the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters launched a computer simulation war-game known.

The troops trained alongside another famous combat unit based in New York, the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) from Fort Drum, N.Y. The two units participated in Warfighter, an electronic battle simulation that tested and evaluated the division staffs on all aspects of battlefield operations, communications, and logistics.

About 4,500 Soldiers took part in all phases of the exercise.

Warfighter is a two-week command post exercise that lets computer simulations and an enemy force role-player test the ability of commanders and their staffs to fight a modern battle.

The Soldiers managed the combat operations of more than 20,000 personnel in the computer simulation. They did everything related to war fighting, including planning and movements to gather intelligence, maneuvering forces to the fight, providing medical evacuation, resupply and maintenance and replacement operations.

All of these staff functions play critical roles in full spectrum operations, a role that the 42nd Infantry Division trains and prepares for, said 42nd Infantry Division Chief of Staff Col. Michael Murphy.

Operations ran 24-hours a day, testing ability of staff sections to operate continuously; tracking battlefield reports and responding to changes on the computer battlefield.

But not all actions are generated in a computer simulation.

The warfighter exercise also provides real interactions with professional role players in the exercise, ranging from media reporters to local civilian leaders, non-governmental agencies, humanitarian relief groups and even criminal organizations, all meeting with and challenging the decisions and actions of the division's leadership and staff.

For a division headquarters with part-time Citizen Soldiers from across New York State, the first success in the exercise is simply bringing the team together, said Maj. Michael Rodri-



1st. Lt. Michelle Arreola and Maj. Michael Squires, provide support to the 42nd Infantry Division Warfighter on October 6 at Fort Indiantown Gap, P.A. Multiple units from the Active Army, National Guard and Army Reserve participated in the exercise. The Warfighter trains and improves the capabilities of the division staff to be prepared for any potential state emergency or combat mission. Photo by Sgt. Harley Jelis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

guez, an engineer officer and operations officer in the division's overnight battle staff.

"This type of training is invaluable," Rodriguez said. "As a National Guard unit, we hardly get to have the staff together in a scenario that's this life-like. It's great because we get to exercise and refine staff processes; that's what we're here to do."

The division headquarters directed command posts and Soldiers from a number of combat brigades, including the:

- New York's 27th Infantry Brigade
- The 50th Infantry Brigade from New Jersey
- The 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 28th Division from Pennsylvania
- The 26th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Massachusetts
- The 142nd Field Artillery Brigade from the Arkansas Army National Guard
- The 28th Combat Aviation Brigade from Pennsylvania

"Training is complicated for the Guard," Rodriguez said. "We have to be selective in how and where we train. The value of the Warfighter is having everyone here."

For the senior noncommissioned officers and

staff officers, this validates their functional areas and prepares them to better manage complex and challenging events, said Sgt. Maj. Matthew Gutzwiller, a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear staff specialist and night operations NCO supervisor.

"Warfighter provides an opportunity for the staff to come together," Gutzwiller said. "It provides a better understanding of how the staff process works. It builds team understanding and better prepares us for real -world missions."

The ability to run computer simulations for thousands of combat troops on a battlefield forces the variety of staff specialties to exercise battle drills and find ways to improve staff plans, said Gutzwiller, now training in his third Warfighter exercise in his career.

The simulation often injects small scenario incidents that if not addressed, grow more complex and challenging if not addressed by the division staff. Other times, events will present problems that a unit had not foreseen.

"This is the only opportunity to synchronize and validate our division staff standard operating procedures," Gutzwiller said. **gt**

Army Guard Welcomes New Commanders



Command changes around the state this fall: Lt. Col. Wing Yu, Commander of the 204th Engineer Battalion, receives the guidon during his change of command ceremony in Johnson City, N.Y., Oct. 15, 2017. Photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters. Bottom left, Col. Michael Fowler, Commander of the 153rd Troop Command, passes the guidon representing command of the 501st Ordnance (EOD) Battalion to Maj. Henry Padley in Glenville, N.Y., Oct. 21. Photo by Spc. Andrew Valenza, Joint Force Headquarters. Bottom right, Col. Stephen M. Bousquet, commander of the 369th Sustainment Brigade, hands the battalion colors to Maj. Todd M. Balog, incoming commander of the 369th Special Troops Battalion (STB), during a change of command ceremony at Camp Smith, NY, October 22, 2017. Balog also received his promotion to Lt. Col. Dec. 8. The 369th STB returned this summer from a successful nine-month deployment to the Middle East. Photo by Sgt. Jeremy Bratt, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.



27th Brigade Colors Return to Europe after 99 Years Brigade Task Force Assumes Ukraine Training Mission

Story and photos by Sgt. Alexander Rector, 27th Infantry Brigade

YAVORIV, UKRAINE - The New York Army National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) formally took command of the Joint Multinational Training Group - Ukraine (JMTG-U) from the Oklahoma National Guard's 45th IBCT during a Transfer of Authority ceremony here Nov. 22.

Approximately 250 U.S. Soldiers from the 27th IBCT assigned to the JMTG-U will take the lessons learned from the 45th and build upon their successes as they further assist in developing the capabilities of Ukrainian ground forces during their time in country, which is expected to last until late next summer.

The 27th IBCT is headquartered out of Syracuse, N.Y., and most of the Soldiers assigned to task force Orion are deployed from the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry headquartered at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station in Niagara Falls, N.Y. The squadron also has troops in Jamestown, Geneva, and Buffalo.

The 45th IBCT has been deployed in Ukraine since January 2017 where they have trained together with Ukrainian forces in developing a combat training center (CTC).

The goal of the CTC is to provide Ukrainian troops with the facilities, experience, and knowledge to develop their warfighting capabilities to achieve NATO interoperability.

Engaged in this effort along with the U.S. and Ukraine, are soldiers from Canada, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and the United Kingdom.

During the ceremony, Madam Marie L. Yovanovitch, The United States ambassador to Ukraine addressed the troops where she praised the successes of the 45th IBCT, and charged the incoming 27th IBCT Soldiers to build upon their legacy.

"This is a bittersweet day for the Thunderbirds," said Col. Dave Jordan, the 45th IBCT Commander. "We are certainly excited to get back home and see our families and return to our civilian jobs, but it's difficult to leave our



Col. Dennis Deeley, the Joint Multinational Training Group - Ukraine commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Ciampolillo uncased the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's colors during a JMTG-U Transfer of Authority ceremony Nov. 22. During the ceremony Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 27th Brigade took command of the JMTG-U training mission from the Oklahoma National Guard's 45th IBCT.

friends and comrades in arms."

"The capacity that you have helped build at this combat training center will help serve Ukraine for decades," said Jordan. "I believe we have all learned as many lessons as we've taught. We must now return to our home nations and pass on what we've learned from our Ukrainian brothers to our own formations."

Soldiers from the 27th arrived in Ukraine early this November after completing pre-mobilization training at Fort Bliss, TX and additional training with the 7th Army Training Command at Grafenwohr, Germany.

"It is your time now to carry the torch and bring this mission to the next level of success."

-- Col. Dennis Deeley, JMTG-U Commander

"Today is exciting for the 27th IBCT's task force Orion as we assume this important mission" said Col. Dennis Deeley, the 27th IBCT (forward) commander. "This is a complex mission, however Col. Jordan and the entire 45th IBCT have done an outstanding job preparing us," said Deeley. "It is your time now to carry the torch and bring this mission to the next level of success."

A delegation including ambassador Yovanovitch, Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, Maj. Gen. John Gronski, and Brig. Gen. Tony Aguto welcomed the incoming JMTG-U commander, Col. Deeley and Task Force Orion and said their goodbyes to Col. Jordan and his Thunderbirds.

The 27th IBCT (forward) is now officially set in motion as the third iteration of the JMTG-U and looks to make a significant impact on the Ukrainian Armed Forces and their training facilities. **gt**



Ukraine Mission Training for New York Troops

New York Army National Guard Soldiers from 27th and 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Teams undergo combat lifesaver training in preparation for the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine mission, Oct. 21, 2017. Over 200 New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the 27th Brigade and the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry will now lead the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine beginning Nov. 22. Photos by Alexander Rector, 27th IBCT.



30th Season of South Pole Flying

Story Staff Sgt. Stephanie Lambert, 109th Airlift Wing



Staff Sgt. Latisha Webb, 139th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron crew chief, taxis an LC-130 "Skibird" into the fuel pit on the Williams Field skiway at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, Nov. 6, 2017. Both Webb and the LC-130 are deployed to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, New York. This is the 30th season the 109th AW is providing support to the National Science Foundation's U.S. Antarctic Program. Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing.

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, N.Y. - The hum of an LC-130 Skibird taking off on a crisp upstate New York morning marked the 109th Airlift Wing's annual migration to the South Pole on Tuesday, Oct. 17.

Two LC-130 aircrews, transporting supplies and equipment, began the first leg of a five-day journey to McMurdo Station, Antarctica, to provide logistical support to the National Science Foundation.

The primary mission of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing is to provide airlift within Antarctica to support science research.

This is the 30th year the wing has supported science research at the South Pole.

The wing flies the LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft; the only one of its kind in the U.S. military, able to land on snow and ice.

The U.S. military provides logistics support with ships and aircraft to the National Science

Foundation annually under the designation Operation Deep Freeze.

These aircraft were the third and fourth to depart from the base here. The first and second aircraft flew out on Oct. 13 and 16.

Flying in the Antarctic is challenging, according to LC-130 pilots.

"The weather is our biggest challenge there, if a storm rolls in you can't take off," said Maj. Suzanne Nielson, an LC-130 pilot.

"There's always something that comes up over the year, but our training prepares us for anything," said Col. Robert Donaldson, the 109th Maintenance Group commander.

The start of this season coincides with the first week of Col. Michele Kilgore's command of the 109th Airlift Wing. Kilgore took command of the wing on Oct. 15.

"What a great way to start my first week," said Kilgore. "It's great to be a part of such a unique mission."

Kilgore is slated to go for the first time in

support of Operation Deep Freeze later on this season.

Approximately 120 Airmen from the 109th will be deployed on the ice at any one time. About 500 Airmen will deploy throughout the season. Five aircraft will provide support.

The Operation Deep Freeze support season runs through February, the wing plans to fly between 200 and 250 missions.

During the 2016-17 season, the 109th flew an estimated 2,550 researchers and support staff plus about 3 million pounds of cargo and 2 million pounds of fuel to research stations across the continent.

Operation Deep Freeze, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, runs through February.

The 109th has supported the National Science Foundation since 1988 and been the sole provider of this type of airlift since 1999. **gt**



Capt. Jason Grupp, 139th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron LC-130 "Skibird" pilot, flies back into McMurdo Station, Antarctica, on Nov. 6, 2017, following an IcePod mission. Both Grupp and the LC-130 are deployed to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, New York. Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing.



EADS Plays Key Role in Response 1,500 Miles Away

Story by Tim Jones, Eastern Air Defense Sector

A file photo of a dimly-lit Eastern Air Defense Sector operations floor in Rome, N.Y. shows some unclassified radar feeds and data that Airmen work with around-the-clock to conduct the NORAD air defense mission. EADS familiarity with inter-service and inter-agency coordination proved invaluable during September's hurricane response operations. Photo by Tech Sgt. Jeremy Call.

ROME, N.Y. - They may have been 1,500 miles away, but New York Air National Guardsmen at the Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS) played an important role in the initial relief efforts after Hurricane Irma roared over the Florida Keys on Sunday, Sept. 10.

Manned by the Guard's 224th Air Defense Group, EADS is responsible for the air defense of the United States east of the Mississippi.

The unit's Battle Control Center (BCC), in Rome N.Y., is designed to provide decision-makers with time and options during air defense events and these assets proved to be effective in emergency response coordination, said Col. Emil Filkorn, EADS Commander.

"The BCC utilized many of the same systems and procedures that we use to coordinate air defense operations to support relief efforts," Filkorn said. "This enabled the BCC to provide immediate, real-time support for airfield and search and rescue operations that took place 1,500 miles from our facility in Rome."

"The NORAD mission is truly one team, one fight and our unit's extensive operational experience with other services and components made it easy to transition to relief coordination," Filkorn added.

Two instances on Sept. 11 demonstrated EADS vital role, he said.

At 7 a.m., just hours after Irma had smashed through Florida's tip, an HC-130 and two HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters left Hurlburt

Field on the Florida Panhandle bound for the demolished Marathon International Airport in the Keys.

An Air Force Special Tactics Squadron on the helicopters landed first. The team cleared debris, enabling an HC-130 airplane to land with additional personnel who quickly readied the airfield for additional C-130 operations.

Unknown to the team, a C-17 Globemaster had departed Travis Air Force Base, California for Marathon and was rapidly approaching.

When the 601st Air Operations Center in Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, discovered the airfield was cleared only for C-130s, it contacted EADS. The New York Guardsmen, in turn, contacted the only working communications link, an E-3 AWACS airborne search and warning aircraft. The AWACS crew relayed the impending C-17 arrival to the Special Tactics Airmen on the ground in Marathon.

The Airmen immediately went to work to make the runway safe for the larger plane. The airfield was ready in 90 minutes and word was passed back from the E-3 in the air to EADS in New York to the 601st back in Florida to the 18th Air Force, the parent unit of the C-17.

The C-17, carrying a full Contingency Response Element of specialized personnel and equipment, landed as planned. Twenty minutes after it departed, another C-17 landed.

The Marathon airfield was now officially opened for relief operations.

EADS also served as an indispensable communications node for search and rescue efforts.

One example was a midday effort on Sept. 11, when a RQ-4 Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft picked up a personal locator beacon in the Florida Keys.

The Air Force Rescue Coordination Center responsible for coordinating on-land federal search and rescue activities, traced the code to a cell phone number. The phone's owner informed the rescue center that there were five people in Long Key, Florida with the locator and that he had been unable to contact them.

EADS took the Long Key address, converted it to geo-coordinates and transmitted the information to an E-3 AWACS. The AWACS crew, working with Search and Rescue, pushed the information to the USS Abraham Lincoln, a Nimitz class aircraft carrier supporting recovery operations.

The aircraft carrier launched MH-60 Seahawk helicopters in response to the call. The five persons were quickly located. Fortunately, the group did not require immediate assistance and the aircraft were dispatched for additional missions.

The ingenuity of our Airmen and the flexibility of airpower enabled our contributions to post-hurricane efforts," Filkorn said "Together with our other 24/7 partner units under NORAD, we're able to provide immediate response when called upon." **gt**



Weather Challenges of the South Pole Mission

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt, 109th Airlift Wing

This LC-130 "Skibird" crew landed at South Pole Station with minimum visibility and maximum crosswinds November 9, 2017, but was then forced to make an emergency weather diversion to Terra Nova Bay when extreme weather made it unsafe to land at McMurdo Station. The crew (from left): 1st Lt. Brian Alexander, co-pilot; Airman 1st Class Ryan Rhoads, loadmaster; Lt. Col. Ronald Ankabrandt, navigator; Senior Master Sgt. Michael Messineo, flight engineer; Senior Master Sgt. David Vesper, loadmaster; and Capt. Brandon Caldwell, pilot.

MCMURDO STATION, Antarctica-- Harsh, unforgiving and unpredictable Antarctic weather made a routine mission to the South Pole made one LC-130 "Skibird" trip more than they bargained for on Nov. 9, 2017.

Despite the extreme cold, minimum visibility and maximum crosswinds, the crew landed at Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station after three attempts during a resupply mission.

The Airmen are with the 109th Airlift Wing, based at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, N.Y. The wing supports the National Science Foundation's research operations in Antarctica as part of Operation Deep Freeze.

After loading and unloading cargo and passengers at the South Pole, the crew headed back to the National Science Foundation's McMurdo Station on the coast.

But mid-way through the flight back, extreme weather made it unsafe to land at McMurdo. This forced the crew to make an emergency weather divert to Italy's Mario Zucchelli Station.

The station, owned by Italy's National Ant-

arctic Research Program, is located 200 miles from McMurdo at Terra Nova Bay.

The stop at Mario Zucchelli Station allowed the crew to refuel and get much needed rest before returning to McMurdo on Nov. 10.

According to Capt. Brandon Caldwell, the mission pilot, encountering one or two issues is normal throughout the Operation Deep Freeze season. However, encountering so many issues during one mission is quite rare.

"Throughout the years, our weather restrictions have become stricter so we can try and avoid situations like this one," he added.

"But the weather is just so unpredictable," said Senior Master Sgt. Michael Messineo, flight engineer on the mission.

The crew attributes teamwork, and quick thinking to the safe South Pole landing and the decision to make the emergency weather divert.

"Teamwork is crucial when landing in extreme weather," said Lt. Col. Ronald Ankabrandt, the mission navigator. "Everyone on the crew had a job while we were landing, scanning the horizon, looking for flags – this type of

mission requires everyone to help," he said.

For 1st Lt. Brian Alexander, the co-pilot, this was his first mission in Antarctica, and he treated it as a learning experience.

"I've probably learned more my first mission on the ice than most co-pilots have learned in years," he said.

The crews train to land on snow and ice in Greenland every summer. But Alexander said, nothing can prepare you for taking that first mission on the Antarctic continent.

During this mission, crews loaded 15,000 pounds of cargo as wind chill temperatures hit an estimated 65 degrees below zero.

Senior Master Sgt. David Vesper, an instructor loadmaster, added that the cold temperatures mixed with the wind chill coming off the engines makes for an extremely difficult mission. "The South Pole is the toughest place we go (because of weather) – the whole crew has to put safety first," he said.

This is the 30th season Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing have been part of Operation Deep Freeze. **gt**

Airmen Head to Hawaii to Hone Medical Skills

Story by Tech. Sgt. Monica Dalberg, 106th Rescue Wing

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii --Like the fronds of a palm leaf, 28 members of the 106th Rescue Wing Medical Group, fanned out throughout Tripler Army Medical Center here for 13 days of training with the center's medical facility.

The New York Air Guard medical personnel were picked for the Aug. 19 to Sept. 3 deployment for training because they scored in the top five of 90 Air Guard medical units evaluated nationally.

Units were scored by criteria which included individual medical readiness, occupational health exams, and percentages of currently credentialed health care providers in the group.

Training at Tripler was extremely advantageous to the medical group, according to, Col. Pamela Combs, the 106th Medical Group commander.

Although the clinic at the 106th Rescue Wing is not a military treatment facility, medical technicians in the unit must maintain the same training requirements as technicians based at a treatment facility, she explained.

The medical technicians participating in the deployment received hands-on experience in providing patient care under the supervision of skilled personnel.

They also faced challenging tasks found at a larger and more advanced healthcare facility like Tripler Army Medical Center, Combs said. The patient population included active duty military members, family members and retirees, which the Airmen do not normally deal with, she said.

The medical group members accomplished readiness and upgrade training in patient administration; family medicine; anesthesia; emergency medicine; dental; pediatrics; flight medicine; and public health.

"It was definitely an exhilarating experience and the hospital pace was fast," said Technical Sgt. Sandra Martinez. "In a deployment location you're expected to perform efficiently and at a faster rate and we achieved that."

Medical technician Senior Airman Zachary Wagner-Herbert trained in conducting transfusions at the Tripler blood donor center and processed specimens in microbiology. He learned about pathogens and antibiotics while doing this work, Wagner-Herbert said.

"It was a good opportunity to be exposed to different areas of the lab. Everyone I worked with went out of their way to train me," Wagner-Herbert said.

"It was probably the best training experience I've had. I wish we could have stayed longer and learned even more," he added.

One of the unique training opportunities presented at Tripler during the deployment was a real-world patient aeromedical evacuation, Combs said.

"You're actually experiencing what truly is going on," Combs said.

"What are the challenges in making the patient ready for aeromedical evacuation?"

Keeping the patient stable and also, how much time does it truly take?" she said.

During training an evacuation can be condensed into 20 minutes, but



Capt. Lisa Yu, a 106th Rescue Wing medical provider, listens to the heartbeat of a child patient at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii Aug. 25, 2017. 106th Rescue Wing Medical Group members deployed this summer to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii to accomplish real-world medical training at one of the military's premier medical facilities. Courtesy photo.

real life is different, Combs said.

"You don't really appreciate the complexity and all the logistics... that have to go into the actual transport. I think it gave them a better understanding of how all of the different components work together to accomplish something like the aerovac, as well as how much time it takes," Combs said.

"Working in that environment with other branches, helping members from the Navy, the Army... It brought us together and helped us to bond as a unit. We went into an active duty station and blended well with them. I felt like we were one with the Army," Martinez said.

Army Col. Andrew Barr, the medical center commander, presented Army Certificates of Achievement to Wagner-Herbert, Senior Airman Ashley Espin, and Senior Airman Joanne Magloire in recognition of the work they did.

Barre also acknowledged excellent performances by coining Martinez, Master Sgt. Karina Munoz, and Senior Airman Juan Lopez. **gt**

106th Rescue Wing teams with Local Responders

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Monica Dalberg, 106th Rescue Wing

MONTAUK, N.Y. --Members of the 106th Rescue Wing trained for the next hurricane with Suffolk County's Urban Search and Rescue Task Force at Montauk County Park on the east end of Long Island, October 14 and 15.

The Airmen rescued victims of a notional hurricane that hit the eastern twin forks of the island, putting local people at risk.

"A good thing with this exercise was the size of the area we were working in," stated Senior Master Sgt. James Nizza, 106th Rescue Wing Fire Department Fire Chief and exercise task force leader.

Instead of doing all the rescue training at one location, the scenario required Airmen to respond to incidents in different spots, he explained.

"The fact that it's spread out so much is what we're going to see in an actual event," he added.

The south shore of Long Island is vulnerable to hurricane storm surges because a landfall would first occur there and water would move inland due to the low elevation, according to experts.

When Superstorm Sandy slammed the island in 2012, utilities were taken out, roads were washed away and thousands were left homeless.

"We train all the time in various aspects of rescue... It's been escalated since Sandy," Nizza said.

Scenarios included victims trapped in collapsed buildings; canines searching the areas for trapped people; victims stranded on bluff beaches with an incoming tide; and the transportation of victims.

The Airmen focused on shoring up destroyed buildings. Putting temporary supports to stabilize a damaged building is necessary to safely reach trapped victims.

Rescuers must also learn to "breach," or make a hole in through an obstacle, Nizza explained.

The Airmen trained in shoring and breaching in mock-ups of collapsed structures, complete with toppled furniture and a mannequin under metal debris.

Communication is another vital element in operations, according to Chief Master Sgt. John Bellissimo, chief of 106th Communications.

Setting up "on the road" by trees, valleys, hills, cloud coverage, and even noise interference from high voltage powerlines can complicate unit communications, Bellissimo said.

Maintaining connectivity requires constant monitoring, he said.

"The timely coordination of the search and rescue of a victim - the response time - can be the difference between life and death for someone," said Bellissimo "We provide the



Photo at top, Staff Sergeant William Henderson, a 106th Rescue Wing firefighter, discusses shoring with Joseph Williamson, Assistant Fire Chief at Dix Hills Fire Department, as part of a two-day exercise with local urban search and rescue task forces simulating a hurricane at Montauk County Park in Long Island Oct. 14, 2017. Below, Master Sergeant Craig Moore, a 106th Rescue Wing firefighter, uses a sledhammer to breach a concrete wall in a collapsed structure Oct. 14 as part of the training.



backbone for communication to happen."

Rainy conditions during the training added a real-world element to the training. "Although we can plan for an exercise, we can't plan for the weather

to fit the scenario as well as it did this weekend," Bellissimo added.

Training together is beneficial for both Guard and Suffolk County task force members, Nizza said.

"If this were an actual

event, these are the people we're working with. They're getting to know what we can do, and we're getting to know their capabilities," he said. **gt**

Activation Grows for NY Guard Recovery Mission

Story and photos by Spc. Zach Perkins, New York Guard

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. --As donations of relief supplies for Puerto Rico continued to pour in, the New York Guard state defense force more than doubled the size of its force on State Active Duty.

The activation approached nearly 100 volunteers of the New York Guard and is one of the largest forces assembled by the New York Guard since Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

On September 24th, the New York National Guard established donation collection points across the state. These collection points were set up to accept the influx of needed public donations of emergency relief supplies for Puerto Rico, including bottled water, flashlights, batteries, diapers, baby wipes and baby formula.

The influx of donations extended beyond the state borders as well, with trucks coming from as far as Ohio.

Camp Smith was set up as the primary consolidation point for the donations coming from all the state's collection points.

To manage the consolidation, warehousing and transport of the supplies, and prepare them for shipment to Puerto Rico, the 719th Transportation Company, under the 369th Sustainment Brigade, and the New York Guard State Defense Force were activated to serve alongside one another at Camp Smith.

"I've been on State Active Duty alongside the National Guard before," said Spc. Steve Morelli of the 88th Area Command, "but this is by far the most challenging and reward-

ing activation yet".

What began as an activation of 25 New York Guard members on September 29th, has nearly quadrupled in size through the fall.

The rapid increase in personnel has been necessary to meet the full scope of the New York Guard's mission to provide the logistical manpower needed to support the New York Army National Guard at Camp Smith.

Since day one, the New York Guard and Army National Guard efforts have been a 24-hour operation, working around the clock to consolidate and prepare these much-needed supplies for rapid shipment.

With its current force of 70 soldiers, led on the ground by Second Lieutenant Richard Shaw, the New York Guard has been working in three shifts to keep the supplies moving out the door for shipment to Puerto Rico, as new donations continue to arrive each day.

"We're ahead of the curve," said 2LT Shaw. "Our committed soldiers are preparing relief supplies faster than expected. We've processed over 1500 pallets, which exceeds our previous target goals."

For many of the New York Guard members, who come from all over the state, this mission hits close to home.

"This is personal for me," said Staff Sergeant Jesus Sanchez. "90% of my family are in Puerto Rico. When I was a kid I



The New York Guard nearly quadrupled its force on State Active Duty of 25 volunteers to manage relief supplies following Hurricane Maria's devastation in Puerto Rico. The New York Guard's force grew to 98 members on the ground at Camp Smith, who have worked around the clock, seven days a week, to manage the challenging logistics operation to collect and prepare for shipment some 5,425 pallets of relief supplies.

lived there for two years."

Before the hurricane hit the island, Sanchez's family was already sending supplies in preparation. "We were on the phone with my grandma when it hit, and the phone line went dead. It was scary because for a week we didn't know where my family was. I couldn't sleep."

When the New York Guard was activated, he jumped at the chance to help.

"Whether I'm working here in New York or over there, I'm helping my people. When I'm on the forklifts moving water, clothes or medical supplies, I think about them. I'm here for the long haul on this activation. I owe it to them, and that's why I'm here and working so hard."

The mission is expected to continue as long as the volume of donations from the public warrant the New York Guard's logistical support,gt

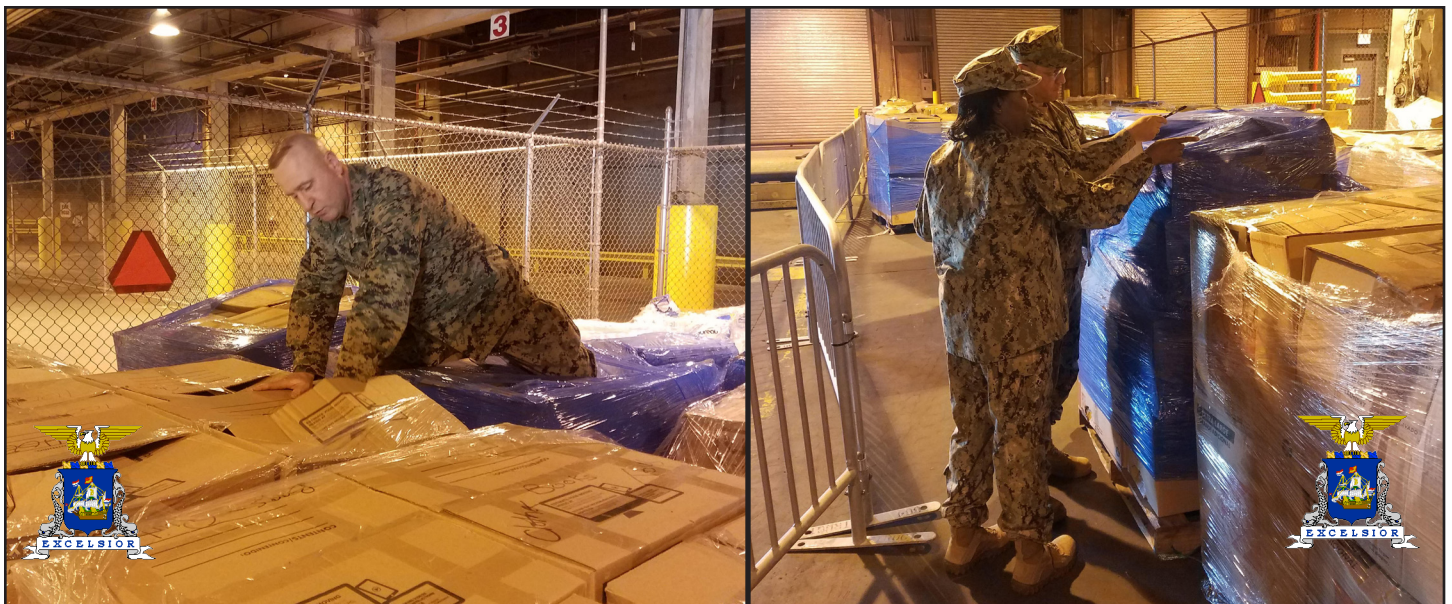


2nd Lt. Richard Shaw, of the New York Guard's 12th Regimental Training Institute, at left, tracks movements of relief supplies with New York Army National Guard Maj. James Greene, the Logistics Supervisor and Officer in Charge of Task Force Donation at the Camp Smith warehouse site Oct. 10th, 2017.

New York Naval Militia



Sailors, Marines, turn out for Hurricane Response



The New York Naval Militia support to hurricane response missions tasked 48 sailors and Marines around the state to assist in the collection and shipment of relief supplies. At top, Naval Militia cooks prepare and serve meals for New York National Guard Soldiers assisting in collecting and packing goods destined for Puerto Rico at the Camp Smith Training Site on Nov. 15. The New York Naval Militia is comprised of members of the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve who also volunteer to serve in a State Active Duty Status. Bottom left, Marine Reserve Gunnery Sgt. Anthony Cuccurese secures goods donated for Puerto Rico onto a pallet at JFK International Airport in New York on Oct. 3. Naval Militia members helped organize supplies sent to Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. New York Naval Militia photo by Lt. Filipp Khosh. Bottom right, Coast Guard Reservist Lt. Filipp Khosh, in rear, and Navy Reserve Logistics Specialist Chief Petty Officer Christopher Cintron organize supplies donated for delivery to Puerto Rico at JFK International Airport Oct. 3. Naval Militia photo by Lt. Commander Jay Veronko.

