



Volume 12 Number 3

# guardtimes

[www.dmna.ny.gov](http://www.dmna.ny.gov)

Serving the New York Army and Air National Guard, Naval Militia, New York Guard and Families



# FROM THE LEADERSHIP

## Your Service Matters and Readiness is our Job

When I'm out visiting units, junior enlisted Soldiers routinely ask me how they can get promoted or serve full time.

Here's the bottom line: opportunities and promotions go to service members in good standing in their units who let their leadership know they want to move up. So let's discuss how you do that.

Start with the military basics: report on time to drill and other functions, arrive in the right and clean uniform with a proper haircut, and keep in touch with your leadership in between drills so you know what is going on.

I've always said, "giving a damn is 75% of the way, you can learn the other 25."

Next, meet the basic standards for being a Soldier or Airman.

Be qualified in your military occupational specialty or your Air Force specialty code skill. Pass or exceed the minimum score for the Army Physical Fitness Test or the Air Force Fitness Test.

Meet height and weight requirements for your age and sex. Qualify with your assigned weapon.

You must also ensure you deal with medical issues in a timely manner. If told to get dental work, get dental work. Don't miss medical exams.

You are in the National Guard. There's no first sergeant or platoon sergeant making sure you do what you need to do each day. We expect you to be a self-starter.

Ensure that you are ready to deploy here in New York for a State Active Duty mission or go out of state or overseas on a federal mission.

Those great opportunities for schools, interesting training and deployments require endorsement from your chain of command. Make sure unit leaders know who you are.

An MP battalion will deploy to Poland next year and there will be events in South Africa and Brazil, our State Partners.

When the first sergeant comes around looking for volunteers, be one of them. Take on any new experience that you are offered.

Participating in ceremonial or historic events demonstrates your commitment to your unit. Color guards and ceremonial teams offer the chance to do this.

Best Warrior Competitions for Soldiers and the Airman of the Year competitions are a great way to create your own opportunities too.

It is hard work, but if you succeed, I guarantee excellent training and a lot of travel and awards. Nearly every winner has been offered a full-time

job in the National Guard, typically Active Guard and Reserve.

Even if you don't win, it increases your visibility with unit leaders. Volunteering for a civil support mission like a snowstorm or flood lets you help the community while supporting your unit and gaining valuable experience.

As I write this in June, there are over 200 Soldiers and Airmen on state status supporting local communities during Operation Lake Ontario Flood 2019.

Leaders find it easier to recommend the Guardsmen who do extra things to support their unit. They will know the name and face of their "go to" Soldiers or Airmen.

If you hide in the back of the room, you will always be in the back of the line for opportunities.

These same basics apply for promotion.

Commanders have the opportunity to waive time in grade requirements for their best performers.

Soldiers who exceed the standard, or do something unusual or special for the unit have a shot at this.

It is acceptable to ask your chain of command about early advancement if you can demonstrate that you deserve it.

Deployments are sought after by many. Units fill from within first, and why wouldn't they?

They want to deploy the team that has been training together. It's common for the mission's requirement of service members to be less than the unit's full strength.

Still, units may be looking for somebody with your qualifications. Let your chain of command know that you are ready and willing to deploy.

If your unit is deploying or heading to a combat training center, there may be a chance to come on temporary duty. This is another opportunity for a "go to" service member.

Soldiers who want to be competitive can take advantage of classes offered by the 106th Regional Training Institute at Camp Smith Training Site.

You can attend courses in lieu of annual training with your unit's approval, or in addition to annual training if you have the time

Here are a few of the 13 courses offered: Combatives, Future Leader Course, Tactical Athlete Course, Infantryman Course and Officer Candidate School. You can learn more at this website: <http://dmna.ny.gov/arng/106rti>.

The Army and Air National Guard headquarters and the National Guard Bureau also have some opportunities for New York Guardsmen to serve, often in the Washington D.C. area.



Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowski

Information about these opportunities go out through training channels. These opportunities definitely require endorsement from your chain of command.

If you are approaching your ETS and are interested in a different specialty, you can reclassify. You'll be required to go to training and you may transfer into a different unit.

Talk to a senior leader or a career counselor about what other options are out there. This link lists our many units and their locations. <http://dmna.ny.gov/units/>

If you want to spend time serving with the Active Army, the Tour of Duty website is a system for advertising active duty opportunities where Soldiers can look for available tours that match their skills and desire to serve.

Soldiers can volunteer for consideration for the tours and the hiring commands can screen interested candidates. Visit the TOD web site at <https://mobcop.army.mil> and select "Tour of Duty" or Google "MOBCOP".

Recently I counted 114 tours for E4s in various MOS, tour lengths, states and countries.

I have also directed many to the NY National Guard "Job Zone" webpage for full time jobs.

Information on all of the jobs below can be found there (<https://dmna.ny.gov/jobs/>). The site has thousands of military and civilian full time and part time jobs posted.

There were 41 Active Guard and Reserve (AGR), Counter Drug or Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) jobs posted. Types and locations change all the time.

**Commentary continues on page 10**

gt



# guardtimes

Volume 12, Number 3

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
Eric Durr, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
Col. Richard Goldenberg, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
Capt. Jean Kratzer, COMMAND INFORMATION OFFICER  
Sgt. Andrew Valenza, GUARD TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER  
Sgt. Matthew Gunther, GUARD TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER

## About Guard Times

The *Guard Times* is published quarterly using federal funds authorized under provisions of AR 360-1 and AFI 35-101 by the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs and the New York Army and Air National Guard Public Affairs Office.

Views which appear in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force or the National Guard Bureau.

The *Guard Times* has a circulation of 17,000 and is distributed free to members of the New York State Military Forces and employees of the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

## Submissions

Articles, photos and letters are welcome. Please provide article submissions via email saved in Microsoft Word or rich text format (rtf) along with high resolution digital (jpg) photos. Submission deadlines are January 15 (winter issue), April 15 (spring issue), July 15 (summer issue), and October 15 (fall issue). Send your submissions to:

Guard Times  
DMNA-MNPA  
330 Old Niskayuna Road  
Latham, New York 12110-3514  
OFFICE (518) 786-4581 FAX (518) 786-4649  
or richard.l.goldenberg.mil@mail.mil

Complimentary or Back Issues of the *Guard Times* are available. Contact us at the address above or visit us on the web for current news, photos or to download prior issues at [www.dmna.ny.gov](http://www.dmna.ny.gov)



[www.dmna.ny.gov](http://www.dmna.ny.gov)

gt

## This Issue's Highlights:

### Faces of the Force

- 4 Officer Honored for Academic Excellence
- 5 Four Guard Members Qualify for Marathon Team
- 6 Final Flight Marks End of 33 Year Technician Career
- 7 Brothers Carry on Family Service Tradition

### Around the State

- 8 Rainbow Division Veterans Value Reunions
- 9 Guard Leaders Honor D-Day Veterans Across State
- 11 Guard Marks Army Birthday with Cake Cutting

### The Joint Force

- 12 New York, Puerto Rico Airmen Combined Training
- 13 Soldiers and Airmen Fight Lake Ontario Floods
- 14 Guard Hosts First Joint NCO Professional Workshop
- 15 Guard Leaders prepare for 2019 Hurricane Season
- 16 Soldier from 204th Engineers wins TAG Rifle Match
- 17 Command Chief Giaquinto Retires

### Army National Guard

- 18 Leaders Tackle New Army Combat Fitness Test
- 19 Soldiers Hone Domestic Nuclear Disaster Skills
- 20 27th Brigade Soldiers Win Northeast Best Warriors
- 22 New Commanders in the Army Guard

### Air National Guard

- 24 109th Airlift Wing Wins Air Transportation Award
- 25 Bonjour! 109th Sends Skibird to Paris Air Show
- 26 105th Airmen Survive, Evade & Escape in Hudson Valley
- 27 106th Rescue Wing Welcomes New Aircraft
- 28 106th Airmen Share Flag Day with Local School

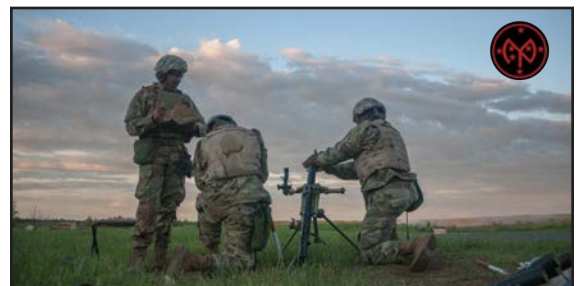
### New York Guard

- 30 Guard Volunteers on Lake Ontario

### New York Naval Militia

- 31 Naval Militia Meets Empire Challenge Exercise

**Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, operate a M224 60mm mortar during a training exercise June 21. The New York City-based Soldiers traveled more than 300 miles to Fort Drum. Photo by Sgt. Alexander Rector, 27th Infantry Brigade.**



FRONT COVER: Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing participate in combat survival training at Plum Point County Park, New Windsor, New York, June 1, 2019. The training equips aircrews with the skill necessary to survive in hostile environments. Photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Lane, 105th Airlift Wing.

BACK COVER: Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, conduct crew-served weapon qualifications at Fort Drum, N.Y. on June 19th, 2019. The crew-served weapons qualification and validation exercise is to ensure the units and Soldiers are trained and ready to deploy. Photo by 1st. Lt. Jennifer Alvarez, 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters.

## Officer Honored for Academic Excellence

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

**ALBANY, N.Y. -- For the past couple of years, when Maj. Keith Casserly wasn't on the job as unit commander of the New York Army National Guard's Medical Command, he's been in class, the library, or testing air quality in Albany.**

The work paid off in May, when Casserly earned a Masters of Public Health from the State University of New York School of Public Health.

Casserly was also recognized for unique research on air quality on bus routes he conducted to obtain his degree. He received the award for Excellence in Scholarship in the field of Environmental Health Science along with the degree.

He appreciated the recognition, Casserly said, because in masters programs you don't get recognized for just having a high grade point. It's the ability to conduct and present research that matters, especially in the field of public health, he said.

"This is one of the awards that show you stand out from your peers and gets your work recognized," Casserly said.

Casserly started working on his environmental science master's degree in 2012.

This was two years after he became a Medical Service Corps officer and joined the 24th Civil Support Team as the team nuclear science officer.

As an Allied Science Medical Service Corps officer, promotion is based on education and credentials. Earning the masters set him up for success in his military career and when he retires, Casserly explained.

As the nuclear medicine science officer for a civil support team, which specializes in identifying chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards and weapons, Casserly was responsible for overseeing the high-tech mobile lab used to test the environment and samples.

Before that job shift, Casserly was an infantryman.

He joined the 1st Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment in 2002 and was commissioned through Officer Candidate School. He served in the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment and the 153rd Troop Command and earned the Air Assault Badge, the Ranger tab, and the Pathfinder Badge. He added the Combat Infantryman's Badge in Afghanistan in 2007-2008 but when the chance came to join the 24th Civil Support Team in Brooklyn he took it.

"You can only pound ground for so long," he said. "It's fun to be an infantry officer, it's great. But as you get up in echelons you need something else."

Casserly served with the 24th CST at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn for four years and then took the same position with the 2nd CST at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia.

In 2017 he became medical command unit commander and reenergized his quest for a masters of public health in environmental science.

He was able to use his CST-related military experience check the block on some of the 61 credits he needed, Casserly explained.

That included checking the block on one of two internships required for the degree, he added.

For his other internship, Casserly decided to conduct the air quality study he was honored for.

Worldwide air pollution contributes to 4.7 million deaths annually, Cas-



**Major Keith Casserly with the atmospheric sampler he used to conduct a study of particulate air pollution along bus routes in Albany, N.Y. outside New York National Guard headquarters in Latham, N.Y. on May 15, 2019. Photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff.**

serly said. That is seven percent of all annual deaths.

He studied air quality along the two major bus routes that run through Albany.

His study looked at air quality for somebody driving in a car, somebody walking along the bus route, somebody riding a bike along bus routes and somebody riding in the bus.

He spent nights and weekends this past winter and spring following buses or riding in buses with air monitoring equipment. Sometimes he'd bring his son and daughter—Ethan and Emma-- along with him, Casserly added.

He was surprised to find that a bus passenger is exposed to more fine particulate matter—the kind that can cause cancer--than a driver, bike rider or pedestrian. He and his advisor expected the greatest risk would be to the bike rider.

The culprit, Casserly explained, is what he called the "swoosh" when the bus door opens and closes

In the winter the change in temperature, causes the air to rush in and out when the doors open and then close.

That action draws the diesel exhaust and its particulate into the bus, he said. It also kicks up particulate matter on the floors, or the passengers he added.

So at the end of May Maj. Keith Casserly earned his master's. His wife Sylvie, he said, is very happy.

Casserly used New York's Veteran Tuition Aid program and the Go Army Ed program which provides money to serving members of the Army Guard to fund his degree.

More Soldiers considering advanced degrees should use these benefits, Casserly said.

"The money is out there. I don't think enough Soldiers take advantage of it," he added. **gt**

# Four Guard Members Qualify for Marathon Team

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

**NEW YORK -- Four New York Army National Guard Soldiers have been selected to join the National Guard's 2019 "All Guard" Marathon Team.**

200 Army and Air National Guard members from 45 states and two territories competed for the 45 male and 15 female slots on the team during the 42nd Annual Lincoln National Guard Marathon in Lincoln, Nebraska on May 5.

All four New York Army National Guard Soldiers who participated in the Lincoln race--Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Maj. Nick Whaley, Maj. Matthew Kane and Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Grove-- made the All Guard Team.

The fastest male and female runners made the team.

Kratzer, the commander of the 42nd Infantry Division's Headquarters and Support Company, lives in Cambridge; Whaley the executive officer for the 204th Engineer Battalion, is a Clifton Park resident; while Kane, the human resource operations branch officer for the 369th Sustainment Brigade, is from Schenectady. Grove, a maintenance officer in Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation lives in Rochester.

To qualify to compete in the Lincoln Marathon, male Soldiers under the age of 40 must have run a recognized marathon 18 months prior to the Lincoln Marathon, in under four hours.

For women and masters-40 and older runners-- the time requirement was 4 hours 30 minutes.

To make the team this year the top 45 men had to come in under 3:22:05 and the top 15 females had to come in under 4:15:28. For Kane, it's his second time making the All Guard marathon team.

"It's an honor and a privilege to

make the Army National Guard Marathon Team two consecutive years in a row, representing New York and the 369th Sustainment Brigade," Kane said.

The marathon program is designed to encourage and enhance the National Guard retention program by instilling physical fitness, self-discipline and esprit de corps among National Guard members from every state across the country, according to the Nebraska marathon team coordinator.

All Guard Marathon Team members are expected to compete in five to eight marathons across the United States during the upcoming running season.

Members get to choose from a list of marathons across the country to compete in.

"Long distance running is a very self-motivating sport. By default, long hours are spent training which requires hours of mental strength. But running on a team is so different than running alone," Grove, said.

Running as a team, means you have people to support you, Grove explained.

"At this year's marathon Maj. Kane and I ran together for about two-thirds of the race. His pacing enabled me to run one of my best marathon times ever," Grove said.

"Maj. Whaley is way faster than I ever dreamed of being, but his advice completely changed my future training plans, we work together as a team and we take each other's advice," Grove said.

"It was the first race I ever ran that I paid close attention to my strides, focused on my water stations and paid attention to anyone who was passing me, I knew it was a competition and I had to keep going," Kratzer said.

"The sun started to peak at



Four New York Army National Guard Soldiers who have all qualified to be part of the National Guard 2019 Marathon Team are, from left, Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Maj. Nick Whaley, Maj. Matthew Kane, and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Thomas Grove. Photo by Sgt. Anna Pongo, Nebraska National Guard.

around mile 19, usually when the average distance runner starts hitting a wall, my only motivation was to keep moving, and I wanted to make the team," Kratzer added.

Along with the camaraderie of the competition--there are not many people in the country who have completed a marathon-- the mental focus, physical strength and hundreds of miles a month we trained for this event added to the success of the New York team, Kratzer added.

"Soldiers are inherently team members. We constantly train and fight together sharing the good and bad. While running on a team is still pretty foreign to me I'm learning it's also pretty awesome." Grove said.



Maj. Nick Whaley, a member of the 204th Engineer Battalion, during the 2019 Lincoln National Guard Marathon on Sunday, May 5, 2019 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

# Final Flight Marks End of 33 Year Technician Career

Story by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. --New York Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Joseph Marino, a federal technician specializing in helicopter maintenance for 33 years, expected the usual retirement lunch and jokes when he showed up for work at the Latham flight facility on Wednesday, May 28.

It was his last official day in his full-time job as a maintenance supervisor and he expected a cake and was ready to act surprised.

Instead, he really was surprised when he was told to suit up in flying gear for a "final flight."

Traditionally, pilots make final flights as they wrap up their military flying careers. Helicopter crew chiefs normally do not.

Because Marino has been such an important part of aviation operations at Army Aviation Support Facility 3 for so many years, his colleagues and supervisors decided he deserved a final flight too, explained Capt. Forest Thrush, the flight facility operations officer.

So when he came into work for the last time, Marino was bundled into a UH-72 light utility helicopter with Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark Shumway and 1st Sgt. Charles Garretto, for a last ride as a member of the support facility team.

When the hour-long flight ended, Marino was greeted by a line of well-wishers who have worked with him over the years.

"It's been an honor working with Sgt. Maj. Marino all these years; he's an old-school Marine: he is direct, honest and set in his ways, but always willing to help Soldier's out first," said Staff Sgt. Stephanie Kyle, state aviation operations office coordinator.

"It was nice see everybody here to wish me well, and it was great," Marino said. "It's hard to see it

come to an end."

While he'll no longer be coming to work at the flight facility each day, Marino will spend another year as a traditional Guardsman, drilling with the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade headquarters.

He plans to retire in 2020 which will mean he will have spent 40 years in uniform, first as a Marine and then as a member of the New York Army National Guard.

"I am not ready to hang up the uniform yet," he said.

Marino joined the Marine Corps in 1980 before transferring to the New York Army National Guard in 1984. As a Marine he deployed to Lebanon following the Marine barracks bombing in Beirut in 1983.

After joining the New York National Guard, he deployed to Bosnia in 2002-03 and then to Iraq in 2008-09.

Marino has served as the first sergeant for Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation, first sergeant for the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade Headquarters Company and the command sergeant major of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation.

He served as the command ser-




(From the Left) Chief Warrant Officer Five Mark Shumway, Sgt. Maj. Joseph Marino, and 1st Sgt. Charles Garretto, pose together at the Army Aviation Facility at Latham, N.Y., May 29, 2019 following a "final flight" for Marino. Photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division.

geant major of the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade and finally as the operations sergeant major in the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

His National Guard service included response missions for Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Irene, Hurricane Wilma and Superstorm Sandy.

"I am proud of him" said Marino's wife Brenda. "We have been together 26 years, multiple deployments and now he's retiring. He's had a great career, great friends and now we are ready to travel and catch up on house chores."

"I've had a great career," Marino said. "I wouldn't change it for anything in the world, I spent years fixing aircrafts, watching them fly successfully and had the opportunity to lead Soldiers, I couldn't ask for anything more." 



Sgt. Maj. Joseph Marino sits with his wife Brenda, Latham, N.Y., May 29, 2019 after returning from a final flight in a UH-72 light utility helicopter. Photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division.



## Women of Distinction Honors

SCOTIA, N.Y. -- Airman 1st Class Madison Daquelente was recognized as a New York State Senate "Woman of Distinction" by State Senator Betty Little. Daquelente is a member of the Emergency Management Office at the 109th and graduated SUNY Plattsburgh this spring with a degree in Art Therapy. She also volunteers with the Capital Region Expressive Arts Program and Toys for Tots. Courtesy photo.



## Remembering NY Volunteers

SLEEPY HOLLOW, N.Y. - On May 5th, 2019, the New York Guard, New York's volunteer state-defense force, held their 101st Aqueduct Defense Memorial Service which honored and remembered the 40 Soldiers of the New York Guard First Provisional Regiment who died while serving New York during World War I.

Brig. Gen. David Warager, the New York Guard Commander lays a memorial wreath at the Aqueduct Defense Memorial. Photo by Sgt. Edward Shevlin, New York Guard.

# Brothers Carry on Family Service Tradition

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood, 109th Airlift Wing



Airmen 1st Class and brothers Jack and Joshua Seeberger, both serving in the 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, N.Y.

ALBANY, N.Y. -- The National Guard is often referred to as a family, and many children follow in their parents' footsteps by joining.

For brothers Jack and Joshua Seeberger this truly is a family affair. Their father, Scott Seeberger retired as a master sergeant from the 109th Airlift Wing in 2012 serving more than 22 years in the military. The brothers, now Airmen 1st Class, returned from more than a year of training in March.

One of the unique aspects of the Guard is being able to enlist and serve with family. Jack and Joshua enlisted together in 2018 and left for basic military training that February. They have been together in every aspect of their training from being assigned to the same flight in basic training and throughout classes in technical school. They were even selected as element leaders at the same time before anyone knew they were brothers.

"Even though we never planned on joining at the same time, being able to take the journey with my brother made it a little easier and also rewarding," said Joshua. "This is just one more experience that we can share together."

After they completed the basic loadmaster

course in San Antonio they flew to Jacksonville, Arkansas, for initial qualification for the C-130H and the last stop was to complete Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape training.

The brothers returned to their home station here on March 16. They are now completing Mission Essential Skills Training, which gives them more in-depth training of the ski-equipped LC-130.

As children they grew up visiting the base with their dad.

"He used to bring us on the base all the time," said Jack. "We would run around the load shop all the time."

Their father joined the 109th in September 2001 after prior Marine Corps service. He was also a loadmaster for the C-130H, completing missions around the world.

When asked about his sons' service he expressed pride and excitement for their careers.

"It's a great experience and I'm just glad they have an opportunity to travel," he said. "It's a great job. It's a great starting point for them, the mission is awesome. I'm very proud." **gt**

## Rainbow Division Veterans Value Reunions

Story and photo by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

TROY, N.Y. --In May 2004, New York Army National Guard Maj. Michel Natali was a New York State Trooper and deputy intelligence officer of the 42nd Infantry Division.

The 42nd's headquarters Soldiers were preparing to go to Iraq and provide command and control for 20,000+ troops, something no Guard division had done since 1952.

Fifteen years later, Brig. Gen. Michel Natali commands the 53rd Troop Command and is Assistant Adjutant General responsible for overseeing 10,000 members of the New York Army National Guard. The job means busy schedules and a lot of time on the road.

But Natali makes time for an informal lunch gathering that Soldiers who deployed with him have been holding for the past several years.

"I do it to stay in touch with guys who have left our ranks and who I don't get to see very often and it gives us time just to catch up," Natali said. "It is always good to hear the same stories from people but told from a different perspective so it always sparks a new memory that maybe you didn't pick up on the first time you heard the story."

The 42nd Infantry Division's headquarters, about 2,000 Soldiers coming from the New York and New Jersey National Guard, mobilized in May of 2004 for deployment to Iraq.

400 Soldiers came from the 42nd Infantry Division headquarters in Troy.

They made up the officers, NCOs and enlisted personnel responsible for helping a two-star general run a four-brigade task force.

The headquarters trained at Fort Drum, New York in the summer and fall of 2004. They deployed to Iraq in 2005.

Al Thiem, then a major, was one of those 400. Thiem manned the aviation operations desk in the division main command post.

These days, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Al Thiem is the guy who organizes the reunions.

The reunion lunches began about 2010 when retired Lt. Col. Mike Kelley and retired Maj. Patrick Chaisson—both veterans of the Iraq deployment—were visiting the division.

Lt. Col. John Andonie, the division operations officer, now Brig. Gen. Andonie and

Director of Joint Staff for the New York National Guard, suggested they do lunch.

So they rounded up whoever they could find. Thiem began an e-mail list and reached out to that original group and had more people a few months later.

Every six or seven months, Thiem sent out an open-ended invite to his email list – it stands at 70 people now—to show up at Moscatiello's Family Restaurant in North Greenbush, N.Y. on a Friday afternoon, and Soldiers and former Soldiers from the deployment would show up .

Anywhere from 15 to 20+ normally attend.

Why does he do it?

Because it's fun, Thiem explained.

"You get a core group of people who were there and you talk about the old times," he said.

Chaisson—a retired officer who writes articles for history magazines—likes the chance to reconnect with old friends.

"Our get-togethers are very informal, fun and noisy. We're either finding out what everyone else is doing nowadays or telling stories about our time in Iraq," he said.

Lt. Col. Paul Conte, a retired artilleryman -who now works in financial services—said he keeps going because the 42nd Infantry Division group is like a family.

"Those are significant events in people's lives and in the military, especially if you spend time with them, you want to go, because who else are you going to sit down and tell this stuff to," Conte said.

"Those are significant events in people's lives .. especially if you spend time with them, you want to go because who else are you going to .. tell this stuff to,"



Veterans of the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division's deployment to Iraq in 2005 gather for an informal lunch at a restaurant in North Greenbush, N.Y. near the division's headquarters on April 5, 2019.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Stephanie Spanton—who in 2005 was the "landing zone coordinator" at Forward Operating Base Danger—said she values the chance to relax with people who have this shared experience.

"It is the stories that you don't tell everyone. The ones that only people who were there get to hear and remember with you," she said. "It's laughing about the dumb stuff, boasting the accomplishments and the quiet moments we wished had gone better."

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tim Schultz, an intelligence analyst and the senior intelligence advisor in 2005, said he values the chance to break away and "slow things down for 60-90 minutes and have lunch with the team."

"I like catching up with the folks we deployed with in this relaxed setting where all seem to be genuinely happy to just see one another again," said Col. Robert Epp, who is now deputy commander of the New York Counterdrug Task Force.

"If shared misery builds the strongest bonds, then maybe that is why we still find the time to share some pasta a few times a year," he added. **gt**

-- Retired Army National Guard Lt. Col. Paul Conte



# Guard Leaders Honor D-Day Veterans Across State

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

ALBANY, N.Y. --New York National Guard leaders honored veterans of D-Day with presentations of state medals at five state veterans homes on June 6, 2019.

The visits marked Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's statewide "Salute to World War II Military Service Day."

"On the 75th Anniversary of D-Day I want to offer a sincere thank you to all our veterans and their families for their sacrifice and service to protect our freedoms," Governor Cuomo said.

"For those we lost and the veterans who made it home, thank you. We owe you a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid," the governor added.

The National Guard partnered with the New York State Division of Veterans' Services, New York State Department of Health, and the State University of New York.

The New York State Veterans Homes are located in Oxford, St. Albans, Batavia, Montrose, and the State University of New York, Stony Brook.

Veterans present at D-Day or who fought in the Battle of the Bulge received the New York State Medal for Merit.

Presenting state medals were:

- Col. Michael Bank of the 106th Rescue Wing at the Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook.
- Lt. Col. Paul Salas of Joint Task Force Empire Shield at the St. Albans Veteran Home in New York City.
- Col. Isabel Smith of the 53rd Troop Command at the Montrose State Veterans Home.
- Col. Richard Goldenberg of the Joint Force Headquarters at the Oxford State Veterans Home.
- Lt. Col. Ernest Minichello



Col. Isabel Smith, Chief of Staff of the 53rd Troop Command, greets a World War II veteran at the New York State Veterans Home on Montrose, N.Y. on June 6, 2019 during an event organized by New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo to recognize veterans. Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Pietrantoni, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

assigned to the 153rd Troop Command at the Batavia State Veterans Home.

"The ceremony was very nice very impressive," said Louis Pompeii, an Army veteran of D-Day and former prisoner of war at the Oxford ceremony. "I was just glad [D-Day] was over."

"It was a beautiful ceremony, a really great tribute to these heroes," said Pompeii's niece, Judi Dean.

"The men and women of the New York National Guard who serve our state and nation are always inspired by the memory of the Soldiers who stormed ashore on Omaha and Utah beaches 75 years ago," said New York Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Ray Shields. "Those of us who serve today are proud to follow in their footsteps."

900,000 New Yorkers served during World War II. Every World War II veteran at each of the State



Col. Richard Goldenberg presents former Army Pfc. and World War II veteran Harry Myers with a New York State Medal of Merit at the 75th Anniversary of D-Day commemoration at the Veterans' Home in Oxford, N.Y. Photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division.

Veterans' Homes received a Governor's Proclamation commemorat-

ing D-Day and thanking them for their wartime service. **gt**

## Commentary continued from page 2:

And we are currently seeking recruiters at the E4-E5 level.

There are many federal technician jobs in maintenance, but also in auditing, finance, contracting, human resources, and Information Technology.

National Guard membership is usually required and some jobs require that you wear your uniform to work. These jobs have their own benefits which include a matching 401K and a pension separate from and in addition to your National Guard pension.

State Active Duty can offer solid pay and benefits.

Joint Task Force Empire Shield (JTF-ES) deters and prevents potential terrorist operations in the New York City Metropolitan Area with some jobs in Latham and Camp Smith too. The task force prepares for manmade or natural disasters by training alongside and working with civilian authorities and agency partners.

Another State Active Duty opportunity can be found with the Citizen Preparedness Corps training team. The team trains New York residents for any type of disaster.

Training is led by the New York National Guard and The American Red Cross working with experts from the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), Office of Emergency Management, and Office of Fire Prevention and Control. For more information go to [www.prepare.ny.gov](http://www.prepare.ny.gov).

Another unique opportunity for those with computer skills is in cyber support to the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

There is a State Active Duty pilot program between the New York National Guard and the DHSES Office of Counter Terrorism's Critical Infrastructure Unit.


The team enhances the DHSES cybersecurity capabilities and assessments by developing a Cybersecurity Assessment Program offered to state, local, public, and private entities across New York.

The New York National Guard can also help you with your civilian employment.

Ms. Darlene Stanton, our Employment Support Specialist who works in the New York National Guard Family Programs office can help. There are a large number of apprenticeship careers from Union Trades that are looking to hire service members for life long careers.

Ms. Stanton can help with your resume and career planning. Call her at (518) 786-4911 or e-mail her at [darlene.a.stanton.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:darlene.a.stanton.ctr@mail.mil).

In the military, as in civilian life you have to take responsibility and put yourself in a strong position to advance yourself. This will take personal time and responsibility.

Soldiers and Airmen who make the extra effort for the good of the National Guard or service are the ones that we want to and usually do offer opportunities. 



## Memorial Day Ceremony Remembrance

LATHAM, N.Y. -- Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General, speaks during the Division of Military and Naval Affairs Memorial Day Ceremony held here May 22, 2019 at the New York National Guard headquarters. Civilians and service members who work at the New York State Division of Military and Naval in Latham marked Memorial Day with a ceremony honoring the members of the New York National Guard who have died in combat since 2001. Photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff.



## Naval Militia Trains with Chainsaws

CAMP SMITH, N.Y. -- A New York Naval Militia member demonstrates proficiency with a chainsaw during debris clearance training at Camp Smith Training Site on May 17, 2019 as part of the NYNM's Exercise Empire Challenge held May 16-19. Courtesy photo.

# Guard Marks Army Birthday with Cake Cutting

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. – A young New York Army National Guard military police Soldier and a veteran noncommissioned officer from the armor branch joined Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General of New York, in marking the Army's 244th Birthday at the New York National Guard headquarters in Latham, N.Y. on Friday, June 14.

Pfc. Amanda Coleman, age 19, a member of the 206th Military Police Company from Schuylerville, N.Y. and Sgt. 1st Class Frank DeThomasis, age 59, a Rensselaer resident assigned to the Joint Force Headquarters helped Shields cut the Army birthday cake during a short ceremony.

The date marks the day in 1775 on which the Continental Congress took charge of colonial troops besieging the British army in Boston and created an American Army.

Traditionally, the youngest Soldier present joins the oldest Soldier present in cutting the Army birthday cake. The young Soldier symbolizes the future of the Army while the old Soldier symbolizes the Army's history and past.

In his remarks, Shields thanked both DeThomasis and Coleman for their service and presented them with coins in appreciation.

This year the Army noted the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy during the birthday celebrations with the theme of "honoring the call to service from D-Day to today."

Equipment and uniforms like those used during the invasion and held by the New York State Military Museum was on display as part of the event.

Shields wore the newly issued Army Green uniform for the ceremony, noting how it looks like



Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General, center, cuts the Army birthday cake with Army National Guard Pfc. Amanda Coleman and Sgt. 1st Class Frank DeThomasis during an Army Birthday ceremony held at New York National Guard headquarters in Latham, N.Y. on June 14, 2019. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, Guard Times Staff.

the WWII "Pinks and Greens" displayed with the museum artifacts. The new uniform references that worn in World War II, he said.

"The uniform is issued to me to model for our force as the fielding rolls out over the next year," Shields said. So far the feedback from Soldiers has been positive for the first impressions on seeing the uniform. "But don't think of me as a much of a model," he joked.

DeThomasis enlisted in the New York Army National Guard in November 1980. A co-worker of his was in the Army National Guard and convinced him to enlist.

"He managed to talk my ear off to the point where I finally said, 'Okay... I'll sign up,'" DeThomasis recalled.

He spent the majority of his

time in the Army National Guard serving in tank units, DeThomasis said, first in the 1st Battalion, 210th Armor Regiment and then in the 1st Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment.

"I loved every minute of it," he said. "During that time I was also offered several different positions which would eventually lead to promotions, but I refused them, perhaps a bit foolishly, because I really enjoyed what I was doing."

"Fulfillment meant more to me than the rank," he said.

The highlight of his Army career was when he deployed to Iraq in 2004-2005 as a platoon sergeant in Delta Company, 101st Cavalry which deployed to Baghdad with the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, DeThomasis said.

DeThomasis also served as act-

ing first sergeant for a company in Task Force Wingfoot in New York City in the days following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center.

The New York National Guard built a long-term security force around the 1st Squadron, 101st Cavalry for three months of duty during the recovery process.

He was proud to be asked to represent the Army's history in the birthday ceremony, DeThomasis said.

"I guess it came full circle, the old guy brings in the new kid," he said.

"I'm very happy to do it and it's very appropriate in my case."

His advice for Coleman and other young Soldiers is to do the best job you can and enjoy your job.

"Chasing stripes and rockers are important, as long as you can do it with some intestinal fortitude and passion," DeThomasis said.

Coleman, a college student at Adirondack Community College in Queensbury, N.Y., joined the New York Army National Guard in 2018.

She joined the Army because her brother joined and she had always looked up to her brother. She decided to become a military police Soldier because she had once wanted to be a New York State Trooper, Coleman said.

"It made sense to correlate the two," she said.

Her most memorable Army experience has been the people she's met in the 206th Military Police Company, Coleman said.

"They've taught me a lot so far," Coleman said. "I just want to learn and every day we grow at drill." **gt**

# THE JOINT FORCE

## New York, Puerto Rico Airmen Combined Training

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

MUNIZ AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, PUERTO RICO -- Nearly two years after providing support in Puerto Rico following the devastation Hurricane Maria left, the relationship between the 109th Airlift Wing here and the 156th Airlift Wing at Muñiz Air National Guard Base, Puerto Rico, has continued to grow. Airmen from the two Air Transportation Operation Centers (ATOC) have joined together for training opportunities and mission support.

Most recently, 13 Airmen here joined the 156th ATOC to facilitate the traffic of 11 missions, 188 passengers and 96 short tons of cargo during Vigilant Guard 2019 in March.

With many Airmen of the 156th deployed, Chief Master Sgt. Harry Capocalo, 156th Air Transportation (ATO) Manager, was looking for Airmen to help support the exercise.

He first brought up the idea to Chief Master Sgt. Mark Mann, 109th ATO manager, in November of 2017 when he and other 109th Airmen were in Puerto Rico to assist after Hurricane Maria. The two began planning the following year when it was confirmed that Muniz would be hosting Vigilant Guard.

"(We) discussed the possibility of joint training operations between members from his air transportation unit and the members from the 156th ATO," Capocalo said. "We decided to use Vigilant Guard 2019 as the kick start for this operation."

"Both our units are in the same FEMA Region, so it makes sense for us to work together, and it's great to see the two units have such a great working relationship," Mann said. "When my folks went



Airmen with the 109th Air Transportation Operations Center and the 156h ATOC work together to support Vigilant Guard 2019 at Muñiz Air National Guard Base, Puerto Rico on May 1, 2019. The 109th Airmen, based in Scotia, New York, have been working with their counterparts at the Puerto Rico Air National Guard at Muñiz since assisting after Hurricane Maria in 2017. Courtesy photo.

down for Vigilant Guard, they ended up working with some of the same 156th members they had met back when they were there for hurricane relief."

Vigilant Guard provides state National Guard headquarters and supporting units with an opportunity to improve command and control and operational relationships with civilian and military partners at the local, state, regional and national levels. It helps military units unify their efforts to support civilian authorities during emergency response in the event of a disaster.

"We were on site prior to the Army arriving so we could offload all of their equipment from the cargo planes that came," said Master Sgt. Tom Hegney, 109th ATO. "We stayed until after they left. We saw them in, and we saw

"It makes sense for us to work together, and it's great to see the two units have such a great working relationship,"

-- Chief Master Sgt. Mark Mann, 109th Airlift Wing

them out."

"The members of the 109th verified flight documentations, conducted joint inspections, passenger processing and aircraft loading, while always maintaining a high degree of professionalism and integrity," Capocalo said. "The exercise and mission was accomplished for the work done between both units; however, it is important to highlight the team from the 109th and their dedication to mission success."

Master Sgt. Kelly Littlejohn, 109th ATO, said the goal of the combined training was to create a liaison between the two units.

"If we had an emergency situ-

ation up here, (they) could send people up here to relieve us so that we could tend to our families," she said. "And (Chief Capocalo) wants us to start coming there regularly to train with their folks so that if and when the next (hurricane) comes through, we can roll in and take over their mission so they can tend to their families."

"Hurricane Maria taught us many things -- one was the need to develop better integrated teams among the air transportation specialty," Capocalo said. "Thank you again to Chief Mann and the men and women of the 109th Air Transportation Operation." 🇺🇸



Soldiers assigned to the New York National Guard roll out a water-filled dam through flooded areas of the Port of Rochester, May 20, 2019. Gov. Andrew Cuomo activated the New York National Guard and Naval Militia after water levels in Lake Ontario started rising and causing flooding across areas of New York State. Photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff.

## Soldiers and Airmen Fight Lake Ontario Floods

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

ROCHESTER, N.Y. --As water levels in Lake Ontario reached more than 2 feet higher than normal on June 16, the New York National Guard and New York's state military forces had 453 personnel focused on flood control issues around the lake shore.

This included 422 personnel working directly on shore line issue and 29 personnel involved in support for the mission.

Along with 262 National Guard Soldiers and 57 National Guard Airmen, there were 80 members of the New York Naval Militia on the mission and 54 members of the New York Guard, the state's volunteer defense force.

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo had initially ordered 100 troops to state active duty on May 4, 2019 as high rains started water levels in Lake Ontario to increase.

By the end of June, with most mission requirements met, Joint Task Force Ontario downsized to a force of 150 personnel. In early July, that number went down to 50.

High water levels in streams in Ontario and Quebec initially limited the amount of water that could be discharged through the Moses-Sanders Dam at Massena, N.Y. into the St. Lawrence River. The Canadian-US Interna-

tional Joint Commission, which controls water levels in the Great Lakes, has increased the flow of water out of the lake system to deal with high water levels.

The New York troops have been involved in filling sandbags for emplacement by other agencies and property owners and have also been emplacing sandbags when necessary.

Other state and local government agencies are also making and filling sandbags.

Between May 4 and June 27 Joint Task Force Ontario personnel had filled 442,154 sandbags and emplaced 538,653.

The task force personnel also emplaced 15,039 feet of a water filled barrier called an Aquadam, designed to hold back water.

New York Military Forces personnel had conducted 233 sandbag missions and 55 Aquadam missions as of June 27.

Each sandbag takes about 30 pounds of sand. The bags are stacked in layers with plastic sheeting to form a barrier to keep out water.

It takes about 540 sandbags to create a water resistant wall 30 feet long and three feet high.

At its peak, Joint Task Force Ontario was configured into 23 strike teams using 72 rental vehicles and 12 military vehicles.



New York Army, Air National Guard and Naval Militia personnel conduct sandbagging operations near Sodus Point, N.Y. on May 7, 2019. Photo by Maj. Gary Barney, 42nd Infantry Division.

The teams worked out of armories in Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester and Fort Drum and at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station.

The New York Naval Militia, whose members serve in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Reserve and volunteer for state active duty missions in addition to federal service, briefly deployed two patrol boats to Lake Ontario in support of the mission there. **gt**

# Guard Hosts First Joint NCO Professional Workshop

Story and photos by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff

LATHAM, N.Y. -- 120 senior NCOs from across the state gathered for the first ever Joint Senior Enlisted Leader Professional Development Workshop held at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters May 31, 2019.

The senior enlisted leaders from the New York Air and Army National Guard, N.Y. Guard and Naval Militia who attended the workshop learned about what each branch does and what roles they can fulfill when working in a joint environment. The education provided was designed to improve joint interoperability across the state.

"I don't recall, at least in the last 10 years, where our enlisted senior leaders across the state have gotten together in a joint environment to talk," said Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, the New York National Guard senior enlisted advisor. "The purpose of the workshop was to establish relationships across the force and educate ourselves on what is going on in the New York National Guard."

The workshop also tackled sensitive issues such as suicide, Giaquinto

explained, with Kim Ruocco from the Transition Assistance Program for Survivors speaking on the topic. As the widow of a Marine who died by suicide in 2005, Ruocco "uses her education and personal experience to help others more fully understand suicide," Giaquinto said.

Those that attended also got to hear from retired Army Staff Sgt. Joel Tavera, who at the age of 20 in 2008 survived a rocket attack in Iraq while three others did not. Tavera, who lost sight in both eyes, his right leg, several fingers and suffered burns over 65% of his body, told his story as well as how to remain resilient through the toughest of times, said Giaquinto.

"His extraordinary spirit and perseverance serves as an example for anyone who is facing difficult times," Giaquinto said.

The workshop wrapped up with Giaquinto hoping that everyone made at least one new connection with someone they didn't know. Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sergeant,

**"We are the Army and we are the Air, we are unique and we have our own missions. But when we work together, there is no one that can beat us."**

-- Command Chief Master Sgt. Maureen Dooley, New York Air National Guard Command Chief



Top and bottom photos; Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the Adjutant General, speaks to senior NCOs from across the New York State Military Forces during a professional development workshop held in Latham, N.Y., May 31, 2019.

echoed the importance of working together.

"We are the Army and we are the Air, we are unique and we have our own missions," said Dooley. "But when we work together there is no one that can beat us." **gt**



## Firefighters Train in South Africa

CAPE TOWN, South Africa – New York Air National Guard Master Sgt. Fredric Pravato, a fire fighter assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing conducts fire line training with South African fire fighters at the Table Mountain Newlands Fire Base in Cape Town, South Africa on May 2, 2019. Four New York Airmen spent April 29 to May 5 in Cape Town as part of a training exchange under the State Partnership Program. The four have 90 years of firefighting experience among them. Photo by Lt. Col. Alvin Phillips, Joint Force Headquarters.



Lt. Col. Tammy Street, center, commander of the logistics readiness squadron of the 109th Airlift Wing, moves a placard representation during the 2019 hurricane season at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in New Windsor, N.Y., May 23, 2019.

# Guard Leaders prepare for 2019 Hurricane Season

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

NEW WINDSOR, N.Y. -- 80 New York National Guard senior leaders and staff planners spent May 20-23 at the Armed Forces Reserve Center here to prepare for the 2019 hurricane season.

The training brought together leaders from the New York Air National Guard, Army National Guard and the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard.

The theme for the training was "Information sharing, information exchange," said Guard Brig. Gen. John Andonie, director of Joint Staff.

Discussions focused on reporting, mission planning and improving joint interoperability for civil support operations.

"All of you represent the five air wings, Army Guard commands and state defense forces," Andonie told the attendees. "You are our collective ability to respond to emergencies anywhere in the state."

"But we're not perfect," Andonie said. "So we'll spend the next couple of days on areas to improve. Ask yourselves during this training, how do we reduce the time from a mission request to a mission response?"

The six joint task force headquarters arrayed in the state shared best practices during recent operations. Each task force is responsible for a designated geographical region of the state during a domestic operation supporting local authorities.

The training workshop culminated with the group's rehearsal and briefing of the Guard's hurricane response plan for the 2019 season to Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the adjutant general.

Hurricane season runs through early November.

The challenge for the New York National Guard is positioning response forces before a hurricane arrives, explained Maj. Gen. Timothy LaBarge, the assistant adjutant general for air, and commander of the New York Air National Guard.

Commanders from across the joint force walked through their deployment of response elements in the hours prior to a potential storm striking New York City and Long Island.

"Who knows where we'll end up after landfall," LaBarge said, "but this is a really good

starting point."

Moving thousands of Soldiers and Airmen, their vehicles and equipment from across the state to participate in the response task force represents a real tyranny of geography, said Lt. Col. Shawn Shutts, commander of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion.

"It's seeing the management of the time and distance piece in planning," Shutts said. "I've been part of this planning for years, but this is the first time seeing this all laid out on a large map."

The rehearsal is really a comprehensive plan, LaBarge said, including not just the National Guard, but the expectation that a dual status command will employ active forces as well.

"Everybody's going to want to help, and Title 10, those active duty forces, are going to be participating. Count on it and plan for it," he said.

The last major hurricane response in New York State was Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

"We have a plan that probably won't survive first contact with the storm," LaBarge said, "but getting all of our forces on the same page in preparation is a great start." **gt**



Spc. Carlos Zambrano, a Soldier assigned to the 145th Maintenance Company, New York Army National Guard, fires an M4 rifle during the Sgt. Henry Johnson Individual Combat Rifle Match at the 40th Annual Adjutant General's Marksmanship Competition at Camp Smith Training Site, N.Y., May 31, 2019. Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

## Soldier from 204<sup>th</sup> Engineers wins TAG Rifle Match

Story by Spc. Chisom Olajide, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP SMITH, N.Y. --After three days of shooting at Camp Smith Training Site, May 30-June 2, at the New York National Guard's annual Adjutant General's Match, Pvt. Briana Tillotson was the winner in two individual rifle marksmanship events.

Tillotson, a member of Headquarters and Support Company of the 204th Engineer Battalion, took first place in the Sgt. Henry Johnson Individual Combat Rifle Match Award. Named after the World War I hero, the event tests marksmanship with the M16A2/A4 or M4 rifle.

Beating Sgt. Sean Cassidy of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment for that win also meant that Tillotson had won the Sgt. Timothy Murphy "Bullseye" Award. The award named after a Revolutionary War militia marksman is the tie breaker when competitors have the same final score.

Finishing in third place in the rifle match was Cpl. Daniel Suarez, assigned to the 107th Military Police Company.

Known as the "TAG Match," the annual competition encourages shooting excellence among New York Guardsmen on rifle and pistol skills and move on to national-

level marksmanship competitions.

This year's event featured 89 competitors: 69 from New York Army National Guard, 4 from the New York Air National Guard and 16 New York Guard members. There are individual competitions in rifle and pistol marksmanship, along with team competitions in rifle and pistol shooting.

Tillotson is one of the first women to win in one of the shooting competitions in many years, according to match officials.

Tillotson competed for the first time in 2018.

Her only preparation was her annual individual weapon qualification with her unit, Tillotson said.

But Tillotson, a native of Whitney Point, N.Y., said she grew up shooting with her father.

Next year she hopes to recruit more Soldiers from the 204th Engineers to participate as a team.

"My advice for them would be not to take it too seriously, but to have fun and make new friends," she said.

Staff Sgt. Blake Alexander, assigned to the 1108th Ordnance Company, took first place in the pistol competition. The second-place winner was Capt. Steven Dubin, assigned to the New York

Guard. Third place went to Cpl. Daniel Suarez, assigned to the 107th Military Police Company.

But the team he assembled won second place for Overall Combined Combat Champion match and first place for the Team Combat Rifle Match.

Baker, the namesake of the pistol competition's, was a posthumous World War II Medal of Honor recipient who held off a Japanese attack with his pistol at close range.

For first time competitors, the winner of the rifle match was Spc. Stephen Chiarizia, assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment. The winner of the pistol match was New York Guard Pfc. Caleb Louard.

For Overall Combined Combat Champion, the first-place team winner was the 107th Military Police Company. In second place, were Soldiers of the 145th Support Maintenance Company and the third-place winners were the 107th Attack Wing.

The 145th Maintenance Support Company won first place in combat rifle match team. The 107th Military Police Company took second place and the third place



Pvt. Briana Tillotson, a Soldier assigned to Headquarters and Support Company, 204th Engineer Battalion, displays her Sgt. Timothy Murphy "Bullseye" Award after taking first place in the Individual Combat Rifle Match. Photo by Spc. Michael Bezares, 138th Public Affairs Detachment.

winner were the 69th Infantry and 4th Finance.

The first place team winner for pistol was the 107th Military Police Company. The second place winner was the 107th Attack Wing and third-place was the New York Guard. **gt**



# Command Chief Giaquinto Retires

## New York's First Female Senior Enlisted Leader Retires

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

LATAHM, N.Y. -- The first woman to serve as senior enlisted leader for the New York National Guard retired on June 27 after a 25-year military career.

New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy R. Giaquinto retired during a June 27 ceremony at Stratton Air National Guard Base.

Giaquinto served in the 109th Airlift Wing, which is headquartered at the base prior to moving into the senior enlisted leader job for the New York Air National Guard in 2016. She became the senior enlisted leader for the entire New York National Guard in 2017.

As senior enlisted leader for the 16,000 members of the New York Army and Air National Guard, Giaquinto reported directly to Army Maj. Gen. Ray Shields, the Adjutant General of New York on all enlisted issues, to include professional military education, enlisted promotions, mentorship, morale, family and community relations.

Giaquinto said she decided to retire so she can spend more time with her family.

The position requires a great deal of travel and she has a son still in high school who she would like to spend more time with, she explained.

"It was a hard decision to make. I love serving and I will miss my National Guard family," Giaquinto said. "No one asked me to leave. It is just the right time."

Giaquinto served three years in the Army after enlisting in 1984. She joined the 109th Airlift Wing in 1997 as an information manager a decade later.

In retrospect, she wishes that she hadn't stayed away from the military for so long after leaving the Army, Giaquinto said.

She missed serving but didn't know about the National Guard until years had gone by, Giaquinto explained.

"If I knew about the Guard sooner I would have joined right after leaving active duty," she said.

She served in the logistics readiness squadron and also served on the Base Honor Guard. She later served as the information resource manager and as the office manager for the wing

command staff.

In 2009, Giaquinto deployed to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom, and in 2010 she was selected as a human resource specialist at New York Air National Guard headquarters.

Giaquinto was selected as the 109th Airlift Wing command chief in June 2013 before moving into the New York Air National Guard Command Chief position in July 2016. She was the first woman in both those positions. She took over as senior enlisted leader for the New York National Guard in November 2017.

Since she joined the Army in 1984 she seen lots of changes in the military for women, Giaquinto said.

"There are more and more firsts for women in the military," she said. "The first women to serve in combat, the first woman to be in the position I am in."

"I hope there are a lot less firsts. I hope it becomes the norm," Giaquinto said.

Her advice to young people joining the military is to be ready to make a career out of it.

The National Guard, especially, has a lot to offer, she said. People can have a military career and a civilian career at the same time and get opportunities to deploy without moving around



Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto and retired Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the former Adjutant General, display Giaquinto's retirement certificate during her retirement ceremony at Stratton Air National Guard Base on June 28, 2019. Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara, 109th Airlift Wing.

as much as active military people do.

"Twenty years goes by fast. My advice is if you can stay in and make it a career you will not regret it," she said.



Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, top left, New York's senior enlisted service member, joined Maj. Gen. Anthony German, then the Adjutant General, for a meal with New York Soldiers deployed as part of the Joint Multinational Training Group Ukraine during a visit to the Yavoriv Combat Training Center March 8, 2018. Giaquinto retires from service this summer. Photo by Sgt. Alexander Rector, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

## Leaders Tackle New Army Combat Fitness Test

Story by Col. Richard Goldenberg, Joint Force Headquarters

LATHAM, N.Y.-- 75 New York Army National Guard senior leaders got hands-on with the new Army Combat Fitness Test at New York National Guard Headquarters here April 27, 2019.

Battalion and brigade commanders, and their command sergeants major, participated in a step-by-step walk-through of the six event combat fitness test.

"Units that conduct pre-training, a walk-through; do significantly better at this," explained Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowarski, the New York Army National Guard senior enlisted advisor.

The colonels, lieutenant colonels, and command sergeants major went through the same process sergeants, specialists and privates will go through.

The goal was to familiarize leaders, learn techniques and prepare training plans as units train for the new standards which become effective in 2020.

The sequencing of the test—five demanding events and then a two-mile run—will make the running event more demanding than the current three event PT test, said Lt. Col. Wing Yu, the commander of the 204th Engineer Battalion.

"Each individual event is achievable with some practice for improvement, however my opinion is that the sequencing of all six events within less than one hour is what will challenge most people," he said.

"I think the biggest challenge was, and still is, the Sprint, Drag and Carry event," said Yu who got a taste of the new fitness test at his pre-command course. "It'll smoke everyone, especially little guys like me," Yu added.

The test events matched his abilities, so it was fairly easy, said Lt. Col. Joe Whaley, the commander of the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment. The new fitness test is more strenuous than the current PT test and that will mean changes, Whaley said.

"Without serious training, my staff and I feel it will be very difficult for many of our soldiers to pass the test," he added.

Instructors from the Army National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation Regiment, a pilot unit for the Army Combat Fitness Test, conducted the training.

The battalion, headquartered in Latham, N.Y. is providing feedback to Army evaluators about the new fitness test.

The pilot tests will help the Army determine what scores and categories need to be adjusted.

"It is coming and we are getting ready," explained Col. Christopher Panzer, the New York National Guard operations officer.

"In fiscal 2021 we plan to implement the test of record for all our Soldiers," Panzer said

The new test goes from three events in the current Army Physical Fitness Test to six events in the ACFT. The six events include a Strength Deadlift, Standing Power Throw, Hand-raised Push-ups, a 250-meter Sprint, Drag and Carry, Leg Tuck and finally a Two-mile Run.

The increased number of events is strategically designed to test areas of physicality that are important in combat scenarios and that were not addressed in the older test. By the end of 2020, the six-event ACFT is supposed to replace the Army Physical Fitness Test first implemented in the 1980s.

The new test is gender- and age-neutral, and includes three minimum standards that are based on unit and military job specialties. Soldiers in units that are physically demanding will have to score higher than those in less physically demanding units in order to pass the new test.

"The new fitness test has a bunch of nuances," explained Lt. Col. Jason Lefton, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation Regiment. "But once you start doing it, our Soldiers have really found it to be fun."

The rapid pace of each training lane and the movement of groups of Soldiers through the fitness test create an atmosphere to build unit cohesion and comradery, Piwowarski said.

"Cheering, encouraging at each event, leveraging that energy, that is what makes this fitness test a real team effort," he said.

The test takes about 17 minutes to pass through the first five stations, leaving the two-mile run for the final hurdle, Lefton said.

There's a cumulative effect on participants not accustomed to the



Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowarski drags a weighted sled for 50 meters during the sprint, drag, carry event for the Army Combat Test April 27, 2019 in Latham, N.Y. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, 42nd Infantry Division.

demands of the new test.

"For our leaders, I emphasize watching your pride," Lefton said. "On my first attempts at the dead lift, I kept going until I threw my back out," he explained. **gt**



New York Army National Guard leaders stretch before the Army Combat Test on April 27, 2019 at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs in Latham, N.Y. Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, 42nd Infantry Division.



Photos left and above, Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade man their command post on May 12, 2019 during exercise Guardian Response 19 at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. One hundred and sixty New York National Guard Soldiers took part in the major national exercise. Photos by Sgt. Deyanira Rios, 369th Sustainment Brigade.

## Soldiers Hone Domestic Nuclear Disaster Skills

Story by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, 42nd Infantry Division

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. -- 160 New York Army National Guard Soldiers spent May 8-16 honing their emergency response skills during exercise Guardian Response at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

The Guardian Response exercise validates a units' ability to support state and local authorities in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack.

Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade, headquartered in Harlem, trained in the exercise, which simulated a nuclear attack on Detroit.

Army units from eight state National Guards, the Army Reserve and active Army took part.

Part of the exercise involved hands on rescue and recovery missions at Muscattuck Urban Training Center.

"We started training last year, we are learning a lot from our civilian counterparts and as a strong team we have worked on our individual tasks and collective staff work," said Col. Stephen Bousquet, the 369th Sustainment Brigade commander.

The exercise scenario was built around an urban area hit by a 20 kiloton atomic weapon. One incident was followed by another during the exercise.

The 128 Soldiers from the 133rd Compos-

ite Supply Company, headquartered at Fort Hamilton were constantly on the go, moving critical supplies from one location to another, according to Capt. Ismael Batista, the company commander.

"These truly are the epitome of disaster-ready, citizen-Soldiers," said 1st Sgt. Tracyann Stewart, first sergeant of the 133rd Composite Supply Company.

"For a unit such as ours in Brooklyn, it can feel too close to think about such emergencies as these which will test our resolve or will to help family, friends and neighbors," she added.

The 369th will be responsible for their part in the mission for about two years and during that time will continue to improve interoperability between active, Guard and Reserve with civilian agencies for homeland response, specifically chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents, according to Bousquet.

"This experience is different than our deployment in 2017. Then we were a brigade element supporting logistics in the Middle East, now we are working with different units assisting with vital urban search and rescue and life-saving decontamination and medical care," Bousquet said.

During the exercise, the Soldiers were continually performing command tasks, to include

receiving reports, updating and assessing information and deploying simulated National Guard, state and federal forces to provide a scaled response to the disaster.

"No one is ever truly ready for a scenario where U.S. cities are attacked like this. Not every young Guardsmen knows the danger of an experience such as a deployment, Batista said.

"This exercise can remind them of the risk and responsibility we hold within our communities," Batista added.

The team trains under Department of Defense guidelines which require the Soldiers to respond within 6 to 12 hours to assist local authorities after a chemical, biological radiological or nuclear attack or a hazardous materials incident, Bousquet explained.

"Every member of the 133rd can attest to hoping we're never called up," Stewart said. "But they are ready to do their jobs."

"As we have geared up for this exercise over the past year, many Soldiers felt the strain of a higher op-tempo, but being here in person, running through the scenario, I think they are confident in their training," Stewart said.

"I'm proud of how far this unit has come; leaders should rest assured that the 133rd remains vigilantly in place," said Batista. **gt**

# 27<sup>th</sup> Brigade Soldiers Win Northeast Best Warriors

Story by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff



Cpl. Joseph Ryan, an assistant operations specialist with headquarters company, 1-69th Infantry Regiment, low crawls through an obstacle course during the 2019 Regional Best Warrior Competition at the Regional Training Institute in Center Strafford, NH, April 30. The regional event has the state best warrior winners from Conn., Mass., N.H., N.J., N.Y. and R.I. compete for the regional title. Courtesy photo.

CENTER STRAFFORD, N.H. -- New York Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Martin Cozens and Cpl. Joseph Ryan took first place during the Northeast Region Best Warrior Competition held in Center Strafford, New Hampshire, April 29 to May 1.

The two 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers were up against Best Warrior winners from the New England states and New Jersey. Cozens won in the non-commissioned officers



Sgt. First Class Martin Cozens loads an M9 pistol during the qualification portion of the Regional Best Warrior Competition in Center Strafford, N.H., April 30. Photo by Spc. Nicole Hayes, New Hampshire National Guard.

category while Ryan was facing off against other junior enlisted Soldiers.

It's the second year in a row that New York Soldiers have won the competition in both categories. In 2018, Spc. Ilya Titov and Sgt. Quentin Davis -- both from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment -- won the regional competition and went to the Army National Guard nationwide Best Warrior event.

Cozens and Ryan performed "incredibly well" during the competition, said New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major David Piwowarski.

"They outperformed a tough and ready field of competitors from the region and won it all," Piwowarski said.

Cozens is a Greenwood Lake, N.Y., resident and platoon sergeant assigned to Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment.

Prior to joining the National Guard, Cozens served six years with the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, including a 2013 deployment for Operation Enduring Freedom.

The win was "exhilarating," Cozens said. But he emphasized that winning in New Hampshire was "a momentary pat on the back."

"I also know I have a harder challenge down the road," Cozens added.

The next stop for Cozens and Ryan is to compete for the overall titles at the 2019 Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition July 13-20 at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma.

Months of training and preparation without slowing down has paid off for the pair.

"The first competition was in October, which we started training in August for," said Ryan, an assistant operations specialist assigned to the 1st battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment from Yonkers, N.Y. "Things really ramped up in January after the brigade competition."

Cozens and Ryan both said the help other Soldiers gave them in getting ready for the competition was vital.

Titov, the enlisted winner from 2018 who is now a sergeant, "donated a lot of his personal time so we could work together," Ryan said. "He had the most info, he's a squared away guy," he added.

Cozens praised his company first sergeant, Daniel Markle, for working with him to get ready for first the state and then the regional Best Warrior contests.

“He was one of the forces that got me into alpha company,” Cozens said. “He’s been a springboard for information and mentorship and has been in the foxhole with me since day one.”

They have been supported by their sponsors and trained by other Soldiers from different companies and even at the division level many of whom were on hand for the victory, Piwowarski explained. This helped them to turn any weaknesses they had into strengths, he emphasized.

Some of the tasks the Soldiers are evaluated on during a Best Warrior event include; obstacle courses, calling for indirect fire, weapons qualification and stress shooting, land navigation, dress and appearance and written exams.

For the regional Best Warrior event, the Soldiers were also added a surprise test: they were interviewed by a TV camera crew, said New Hampshire Army National Guard Public Affairs Officer Lt. Col. Greg Heilshorn.

On today’s low intensity battlefield any Soldier may have to talk to a reporter so the idea was to allow these top Soldiers to experience that reality, he explained.

“Two of the tasks that were the hardest for

me were the M9 pistol qualification and conducting the stress shoot with it,” said Cozens. “I didn’t have much experience with that, so Markle put together a training program and over two months I got better and better. I had to stay on top of it and it paid off.”

The stress shoot event required the Soldiers to run and conduct other strenuous physical tasks, like hauling a simulated casualty, and then engaging targets.

After going against the best Soldiers in the northeast, Cozens and Ryan said they know what they must do in order to take on the best from across the entire country.

A training program is in place to get them ready for the next round of competition in Oklahoma, Piwowarski said.

“The win is only the tip of the iceberg,” Piwowarski said. “Their ongoing preparation and continuous rehearsal is what made the difference. Readiness really wins a contest like this.”

The combined talents of Cozens and Ryan made it clear to the other competitors that they

were going to be the ones to beat, Piwowarski said.

According to Cozens, the two quickly formed a team and trained and studied together, with Cozens calling Ryan a great motivator.

“People realized the Soldiers from New York, are a strong team,” said Cozens. “It set the tone for the competition when we finished the run during the PT test together.”

Ryan, who enlisted in 2017, said he appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Best Warrior and also appreciated the fact that his unit sent him to Ranger School and Airborne School to hone his skills.

“It feels really good to be able to represent New York,” Ryan said. “I hope to continue succeeding and continue on representing the state.”

With fellow Soldiers and their families supporting them, Cozens and Ryan said they are certain they can triumph in Oklahoma.

“They are truly the New York Army National Guard’s best warriors,” Piwowarski said. **gt**



Cpl. Joseph Ryan, an assistant operations specialist with Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, slides down an obstacle course during the 2019 Regional Best Warrior Competition at the Regional Training Institute in Center Strafford, N.H., April 30. Courtesy photo.



Sgt. First Class Martin Cozens, an infantryman assigned to Alpha Co., 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment conducts the Sprint/Drag/Carry portion of the Army Combat Fitness Test, Center Strafford, N.H., April 30. Courtesy photo.

## New Battalion Commanders



AUBURN, N.Y. -- Lt. Col. Monique Foster, accepts the colors of the 102nd Military Police Battalion from Col. Michael Fowler, commander of the 153rd Troop Command, during change-of-command ceremony here June 8, 2019. Photo by Lt. Col. Roberta Comerford, Joint Force Headquarters.



GLENVILLE, N.Y. -- Maj. Doug Baker, right, the incoming commander of the 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD), receives the unit colors from Col. Michael Fowler, commander of the 153rd Troop Command on Saturday, June 8, 2019 at the Glenville Armed Forces Reserve Center in Glenville, N.Y. Photo by Master Sgt. Jacklyn Lloyns, 109th Airlift Wing.



Col. Robert Charlesworth, left, accepts the colors of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Maj. Gen. Steven Ferrari, 42nd Infantry Division commander during his change-of-command ceremony at Fort Drum, N.Y. on June 22, 2019. Photo by Sgt. Alexander Rector.

## New Commander for Hunter Brigade

Story by Capt. Avery Schneider, 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- Army National Guard Col. Robert Charlesworth a veteran of the war in Afghanistan who recently served in the office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, took command of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in a ceremony at Fort Drum on Saturday, June 22.

Charlesworth took over for Col. Christopher Cronin. Maj. Gen. Steven Ferrari, 42nd Infantry Division commander, served as the reviewing officer.

"[Col. Charlesworth] is uniquely qualified to command the 27th IBCT with over 24 years of military experience," Ferrari said as he welcomed the new commander.

"These two officers are leaders of character, competence, and commitment," Ferrari said. "They epitomize everything we expect and demand of our senior leaders."

Ferrari said under Cronin's command, the 27th went through a redesign, added new units and equipment to its ranks, deployed Soldiers to Ukraine and Australia, and maintained a high level of readiness.

As he addressed his Soldiers for the final time, Cronin recalled more than a dozen locations around the world where they had served during his two years in command.

"Either supporting individual mobilizations, or leaving the state in a formation, you have left your families and travelled abroad protecting our nation and enforcing its strategic interests," Cronin said. "You are all heroes."

Charlesworth told the Soldiers he is honored and humbled to serve with the 27th, and excited for a return to the field.

Charlesworth, who grew up in Kingston, N.Y., commissioned as an engineer officer through Army ROTC in 1992. He served in the active Army and transitioned to the Vermont Army National Guard in 2001. He served as a staff officer and as brigade operations officer in the 86th Brigade Combat Team, and later as battalion commander for 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment.

Since 2011, Charlesworth has served in staff positions on active duty for the Army National Guard, most recently as deputy assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for National Guard and Reserve Matters.

He will continue his active service as the brigade's full-time commander. **gt**

## Engineers Train, Build for Troops



CAMP SMITH, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y.-- Soldiers from the 1156th Engineer Company built a brand new pavillion at Camp Smith during their annual training on May 8th, 2019. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer Reid Duncan, 1156th Engineer Company.



Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the Adjutant General, shakes hands with Soldiers of the 27th Financial Management Support Unit at a mobilization ceremony in Whitestone, N.Y., on June 26th, 2019.

## Farewell to Finance Troops

Story and photo by Sgt. Andrew Valenza, 42nd Infantry Division

NEW YORK -- Twenty-five New York Army National Guard Soldiers said goodbye to their families and friends as they prepared to leave for a nine month deployment to Afghanistan on June 26, 2019.

At a farewell ceremony held at the American Legion Post in Whitestone, the Soldiers of the 27th Financial Management Support Unit heard from Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the Adjutant General, before departing for training at Fort Hood, Texas.

Following a month of post-mobilization training at Fort Hood, the 27th Finance will deploy to Afghanistan where they will provide financial assistance to coalition forces there.

Shields praised the Soldiers for their service, noting they all volunteered for the deployment, and encouraged them to stay safe while deployed.

He also thanked family members and friends of the Soldiers who attended for their support.

Major Sarah Mitchell, the unit commander, said she was very proud of her company and their willingness to deploy.

"They're super motivated. All of my Soldiers are volunteers, none of them were forced to deploy, they all wanted to deploy," Mitchell said.

"They all work well together and they're excited to be working together," she added.

Spc. Larisa Yegorova said this will be her second deployment. She says the way she will make it through the next nine months is to focus on personal development.

"I want to keep focused on long term goals, work out and read a lot of books to try to stay positive," Yegorova said.

The 27th Finance has deployed to Kuwait twice before, once in 2008 and again in 2013, supporting missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan. **gt**



## Syracuse Armory Light Repair

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Charles Volcheck, assigned to the Joint Force Headquarters as an electronic communications technician at the Syracuse Armory, repairs an aircraft beacon light at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base on June 4, 2019. The aircraft beacon light, part of the Syracuse International Airport, is located on a radio antenna tower on the roof of the Syracuse Armory. The beacon light gives pilots operating aircraft in the area a positive identification of where the tower is located for their safety. Photo by 1st Lt. Joseph Riviello, Joint Force Headquarters.

# AIR NATIONAL GUARD



13 of the 50 air transportation specialists from the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, New York, pose for a photograph at Muniz Air National Guard Base in Puerto Rico on March 16, 2019. Courtesy photo.

## 109<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing Wins Award

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

SCOTIA, N.Y. — The 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron's Air Transportation team here was recently selected for the 2018 Air Force Air Transportation Activity of the Year award.

The New York Air National Guard unit was the only Guard unit to take home an award from the 2018 Air Force Maintenance and Logistics Readiness Individual and Unit Awards.

"These awards recognize individuals and organizations within the logistics community for outstanding contributions to the success of Air Force and DoD missions," said Lisa Smith, Deputy Director of Logistics, in a memo announcing the winners. "We received over 300 outstanding packages and given the extremely rigorous competition, all individual and unit nominees should be commended for their outstanding accomplishments."

The Air Transportation Operations Center consists of 50 Airmen responsible for securely managing cargo and passengers. The 109th

Airlift Wing is home to the only ski-equipped cargo aircraft, the LC-130, able to land on snow and ice.

"During the past year, they provided support across the globe, including Hurricane Maria relief efforts in Puerto Rico, cargo retrograde at the South Pole Station, and cargo and passenger support to Operation Deep Freeze and the National Science Foundation in Antarctica and Greenland," said Lt. Col. Tammy Street, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander.

"(Everyone from my most junior enlisted to the higher enlisted) continues to perform at an exceptional level, whether it's the fulltime work force or the drill status guardsmen," said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Mann, 109th Air Transportation Operations Center manager.

"These outstanding men and women shine in every task they undertake," Street said. Along with their missions around the globe, "they're always among the first to volunteer to support the citizens of New York when natural disasters

strike."

"No matter the location or task, the excellent character and strong work-ethic of these Air Transporters produces profound results! It's wonderful to see their hard work recognized at the national level," Street said.

"Folks continue to volunteer for the many aspects that earned us this award," Mann said.

"It is extremely beneficial as well, that when we are doing all the things we do, to have the support of leadership, and that happens all the time here. Another example on how we are able to succeed," Mann said. ✪

*"These outstanding men and women shine in every task they undertake. It's wonderful to see their hard work recognized at the national level,"*

*-- Lt. Col. Tammy Street, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron Commander*



# Bonjour! 109<sup>th</sup> Sends Skibird to Paris Air Show

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Jaclyn Lyons, 109th Airlift Wing

PARIS, France— One LC-130 "Skibird" and 12 Airmen from the Capital Region's 109th Airlift Wing are taking part in the International Paris Air Show which began June 17 and ends on June 23.

The 109th, based at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, N.Y., specializes in supporting National Science Foundation research in Antarctica and Greenland and can also support military missions in Arctic regions.

The Paris Air show, held every other year, is the world's largest and premier air show. This year the show, held at Paris-Le Bourget Airport, featured 140 aircraft, 2,381 exhibitors from 48 countries, 290 official delegations representing 58 nations and is being covered by 3,450 journalists from 67 countries, according to air show organizers.

It is the first time the 109th, or any New York Air National Guard contingent, has participated in the Paris Air Show. In 2018 the 109th sent an LC-130 Skibird to participate in the African Aerospace and Defence Airshow held by the Republic of South Africa.

The New York National Guard has a training partnership relationship with the South African military.

The 109th was asked to participate because the NP2000 eight-bladed propeller used on the LC-130s is made in France by Collins Aerospace, which is now part of United Technologies Corporation.

The NP2000 propeller, which features curved blades, provides more power than a traditional propeller. All ten of the 109th Airlift Wing's LC-130 use the high-tech propeller. One of the 12 109th Airmen at the airshow-eight aircrew members and four maintenance personnel-is an expert in the propellers and can talk about the system and its impact on fuel consumption and flight performance.

The wing is embracing the chance to be part of the world's biggest and best air show, according to Col. Michele Kilgore, the commander of the 109th Airlift Wing.

"This is a great opportunity to educate the public about the specialized LC-130 Skibird capabilities and how the NP-2000 bladed propellers have increased our aircraft performance," she said. "The Paris Airshow is a premier event




An LC-130 assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing on display at the Paris Air Show on June 18, 2019. The NP2000 propellers, which provide more power and enable fuel economy, are unique and the reason why the wing was invited to attend. Below, An LC-130 comes into land at the Paris Air Show on June 16, 2019. Courtesy photos.



to showcase our mission sets, bring awareness of Arctic exercises and foster our relationships with our European Allies."

1st Lt. Laura James, an LC-130 navigator, said it's tremendously exciting for the 109th Airmen to be part of the event.

"It's been awesome to see all the airframes and technology from different countries," James said. "There's everything here. There's NASA, fighter planes from WWII, amphibious planes and then we brought the LC-130."

"Some know about our mission and tell us how cool it is, others come up and point to the skis and ATO (rocket assisted takeoff) bottles and ask what they're for. Then we explain the mission and they think it's crazy... seeing the reactions has been pretty cool," James added. 



Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing, from left, 1st Lt. Laura James, Senior Airman Ben LaFond, and 1st Lt. Dan Urbanski point to the spot at Le Bourget Airport where Charles Lindbergh landed on May 21, 1927 after flying solo from Long Island to Paris. The three were attending the Paris Air Show June 18, 2019. Courtesy photo.

# 105<sup>th</sup> Airmen Survive, Evade & Escape in Hudson Valley

Story and photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Lane, 105th Airlift Wing

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, N.Y.— Among the mountains, woods, and water of the Hudson Valley, Aircrew members with the 137th Airlift Squadron of the 105th Airlift Wing, completed combat survival training at Plum Point County Park, New Windsor, New York, June 1, 2019.

The training was led by Staff Sgt. Ian Kuhn, a survival, evade, resist, escape (SERE) specialist assigned to the 106th Rescue Wing in Long Island, and was a part of the aircrew's refresher course for combat operations.

"This training is an investment by the Air Force into the men and women who routinely fly into dangerous areas during their missions," said Kuhn. "By learning and refining these combat survival skills, our Airmen remain safer and more self-sufficient in a scenario that might leave them vulnerable if they were to be downed in an aircraft."

Aircrew members covered several different training topics during their day such as water survival, environmental protection, raft living, personal protection, signaling and recovery, sustenance, travel, and health and welfare.

"The best part about this training is being re-familiarized with the equipment and survival training," said Capt. Jordan Hatfield, a pilot.

"Getting the opportunity to physically get into the rafts and put on the safety equipment helps us maintain confidence for our safety if something went wrong during a mission."

This confidence was echoed by Master Sgt. Christopher Cummings, the squadron aircrew training noncommissioned officer in charge, who coordinated the aircrew's training for the day.

"This type of training gives pilots and the loadmasters the confidence that they can and will survive if a worst-case scenario happened," said Cummings. "By completing this annual training requirement, aircrew members can execute the global mobility mission of Stewart Air National Guard Base.

Throughout the day, the training site was covered with shelters made with olive drab parachutes, burned wood from camp fires, bright yellow life preservers, and orange inflatable life rafts.

Kuhn started the morning by demonstrating different methods on building a shelter. Logs, sticks, rocks, leaves and 550 cord were all used to create shelters that the aircrew members could use for safe havens.

Several factors had to be considered when making a shelter such as wooded versus desert, mountains versus flatland, proximity to bodies of water and escape routes. "Site selection is key," Kuhn said.

Once all of the sharpened limbs were secured, fires extinguished and foliage woven, aircrew members moved on to the escape phase.



Airmen assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing participate in combat survival training at Plum Point County Park, New Windsor, New York, June 1, 2019.

"Every minute the enemy spends on hunting for our service members is another minute that wastes their time, energy and resources," Kuhn said.

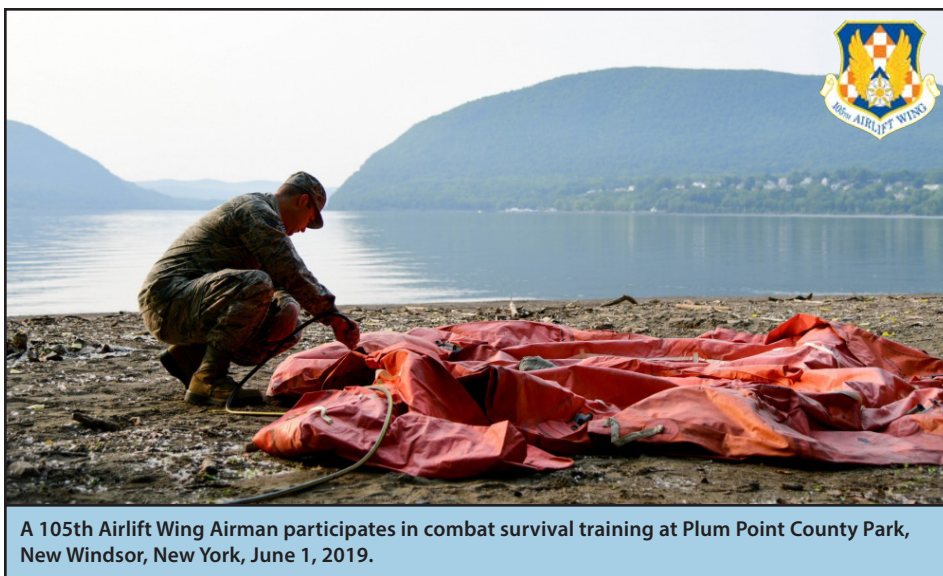
Mud, leaves, insects and debris covered the airmen's flight suits as they ran through open fields to seek cover. They traversed mountain ridges to meet up with other teammates and reviewed navigation equipment to safely find their way back to a predetermined location.

For the final phase, the aircrew members took to the water. Airmen competed to don their emergency water survival equipment faster than their teammates to simulate stress and a sense of urgency.

"Link up, link up, link up," was chanted by aircrew members wearing brightly colored yellow and orange inflatable life vests as they swam through the water in an attempt to jointly reach the inflatable raft that was floating in the Hudson River.

"There's a great atmosphere of comradery and pride when you're all in the water together," said Hatfield. "Everyone has to work together to get through the event and survive."

Once at the raft, the aircrew members were met by Kuhn who provided insight and guidance on staying alive while at sea. **gt**



A 105th Airlift Wing Airman participates in combat survival training at Plum Point County Park, New Windsor, New York, June 1, 2019.



A HC-130J Combat King II sits on display at the 106th Rescue Wing, New York Air National Guard, during a ceremony at Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base, Westhampton Beach, N.Y., May 17, 2019.

## 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Welcomes New Aircraft

*Story and photo by Ryan Campbell, Guard Times Staff*

WESTHAMPTON BEACH, N.Y.— The 106th Rescue Wing at Francis J. Gabreski Air National Guard Base presented the first of four new HC-130J Combat King IIs, call sign “King 76” during a ceremony May 17, 2019.

The HC-130J, officially aircraft 16-5863, was designated the “Spirit of Long Island” during the ceremony. It is the first time in the 72 year history of the 106th that it has received brand new aircraft straight from the factory, according to wing commander Col. Michael Bank.

Typically, the National Guard gets aircraft that has been phased out of the active components. Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, the New York State adjutant general, added that units across the state can expect this to change, with brand new aircraft being delivered to various units across the New York National Guard.

The wing, which also flies the HH-60 Pave Hawk rescue helicopter, utilizes the Combat King to conduct search and rescue missions domestically and in combat environments. With the arrival of these brand new aircraft,

the 106th will be able to increase its capabilities over the aging HC-130P/Ns currently assigned to them, according to wing leadership.

Bank explained that this is another significant event in the long history of the wing’s 102nd Rescue Squadron, who the new aircraft will be assigned to. The squadron traces its origins back to 1908 and the 1st Aero Company, when in 1921 it became the 102nd Observation Squadron, one of the original 29 such squadrons in the Army National Guard.

“The history of the 102nd is rooted with the pioneers of aviation, the birth of airpower and the nucleus of the Air National Guard,” Bank said of the squadron which is the oldest unit in the Air National Guard.

Carrying the latest in technology will “enable the 106th Rescue Wing to conduct personnel recovery in a highly dynamic environment,” Bank said. Since taking on the role of rescue wing in 1975, the 106th has provided support for space shuttle launches, conducted the longest over-water rescue mission in an HH-60,

deployed to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey and been involved in numerous other operations over land and sea.

Some of the improvements the new aircraft feature are improved navigation, threat detection and countermeasures systems and greater range than the older aircraft it replaces. These variants of the C-130 are the only fixed-wing personnel recovery platform in the Air Force.

Along with recovery missions, the 106th explained that these aircraft can also conduct humanitarian assistance operations, disaster response, emergency aeromedical evacuation and noncombatant evacuation operations. With three officers and two enlisted loadmasters, the HC-130J can carry a payload of 35,000 pounds, fly at a speed of 362 miles per hour with a range of more than 4,000 miles. This is an improvement of 5,000 pounds of payload capacity and increased speed up from 289 miles per hour over the outgoing HC-130P/N.

“We are proud and grateful that we can accept it and employ it,” Bank said. **gt**

# 106<sup>th</sup> Airmen Share Flag Day with Local School

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times* Staff

SHIRLEY, N.Y.— Eight Airmen from the 106th Rescue Wing shared what the flag means to them during a Flag Day ceremony at William Floyd Learning Center in Shirley, N.Y. on June 14.

William Floyd kindergarten students and staff honored the military members for their service during their Flag Day ceremony.

Students and staff performed patriotic songs, presented Airmen with thank you cards and shared a Flag Day cake.

“Flag Day is a time to honor the greatest symbol of our freedom as American citizens,” said Gary Bretton, the school principle. “We invited the 106th Rescue Wing to our school today to give our students the opportunity to celebrate this day with the true American heroes that defend and serve our country.”

Every year since President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed, June 14th as Flag Day in 1916, Americans have celebrated the adoption of the American flag everything the flag represents.

The American flag represents freedom and members of the Rescue Wing have answered the call to serve according to Lt. Timothy J. Ginás, commander of the 106th Security Forces Squadron.

“It felt great seeing the teachers promote the American flag and the American way of

life,” said Ginás. “And the fact that the students embraced that culture. We serve to provide all Americans with the freedom to achieve anything they are willing to work hard for.”

The Airmen were invited to the ceremony so the kindergarten students would find people in uniform less scary, explained Wendy Gross, a kindergarten teacher.

“The purpose of our ceremony was to address the importance of acknowledging and thanking those who have served or are currently serving in the military,” said Gross. “Many of our special needs students have not had the opportunities to meet or speak with members of the military and benefit from adults who can model how to interact appropriately with them.”

Community engagement is important to keep the public informed about who we are and what we do at the 106th, said Capt. Michael O’Hagan, the public affairs officer of the 106th Rescue Wing.

“It was inspirational seeing all the hard work the staff and students put together for the Flag Day Ceremony,” said Major Cynthia L. Spragg, the public health officer of the 106th Medical Group.

“What’s even more impressive was the



Lt. Timothy Ginás, Major Cynthia Spragg and Lt. Col. Jeffery Cannet, all members of the 106th Rescue Wing, greet kindergarten students at the William Floyd Learning Center in Shirley, N.Y. on June 14, 2019 during a Flag Day ceremony hosted by the school. Photo by Airman 1st Class Kevin Donaldson, 106th Rescue Wing.

families that took time to be at the ceremony to support their kids. Community support, collaboration and engagement are important to our mission,” Spragg said. **gt**

## Two Stars for Two General Officers Promoted in New York Air National Guard



LATHAM, N.Y. -- Above left, newly promoted Maj. Gen. Timothy J. LaBarge’s family as his daughter Emily (left) and wife Petra pins his new rank during a promotion ceremony at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs Headquarters on June 1, 2019. LaBarge is the New York Assistant Adjutant General and New York Air National Guard Commander. Above right, the family of Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Owens II, son Lt. Thomas Owens III (left) and son Riley Owens pins his new rank while his wife Karen looks on, Owens is the Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. Photos by Staff Sgt. Ben German, 109th Airlift Wing.



### VP Meetup at 105<sup>th</sup>

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, N.Y. -- U.S. Vice President Mike Pence greets Col. Jeff Hedges during a visit to Stewart Air National Guard Base before attending the West Point Graduation Ceremony May 25th, 2019. Courtesy photo.



### 139<sup>th</sup> Aeromed Commander Retires



STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Scotia, N.Y. -- After 25 years at the 109th Airlift Wing and 39 years in the military, Col. Brian Backus retired as the commander of the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron on May 10th. When asked about his favorite part of serving in the military- Backus responded it has been about working with great people, executing the mission and helping the patients that needed their assistance. He said aeromedical evacuation has been the most rewarding job he held in the military. Courtesy photo.



### Air Guard Takeover in NYC

NEW YORK -- Col. Michele Kilgore, center, commander of the 109th Airlift Wing, and Col. Denise Donnell, at left, commander of the 105th Airlift Wing, give remarks for the kick off Air National Guard Day 2019 at New York Penn Station May 17, 2019. The event paid tribute to their military service. The recruiting program hopes to empower local hometown commitments and inspire others to serve their country. Courtesy photo.



### FOD Walk for Safety before Holiday Weekend

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse, N.Y. -- New York Air National Guard Airmen assigned to the 174th Attack Wing pick up FOD (Foreign object debris) during a FOD Walk July 2, 2019 in Syracuse, N.Y. FOD Walks are done to prevent debris from damaging aircraft arriving and departing from the air base. Photo by Staff Sgt. Duane Morgan, 174th Attack Wing.



## Guard Volunteers on Lake Ontario

LAKE ONTARIO, N.Y. -- New York Guard volunteers on State Active Duty support the effort of Joint Task Force Ontario along the lake shoreline. Below, New York Guard Chaplain (2nd Lt.) Garry Ferris, second from left, visits a sandbagging station. Bottom left, New York Guard Spc. David Cox helps assist with sandbag emplacement at Sodus Point, N.Y. on May 7, 2019. Bottom right, New York Guard members place sandbags along the shoreline in Clayton, N.Y. on May 30. Courtesy photos.



### All in for Commo Training

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. -- Members of the New York Guard partnered with New York Army National Guard and Naval Militia communications personnel to set up a Mobile Emergency Response Center (MERC) antenna system during the Naval Militia's Empire Response 19 exercise at Camp Smith on May 18, 2019. The New York Guard volunteers assisted with the communication system setup and operation during the disaster response portion of the exercise. Photo by Pfc. Steven Getman, New York Guard.



### Recognizing Achievement

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR, N.Y. -- New York Guard Capt. Frederick Veit, Deputy Judge Advocate General for the New York Guard Headquarters, receives the New York Guard Achievement Medal from Brig. Gen. David Warager, New York Guard Commander during the June consolidated drill held at Camp Smith Training Site. Photo by Spc. Michael Bilski, New York Guard

# New York Naval Militia

## Naval Militia Meets Empire Challenge Exercise

Story by Capt. Larry Wiell, New York Naval Militia

**CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, N.Y.** -- Seventy-Four New York Naval Militia members tested their ability to integrate into National Guard communications, logistics and command operations, while also exercising the Military Emergency Boat Service to operate together, May 16-19 at Camp Smith.

One of the key elements of Exercise Empire Challenge was moving Naval Militia members to Camp Smith from across the state.

A system of rented vans brought members from all three major Naval Militia regions to Camp Smith.

“The logistics of getting all personnel on station was a major effort,” said Commandeer Kenny Fellers, who devised the plan. “But the system worked, and the shared ride program proved that we can effectively collect and deliver our personnel whenever and wherever needed.”

Throughout the exercise, Naval Militia personnel worked side-by-side with New York Guard, the state’s self-defense force, and Army National Guard personnel.

Logistic personnel from the New York Guard worked in tandem with landing craft LC-350

crewmembers to practice loading a large, heavy load onto the new bow ramp boat using a heavy-load forklift at the Cortlandt boat ramp.

Other Naval Militia members trained on chainsaw operations. The exercise scenario factored in a storm.

“These qualifications will help our personnel and organization become more important and relevant to the entire Division of Military and Naval Affairs organization,” said Capt. David Hawley, the Naval Militia’s chief of staff. “If we are to maximize our ability to respond to actual disasters, we have to have trained personnel ready to respond on short notice. This is exactly the kind of preparations we need to get our people ready to respond.”

On the Hudson River, a rare and unique photo-op took place as all ten of the patrol boats positioned themselves into a two-column formation. Fellers operated a drone above the formation and documented the procession.

The exercise also served the purpose of testing Naval Militia communications capabilities.

Communications experts from the Division of Homeland Security



A New York Naval Militia member takes part in a logistics exercise involving loading New York Naval Militia landing craft LC-350 with cargo at the Cortlandt Manor boat ramp on May 18, 2019 near the Camp Smith Training Site. Photo by Lt. Cdr. Ed Balaban, New York Naval Militia.

and Emergency Services helped Naval Militia operators determine where radios and antennas required adjustment or replacement, and also provided training on how to best configure their gear.

“The exercise gave us a good understanding of our capabilities,” said Capt. Mark Pederson, the Naval Militia’s signal officer.

Empire Challenge also tested the Naval Militia’s ability to conduct a full-up exercise while also operating in a real-world

mission, according to Rear Adm. Tim Zakriski, the Naval Militia’s commander.

At the same time Naval Militia members were exercising at Camp Smith, others were conducting flooding mitigation operations on Lake Ontario, he emphasized.

“Our staff and our personnel are enthusiastic and ready to take on all these challenges. We have never had a better group of men and women dedicated to the task,” Zakriski said. **gt**

## Ten Boats Make up Fleet Manuever in Hudson River

**PEEKSKILL, N.Y.** -- The ten patrol boats that make up the New York Naval Militia’s Military Emergency Boat Service manuever up the Hudson River near Peekskill on May 18, 2019 during the Naval Militia’s Empire Challenge exercise in this photo taken from an unmanned aircraft. The Military Emergency Boat Service exercise was one component of the drill which ran from May 16 to 20 and tested the Naval Militia’s logistics, mobilization procedures, command system, and communications. Photo by Cmdr. Kenny Feller, New York Naval Militia.



