

The

Skibird

Winter 2008

GUARDING AMERICA,
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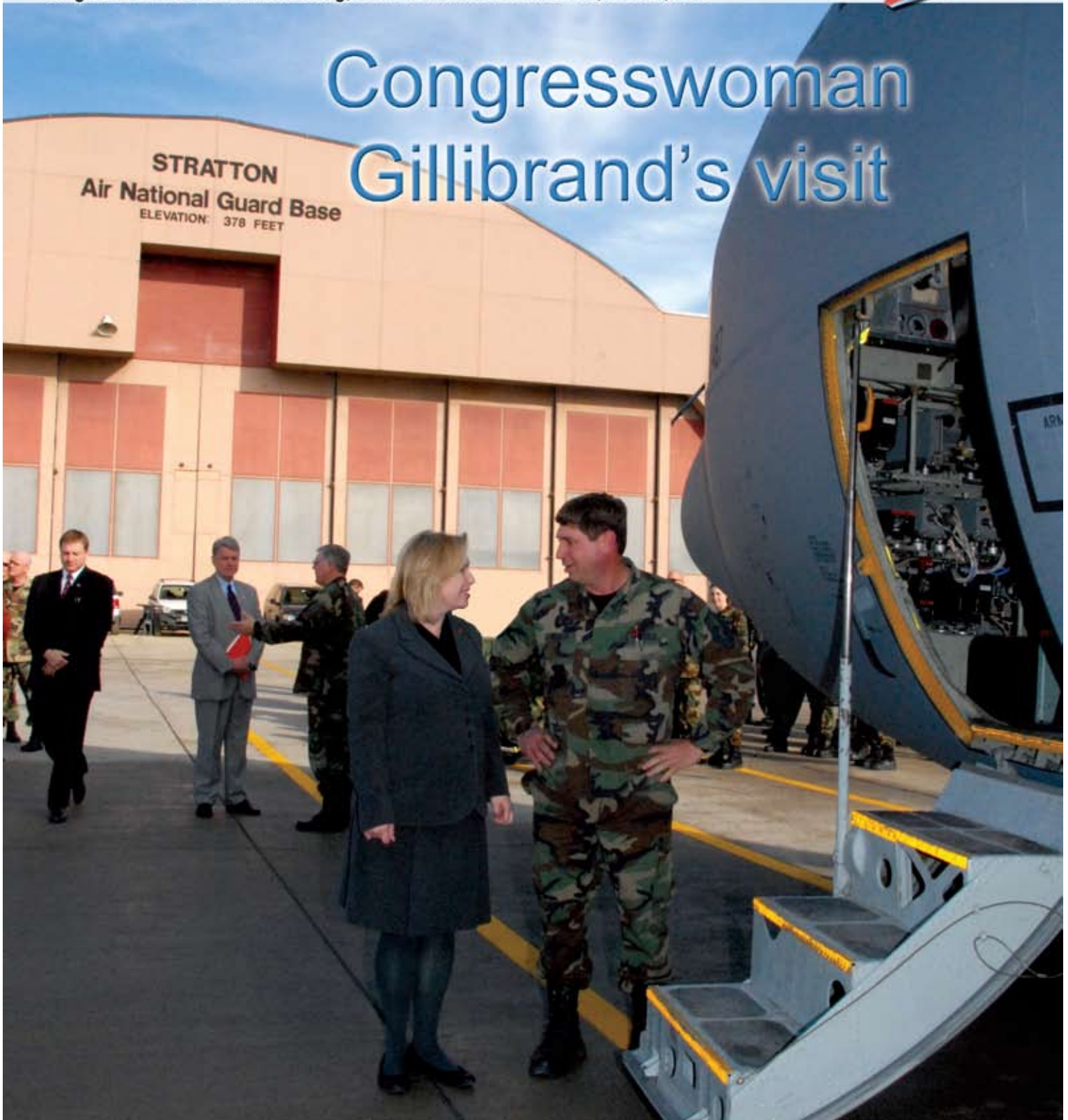
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AIR NATIONAL GUARD
NEW YORK



Magazine of the 109th Airlift Wing, Stratton Air National Guard, Scotia, N.Y.

Congresswoman Gillibrand's visit

STRATTON
Air National Guard Base
ELEVATION: 378 FEET



Working with 109th Airmen a great opportunity

By Col. Timothy LaBarge
109th AW Vice Commander
(effective 1 March)

Several months ago I had my first opportunity to fly with the 109th Airlift Wing. The occasion was a short trip to Stewart Air National Guard Base to attend the promotion ceremony of the 105th Wing Commander, Brig. Gen. Verle Johnston, a name that is somewhat familiar to the members of the 109th.

In his remarks to the assembled crowd, General Johnston indicated that he was uniquely privileged to have served with two of the finest airlift wings in the U.S. Air Force, the 105th, the acknowledged best in class strategic airlift wing, and the 109th, the premier C-130 / LC-130 airlift wing.

Looking back on those remarks, two things become apparent.

First that his experience is no longer unique in that I am about to be afforded the same opportunity, and second, that I have already begun to experience the truth in his words with respect to the world class expertise of the 109th AW.

It is my singular pleasure to be afforded the opportunity to work with and serve the men and women of the 109th AW.

I bring an experience base and skill set that is diversified and hopefully will be complementary to the corporate structure of the 109th.

Coming from the "strat air" community it is a given that I have much to learn about the "tactical airlift" community in general and the LC-130 mission in particular. The good news for me is that I will be learning it from the best in the business, and I am very much looking forward to the process and experience.

Over the last several years I have worked with many distinguished members of the 109th at various events and in varying capacities.

In fact there are a few members who I have known since high school. For those of you who don't know me, the thumbnail version looks like this:

Hometown – Tupper Lake, NY; Tupper Lake High School class of 1979; St. Lawrence University class of 1983; Reese AFB TX, Undergraduate Pilot Training class 85-04, T-37 First Assignment Instructor Pilot Reese AFB, TX, 1985-1989, C-5 Galaxy Pilot Dover AFB DE, 1989-1991. Joined NYANG at Stewart ANGB 1991, played C-5 Instructor/Evaluator Pilot, Flight, Squadron and Wing Leadership roles, HQ-NYANG

Director of Plans and Programs in 2006, Headquarters USAF, Pentagon, Washington DC 2006-2007 and Director of Staff – HQ-NYANG 2007 – 2008.

Intermixed in the 1991-2006 Stewart ANGB years is 15 years of experience in the small and large corporate business world. It is my hope that this business experience will translate well into the dealings that we at the 109th have with our primary customer the National Science Foundation.

This Supplier / Customer model is no longer unique to the business community as we have seen here. Our continued success with the National Science Foundation is based on being accountable, being good stewards of the NSF resources, and providing world class logistical support in the worlds most demanding environments. All of these elements have been routinely and repeatedly demonstrated by the 109th over the years.

So, that's who I am. Now, it will be my complete pleasure in getting to know who all of you are.

Thanks for this opportunity to introduce myself and thanks to Colonel German and the leadership of the 109th for this chance to work with and serve the distinguished members of Stratton ANGB.

Colonel Kinowski says farewell to 109th members

By Col. Edward Kinowski
109th AW Vice Commander

Another home, another family, a place of employment, travel and adventure, a way to serve your state and country and all from your backyard – how lucky can one get belonging to the

109th!

I'm not one for long good byes, mostly because hello with the 109th lasted almost 38 years.

So I'll spare you the details and just leave my Bio highlights on the 109th Web site for a least a few more months.

So, to the membership of the

109th (both past and present), my thanks for a tremendous life.

I owe a debit of gratitude to just way too many to mention.

I have great faith with the membership and new leadership and know you are on the right road to a long and prosperous future.



File photo

From the Family Support Center

Would you like to know about events on base? Would you like information on new programs for military families? Would you like to know what is available for military families when a family member is deployed?

The Family Readiness and Support Office provides this information. If you would like this information and it doesn't always make it home, put your email address on my distribution list. Send your email address along with the service member's name, your name and your relationship to the service member to Joanna.pritchard@nyscot.ang.af.mil

109th Airlift Wing



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Col. Anthony German

Vice Commander

Col. Edward Kinowski

The Skibird

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The Skibird

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On the cover:

U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand talks with Master Sgt. Michael Brienza, supervisor of the Aerospace Repair Shop, during a visit here Jan. 8. 109th Airlift Wing senior leaders gave the congresswoman a tour of the base and briefed her on the wing's mission.

Letter to Airmen: Make 2008 the Year of Achievement

The following is from Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne:

Happy New Year! I am so proud to begin another year serving with all of you as Secretary of this great Air Force.

You performed magnificently as an Air Force in 2007, and our nation needs you to have a repeat performance in 2008. As we begin this new year together, I want us all to set the personal and organizational goals necessary to capitalize on last year's efforts and make 2008 The Year of Achievement.

Set Your Goals for the Year. I encourage each of you to set personal goals that will take care of your mind, body and your family so you are ready to defend our great nation today and in the future.

Additionally, each organization should set goals focused on accomplishing their specific missions with excellence and taking care of their people.

To accomplish the Air Force Mission, General Moseley and I need every unit and individual to continue to develop, maintain and sustain the Warfighter Edge so you are prepared to fight alongside our Joint brothers and sisters anytime, anywhere.

Achieving Our Air Force Goals. In 2008, our Air Force will continue to train and equip warrior Airmen to fight and win the current war while also preparing our Air Force for the uncertain future.

This year we will also continue to achieve results towards the Air Force Goals I previously established. For example, we will achieve successful results

in the critical modernization of our aging aircraft inventory by putting the top two Air Force acquisition priorities on contract -- the new air refueling tanker and the new Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) helicopter.

As we set the stage for the future, we will also break new ground by applying innovative technologies in areas such as alternative energy and cyberspace.

Building on last year's certification of the B-52 to fly on synthetic fuel and the first-ever transcontinental flight on 'synfuel' by a C-17, we are taking aggressive steps to certify the entire fleet to reduce dependence on foreign oil. We will also achieve a major step towards providing global effects across our air, space and cyberspace domains when the



File photo

new Air Force Cyber Command (AFCYBER) reaches Initial Operational Capability status targeted for October 2008.

This new command will lead our cyberspace forces and ensure dominant air, space and cyberspace power for the 21st century.

All of the program successes we see in 2008 will result from incredible efforts by our Guard, Reserve, Active Duty and Civilian Airmen. In 2007, you did an excellent job of planting the seeds -- let us all set goals to achieve and harvest the results in 2008

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (Capt.) Jake Marvel
Staff Chaplain

In less than two weeks from the time I am writing this, a young man who I have worked with for about a year and a half will head out to basic training for the Army. He's a great guy who realizes he needs some discipline and direction in his life; he's hoping to find it in an infantry unit. I've been praying with him and for him for several months, and now as his departure is imminent, there are a few things I'd like to say to him.

Pay attention to people. Not just to the drill sergeant, but to your peers. Cut the loud obnoxious ones some slack; pay attention to the ones who seem real quiet and held back. People deal with uncertainty and fear differently. Be friendly, be yourself. You are about to make some very close friends.

Join the team. You have a great opportunity to become part of something bigger than yourself. Get together with friends to study, encourage and play. Something significant happens to us when we join a team.



Marvel

It's as if God made us to need other people and so in synergy we find purpose, meaning and direction.

Make peace. Yes, you are preparing for war. But facing combat doesn't mean you need to embrace hatred for an enemy. Treat all people with respect. Seek and find even small ways to make peace. Never forget that every human you meet is created by and loved by God.

Be ready to fail. Your measure is made

by how you react to challenges and apply what you learn, not by getting everything right the first time.

Remember your roots. The ups and downs, the values, the lessons you have learned in your life are about to be put into play. You don't need to reinvent yourself; what you are becoming is an evolution of where you have been.

Pray. I believe you have been gifted by God with a unique set of talents, passions and skills. Pray that God will nurture those gifts within you and enable you to share them with others. Pray that your leaders make wise decisions. Pray that your peers reach their potential.

Know you are not alone. Many people who care for you very much -- myself

See *CHAPLAIN*, page 7

General Hemstreet leaves behind legacy

By Staff Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
Public Affairs

In October, Airmen here gathered to pay tribute to the “father of the polar missions” by naming the base’s main road after him. Only a few months later, Airmen gathered again to honor the general, but this time on a much more somber note.

On Jan. 20, retired Gen. Stanley Hemstreet passed away at the age of 82.

A memorial was held at the base Jan. 24 in Hangar 7. About 100 friends and family, as well as 109th Airmen, attended to say good-bye to the man who pioneered the wing’s mission.

After the memorial, where many family members spoke about the man they loved and admired, the procession was led to the general’s burial at Schaghticoke Cemetery. He was given full military honors, including a C-130 fly-by in true 109th fashion.

General Hemstreet signed up for the Army Air Corps before graduating from high school in 1943 and was about to be shipped overseas when World War II came to an end in 1945. After two more years of aeronautics schooling in Oklahoma, then-2nd Lt. Hemstreet returned



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Col. Edward Kinowski, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander, presents the American flag to Aileen Hemstreet as her daughter, Stana Iseman, and son, Maj. Steve Hemstreet, stand beside her.

to his hometown of Schaghticoke and applied for a job at what was to become Stratton Air National Guard Base.

But the flood of post-war pilots quickly filled all the aviator spots at the 109th Airlift Wing and left only a few spaces at the base for mechanics, restricted to enlisted men. The Guard ultimately gave him a choice: either retain his commission and keep looking for a job or accept a demotion and start a different line of work. “So he resigned his commission and became an enlisted man,” recalled Stana

Iseman, his eldest daughter.

General Hemstreet stayed with the unit until the day he retired in 1985. He began here as a master sergeant in the maintenance field and soon after regained his commission and worked in about every section the unit had to offer. In 1971, he became commander of the 109th and spent 14 years serving in that role.

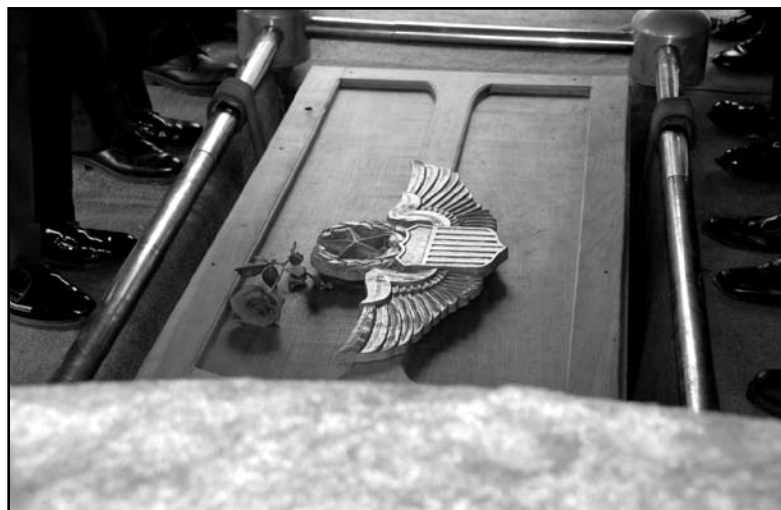
As base commander, General Hemstreet is credited with bringing in the unit’s trademark

See HEMSTREET, page 7



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

A bugler with an Army Honor guard plays “Taps” during Gen. Stanley Hemstreet’s funeral.



Gen. Stanley Hemstreet is laid to rest in a hand-carved coffin made from the wood of his barn.

Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Partners in history

By 1st Lt. Ernest Lancto
109th Airlift Wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron

On a rainy day in April at the Rotterdam industrial park, a partnership was developed from a request for a piece of history.

Master Sgt. Martin Mailhot from the Southeast Air Defense Sector located at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., contacted Craig Williams of the New York State Department of Education who is the senior historian and maintains museum property for the state of New York. Mr. Williams jokingly refers to himself as, "the keeper of big heavy things." Sergeant Mailhot was attempting to locate something from the 9-11 attack to display at Tyndall AFB. A nearly 9,000-pound piece of steel I-beam is that piece of history he was looking for.

The Southeast Air Defense Sector is part of 1st Air Force which during wartime and contingencies becomes the Continental United States North

American Aerospace Defense Command Region (CONR). It is the part of NORAD that protects and defends our homeland from outside attack and was witnessed the terrorist attacks on that tragic day in 2001.

Mr. Williams and Sergeant Mailhot were put into contact with Tech. Sgt. Scott Molyneaux of the 109th Logistic Readiness Squadron's traffic management flight. Sergeant Molyneaux received this special request for assistance with great enthusiasm.

He first connected with Mr. Williams to find out all the pertinent details regarding this shipment and assess the needs of the customer. Second, a similar call was made with the consignee, Sergeant Mailhot, to clarify any delivery location or time constraints. Third, Sergeant Molyneaux researched price quotes from contracted civilian transportation companies to



Courtesy photo

Tech. Sgt. Scott Molyneaux and Master Sgt. Lawrence Belak inspect the truck and survey the loading of the artifact.

arrange the over-the-road transport on a flatbed truck. Finally, he reached out to a nearby Army Reserve unit, the 77th Regional Readiness Command, and got a hold of Lawrence Carter to make use of a heavy equipment crane to load the large piece of steel on the flatbed.

This large broken 14-foot

long piece of steel I-beam is part of the main structure from Tower 2 of the World Trade Center, between floors 9 and 12. It is now a part of history, both state and federal, a reminder of the horrific attacks on our own soil. We were able to assist the

See *PARTNERS*, page 12



Courtesy photo

Pictured is a sculpture by Rolando Guzman dedicated to the memory of all the heroes who died on September 11, 2001. It was made using scrap aluminum pieces from his work place.



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. Lawrence Belak, Tech. Sgt. Scott Molyneaux and Jeff Stringer view the proper balance points to place the lift support chains under the steel beams.

Hemstreet, from page 4

C-130 aircraft equipped with ski landing gear and establishing supply missions to both polar icecaps. When he retired from the Guard, he set the record for the longest time on active flying status — 42 years.

“The missions he brought to the 109th have kept the 109th here for as long as it’s been,” said Col. Edward Kinowski, the vice commander of the 109th. “He emulates what I would call the true citizen soldier.” *(This article was combined with an article written by Justin Mason of the Daily Gazette.)*



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Aileen Hemstreet says some words about her late husband, Gen. Stanley Hemstreet, during his memorial on the base.



Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara

Above, Army Honor Guard members give a military gun salute and **at left,** Lt. Col. Dave Kolterman performs a fly-by in a Stratton C-130 during Gen. Stanley Hemstreet’s funeral.

Chaplain, from page 4

included – cannot go with you on this journey, but we will keep you in our prayers and thoughts. We will hold your spirit close to ours and hope for the days we can again be together. We are tied together by the one Spirit that has promised never to leave you alone.

Each step you take into your future is guarded by the God who made you and knows you and will never leave you. May God bless you and keep you safe. May you find that God has led you into this new stage of your journey.

May you discover in yourself the strength that God has placed within you for such a time as this.

Go in Peace.

On the ice with Ann Curry



(Above) Ann Curry reports a “Today Show” segment, titled “Ends of the Earth,” from Antarctica.

(Left) Airmen pose with Ann Curry in front of a ski-equipped C-130 in Antarctica.

Photos by Senior Airman Stephen Girolami

Gillibrand visits



U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand meets with 109th Airlift Wing members during a visit Jan. 8.



U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand meets Tech. Sgt. Ellen Caporiccio of the 139th AES here during a visit Jan. 8.



109th
Kirste



Col. Edward Kinowski, vice commander, discusses the 109th Airlift Wing mission with U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand during her visit to the base.



U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand visits with 109th Airlift Wing members Jan. 8. wing's mission as well as strategic initiatives for the coming years. More th

109th Airlift Wing

Photos by
Master Sgt.
Christine
Wood



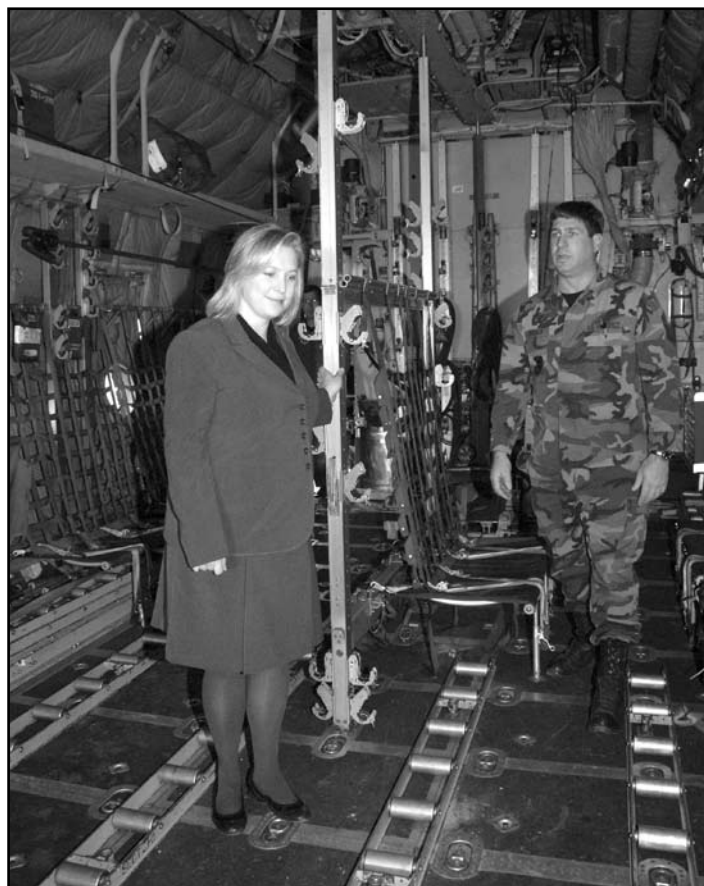
109th Airlift Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Charlie Lucia shows U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand around the base during a visit Jan. 8.



Col. Edward Kinowski, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander, presents U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand with a photo of a wing Skibird.



While Congresswoman Gillibrand was here, she was briefed on the more than 700 wing Airmen are members of her district.



Master Sgt. Michael Brienza, 109th MXM, shows U.S. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand the inside of a 109th Airlift Wing LC-130.

Young, old vets share meal, memories

By Michael Lamendola
Gazette reporter

Service members of today paid homage to the men and women who served in World War II and Korea during a Veterans Day celebration Nov. 12 at the Glendale Home.

About 10 active-duty members of the 109th Airlift Wing volunteered to cook and serve meals to an equal number of elderly veterans at the Schenectady County-owned nursing home on Hetcheltown Road. They also delivered meals to shut-in veterans at Summit Towers and prepared meals for residents of the City Mission of Schenectady.

City Mission of Schenectady sponsored the event and provided use of its kitchen to cook the meals.

"This is our first collaboration with City Mission to support veterans," said Tech. Sgt. Dede Ekong, 30, of the 109th at Stratton Air National Guard base in Glenville. "We are showing solidarity for veterans who paved the way for us."

City Mission Executive Director Michael Saccocio said the program is the mission's first outreach into the community that goes beyond the regular meal service at its Smith Street facility.

"This isn't about us. It's to say thank you to the people who made Veterans Day possible," Mr. Saccocio said.

The 109th members spent about two hours preparing the meals and then spent another hour serving and talking with the Glendale Home veterans.

Sergeant Ekong quickly discovered she had something in common with Chuck Claydon, 81, retired captain with the Army Air Corps: They both were in Hawaii.

Sergeant Ekong was in Hawaii several months ago before transferring to the Stratton

Air National Guard base in Glenville; Mr. Claydon was there during World War II, some 65 years earlier.

The connection opened a flood of memories for both of them. "I was at Hickam Field," Mr. Claydon said.

"So was I. It's a lot bigger now," replied Sergeant Ekong.

"I didn't see you there," Mr. Claydon joked.

"My parents weren't even married then," Sergeant Ekong replied.

Laughter, smiles, more kidding.

Hickam is a U.S. Air Force base in Honolulu on the island of Oahu. It borders Pearl Harbor, site of the Japanese surprise attack on Dec. 7, 1941, that led to America's entry into World War II.

Mr. Claydon flew transport missions in a B-29 throughout the Pacific during World War II.

Other retired veterans at Glendale had their own stories to share.

Ray Boucher, 81, served in the Marines and participated in two of the Corps' most famous battles: Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Mr. Boucher pronounces the name "Okey now wa."

He joined at 17, because he "wanted to get into the Marine Corps," according to the former Mechanicville resident. He served 3 1/2 years and left the service a private first class.

Mr. Boucher said he usually spends Veterans Day quietly, but enjoyed the idea of meeting other veterans and sharing a meal and a story.

"I'm not a storyteller. I like to keep to myself. If I have to, I can bend out one or two stories," he said.

There is Dorothy Moore, a slight woman, who served in the Women's Army Corps during World War II. She was stationed in

This isn't about us. It's to say thank you to the people who made Veterans Day possible.

-- Michael Saccocio
City Mission Executive Director

London. Her job, she said, was "to get there and back again."

And then there is Michael DiDonna, 80, of Schenectady. He joined the Army Air Corps at 15, lying about his age. He wore a baseball cap festooned with campaign ribbons and the 8th Army Air Force's insignia.

He served 18 years in the military police, retiring as a master sergeant.

During his career, he landed at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944, and later traveled throughout Europe.

He recalled sharing his Army food with starving children in St. Lo, France, and then eating hardtack. "You can survive on that," he said.

He also remembers strolling through some of Europe's most famous cities, wearing his Army uniform and "feeling 10 feet high."

As he spoke, he pulled memories from his wallet: faded pictures, some in black and white, some in color, of his wife of 52 years, Georgianna, deceased, of his son, now 38, and of himself in full uniform or with his arm around Georgianna.

At the end of the meal, the veterans, both young and old, sang "God Bless America" and "The Star Spangled Banner," their voices clear and strong.

The Skibird has gone quarterly!

Because of this, submission deadlines have also changed. If you'd like to submit an article to be published, it will need to be sent to the Public Affairs Office no later than the beginning of the first UTA of each quarter.

The next issue will be published in May. Therefore, submissions for that issue are due no later than **April 5**.

For submissions and story ideas, please e-mail skibird@nyscot.ang.af.mil or Staff Sgt. Catharine Schmidt at catharine.schmidt@nyscot.ang.af.mil. You can also call the office on UTA weekends at 344-2396.



ANG officials break ground for new readiness center

By Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, Md. (AFPN) -- Officials broke ground on a \$52 million Air National Guard Readiness Center expansion here Nov. 19.

When completed, the four-story complex will unite the existing ANGRC here with its Air Guard offices in Arlington, Va.

Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Air National Guard director, said the expansion on Andrews reflects new realities in force protection since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"The reason we are here today is that, after 9/11, force protection became a major issue, especially in the city," he said. He explained that the Base Realignment and Closure commission moved government offices at risk of terrorist attack away from downtown areas.

An added benefit from the project is that the Air Guard will have all nine of its directorate offices under one roof. The directorates serve the Air Guard's day-to-day operations of 88 flying units and more than 200 geographically separated units.

"It will give the commander of the ANGRC a chance to have a span of control over all the people that work for him, and it will streamline and make more orderly the process of command," McKinley said.

The centralized ANGRC campus will be occupied by more than 1,100 airmen and federal employees by September 2011. Clarke Construction of Bethesda, Md., has the contract for the expansion.

"It will be one of the most sustainable and energy efficient (buildings) that the Air Guard has built to date," said Ben Lawless, chief of the engineering division in the Air Guard's Installation and Mission Support directorate.

Energy-saving features include interior lighting that will adjust automatically with the amount of natural daylight. Storm water will be recycled and filtered through a special drainage system before it's discharged. Air conditioning and heating controls will be located at work stations and fed underneath the floor which, officials said, provides better



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith

From left, Air National Guard Director Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley, retired Lt. Gen. John Conaway, Readiness Center (ANGRC) Commander Col. Joe Lengyel, Air Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, and J.L. Herndon break ground on an ANGRC expansion project Nov. 19 at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

It's going to set the example for energy conservation, which is really important to everyone. I think it's also going to set the tone for the future of the Air Guard in terms of facilities that can be reconfigured for new occupants and new missions and functions.

- Ben Lawless
Engineering Division Chief

occupant comfort and energy efficiency.

Officials will have the project certified by the U.S. Green Building Council for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, which is a nationally-accepted benchmark for green buildings.

"It's going to set the example for energy conservation, which is really important to everyone," Mr. Lawless said. "I think it's also going to set the tone for the future of the Air Guard in terms of facilities that can be reconfigured for new occupants and new missions and functions."

Mr. Lawless explained that moveable wall partitions will allow occupants to

simply reconfigure their office space to meet future mission requirements. Officials also hope to lay out an open-working environment that fosters teamwork.

The new building will be landscaped with a variety of native plants and trees, and it will be next to Conaway Hall, the existing ANGRC building.

Conaway Hall opened in 1985 and was renamed in 1991 after retired Lt. Gen. John Conaway.

General Conaway, who attended the groundbreaking ceremony, is a former Air Guard director and chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Airman honors employer with Patriotic Award

By Staff Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
Public Affairs

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Mann, of the 109th Aerial Port, nominated his employer for the Patriotic Employer Award for their support of his military career.

Tony Esposito, chairman of the capital



Courtesy photo

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Mann (second from right), a police officer for East Greenbush, nominated the Town of East Greenbush for the Patriotic Employer Award.

region Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee, presented the award to East Greenbush Town Supervisor Rick McCabe and Police Chief Christopher Lavin during a Town Board meeting Jan. 9.

“The Town of East Greenbush has always been supportive, from my deployment to Afghanistan in 2004, and when I got sent to the Gulf for Hurricane Katrina,” Sergeant Mann said.

“They continue my family’s health insurance, make up the differential in my military pay so that I do not lose money, and when I was away, co-workers always made sure my family was checked on and helped whenever the need arose.

“They increase my military leave during activation, and every little bit helps. Nominating them is small compared to what they have done for me and my family,” he said.

The mission of the ESGR is to “gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of

the National Guard and Reserve,” according to its Web site.

“We like to recognize those employers who go out of their way to support employees who are deployed,” Mr. Esposito said. “This honor comes directly from Washington.”

According to the ESGR Web site, “civilian employers play a critical role in the defense of the nation by complying with existing employment laws protecting the rights of workers who serve in the Reserve component.

“ESGR was established in 1972 to promote co-operation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee’s military commitment.”

For more information about ESGR and to nominate an employer for the Patriotic Employer Award, visit www.esgr.net.

(Some information obtained from Kristen Shaw of *The Independent*.)

Partners, from page 6

New York State Department of Education, with the help of our brothers in arms, to get the memorial to its final home near CONR on Tyndall AFB

and touch a little bit of modern day history. A memorial park is planned to display this piece of the World Trade Center as well as a segment of concrete wall from the Pentagon.

Wing members Sergeant Molyneaux, Master Sgt. Lawrence Belak and 1st Lt. Ernest Lancto, 77th RRC members Warrant Officer 1 Baldwin and Staff Sgt. Borden,

and Department of Education personnel Mr. Williams, Aaron Noble and Jeff Stringer were all present for this low key, but none-the-less important movement of a piece of history.



Courtesy photo

(Top) From left, Jeff Stringer, Tech. Sgt. Scott Molyneaux, Warrant Officer 1 Baldwin, Master Sgt. Lawrence Belak all pose behind the inspirational sculpture created by Rolando Guzman, a metal worker from North Adams, Mass.

(Left) Warrant Officer 1 Baldwin guides the lifting & placement of the I-beams onto the truck.

Here's to a New Year

By Retired Lt. Col. Tom Noel
Alumni Representative

The Annual Holiday Christmas Party, which is always one of our premier events of the year, was held at the Rotterdam Elks Lodge, 1152 Curry Road, Schenectady, on Dec. 19. About 95 members and their spouses attended this holiday event, 20 more than last year. As in the past, ladies brought a new, unwrapped toy to be given to a local charity.

This year a different atmosphere was created with a raffle. Instead of many people participating in a 50/50 raffle and only one person winning, donations from members and local business were donated for this exciting raffle.

Election of officers was held at our Jan. 16 meeting and the new officers of the 109th AW Alumni Association will be listed in the next Skibird quarterly

publication. Congratulations to the previous officers for a job well done during the past year. Thank you all for your service and sacrifice.

Some of the upcoming premier events and functions to look forward to in this new year are the annual St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage meal in March, the Wednesday noon lunches starting in April, and running through August, the annual summer picnic in July and the annual Holiday Christmas Party in December. More details for these events and future functions will be forthcoming in this Skibird publication.

The Firebird Association will be holding their 2008 reunion at the LaQuinta Inn and Suites in Galveston, Texas from April 6-9. The Firebird Association has asked the 109th AW to supply a static display LC-130H Hercules ski aircraft for their reunion.

The Firebird Association is dedicated to those women and men, who gallantly and courageously served their country during World War II and the Vietnam era as members of the 17th Troop Carrier Squadron and later as the 17th Tactical Airlift Squadron.

Special recognition is given to the extraordinary accomplishments of the personnel who have crewed or supported the C-130 Hercules "ski model" of the 61st, 17th, Navy VXE-6 and the 139th Airlift squadron of the 109th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard. It would be great to have many past and present members of "The Raven Gang" attend this reunion. For more information and details visit their Web site at www.firebirds.org.

The members of the 109th Airlift Wing Alumni Association would like to send their condolences to the families of the following individuals who have passed away over the past few months:

-- Stanley R. Bosy II, 54 of Scotia passed away on Sept 10, 2007.

-- Conrad Heintz, 86 of Schenectady passed away on Sept 17, 2007.

-- Retired Senior Master Sgt. Garry A. Beale, age 60 of Saratoga Springs passed away on Nov 17, 2007.

-- Retired Lt. Col. Philip E. Hosegood Jr., age 85 of Schenectady passed away on Jan 7, 2008.

Our thoughts and prayers are with these individuals and their families.

There have been a lot of 109th AW individuals who have retired in the past year. If you know any of them, please invite them to our meeting the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the All Ranks Club. Their first year membership of the Alumni Association is "free". We always look forward to seeing new faces and members at our meetings.

Until the next issue of this Skibird publication, have a Happy, Healthy, Safe and Prosperous 2008 New Year.

Wing Airmen of the Year for 2007:

Airman - Senior Airman Slade W. Tulip, Fuels
NCO - Tech. Sgt. Drew L. Stearns, Recruiting
SNCO - Master Sgt. John H. Rayome, Operations
Honor Guard Member - Staff Sgt. Allen Moon

Maintenance Group Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 2007:

Airman- Airman 1st Class Joseph Dugan, Propulsion Flight
NCO - Tech. Sgt. Scott French, Repair & Reclamation Section
SNCO - Master Sgt. Amy Palmer, MXG Information Manager

Is there someone in your office who deserves special recognition?

How about an Airman just arriving to the base?

If you answered yes, highlight them in the next issue of *the Skibird* for the

Who We Are section!

Call or e-mail Staff Sgt. Catharine Schmidt for a copy of the form and/or to set up a time for an interview. Don't miss the chance to get your Airmen recognized for a job well done!

To contact Sergeant Schmidt, you can call the Public Affairs office at 344-2396 or e-mail her at catharine.schmidt@nyscot.ang.af.mil. Or e-mail the skibird at skibird@nyscot.ang.af.mil.

Recruiting

By Master Sgt. Kim Bowman
Recruiting Office Supervisor

SkillsUSA! We are hosting the 2008 NY SkillsUSA regional competition on March 19. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the recruiting office at x2454 as soon as possible.

We need volunteers to set up, judge competitions, break down, and provide security for the event. Last year we supported more than 150 students and educators.

This program gives local vo-tech students the chance to compete within their respective trade skills and earn a chance to compete at state and national levels! Competition winners can receive tools, prizes and even full scholarships! The ANG is a national sponsor of

this program, and it's a vital link for the unit to our local vo-tech schools. To find out more, head to www.skillsusa.org and thanks for your continued support!

Unit Referrals remain the best way for us to fill our vacancies with great applicants. Mainly because our unit members have known the people for quite some time and can give us a good idea what to expect when we meet the referrals. We always appreciate the chance to share the same opportunities with new members, whether it's career training, travel, or the educational benefits. Contact us with your referrals!

How can you earn \$2k for an enlistment? Answer: G-RAP! For more information, visit www.guardrecruitingassistant.com and get started in the program.

All retraining actions must



be coordinated with the Retention Office Manager, Master Sgt. Dave Roe. One reason for this requirement is that a member who is an incentive program participant may be faced with recoupment of bonus money if voluntarily retraining to a non-bonus Air Force Specialty Code.

For information about

retraining opportunities, or to coordinate a retraining action, contact Sergeant Roe at 344-2315. There are many retraining opportunities throughout the base.

Long and successful careers in the Air National Guard often begin with a simple call to our Recruiting Office at 518-344-2454 or 800-524-5070.

Retirement Spotlight

The Big Four-0!

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Podbielski completed his military career with the 109th Airlift Wing on Dec. 31, 2007.

Chief Podbielski's career spanned numerous aircraft maintenance functions and aircraft. Aircraft include the C-54, C-97, C-124, U-21, U-3, various C-130 models including A, D, D-6, H, R, and LC's along with support and counter drug aircraft C-12 and C-26.

Chief Podbielski started his career in January 1967 attending Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. He attended technical training at Sheppard AFB, Texas and then was assigned to the

109th AW aircraft engine shop, later cross training into the Non-Destructive Inspection Shop Chief position. He later cross trained again as a Quality Assurance Inspector achieving the Flight Line/APG Quality Assurance Superintendent position. Chief Podbielski served as the Equipment Maintenance Branch Chief in the 109th Maintenance Squadron until his retirement in December 2007.

Chief Podbielski also served on the 109th AW base Crash/Fire and Rescue team for a five-year period before the implementation of a full-time firefighting unit.

Chief Podbielski retires with more than 30 CONUS/OCONUS career aircraft recoveries that

required TDYs to the Pacific region, Iceland, Greenland, including two Greenland Ice Cap recovery missions, North West Territories, Goose Bay Labrador, England, Spain, Azores, and while deployed to Operation Deep Freeze as the Maintenance Superintendent coordinated the recoveries of three disabled aircraft.

Numerous recoveries were conducted stateside at Pope AFB, N.C., Fort Campbell, Ky., Little Rock AFB, Ark., Wright Army Air Field, Ga. and numerous Air National Guard



Courtesy photo

Bases throughout the country.

Chief Podbielski retires with nearly 41 years of service with the 109th AW.

Officer Promotions

Major

William Carraher – AS
 Joshua Nielson – AS
 Richard Nunziato – WMD



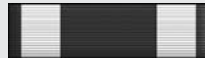
Captain

Robert Dieterich – APF



Meritorious Service Medal

Lt Col Timothy Guiry – AW
 Lt Col Dominic Isopo – AW
 CMSgt Peter Tautznik – LRS
 CMSgt Robert Podbielski – MXM
 SMSgt Louis Salerno – AW
 MSgt Kenneth Christopher – MXM



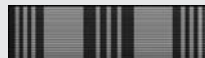
Air Force Commendation Medal

SMSgt Ronald Colasanti – JFHQ
 MSgt Alexander Arroyo – JFHQ
 MSgt Patrick Hart – SFS
 MSgt Heather Peabody – JFHQ
 MSgt Jeffrey Williams – CES



Air Force Achievement Medal

MSgt Raymond Boyea – APF
 TSgt Frank Iadicicco – SFS
 TSgt Kelly Yerg – APF
 SSgt Stephen Coonradt – SFS
 SSgt Kyle Defeo – SFS
 SSgt Thomas Evanoika – SFS
 SSgt Charles Hatch – SFS
 SSgt Jeffrey Ostermann – SFS
 SrA Michael Crisalli – SFS



SrA Daniel Roth – SFS

SrA Miguel Torres – SFS

SrA Thomas Tuthill – SFS

Enlisted Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant

Patrick Brewer – MXM

Senior Master Sergeant

Robert Bolger – JFHQ
 Edward Kenney – SVF
 Richard Rueda – AW

Master Sergeant

Michael Decker – LRS
 Robert Irish – MXG
 Peter Latniak – LRS
 Deborah Nordyke – MSF
 Debra Perini – MXM

Technical Sergeant

Theresa Barone-Lopez – MSF
 Michael Byerwalters – APF
 Charles Chandler – LRS
 Aletha Della Rocco – MSF
 Jim Dupuis – SFS
 Larry Howington – AMXS
 Abigail Kaiser – AES



Staff Sergeant

Matthew Begin – AMXS
 Joseph Costandi – MG
 Howard Heesch – AS
 Dean Lansley – SVF
 Mark Restivo – MOF
 Chelsea Rillo – AES
 Krystle Smith – MG
 Michael Stark – SFS
 Dominick Tatangelo – STU FLT
 Travis Witbeck – CES

Senior Airman

Elizabeth Caldon – STU FLT
 Eric Canestraro – MXM
 Lorenzo Rodriguez – MG
 Jeffrey Wright – LRS

Scholarship Winner

Airman 1st Class Ashley Byerwalters, a trainee from the Communication/Navigation Section, was selected as the recipient of the Master Sgt. Joseph A. Longobardo Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.

This scholarship was initiated by members of the 109th Security Forces Squadron in the memory of Sergeant Longobardo, a New York State Trooper who was killed in the line of duty in 2006 while serving as a member of the NYS Police Mobile Response Team.



Courtesy photo

**Airman 1st Class
 Ashley Byerwalters**

109th Airlift Wing
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Scotia, NY 12302-9752

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Photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Brett Bouchard

Mission statement

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

Vision statement

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