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**guardtimes**

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

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# FROM THE LEADERSHIP

## Fielding the Strongest Guard Team New York Has Ever Seen

2008 has been a busy year for the New York National Guard and our pace of operations this summer shows it.

As I write this, the 27th Brigade Combat Team is halfway through its tour in Afghanistan as the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix headquarters while Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation make ready to head for Iraq this fall. The 174th Fighter Wing, meanwhile, just returned from a deployment to Iraq supporting F-16Cs flying top cover over our troops in the region.

Meanwhile, here at home, Task Force Empire Shield reorganized to better conduct its homeland security duties, the 102nd Military Police Battalion is training to assume CERF-P duties from the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry.

Alongside the Army and Air Guard, the New York Naval Militia continues to take Military Emergency Boat Service patrol craft to New York's waterways, from New York City to the Canadian Border alongside Coast Guard and law enforcement officers. And volunteers continue to join the ranks of the New York Guard where troops trained for search and rescue operations in the hills of Camp Smith. We are all fully engaged in operations and training.

We've met the challenge of resourcing, training, and equipping our forces for both homeland defense and war fighting missions and met that challenge head on.

While there will be some Army and Air National Guard deployments as we look ahead to 2009, next year should give us some breathing room as we ready the force for whatever may come our way as a surge in deployments or a call to assist neighbors here in New York. Our op-

erational tempo is demanding, but manageable.

While we've taken care of our troops heading out we've also been taking care of our troops coming home and their families.

I'm proud to see the New York Army National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program grow and mature since we introduced it back in January this year. Listening to our Citizen Soldiers, their families and our government partners paid off well.

We've improved the program through this feedback from participants and by soliciting ideas from outside agencies. We added screening sessions for Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome and Traumatic Brain Injury to the events conducted at our 60-day reintegration event thanks to the help of the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs.

We continue to expand our family support programs, by hiring professionals, and working to become more responsive to families. This is a program that is as fully important to our readiness as anything else we do.

Commanders need to remember that taking care of families is not a sometimes thing, it is an always thing.

Finally, I want to comment on the high morale I see in our force everywhere I go.

I've been to Afghanistan and spoken to the New York National Guard Soldiers there. Those Soldiers are fired up and believe in their mission. They know the demands and sacrifices they make are tremendous, but see the real progress to their work.

I shook hands with members of the Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing as they departed for their Air Expeditionary Force

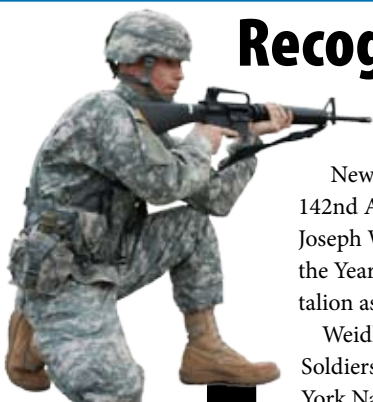


**Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto**

mission to Iraq. They too, have a sense of dedication and mission accomplishment that is impressive and will carry them forward as the wing transforms.

I watched members of the New York Guard put their all into their annual training at Camp Smith, training for the unthinkable hurricane landfall that may one day come to New York. And I've met with Soldiers and Airman from Joint Task Force Empire Shield who are very proud of the role they play in homeland security.

All 20,000 members of our New York Military Forces are energized and ready to serve. This team is strong, motivated and ready for whatever comes ahead. I thank you all for that service and being an important part of that team.



## Recognizing NY's Best Soldiers

The Guard Times staff salutes this year's Soldiers of the Year.

Selected as the best among our force of 10,000 troops were New York Army National Guard Spc. Amanda Matteson, Co. D, 3-142nd Aviation Battalion, as the Traditional Soldiers of the Year; Staff Sgt. Joseph Weidlich of the 206th Military Police Co. as the Traditional NCO of the Year and Sgt. Maxime Pierre from Co. G, 427th Brigade Support Battalion as the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) full-time Soldier of the year.

Weidlich, shown at left, and Matteson competed for selection as top Soldiers from the northeastern states this spring at Camp Smith. The New York National Guard hosted the Northeast Regional competition in May.

Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Weidlich for earning a top spot in the competition in the Northeast Region. He will go on to compete at Fort Benning, Ga. later this summer for the overall NGB Soldier of the Year competition.



New York Army National Guard Spc. Amanda Matteson, of Co. D, 3-142nd Aviation Battalion, Traditional Soldier of the Year, "rods off" the Camp Smith Rifle Range on May 15. Matteson, along with Soldier and NCO of the Year awardees from other Northeastern States, competed to go on to the national competition during a three-day board. Photo by Lt. Col. Eric Durr.

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# guardtimes

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<< New York and Canadian Airmen and Soldiers from the Northeast Air Defense Sector in Rome stand at attention at the center of the Pittsburgh Pirates stadium for the singing of the Canadian and U.S. National Anthem.

The NEADS bi-national color guard presented arms at the first-ever Toronto Blue Jays vs. the Pirates baseball game in Pittsburgh on June 20.

Additionally, Stephen Brereton, the Consul General for Canada in Buffalo, threw out the first pitch of the game. The Pirates came out on top in 12 innings with a 1-0 victory over the Blue Jays.

Photo by Master Sgt. Danny Doucette.

**On the cover:** An F16 assigned to the 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard departs for Southwest Asia as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom on June 10. This is the last combat deployment for the 174 Fighter Wing F16's. Photo by Staff Sgt. Lee O. Tucker .

**Back cover:** Hail and farewell from their home station in Latham. New York Army National Guard 1st Sgt. Richard Nichols from Company A, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation salutes departing aircrews from the company at the National Guard's Army Aviation Support Facility for Fort Sill, Oklahoma on June 6. The battalion, with aircrews and Soldiers from New York's Capital Region and Long Island, will conduct air mobility operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of the 34th Aviation Brigade, an element of the Minnesota National Guard. Photo by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg.

## State Leadership Urges Hurricane Preparedness

ALBANY -- The State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) this summer advises all New Yorkers to review their family emergency plans and check their cache of home emergency supplies as preparation for the 2008 hurricane and coastal storm season.

“While New York State has not recently experienced the devastation that these storms cause, we need to be prepared as individuals and as a State for the eventuality,” John R. Gibb, Director of SEMO, said. “Hurricanes and coastal storms are a threat not only to New York State’s coastal communities but the entire state.”

Governor David A. Paterson also urged residents across the State to begin taking simple, common-sense steps and proclaimed May 25 through May 31 as Hurricane Preparedness Week in the Empire State.

“The chief responsibility of government is to protect the citizens, communities and economic vitality of our State and Nation – and individuals must share a burden of that responsibility,” Governor Paterson said. “Therefore, it is imperative that citizens take the time now to be prepared before storm warnings are posted

by reviewing their emergency plans at home and at work to ensure their safety and that of their loved ones.”

Traditionally, the Atlantic hurricane coastal storm season in the Empire State is from June 1 through November 30, with the greatest threat of storms in the late summer. While predominantly coastal storms, in the past these devastating storms have impacted areas of the State hundreds of miles from the ocean.

“While State and local governments continue to work on their preparedness and response capabilities,” Gibb said, “each of us has a responsibility to develop and practice plans to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our property.”

Gibb said that a community’s level of preparedness begins with the individual.

“We encourage New Yorkers to know what they and their families should do in the event of a storm or an emergency, and that includes having emergencies supplies on hand such as flashlights and batteries, and water and canned goods.”

New Yorkers also should be continuously aware of weather conditions and are urged to monitor broadcasts from their local radio and television stations or NOAA Weather Radio.



## ‘Gifts from the Homefront’ Nets More than \$2 Million over 5 Years for the Troops

DALLAS, Texas – At the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March, 2003, the late Maj. Gen. Kathryn Frost, the Army & Air Force Exchange Services’ (AAFES) commander at the time, immediately recognized the need for a program that not only supported troops downrange, but one that could also alleviate the crush of packages being sent into a war zone. With that in mind, the “Gifts from the Homefront” was launched.

“In our efforts to help, we need to be conscious of the strain that is often placed on the military postal system,” said Gen. Frost in 2004. “Packages are nice, but unlike a care package, a Gift from the Homefront gift certificate is quickly available – no sluggish mail, no wait

and no expensive shipping costs. This program gets comfort items into the hands of troops fast and helps to relieve the burden of the military postal system.”

In the five years since Gen. Frost and AAFES implemented the “Gifts from the Homefront” program, people from all over the country have rallied around military Families by contributing \$2,244,195 towards the program designed to lift the morale of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines stationed around the world.

“Gifts from the Homefront” can be sent to deployed troops by logging on to [www.aafes.org](http://www.aafes.org) or calling 877-770-4438. From there, BX/PX gift certificates are sent to individual service members (designated by the purchaser) or

distributed to “any service member” through the Air Force Aid Society,

American Red Cross, Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes, Fisher House, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, Operation Homefront, Operation Interdependence® or USO. These charitable partners have distributed 24,815 certificates, totaling more than \$480,000, earmarked for “any servicemember.”

“Gifts from the Homefront” can be redeemed at exchange facilities worldwide including more than 70 Base and Post Exchanges throughout Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. Since the effort’s inception, troops have redeemed 67,245 gift certificates for movies, snacks, Military Exchange Global prepaid phone cards and more. As a military command with a retail mission, roughly two-thirds of AAFES earnings are paid to Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs. In the past 10 years, AAFES has contributed more \$2.4 billion to military quality of life improvements.



# Military Personnel News: The MILPO Corner

## Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA)

All Soldiers redeployed from a combat zone on or after 10 March 2005 must complete a Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA). The PDHRA should be completed between 90 and 180 days after demobilization.

PDHRA is designed to identify and address health concerns, with specific emphasis on mental health that have emerged over time since a Soldier's deployment.

Soldiers must be aware that if they fail to complete the PDHRA they are flagged for adverse action, affecting schools, promotions and other favorable actions. Soldiers can check their status with their AKO stoplight.

PDHRA screenings on the DD Form 2900, can be completed online at: <https://apps.mods.army.mil/mwde/secure/AKOfoms.asp> and must be completed with a follow up call to 1-888-734-7299.

If you need assistance or information concerning the issue of an order to visit the VA, please contact Spc. Eric Walker via email at: [eric.r.walker@us.army.mil](mailto:eric.r.walker@us.army.mil).

## Military Personnel AKO Site

Military Personnel has recently created a site in AKO to provide Soldiers and Family Members of the New York Army National Guard, information pertaining to personnel matters. The site contains links to pages for all sections of the Military Personnel Office (MNP). We will be gradually adding important informational items to these pages for you and your families use. Please visit our new site at: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/553732>

Please don't forget to add this site to your favorites.

## File Review Responsibility

The conversion of paper military personnel records to an electronic format on iPERMS resulted in vastly improved accessibility for Soldiers.

All documents which are generated as a result of a Soldier's service, to include DA Form 1059s for school attendance, promotion orders, MOS award orders, civilian education, awards and decorations, etc. are required to be filed electronically in the iPERMS record.

As a reminder, it is each Soldier's responsibility to periodically visit your file to ensure all documentation is present. This can be done from any computer having access to the internet, by logging in either through Army Knowledge On-Line, or directly through iPERMS Welcome.

Each soldier must remember that his or her personnel record is the only official source of information concerning career qualifications and

achievements. It has a major impact on school attendance, promotion eligibility, and career management. It is for that reason regular reviews must be conducted.

## Suicide Prevention Program

Suicide prevention must be the concern of every leader, commander, supervisor, and Soldier, to include family members. In today's high operations tempo and, with mobilization always a very real responsibility, increased stress to the Soldier and his or her family is a real risk.

The need for effective communication within the family and between unit members is critical. Soldiers must have the courage to ask a buddy if they need help if he or she is acting strange or depressed.

It must be emphasized that asking for help is a sign of strength and not a weakness. Once a Soldier at risk is identified he or she must be escorted to the chain of command, a Chaplain, or behavioral health professional.

A list of resources are available on the ARNG Suicide Prevention Web site. This site has reference materials, briefings, handouts, and key phone numbers. The State Suicide Prevention Officer is Lt. Col. Kelly Hilland, at 518-786-4737.

Go to: [www.virtualarmory.com](http://www.virtualarmory.com). At the top of the page click: "Well Being." On the left side of page click: "Special Programs, then "Suicide Prevention"

## Promotion List Grace Period

MNP-PAR now provides a 20 day grace period before the publication of each promotion list to address any material errors.

During this period, no selections will be made from the new Promotion List. They will be held until all material errors have been corrected. This will alleviate any Soldier being erroneously selected from a list that contains material errors.

During the 20 day grace period no request for a Stand By Advisory Board (STAB) is required. The Soldier's chain of command must notify MNP-PAR that the Soldier's points/selections require review and if there are material errors. MNP-PAR will make the necessary corrections.

After the 20 day grace period expires, a STAB will be required to correct any errors.

The Promotion List will become official after the 20 day grace period expires, and MNP-PAR will begin using the new list to make selections.



## Defense Language School free online language materials

PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, Calif. -- The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) activated a new Language Materials website July 1, making available hundreds of language survival kits and other materials free of charge to deploying service members. To view the shopping cart, go to: <https://lmds/dliflc.edu>.

\* The website offers Language Survival Kits - pocket size booklets with audio CDs, in over 30 languages, ranging in topics from public affairs, cordon and search, to medical terminology.

\* DLIFLC also offers new Headstart language DVD programs that use cutting-edge technology and computer animation to teach 80-hours of self-paced lessons and are designed to teach

survival phrases in Iraqi Arabic, and Afghan Dari and Pashto.

\* Language materials can be viewed, downloaded, and ordered at [www.dliflc.edu](http://www.dliflc.edu) under the Products tab. Some products are not available for download to the general public.

Point of contact is Maj. Scott Swanson, (831) 242 5376 or [scott.t.swanson@us.army.mil](mailto:scott.t.swanson@us.army.mil).

## New Yorkers Earn Spots on All Guard Marathon Team

Story by Maj. Kevin Hynes, Nebraska National Guard



Crossing the finish line in just under three hours is 174th Fighter Wing Master Sgt. Walter Bird. Bird finished 15th in a field of 40 runners during the 2008 National Guard Marathon.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Making her second appearance in the National Guard Marathon in Nebraska is Tech Sgt. Sanning Pingitore on her way to a 15th Place finish allowing her to make the "All Guard" list. Photos courtesy of Nebraska National Guard Public Affairs Office

LINCOLN, Neb. – Three members of the New York National Guard took to the streets of Lincoln for a 26.2 mile marathon here May 4 to earn positions on the National Guard Bureau's Marathon Team.

Air Guard Master Sgt. Walter Bird and Tech. Sgt. Sanning Pingitore each finished 15th in their respective male and female race categories. Also earning a top spot for the Guard team was Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Barry Brill.

Bird, a weapons system specialist with the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse and Pingitore, a human resources specialist serving with the Joint Force Headquarters in Latham. Brill is a military schools manager with the 106th Regional Training Institute, Camp Smith.

The National Guard's "All-Guard" Marathon Team is made up of the top 40 National Guard men runners, 15 top Guard female runners and three "Super Masters" runners at the annual Lincoln/National Guard Marathon, which is

held each year in Lincoln, Neb.

"After the race, I discovered that I was the second finisher over the age of 50," said Bird. "The man who beat me was less than 30 seconds ahead. If I had known he was so close, I would have tried to catch him, since the first 50+ finisher gets his name engraved on a trophy that the Lincoln Track Club maintains."

According to Sgt. 1st Class Jack Murphy, National Guard Marathon Program coordinator, this year's All-Guard team will be particularly tough to beat when the team begins competing at races around the country this year.

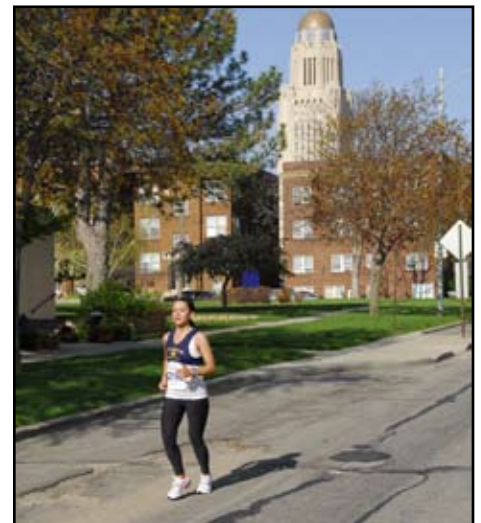
"I think we have a strong All-Guard team this year," said Murphy. "The morale for the team just continues to grow. And the word's getting out."

"We had a lot of new runners here that had never heard about this program before. Once they got here, they learned about the recruiting and retention mission that this program has and they're very excited," Murphy added.

Along with running in races around the country, the All-Guard team is also responsible for setting up recruiting booths prior to each race and talking to prospective members about the National Guard and developing referrals for recruiting officials.

"I'm very optimistic about the direction the program is moving in and I think it's going to continue to be very successful for the National Guard," Murphy said.

According to Pingitore, the first 15 female





Grabbing cold water along the route is Staff Sgt. Barry Brill, instructor at the 106th Regional Training Institute, on his way to earning a top spot on the Guard team. Photo courtesy of Nebraska National Guard Public Affairs Office.

finishers and 40 male finishers qualify to attend other National Guard sanctioned races.

“The All Guard Team is funded for 8 races throughout the country,” Pingitore said. “Those of us who are on the team rate the races that we would like to do. From there the directors try to match up the races to the individual that picked that particular event. Of course, not everyone can go to each race due to work and family, so they just basically go down the list and see which team member can make the race to represent the Guard, and the All Guard team.”

Pingitore is hoping for the chance to run in New Orleans, La. later this year and Brill will attend the twelfth annual United States Air Force Marathon at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio in Sept.

“Finishing the marathon is an accomplishment all its own,” said Pingitore. “Knowing that all the training you have done up to this one day, (this) one moment has paid off, once your running shoes have crossed over the finish line! I have never had such a sense of accomplishment!”

“When Sgt. Maj. Murphy congratulated me to say that I had made the All Guard Team, that was just the icing on the cake,” exclaimed Pingitore. “To be able to represent the New York National Guard in such a positive way is so rewarding!”

For membership information regarding New York’s marathon team please contact Tech. Sgt. Sanning Pingitore at Sanning.Pingitore@us.army.mil. **gt**

# Homeland Security Reorganized

## Upstate Power Plant Mission Concluded as Guard Expands Ops in NYC

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

**FORT HAMILTON, NYC -** After seven years, New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are no longer providing security at three nuclear power plants in Oswego and Wayne Counties.

Joint Task Force Empire Shield, the state’s standing homeland security task force based here in Brooklyn, maintained a force of 94 Soldiers and Airmen for the past six years at the Ginna Nuclear Power plant in Wayne County and the Nine Mile Point and Fitzpatrick nuclear power plants in Oswego County.

A review of security arrangements at the plant made it clear to state officials that the private security forces employed by Constellation Energy Group and Entergy Nuclear, the power plant owners, no longer required National Guard assistance in securing the facilities.

The National Guard force first deployed following the attacks of September 11, 2001 as a precautionary measure. Since then, the private security forces have been improved in order to comply with federal regulations.

Fifty-four of the 94 Soldiers were redeployed to serve with Joint Task Force Empire Shield in New York City. The task force provides a 420 person security detachment to conduct operations in New York City and at the Indian Point nuclear plant in Westchester County.

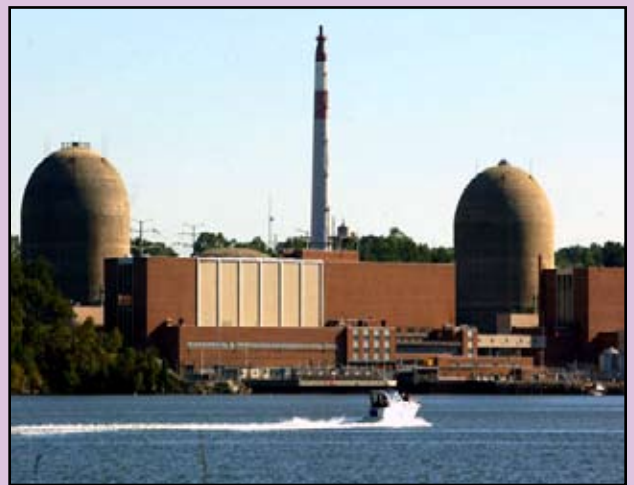
National Guard forces are still at Indian Point because the security risk there is higher than at the upstate plants, according to Brig. Gen. Patrick Murphy, Director of Joint Operations.

The draw down at the upstate nuclear plants is part of an overall restructuring designed to make Joint Task Force Empire Shield more effective and flexible.

The task force, headquartered at Fort Hamilton, an active Army post in Brooklyn, used to provide security augmentation for the Port Authority Police at Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports, and Penn Station and the PATH Terminal in Manhattan, in addition to the security missions at the nuclear plants. **gt**



Senior Airman Michael Hussar (right) and Spc. Chris Jasco at the Robert E. Ginna Nuclear Plant checkpoint, on Lake Ontario east of Rochester. The security force members redeployed to work with Joint Task Force Empire Shield in New York City. Hussar, a parachute rigger in the 107th Airlift Wing, will continue to serve with the task force, while Jasco, a mechanic in the 42nd Infantry Division will return to a civilian job.



Indian Point nuclear plant in Westchester County. Courtesy Photo.

## Aviators Wind Up Training for Iraq; Say Family Farewells

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade



Major General Joseph Taluto, addresses 142nd Soldiers at the Saratoga Fairgrounds. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.



Lieutenant Colonel Albert Ricci, commander, briefs his Soldiers on deployment training objectives. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.



Tom Nicolett from Sikorsky Aircraft, unveils a flag for the 142nd Commander and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.



Sergeant Aaron Chiu explains his military occupational skill to friends and family at St. Joseph's College. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.

**PATCHOGUE** – The threat of high winds and thunder storms did not keep about 125 aviation Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation and their families from attending their send off ceremony in the St. Joseph's College fieldhouse on May 31.

Potential and real disasters are the 3rd Battalion's forte. They have been responders to New York's wild fires and environmental causes as well as assisting victims of Hurricane Katrina on a national level.

Now they are responding to their country's call to service in Iraq.

"We're ready to go," said 142nd Command Sgt. Maj. Chris Imbarrato. "These Soldiers have done an outstanding and professional job preparing for this mission and I am equally impressed with the support we have received from our families."

The 142nd completed their final annual training at Fort Drum in April and are now preparing to be stationed at Fort Sill, Okla. for more active duty combat training prior to leaving for Iraq.

The bulk of the training will focus on the pilots, crew chiefs and door gunners validating for the Iraq mission.

"We did not take one helicopter to Fort Drum," said Lt. Col. Albert Ricci, 142nd Commander. "We went through the basics and finally our last annual training we took our helicopters and the Soldiers said, 'Finally, the commander has his head on right.'"

For some of the 142nd's Soldiers, this will be their second deployment to Iraq due to the 2004-2005 deployment of the 42nd Infantry Division's aviation brigade.

A separate send off ceremony was also held at the Saratoga Fairgrounds, Ballston Spa the following day in which about 180 142nd Soldiers bid farewell to loved ones.

"I have the utmost confidence you will do all the right things," said Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, state adjutant general. "Take care of each other, never compromise your standards and stay focused. We have your back and will take care of your families; you take care of each other." **gt**

**"We're ready to go."**

--Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Chris Imbarrato, 3-142nd Avn



Soldiers and families arrive at St. Joseph's College fieldhouse for their farewell ceremony. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.



Family members handed out American flags to 142nd Soldiers at St. Joseph College's fieldhouse. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.



Chief Warrant Officer Chris Panarese takes time to be with family at Saratoga Fairgrounds. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.



Family and friends watch as 142nd pilots and crew chiefs depart from Latham to fly to Fort Sill, Okla. on June 6. Photo by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg.



# Rochester Aviators Wind Down Mission; Return Home

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott, Joint Forces Headquarters



ROCHESTER - Aviation Soldiers of Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126 Aviation came home May 31 to local fanfare, including an escort by police and a water cannon salute from the airfield fire fighting team.

Charter buses passed under a water canon salute before cheering family members and friends at the Army Aviation Support Facility hanger.

Anticipation built and the crowd grew as



Company B Commander Cpt. Christopher Gagliardo is rushed by his wife Tiffany while son, Brenton catches up as the 126th Aviation returns from their Afghanistan deployment.

the clock ticked closer to the estimated arrival time of the returning Soldiers. American Flags waived, welcome home signs and balloons were held high and the crowd cheered as the buses came emerged from the water cannon salute.

Each Soldier was presented a rose, donated by a local business as they stepped off the bus and were immediately rushed by tearful wives, children, parents and friends. Fellow soldiers and veterans groups rendered salutes of respect to the returning warriors.

The 126th departed Rochester in May of 2007 for Fort Carson, Colo. for mission specific training in preparation for their 10 month tour of duty in Afghanistan.

“We were spread out in different regions of the country in support of three different task forces” said Cpt. Eric Fritz. “We were involved in combat service support missions, combat resupply, and air assault missions. “Our guys worked with units from the 82nd Airborne, 101st Airborne, 173rd Airborne and Special Forces”.

The unit operates CH-47 Chinook helicopters. The heavy lift helicopters are especially suited for the high altitude missions in Afghanistan’s mountainous regions.

“These Citizen Soldiers provided exemplary support to U.S. Army and Coalition allies operating in some of the toughest conditions and terrain in the world,“ said Col. Mark Burke,



Staff Sergeant Nickolas Isler is surrounded by family after stepping off the charter bus at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Rochester.

commander of the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade. “We’re proud of them and we are happy to have them home.”

The Soldiers and their families will participate in a two-part National Guard reintegration program beginning in July as part of the New York Army National Guard’s program for welcoming Soldiers back from combat. The Soldiers and their families will be invited to a hotel setting where they will meet with specialists on veterans’ needs and services. **gt**



Local Rochester area fire fighters shoot water through high-pressure water cannons to honor the redeployment of Soldiers from the 126th Aviation as they arrive home from the Rochester Airport. The CH-47 crews flew from Fort Dix, N.J. after re-deploying back from Afghanistan.



Staff Sergeant Thomas Ruffing stands at the front of a six-man flag folding event while an honor guard judge from Washington D.C. observes and annotates every detail. The New York National Guardsmen were competing in their second consecutive honor guard competition at Camp Rilea, Ore.



Every aspect of honor guard duties is observed and graded. Here, the entire honor guard detachment from New York performs a 21-gun salute on the parade grounds of Camp Rilea, Ore. Sergeant Amanda Wheeler stands behind the formation calling out preparatory and execution commands.

# A Way to Judge the Honorable

## Military Forces Honor Guard Competes to be Guard's Best

Story and photos by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Steven Petibone, *Guard Times Staff*

CAMP RILEA, Ore. – Eight New York National Guardsmen trained and skilled in “Honoring Those Who Served” were selected to attend the national honor guard competition here in April.

The National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. established the nationwide honor guard competition two years ago and New York has been selected to compete both years.

According to New York's honor guard supervisor Staff Sgt. Phil Masserice, there are National Guard honor guardsmen in all 50 states. The states are divided into eight regions. Region One consisting of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and New Jersey is the Northeast region and New York was selected for the second year-in-a-row as the single representative to travel to Oregon.

Each national regional representative is judged on their ability to perform routine honor guard tasks such as urn and casket bearing, rifle-firing sequence, a two, three and six-man flag folding detail. There is also a written test at the conclusion of the three-day competition.

“There's not much you can really do besides studying the Standing Operating Procedures and just train over and over again,” said Spc. Jason Daniels, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation, “because there is no perfect funeral, it's never good enough, it can always be better.”

Competition judges are Soldiers from U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division known as “The Old Guard” honor guards based in Washington, D.C. “The Old Guard” serves as the U.S. Army's ceremonial unit.

New York's Military Forces Honor Guard was established in July, 1999. Currently, there are seven honor guard teams providing funeral honors statewide. Honor Guard members typically perform services for more than 850 veterans each month.

“Honoring Those Who Served” as an honor guard is a calling for a particular type of person and Soldier, should you consider joining.

“I would tell someone who is thinking about joining to be ready to maintain high standards because we are a failure to the men and women who wear the uniform if we just let anyone walk

in here and pick up a casket or a flag and carry with no pride or dignity,” Daniels said.

To learn more about the joining the Honor Guard or requesting military funeral honors, go to: [www.dmn.state.ny.us/honors](http://www.dmn.state.ny.us/honors). **gt**



Corporal John Baker, Troop C, 2nd Battalion, 101st Cavalry, undergoes a rigorous dress uniform inspection from one of the honor guard competition evaluators from Washington D.C.'s “Old Guard”.

## Guard's Senior NCOs Graduate Sgt. Major Academy



**FORT BLISS, Texas** – Nine Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) of the New York Army National Guard completed the U.S. Army Sergeants' Major Academy (USASMA), with graduation ceremonies this June and July. The graduates on June 20 were Master Sgt. Kevin Ryan, Sgt. Maj. Joseph Ewing, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Dan Ames and Sgt. Maj. Ed Lake, The graduates were joined at their dinner and graduation by Col. Carl Pfeiffer (Chief of Staff, 42nd Infantry Division), Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Bob Van Pelt (the state senior

enlisted Soldier), Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Dick Fearnside (senior enlisted Soldier from the 42nd Infantry Division) and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks (senior enlisted from the 53rd Troop Command). Graduating on July 2 were Cmd. Sgt. Maj. John O'Hara, Sgt. Maj. John Lara, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Ron Martin, 1st Sgt. Martin Foss and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Ed Rounds. These graduates were joined at their graduation by Van Pelt and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Lou Wilson (senior enlisted Soldier, 153rd Troop Command). Courtesy photo.

# Breaking Ground for Operation 'Beyond the Horizon 08'

Story by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Peter K. Towse, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Public Affairs

CAMP MAUSICA, Trinidad – Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 1156th Engineer Company arrived in Trinidad April 26 to take part in Operation Beyond the Horizon 2008; a joint nation, joint service humanitarian mission composed of elements from the Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Seabees and Marines.

Approximately 80 Citizen-Soldiers from the 1156th Eng. Co. and 222nd Military Police Co. deployed for the two-week rotation of troops.

Working together with the Trinidad Defense Forces, the joint service task force, the American Partnership for the Americas Engagement Team (PEAT), built two public schools and a medical clinic while providing free medical and dental screenings across the country.

Each participating National Guard unit deploys for a two-week tour in Trinidad with a command and control contingent from the United States Army South (USARSO).

USARSO arrived in February to supervise operations through the final rotation of National Guard forces in June when all proposed sites are expected to be completed. The PEAT will continue until September 2008 with missions supporting five additional Caribbean nations.

"Operation Beyond the Horizon 2008 is a new concept," said Col. Robert Casias, the commander of the PEAT. "We are here in Trinidad and Tobago doing engineering projects. We are constructing schools and a medical clinic and doing some renovations of other buildings in addition to free medical and dental screenings for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago".

The construction of two schools and one medical clinic started in late May with a completion date projected for early June.

"We are continuing from where the last rotation left off," said Sgt. Michael Quijano the site construction NCOIC at the St. Mary's orphanage where a school and medical clinic are in the early stages of development. Working together



Lt. Col. Michael Bahlatzis, medical liaison officer from the 174th Air Wing, Syracuse, pauses for a laugh with Akeem Solomon during a free medical screening May 26. Bahlatzis served with the 166th medical group for Operation Beyond the Horizon 2008. Photo by Pvt. Rachel L. Sanzo



Private First Class James Bach, an engineer with the 1156th Engineer Company, New York Army National Guard finishes a picnic table for the children of St. Mary's orphanage in the town of Tacarigua, Trinidad as part of Operation Beyond the Horizon 2008. The engineers are also building a school and a medical clinic for the children of the orphanage. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse.

with the Navy Seabees Mobile Construction Battalion 74 from Mississippi, the New York National Guard engineers undertook the task with a zealous motivation.

First order of business for the engineers was to unpack the building's trusses from the shipping containers, dismantle them and put them back together while repositioning the truss bolts in preparation for next week's roof project.

"We also poured the concrete for that make up the walls of the structures," Quijano said. "We even had time to build a picnic table for the kids of the orphanage and plan to build more in the coming week".

"The Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard impressed me from day one with their unity and cohesiveness," said 1st Lt. Thomas Loftis, lead engineer for U.S. Army South. Loftis, a Texas Guardsman, is responsible for all engineering construction projects and the living areas used by personnel supporting Operation Beyond the Horizon 2008. "The professionalism of their senior enlisted leaders while taking on really tough assignments in austere conditions is admirable." **gt**

# 501st EOD Soldiers Rock the FOB

Story and photos by Maj. Robert Mitchell, 501<sup>st</sup> Ordnance Battalion (EOD)

FORT McCLELLAN, Ala. -- Approximately 75 Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 1427th Transportation Company, 1108th Ordnance Company (EOD) and the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD) descended on Fort McClellan Alabama in late April to participate in a multi-state Army National Guard Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training exercise. The training, known as Operation Southern Conquest, brought together Citizen Soldiers from seven states to hone their skills, and participate in realistic and relevant training so prevalent on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Soldiers participated in multiple events including an 1,800 mile round trip deployment convoy, hand-to-hand combat or Combatives Training, a Leaders' Reaction Course, squad training lanes using paintball equipment, a convoy simulation trainer, the Army Guard's small arms

Engagement Skills Trainer and a Soldier obstacle or Confidence Course.

The exercise culminated with a 72-hour Theater Immersion exercise at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Pezio at Fort McClellan's Pelham Range complex, simulating the demands and rigors of a combat environment overseas.

Soldiers occupied the FOB and immediately began supporting two notional brigade combat teams with ordnance removal support. EOD specialists from Schenectady worked alongside their peers from Army Guard units in West Virginia, Georgia and Alabama to defeat numerous Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and eliminated a variety of unexploded ordnance (UXO) threats throughout the 55- square mile complex.

Soldiers from the 1427th Transportation Company from Whitehall conducted multiple daily supply missions from a logistics base to gain valuable combat logistics patrol experience and exercise their newly fielded medium trucks and equipment.

The 501st Soldiers completed the three week annual training and returned to their home armories in Schenectady and Whitehall on May 10 with high morale and sharpened skills.

"Our units conducted a relevant, realistic training scenario with great lessons learned," summed up Lt. Col. Jim Pabis from Saratoga Springs, the 501st Ordnance Battalion Commander, "And we're going to apply those lessons going forward into the future." **gt**



New York Army National Guard Pvt. Nicholas Carbone, 1108th Ordnance Company (EOD), from Schenectady, N.Y. completes command sponsored graffiti at Forward Operating Base Pezio, Pelham Range Complex, Fort McClellan, Ala. May 6, during the unit's three-week annual training. Approximately 75 Soldiers from the Guard deployed to Fort McClellan for training with fellow EOD members from seven other states to hone their skills in defeating or eliminating Improvised Explosive Device or Unexploded Ordnance threats.



Alabama Army National Guard Col. Jose Atencio, Commander of the 111th Ordnance Group presents the Army Commendation Medal to Chief Warrant Officer Two Thomas Young from the New York Army National Guard's 1427th Transportation Company at Forward Operating Base Pezio, Pelham Range Complex, Fort McClellan, Ala. May 7 near the completion of the Guard unit's three-week annual training. Soldiers from the 1427th Transportation Company, from Whitehall, N.Y. conducted a cross-country convoy of more than 1,800 miles round-trip to support the training of the 501st Ordnance Battalion, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit based in Schenectady.



New York Army National Guard Major Arthur Zegers, Operations Officer for the 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD), from Schenectady reviews the commander's battle update briefing with Sgt. 1st Class Robert Shallbetter for the Ala. Army National Guard's 441st Ordnance Battalion (EOD) at Forward Operating Base Pezio, Pelham Range Complex, Fort McClellan, Ala. May 6 during the unit's three-week annual training hone their skills in defeating or eliminating Improvised Explosive Device or Unexploded Ordnance threats.

# 206th MP Company Tests a New Ride

Story and photos by Spc. Jimmy A. Bedgood, *Guard Times* Staff

**WHITESTOWN** - The 206th Military Police Company based in Latham upgraded their ride to the M1117 Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) by training at the New York State Office of Homeland Security Preparedness Training Center.

Fifty three MP Soldiers took the M1117 for a test spin during urban-combat training at the Oneida County training center June 25.

The M1117 has more tactical equipment than the armored Humvee, formerly used by the 206th. It's designed to provide maximum survivability in a hostile environment.

The M1117 packs an improved MK-19 40 mm grenade launcher and has an M-2 .50 caliber machine gun in the turret.

Protection is the bottom line and the M1117

has it where the Humvee doesn't. The ASV has front, rear and side crew protection and overhead and underneath mine-blast protection.

The ASV is bigger, has more firepower and protection—and can perform battlefield missions better than the Humvee, said Pfc. Matthew Gatta, who showed off added features of the M1117 and demonstrated its agility at the Preparedness Training Center for local media.

“Vehicles like these provide added protection during convoys in Iraq and Afghanistan,” added Capt Kevin Manion, the company commander.

The center provided the 206th MPs space to hone their combat skills. Hands-on training allowed interaction and feedback that computer-based training doesn't.

The Preparedness Training Center is the

former site of the Oneida County Airport. Its vast runways, hangers and unlimited access provided plenty of space for the 206th MPs to practice driving the M1117. It is a welcome change from their regularly scheduled training at Fort Drum, Manion said.

This means “no competing with other entities for training space,” said the 13-year veteran who deployed to Iraq in 2003.

The 206th MPs week-long urban combat training also included search operations. They conducted room-to-room combat training in pre-fabricated rooms inside the hangers using combat simulators.

The training marked the second week of the 206th MP's annual training. They spent their first week of training at Fort Drum **gt**.



Private First Class Matthew B. Gatta with the 206th Military Police Battalion from Latham climbs into the M1117 Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) during the 206th MP's training at the Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany on June 25.



A New York Army National Guard Artillery Soldier from the 258th waits for the smoke to clear before removing the empty round while another Soldier confirms the rounds impact down-range before making adjustments to the M102 Howitzer. Photo by Staff Sergeant Kevin Abbott.

## End of an Era for M102 Howitzers in 258th Field Artillery

Story by Pvt. Rachel Sanzo, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Public Affairs

FORT DRUM - "There's nothing that gives a Soldier a head-rush than sling-loading equipment for the first time," said Capt. Joshua White, operations officer for the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery.

Approximately 80 Soldiers were able to experience that rush during their June annual training at Fort Drum.

Members of the 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery from Jamaica, the Bronx and Newburgh, along

with supporting troops from the 42nd Infantry Division, arrived at Fort Drum June 7 for their annual training.

In addition to sling load operations, the artillerymen also performed direct and indirect live-fire

will be replaced in 2009 by the new M119A1 howitzer, which weighs about 400 pounds less than its predecessor. The new M119A1 is easier to sling load to the UH-60 Blackhawk.

"The new howitzer employs the same principles as the M102, but it shoots further and takes less people to operate," said Lt. Col. Paul Conte, the 258th Battalion Commander. "The weapons training conducted here at Fort Drum will give our crew the proficiency and the skills that they need so that, when they transfer to the new weapons system, they'll be safe."

The Soldiers of the 258th said that the howitzer live-fire exercise performed was the most rewarding aspect of their annual training.

"Everyone's morale was great," said Conte. "These Soldiers joined the artillery to fire weapons, so they were really happy to be here doing this." **gt**



Soldiers from the Army National Guard's 258th Field Artillery prepare to sling-load their M102 Howitzers during air assault training at Fort Drum. The unit conducted annual training for the last time with the Vietnam-era guns before scheduled transformation to new artillery tubes next year. Photo by Pvt. Rachael Sanzo.

exercises with the unit's seven M102 howitzers, and practiced evacuating overturned Humvees.

"We conducted dry-fire exercises in preparation for live-fire with the howitzers to make sure our crews were proficient with their weapons beforehand," said White. "We want the Soldiers to ultimately meet the goal of the Field Artillery, which is accurate first round fire for effect."

The M102 howitzer, a 105mm weapons system first used by the Army during the Vietnam era,



Army Staff Sgt. James Parks, Afghan National Police mentor, uses water bottle caps to demonstrate a wedge formation, a type of patrolling technique, at the Regional Training Center in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Parks is one of six coalition mentors at the RTC who train the police on basic combat skills..



# Task Force Phoenix Continues Afghan Police Training

Story and photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Beth Del Vecchio, Special to American Forces Press Service

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – Surrounded by Afghan National Police, the U.S. Army Staff Sergeant moved the water-bottle caps around in the dirt, as if on a checkerboard. But, there was no board, and this was no game. It was training.

With different obstacles facing the trainers at Forward Operating Base Scorpion, unconventional methods of training are common. The language barrier may seem to limit the training, but the trainers and mentors are committed to mission execution, no matter what the means.

Army Staff Sgt. James Parks, a police mentor team member from the New York Army National Guard's Troop A, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry in Buffalo, N.Y., uses the bottle caps to demonstrate a wedge formation, a type of patrolling technique. On this day, June 13, his group was working on the "rush and roll," the "low crawl," and other basic combat reactions under fire. This training usually is for soldiers; however, due to the counterinsurgency environment, the Afghan National Police need these skills to survive and defeat the enemy.

"We train them in basic combat skills so they can stay alive out there," Parks said. "It seems basic to us, but it's stuff that they just don't know to do when there is enemy contact."

Parks is part of the 27th Brigade Combat Team's Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix, the mentoring and training team for the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police (ANP). The task force arrived in Afghanistan and has led the training mission since April.

The majority of the training at the Regional Training Center (RTC) in Kandahar is Afghan-led, but the three American and three coalition mentors work with Afghan police commanders and trainers to coach and advise the new recruits on basic combat skills.

"The language barrier is the biggest obstacle we face," Parks said.

Just like the bottle caps, the U.S. mentor team used colored blocks to demonstrate how to clear a building. They assigned colored blocks to each police officer on the clearing team and set corresponding colored blocks on the inside of the building. That way, the police would know by looking at the colored blocks where they needed to position themselves once inside

the building.

Once the policemen finish the eight-week course at the RTC, they are sent out to districts in southern Afghanistan. But their training doesn't stop once they're in the field.

Regional Police Advisory Command South, with headquarters at Forward Operating Base Scorpion, acts as a command post for several police mentor teams spread out through Afghanistan's southern districts. Nearly 10,000 ANP officers work in the field, and the mentor teams travel from district to district to train, advise and mentor the police.

Army Col. John Cuddy, Regional Police Advisory Command South commander, oversees training for the RTC and the police mentor teams.

"The mentors and the Police Mentoring

Teams (PMTs) are the front-runners of our mission here," he said. "It's amazing what these men are doing with what they have."

Cuddy said the mentor teams visit the district police after they have left the regional training center and ensure they sustained those skills learned during training and are conducting their basic function as policemen: to serve and protect. The PMTs also ensure the police are getting paid and fed.

"If the ANP aren't paid, they go AWOL. If they aren't armed, they get killed in the night," he said.

Cuddy said reports of real progress come from the districts.

"We are getting feedback that the Taliban doesn't recognize the ANP they fight now," he said. "The ANP are starting to fight back. Before, they didn't have the training in basic fighting or survival skills, so they would surrender or run."

Afghan Brig. Gen. Nassurullah Zarifi, commander of the Afghan National Police Kandahar Regional Training Center, has more than 35 years of experience, including time with the Afghan army. He worked for 16 years as an instructor in the

ANA before he was transferred to the RTC.

"We have 350 students here, but not enough instructors. The American and coalition instructors help us to educate our people," he said. "While they are here, my instructors, deputies and myself work hard to ensure the students are trained properly and will do their job correctly when they leave the RTC to go to their communities."

He said he receives positive feedback from the provinces about the police who graduated from the eight-week training program at the RTC.

"They are happy to have the new ANPs in their community," Zarifi said. "This is a long process, not a short-term answer. We are working on the security for the future of Afghanistan." **gt**



An Afghan National Police recruit practices patrolling movements at the Regional Training Center in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Police officers train at the RTC for eight weeks on community policing and basic combat skills. After the training, the police are sent to districts throughout southern Afghanistan.

# Down Range Soldiers – Life as an Afghan Police Mentor

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix

**CAMP AIRBORNE, WARDAK PROVINCE**  
-- Like their brothers assigned to Embedded Training Teams for the Afghan National Army, members of the New York Army National Guard's Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix serving on Police Mentoring Teams face enormous challenges under dangerous conditions and often operate from small bases in remote areas of Afghanistan.



Staff Sergeant Frederick Goldacker assists an Afghan police officer with weapons training in Wardak province. The New York Army National Guard Soldiers from CJTF Phoenix train, mentor and serve in combat actions alongside their Afghan police partners. Courtesy photo.

And yet, this training and mentoring mission is rightly described as the task force “main effort.”

“The ETTs and PMTs are the main push, no question about it,” said task force Command

Sergeant Major David Piwowarski, from Buffalo, N.Y. “The strategic objective is to develop this country’s security forces – both army and police – so that they can conduct counter insurgency operations, maintain the rule of law and eventually provide secure and stable conditions for the people and the government. So the goal is Afghans first, Afghans lead and it will be ETTs and PMTs, down range, who will help them become self sufficient at the province and district levels where they are most needed,” he said.

“‘Mount up, and roll out’ and the sounds of engines cranking and up armored doors slamming is just part of our day,” said Staff Sgt. Frederick Goldacker from Lewiston, N.Y. He is a National Guard member assigned to Company A, 2nd Battalion 108th Infantry and serving as a member of SECFOR Alpha attached to a PMT in Wardak province. He is among 230 troops from New York called up last year as security force platoons ahead of the larger deployment of nearly 1400 additional Guard troops from the Empire State.

Goldacker previously served on active duty and following the 9-11 attacks in 2001 performed many weeks of homeland defense duty back in New York. He has spent so much time on either state or federal active duty that he has had little time for his civilian

graphics design work. He married only a few months before his unit was mobilized at the end of September 2007.

Goldacker, Cpl. Wesley Burgess from Oswego and Spc. Matthew Kew are SECFOR troops on a Police Mentoring Team working in the Nurkh Valley. The team mates they support include Master Sgt. Richard Wood, a fireman and Guardsman from Livingston, Montana and Sgt. Joseph Baragwanath, also a Guardsman from Brockton, Massachusetts, who is a part time land surveyor in between college classes.

Sergeant Wood is the team’s assistant non commissioned officer in charge. With 24-years Guard service and a tour of Iraq behind him, he brings a lot of experience to the team.

“I am proud that we are a Guard team from all over the country and we are doing fine,” he said. “Our age and experience are working for us,” he added and talked about members of the 101st Airborne the team shares the FOB with. “Great energetic troops but we are often ready before they are,” he added. “The ingenuity we used to set our vehicles up, the speed we mount up for quick reaction force and just the way we do business – this is a really good team.”

Goldacker, Burgess and Kew often run weapons training for the Afghan Police the team supports. “They really like it when we let them try our weapons,” said Goldacker. “We enjoy teaching them and they love it.”

According to Sergeant Goldacker they face a cunning enemy that fights from the shad-



An up armored humvee of their police mentoring team negotiates a mountain road in Wardak province. Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Frederick Goldacker.



New York Army National Guard Soldiers, from left, Cpl. Wesley Burgess, Staff Sgt. Frederick Goldacker and Spc. Matthew Kew from Co. A, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry in Wardak Province Afghanistan, display t-shirts sent from Nicky's Clam Bar, Bayshore Long Island. Courtesy photo.

ows. "During every convoy we just pour our thoughts over the headsets of what may await us. This is really what it is like," he added, reflecting on close calls he had from the gunner's turret as rocket propelled grenades sailed past him.

During the months they have been based at FOB Airborne, the team has been shelled and attacked frequently. They spent many a night inside bunkers with body armor and weapons at the ready.

"There is an unmistakable screech a rocket makes when it comes in," said Goldacker. "You feel helpless because you don't know where it will land. You just know its going to be close." There is a wave of orange sparks after the white flash and a thundering crash, he said. Everyone yells "Incom-

ing" and scrambles like cats for their armor and then dashes to the bunker hoping to get there before another rocket lands.

"Our rooms are like mini bunkers, now," said Sgt. Baragwanath. "We are always doing force protection improvements," he said, adding that roughly every few days team members rotate on "rocket watch."

"Seeing this first hand is something that you will never let go of," said Goldacker. After the "all clear," Soldiers filter out of the bunkers to survey the damage. "The scarring that is left on the buildings is unimaginable," he said.

"No way that just happened; we would say to ourselves, and then start laughing," said Goldacker. "Just another fun filled day at the office," he added. **gt**



Staff Sergeant Frederick Goldacker occupies the vehicle gunner's position wearing a Kevlar mask during a mission. Goldacker and SECFOR Soldiers from CJTF Phoenix provide security for the mentoring, training and combat actions of Afghan National Police forces. Courtesy photo.



Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, The Adjutant General, presents the folded American flag to family members of Spc. Anthony Mangano, seen above right earlier this year during a mission in Afghanistan..

## Losses Sadden Task Force Phoenix, Guard Family

### *Guard Times Staff*

**KABUL, Afghanistan -- Six members of the New York Army National Guard assigned to Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan here died in June and July.**

Sgt. Andrew Seabrooks, Sgt. Nelson Rodriguez-Ramirez, and Spc. Anthony Mangano, all assigned to A Troop, 2nd Squadron 101st Cavalry where killed on June 21 when their humvee struck an improvised explosive device north of Kabul.

On June 26, Sgt. First Class Joseph McKay and Spc Mark Palmateer, were killed when their M-1114 humvee was struck by an IED, rocket propelled grenades and small arms fire while they were operating in Kobar Province. They were assigned to B Troop, 2nd Squadron 101st Cavalry.

In a non-hostile incident, still under investigation, 1st Lt. Daniel Farkas was found dead on Forward Operating Base Phoenix on July 4. He was assigned to headquarters 27th Brigade Combat Team.

The fallen Soldiers were remembered in memorial services held in the theater and by their families and friends in funerals and memorials held back home. They were remembered as family men, fathers and valued members of the community.

They were laid to rest in National Cemeteries with other fallen Soldiers, and in family cemeteries with other loved ones, while members of the New York Army National Guard looked on.

Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General and commander of the New York Army National Guard, represented the National Guard at all six services. Guard members across the state mourn the loss of the Soldiers, Taluto said.

"We in the military understand that we may be called upon to pay the ultimate sacrifice," Major General Taluto said. "But we are always sad-

dened when comrades in arms make those sacrifices."

"These members of the Army National Guard died carrying out an important mission; training the Afghan forces to stand against elements that would return their country to the dark ages. We are proud of them and we will never forget them," Taluto said.

Sgt. Seabrooks, age 36, had been assigned to Company G of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion, supporting the 1st Battalion 258th Field Artillery, in Jamaica, Queens, before deploying to Afghanistan. He is survived by a wife and two children, as well as another child, and an adult son.

Sgt. Rodriguez-Ramirez, who was 23, was part of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry and C Troop 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry, before deploying with A Troop. He is survived by a daughter in Niagara Falls, and a wife and child in Rochester as well as his mother and father in Massachusetts. He was posthumously promoted to sergeant.

Specialist Mangano, who was 36, served in Company C, 1st Battalion 69th Infantry, based in Leeds, Green County before deploying. He is survived by his wife, who lives in Brazil, and his mother and sister who live on Long Island.

Sgt. 1st Class McKay, age 51 of Cambria Heights Queens, belonged to Company G of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion, and supported the 258th Field Artillery, before deploying with the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry. A member of the New York National Guard since 1977 and a native of Guyana, he had served with Joint Task Force Empire Shield in New York City prior to deployment and had served in Iraq. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Spc. Palmateer, age 38, was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry when he volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan. He is sur-



27th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers take moments for personal reflection for fallen comrade Sgt. Andrew "Andy" Seabrooks (seen at right in theater) at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. Photo courtesy of 27th Brigade Combat Team.



Family and fellow Guardsmen gather to give their final farewells to Sgt. Nelson Rodriguez-Ramirez (shown at left). His funeral took place at the Immaculate Conception Church in Revere, Mass. followed by burial at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett, Mass. Photo courtesy of Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs.

vived by his daughter, his father and an extended family in the Poughkeepsie area.

All five of these Soldiers received the Bronze Star, Combat Action Badge and New York State Conspicuous Service Cross posthumously.

1st Lt. Farkas, a New York City police officer in civilian life, was 42 at the time of his death. He had served in the National Guard for 14 years, becoming an officer after serving as an enlisted Soldier. He was assigned to Battery B 1st Battalion 258th Field Artillery before deploying to Af-

ghanistan. He is survived by his mother and brother.

Each Soldier was honored in memorial services held by the 27th Brigade Combat Team and Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan and by military funerals in their home towns with representation from the senior leadership of the New York National Guard and 42nd Infantry Division. The Military Forces Honor Guard presided over each military funeral, including those held in Massachusetts for Sgt. Rodrigues-Ramirez and in Virginia for Sgt. Seabrooks. **gt**

# Fallen Soldiers Remembered by Rainbow, Orion Troops

Story by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Peter K. Towse, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Public Affairs

TROY – Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division gathered here July 12 to honor the six Soldiers of the 27th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force Phoenix who were killed recently in Afghanistan.

Fellow Soldiers, friends and family members attended the ceremony to pay their respects and celebrate the lives of 1st Lt. Daniel Farkas, a member of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery, Sgt. 1st Class Joseph McKay, part of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), Sgt. Anthony Mangano, a member of the 69th Infantry, Staff Sgt. Mark Palmateer, also with the 69th Infantry, Sgt. Nelson Rodriguez Ramirez, a member of the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry and Sgt. Andrew Seabrooks, part of the 427th BSB.

During the ceremony, the Soldiers were remembered by the division commander and other Soldiers

as being a true professionals and friends.

“Today, we remember and celebrate the lives of our fallen comrades,” said Brig. Gen. Paul C. Genereux, Jr., the commanding general of the 42nd Infantry Division. “They are our brothers in arms who shared a devotion to duty, a love of country and an unyielding desire to serve and protect our nation.”

During the ceremony, the six Guardsmen were remembered as Citizen Soldiers, called upon to leave their families, their jobs and their country to protect the freedoms of America and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

“They trained, they deployed, they sacrificed and they paid the ultimate price for their service,” said Col. Carl Pfeiffer, the Chief of Staff of the 42nd. “Today, we will never forget our six who have fallen.” **gt**



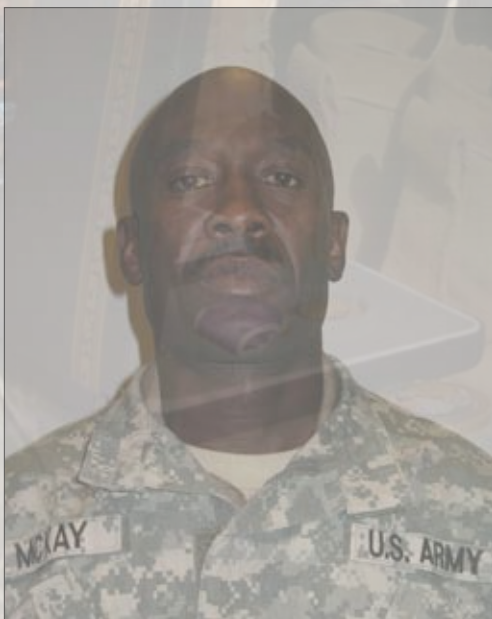
New York Military Forces Honor Guard and members of the New York City Police Department salute 1st Lt. Daniel Farkas (seen on opposite page) during funeral services at Montefiore Cemetery, New York City, July 14. First Lieutenant Farkas was a member of the New York City Police Department. He died of a non-hostile injury at Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan on July 4. Photo by Lt. Col. Eric Durr.



Major General Joseph Taluto consoles Ms. Stephanie Palmateer for her father's service and sacrifice and presents her with a flag that adorned Sgt. Mark Palmateer's casket. Funeral services for Palmateer (at left) were held at New Hurley Cemetery near the town of Plattekill in Ulster County on July 11. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran.

**"They are our brothers in arms who shared a devotion to duty, a love of country and an unyielding desire to serve and protect our nation."**

*--Brig. Gen. Paul Genereux, Commander, 42nd Infantry Division*



Family, friends and comrades attended the funeral of Sgt. 1st Class Courtney Joseph Amorel McKay at the Pinelawn Cemetery in Farmingdale July 10. McKay (seen at left) is survived by his wife Rose and his four children. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy

## Final Combat Flights for Syracuse Fighters

### 174th Fighter Wing Deploys for Final Combat Missions Before Conversion

*Guard Times Staff*

SYRACUSE -- More than 190 Air Guard personnel deployed in early June as part of the New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing support to Air Expeditionary Forces (AEF) overseas.

The Fighter Wing deployed an aviation package that included F-16C fighter jets to Southwest Asia on Tuesday, June 10 to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is the unit's 8th deployment in AEF rotation since Operation Desert Storm and will be the unit's last combat missions flying the F-16.

"This will be our last deployment in the F-16 as we begin our conversion to the new airplane this fall to the MQ-9 Reaper," said 174th Fighter Wing Commander Kevin Bradley. The reorganization is part of the Total Air Force transformation.

The fighter package is expected to operate from Joint Base Balad, renamed on June 15 from the Army's Logistics Support Area Anaconda as the Air Force increased its operations and logistics support from the military site

northwest of Baghdad.

The 174th's last deployment in support of an Air Expeditionary Force was in December 2006. This deployment will be the unit's 8th and final F-16 AEF deployment since first being deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

For one part of the wing's deployment, the notion of the National Guard as family was even more prevalent as Staff Sgt. Josh Van-Winkle joined his brother Senior Airman John for the deployment. The two Airman from Williamstown, N.Y. were deployed together

two years ago for another expeditionary force mission as well.

"It made the process a lot easier...I was never surprised; I knew what to expect because he had been through it," John said to a local WSYR news reporter, referring to his older brother.

The Airmen's mother, Missy, said that a second deployment is likely to be less stressful than the first. "You just got to have faith," she said to the news media. "Faith that they'll be okay, they'll be back and they're doing what they think is right."

The 174th Fighter Wing was formed on



Family members farewell loved ones (above, left) from the New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing as , Airmen prepare to board their charter flight (above, right) overseas for Operation Iraqi Freedom on June 4. The deployment will be the last for the wing to employ the F16 Fighter as the unit undergoes transformation later this year to unmanned aerial vehicle. Courtesy photos.





Pilots of the 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard make last minute preparations to their F16's shortly before their departure to Southwest Asia as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom June 10. This is the last combat deployment for the 174th Fighter Wing's F16's. Photo by Staff Sgt. Lee O. Tucker

October 28, 1947 as the 138th Fighter Squadron. The 138th FS was the first post-World War 2 Air National Guard flying unit in New York State. The unit flew P-47D Thunderbolts and later P-51 Mustangs prior to the jet age and was based at the former Army Air Force facilities at Hancock Field.

The 174th Fighter Wing's federal mission provides combat ready personnel, aircraft, and equipment for worldwide deployment. The aircrews deter, or attack and destroy, enemy surface and airborne forces, in support of joint operations. The wing has previous deployment experience in Afghanistan in 2003.

Members of the wing completed their Air Expeditionary Force rotation and returned back to Syracuse August 5. Air Force rotations routinely cover 60-90 days of overseas deployment.

"Everyone's very excited about this. This is what we train to do and this is the investment that the taxpayers pay for, but also this is their chance to serve the country," Bradley said. **gt**



Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto, The Adjutant General, provides well-wishes to members of the New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing during the unit's departure for Air Expeditionary Force deployment to Iraq on June 4. Courtesy photo.

# New Mission, New Aircraft, New Training at Niagara Falls

## 107 Airlift Wing Receives and Begins Mission Training with C-130s

Story by Lt. Col. Deanna Miller, 107<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION – This summer marks the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing. On June 17, Majors Gregory Miller and Todd Guay piloted the wing's C-130H2 Hercules aircraft, as the first qualified crewmembers of the wing to conduct initial training missions in the mission set. The training missions prepare aircrew to employ the aircraft into combat areas when deployed overseas.

The local training mission for pilot proficiency included members of the 914th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve, the composite wing partner of the Guard's 107th Airlift Wing. The two units share the facility, aircraft, maintenance and administration requirements for the tactical airlift mission.

The flight was the 107th Airlift Wing's maiden voyage on the C-130H2 Hercules after completing months of conversion training from the KC-135 Stratotanker mission as the 107 Air Refueling Wing.

"The tactical airlift mission of the C-130 is completely different than that of the in-air refueling mission of the KC-135," stated Maj. Miller.

"The C-130 can, and does, operate from anywhere in world."

With the change of mission, the 107th will now send its aircrew members to conversion training at Dobbins Air Reserve Station in Georgia and Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas. Once crew training is complete, these members will be mission qualified in the C-130H2. This aircraft operates with a crew complement of five – two pilots, a navigator, flight engineer and loadmaster.

Earlier this spring, the 107th changed its designation from an Air Refueling Wing to an Airlift Wing on April 1st and continues the process of converting to the C-130H2 aircraft first directed by the military's Base Realignment and Closure plan of 2005.

The conversion brings tactical airlift capability for the New York Air National Guard out to Western New York, where missions to support civil authorities for homeland defense or disaster response could call upon the use of the Air Force C-130 workhorse.

While the primary responsibility for the aircraft will rest with the 914th Airlift Wing both units will work together to employ them. **gt**

*"The tactical airlift mission of the C-130 is completely different than that of the in-air refueling mission of the KC-135. The C-130 can, and does, operate from anywhere in world."*

*-- Maj. Miller, 107th Airlift Wing*



## Aircraft Maintainers Learn New Skills C-130 Training Continues as Part of Reorganization

By Staff Sgt. Rebecca Kenyon, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION – More than 200 aircraft maintenance personnel will be preparing for the 107th Airlift Wing's new mission with continued on-site training this spring and summer.

"The mission has changed, the aircraft has changed from a KC-135 to a C-130," said Tech Sgt. Tim Dodge, C-130 Conversion Team Chief, a C-130 crew chief instructor from Air Education Training Command, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Dodge said the 107th requested a comprehensive training plan to get all maintenance personnel in the unit trained on the differences between the aircraft and its unique systems.

The training began May 1 and continues through the end of August.

The first day of training for the C-130's cargo rail system began in June. This three-day course instructed 107th crew chiefs how to maintain, rig, and check the C-130's cargo rail system, something new to maintenance personnel more familiar with bulk fuel as the only cargo on board.

The C-130 utilizes the rail system to lock cargo in place, said Dodge.

"This cargo rail system ensures it (cargo) stays in place and allows for safe operations for it to be jettisoned out of the aircraft," said Dodge.

The cargo rail system course is one example of the many courses 107th members will attend, depending on their unique Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) and skill level.

"We run them through all system classes on the



Master Sergeant Nancy Traxler and Tech. Sgt. Mark Traxler make adjustments to the C-130 cargo door during their field training class at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. The 107th is converting from the KC-135R to the C-130H2. Photo by Senior Master Sgt Raymond Lloyd.

airplanes," said Dodge.

Senior Master Sgt. Thomas McGuire, 107th Maintenance Quality Assurance Inspector, attended an engine course on June 5.

McGuire also attended a transition course and a propeller course. He emphasized the importance of the training by comparing the aircraft to cars. He said like cars, each aircraft is made different and runs different.

"Right now all of our knowledge is based on the KC-135, so attending these classes allow us to learn how these airplanes are put together so we know what to inspect or look for," said McGuire.

Dodge said 29 Air Force instructors from various training detachments will give the conversion training.

"At the end of August, all AFSC's will have a mission cadre trained up to be able to maintain and sufficiently operate the C-130," Dodge said. **gt**



Master Sgt. Ronald Szaicher, a crew chief with the 107th Airlift Wing, says goodbye to last KC-135R Tanker. Photo by Master Sgt. Veronica Jadoch.

## Final Farewells for KC-135

Story by Lt. Col. Deanna Miller, 107th Airlift Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing flew its last tanker mission June 15 as it bid farewell to its only remaining KC-135R Stratotanker, ending its legacy as an air refueling wing.

Colonel Patrick D. Ginavan, Commander of the 107th Airlift Wing, piloted the aircraft on its final mission.

"It's been a great mission for the past 14 years," said Ginavan. "The 107th will embrace our new mission with the same professionalism and enthusiasm as we have with past conversions. We look forward to our new mission as an airlift wing and have already successfully flown our first C-130 mission."

The KC-135R's were transferred to New York from the active Air Force in 1994. Once at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, these aircraft, operated by 107th aircrews, flew numerous air refueling training missions in addition to supporting countless contingencies.

This airframe was instrumental in offloading millions of pounds of fuel to aircraft all over the world.

Some of the global contingencies included Operations Deny Flight, Decisive Endeavor, Northern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

Stateside, these aircraft were employed to support the Northeast Tanker Task Force, refueling aircraft deploying to and from the Middle East and Europe – a 24/7 commitment. Additionally, they were flown in support in Operation Noble Eagle and instrumental in flying supplies to victims of Hurricane Katrina.

After 14 years of faithful service, this KC-135's job at Niagara is complete and the entire wing bids the airframe farewell. The last refueler will join other aircraft of the fleet at the 126th Air Refueling Wing with the Illinois Air National Guard and continue to faithfully serve the nation.

On April 1st the wing changed its designation to an Airlift Wing, converting to C-130H2 aircraft. The reorganization was directed by the Base Realignment and Closure of 2005. **gt**





Above, Senior Master Sgt. James F. McAleavey attaches a buoy to an HH-60 from the 106th Rescue Wing during a recovery operation at Smith Point, Long Island on April 29. The buoy broke free from its anchor and washed ashore. The Air Wing rescue aircraft worked with the Coast Guard and Park Rangers to recover the buoy. Photo, opposite page: Senior Master Sgt. McAleavey and Staff Sgt. Napolitano prepare the buoy for slingload. The airlift of the buoy prevented any ground vehicles from entering the beach site, reducing any threat to endangered wildlife in the area.

## Oh, Buoy! Rescue Wing Lends Ocean Buoy a Lift

### 106th Aircrews Conduct a Different Sort of Rescue on LI

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing*

WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- Airmen of the 106th Rescue Wing worked in tandem with members of the Coast Guard and Smith Point County Park rangers on April 29 to help remove a buoy which washed ashore.

The buoy, which had its solar panel and light torn off from exposure to area storms and the elements, was placed in a dredge channel and attached to a concrete block. According to Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Tony Certa, the block never had a chance to settle in the channel and the buoy was easily torn from its base during recent storms. After the buoy was

reported to have washed ashore, the Coast Guard contacted the 106th Rescue Wing and coordinated the Air National Guard support for its recovery.

Without the aid of the 106th Rescue Wing, the Coast Guard would have had to drive trucks and a crane onto the beach, possibly disturbing the nesting ground for the Piping Plover bird, an endangered species. The slingload mission for the aircrews from the 101st Rescue Squadron came quickly as well, since the likely hatching of the Piping Plover after May 1st would prevent any recovery operation.

Senior Master Sgt. James F. McAleavey, of the 101st Rescue Squadron, assisted the extraction mission by attaching the buoy to the HH-60 operated by Aircraft Commander Capt. Craig Utica, Co-Pilot Capt. Phaedra Spohn and Flight Engineer Chief Master Sgt. Mike Kurtz. Staff Sgt. Joseph Napolitano maintained communications with the helicopter during the operation.

The Coast Guard will ship the buoy to a facility in Boston to be refurbished and replaced in the channel, according to Chief Petty Officer Certa. **gt**



A Pararescueman from the 102nd Rescue Squadron prepares to enter the water following his 5000 foot freefall to demonstrate a "Freefall Swimmer Deployment." The 106th shared the sky with the Navy's Blue Angels, the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team and an Air Force F-22 Raptor fighter aircraft. A record 506,000 visitors attended the two day event.

# PJs Jump for Crowds at Jones Beach

## Air Show Demonstrates Rescue Wing Mission, Capabilities to Record Crowds

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy, 106th Rescue Wing



Air National Guard Major John D. McElroy and Master Sgt. Jules Roy greet attendees of the Jones Beach Air Show after finishing their rescue demonstration on May 25. The Pararescue Jumpers of the 102nd Rescue Squadron represented the 106th Rescue Wing by performing a demonstration to record crowds during the 2008 Jones Beach Air Show in Wantagh. Below, another PJ returns to his HH-60G Pavehawk helicopter after a successful “Low and Slow” rescue demonstration.

**JONES BEACH – Pararescuemen from the 106th Rescue Wing demonstrated their capabilities at the 2008 Jones Beach State Park Air Show in Wantagh on May 24 and 25.**

Pararescuemen from the New York Air National Guard’s 102nd Rescue Squadron at Westhamton Beach demonstrated a freefall skydive from 5000 feet to help a simulated distressed vessel in the waters off southern Long Island as part of the air show.

The PJs, as they are known, demonstrated to the crowd of 506,000 attendees the “Freefall Swimmer Deployment,” or “Low and Slow,” from an HH-60G Pavehawk helicopter to

rescue a downed airman in the ocean. One Pararescueman, along with simulated survivor was hoisted up while two other Pararescuemen climbed a rope ladder back into the helicopter.

The 106th Rescue Wing provides combat search and rescue for downed airmen during wartime and civil search and rescue support off of Long Island waters in peacetime. The unit is credited with more than 300 saves responding to civilian emergencies at sea.

The air show also included demonstrations of an Air Force F-22 Raptor aircraft, the Army’s Golden Knights parachute demonstration team and Navy’s Blue Angels performance team. **gt**

# Brothers in Arms, Family by Blood

## Family of Western NY Airmen Serve Together in Iraq

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Amanda Callahan, 447th Air Expeditionary Group

SATHER AIR BASE, Iraq -- Stepping off an aircraft in a foreign country after days of travel for the first time can often be overwhelming for any Airman. After in-processing, trying to get their bearing and the lay of the new desert terrain, many newly deployed Airmen seek refuge in their new unit.

Two members of the 447th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron (ESFS) at Sather Air Base not only had a good portion of their home unit, the 107th Security Forces Squadron of the New York Air National Guard, awaiting their arrival, they had their dad to help point them in the right direction as well.

As members of the 447th ESFS, Airmen 1st Class Phil and Ben McDonald would be responsible for patrolling and securing Sather, including more than 10 square kilometers surrounding Baghdad International Airport. This responsibility may be stressful to some, but Phil said that having family here helped calm his nerves during his first deployment.

"My father was (at the terminal), along with a bunch of other people," said Ben, who was the last of the McDonalds to arrive Sather AB. "It

was pretty relieving. I was worried that I'd get here and not know what to do."

His father, Chief Master Sgt. Earl McDonald, superintendent of the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, arrived at Sather AB in January. He is used to working with members of his immediate family since all four of his children were or are part of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing out of Niagara Falls, N.Y. But being deployed with his sons brought on new emotions for the chief.

"I felt real good, real proud," Chief McDonald said about his sons' arrival. "I'm glad they want to go out and make their own way."

"As members of security forces, we just do our job the best we can, no matter what," Phil said. "I definitely wanted to do this, and I'm glad I got the chance."

Chief McDonald knows how important the security forces mission is, and he knows that in order to complete it, it takes a team of professionals looking out for each other.

"(Deploying now) is the best thing for them to do because they'll be watched after by people in a good unit that will take care of them," he said.

Now that the men of the family have joined together at Sather AB, they all seem to agree that it's nice to have a support structure, but, in uniform, dad is chief and sons are Airmen.

Chief McDonald remarked that after all this time and with all four children being in the Air Force, it's easy to separate his role as a father and his role as a chief. Even here, the chief only has one comment to his sons about playing "dad" in a military setting.

"I tell them, I only have one rule, 'Don't embarrass me, and I won't embarrass you,'" he said. "Once in a while, I'll have my (airman battle uniform) shirt on and look down at the sleeve and let them know, Yeah, this looks pretty good on me," he said.

The younger McDonalds have no problem staying within their boundaries as Airmen, either.

"I want to make my own way in the Air Force," Phil said. "I don't want any special treatment because he is (a chief)."

It doesn't hurt to have someone to turn to, though.

"If I ever have any questions, my father and my brother are right there," Ben said.

Chief McDonald said he also sees the importance of their peers in the unit.

"I'll give them advice, but I think they need to hear things from the people within their unit too," the chief said.

With Chief McDonald preparing to return to New York, the family will be separated again, but the two brothers still have one another and a new "family" with the members of the 447th ESFS.

"I know their NCOs, senior NCOs and leadership to be highly professional," Chief McDonald said. "I hope this experience helps them have a long and fulfilling career." **gt**



Chief Master Sergeant Earl McDonald speaks with his eldest son, Airman 1st Class Phil McDonald, March 13 upon his arrival to Sather Air Base, Iraq. Chief McDonald is the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron superintendent, and Airman McDonald is assigned to the 447th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. Both serve with the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing in Niagara Falls.



# Air Guard Missions to Greenland More Than Support

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

KANGERLUSSUAQ, Greenland -- Reaching out to the community is nothing new for the men and women of the 109th Airlift Wing. So it should be no surprise that these good deeds would reach all the way to Greenland.

On June 2, Maj. Matt LeClair, of the 139th Airlift Squadron's Greenland shop, and others headed up to visit and drop off needed school items to Qinnngulata Atuarfia Elementary School in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland. It was one of many trips arranged over the years while in country performing Air Guard missions. But this day was more special than most; this was the first community day event ever organized.

"This community day was just a natural progression of our involvement and association with the school," Major LeClair said. "We have field trips to the base here that kids really enjoy. They love the airplane tour and the demonstration of the cargo loading and offloading equipment, so it made perfect sense that the kids in Kangerlussuaq would enjoy that as well.

"We also had these donated items we wanted to give them, and wanted to make it more special than just the normal drop off of supplies."

The day included a tour of the LC-130 aircraft, a K-loader demonstration as well as a barbecue. But for the kids, the surprise was the brand-new toys they would be receiving.

Since the toys were a surprise, it was like Christmas morning for these kids, said Tech. Sgt. Richard Kirker of the 109th Maintenance Group's hydraulics shop.

The new toys were from Toys R Us and The Dollar Tree. The stores had held toy drives around Christmas and turned to Stratton Air National Guard Base to distribute them.

"We distributed as much as we could to our military families and then sent the large remainder to the kids in Greenland," said Joanna Yesse, 109th AW family program coordinator. "This was a good use of the toys, seeing that many of these kids would never have the opportunity to have brand-new toys like this."

Although the toys were a big hit with the students, the school supplies given throughout the year were a big hit with the teachers.

But the school supplies didn't just come from the base; LeClair reached out to the local community for help, specifically Glencliff Eleme-



Master Sergeant Kelly Archambeault passes out toys to students. She and other Air Guardsmen from the 109th Airlift Wing helped organize toys to hand out to the kids. The toys were donated to Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia by Toys-R-Us. Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood.

ntary School in Rexford.

Glencliff jumped at the chance and used the opportunity to add Greenland to the curriculum. The teachers contacted the English teacher in Greenland, Elsemarie Asmussen. Soon after, teachers were exchanging e-mails, and students were writing letters back and forth.

"This year we had almost \$1,000 of donated school supplies and playground equipment from Glencliff Elementary," LeClair said.

During the trip to drop off the supplies, Master Sgt. Mike Decker, of the 109th Aerial Port Flight, saw the need for more supplies.

"(Elsemarie) mentioned she had been trying for a few years to get some sports equipment but hadn't been able to," Sergeant Decker said. "I said the aerial port would take care of it."

Sergeant Decker put the word out through the squadron and within two weeks, they delivered nearly \$500 worth of sports equipment.

And while many guardsmen donated items and cash to help out the school, others donated their time to be with the kids during the day.

"People jumped at the chance to help," said LeClair. "On a day that was supposed to be a light day with no flying, they came to make the

community day a wonderful event for everybody."

For the volunteers, it wasn't considered work.

"It was a lot of fun," Sergeant Kirker said. "It was like we were all kids, too. It was actually a really nice break from the work we do up there."

"I never had any interaction with the locals up there before this, so it was really nice," said Master Sgt. Kelly Archambeault of the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "(The kids) were so excited. ... There were footballs and basketballs flying everywhere."

Many of the Airmen agree that not only is this a good show of community support, it also helps the 109th AW's mission in Greenland.

"Kids are so innocent that they have no judgment of us; now they (see us in a positive light), and their parents will see that," Kirker said.

"They never had any interaction with us before," Archambeault said. "But now, when we're walking to and from work, the kids come up and talk to you and thank you and give you hugs.

"They loved having us there," she said. "They see us up there all the time, so now they know who we are and a little bit of what we're doing up there." **gt**

# Nation's Oldest Air Guard Unit Commemorates 100 Years

## LI Unit Marks the origins of the Citizen Airman

*Guard Times Staff*

WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- The New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing celebrated its 100th birthday on Wednesday April 30, making it the oldest Air National Guard unit in the United States. On April 30, 1908, the First Company, Signal Corps, a New York National Guard unit of 100 men belonging to the 71st Regiment organized to operate observation balloons, held its first training session at the regimental armory in New York City.

Today, the descendants of the 1st Company, Signal Corps now operate state-of-the-art HH-60 Pavehawk rescue helicopters and HC-130N Hercules aircraft designed to locate and rescue downed airmen as part of the 102nd Rescue Squadron, 106th Rescue Wing. 106th Airmen have served in combat theaters such as Afghanistan, Iraq and the Horn of Africa. The para rescue personnel also continue to support peacetime lifesaving missions in the Atlantic Ocean off of Long Island. The wing also provides rescue support during NASA Space Shuttle launches.

According to the New York Herald of Friday, May 1, 1908, that first training session for the signal company balloonists was "the official beginning of the plan to make aeronautics a part of the study and work of the signal corps. An aeronautic corps of twenty-five men, commanded by Major Oscar Erlandean, has been organized," the newspaper reported.



Members of New York's 1st Aero Company complete their historic roundtrip from Mineola, N.Y., to Princeton, N.J. November 19, 1916, the first mass cross-country flight in U.S. military aviation. A pioneer in militia aviation, the 1st Aero Company was the first ever to be called to federal service in 1916. A year later most of its members were flying combat missions in France. Original National Guard Heritage Painting by Woodi Ishmael.

Observation balloons maintained by the Army Signal Corps had been employed in Cuba during the Spanish American War, in which the men of the 71st had fought, as well as in the American Civil War. In the days before airplanes they were used to scout enemy positions and direct artillery fire.

The National Guard Soldiers and Officers who formed that first balloon squadron later formed the core of the 1st Aero Company, New York National Guard, which was formed in 1915 and trained with JN-4 "Jenny" aircraft. In June 1916 the 1st Aero Company was federalized for service along the Mexican Border in the Army's quest to find Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa, who had raided across the border into the United States.

Following World War I the unit was redesignated the 102nd Observation Squadron of the New York National Guard. When the National Guard became the Army and Air National Guard in 1947, with the founding of the Air Force, the 106th was a light bomber wing.

The unit has flown bombers, transport planes, and jet fighters, before settling into its role as a rescue wing. The rescue wing has a large number of significant events in the unit history. Airmen of the 106th were first on the scene when TWA Flight 800 exploded in mid-air off the Long Island coast in July 1996, and conducted the longest over-water rescue mission ever in 1998. In 1991, HH-60s Pavehawks of the 106th launched the rescue of a yacht crew that was later featured in the movie "The Perfect Storm," in which a crewmember perished at sea. And the first woman officer in the Air National Guard belonged to the 106th. **gt**



To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 102nd Rescue Squadron, Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy from the Rescue Wing's Public Affairs Office photographed a modern update to the National Guard Heritage painting by Woodi Ishmael that featured New York's 1st Aero Company in 1916. The creation of the photograph was a team effort by Maj Emily Desrosier, Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Hagan and members of the 106th Rescue Wing featured in the photo. From left to right are Master Sgt. Michael B. Murphy, Capt. Kevin Costello, Capt Phaedra Spohn, Senior Airman Erik Cedano and Airman 1st Class John Angerame. Photo by Staff Sgt. David J. Murphy.

# Welcome Home Tribute to NEADS Airmen

By Maj. Leo Devine, Northeast Air Defense Sector Public Affairs

## ROME - Welcome home.

Those two emotion-filled words echoed throughout the auditorium May 2 as 30 New York Air National Guardsmen of the Northeast Air Defense Sector's (NEADS) security forces were united with their family, friends and coworkers after a six-month deployment to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan.

As the returning security force members entered the ceremony through a flag-lined path, manned by the veteran's support organization Patriot Riders, they were greeted by cheers and wishes of thanks for their service.

During the past six months, security force members were part of the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing at Manas. While deployed, the NEADS members joined a diverse international team at the base including service members from Australia, France, Netherlands, Germany, Afghanistan, Canada, South Korea, and Spain.

The 30 returning Airmen were awarded the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Each Airman was presented their award by Col. John Bartholf, commander of NEADS.

"It is a tremendous honor for me to present these awards to each of you," Colonel Bartholf reflected. "I know the sacrifices you and your families have made and how difficult it has been during the last six months. We are all very proud of you and your contributions to defending our country and her allies."



Staff Sgt. Bernard Jowers, a Northeast Air Defense Sector Security Force Airman who deployed for six months to Kyrgyzstan, smiles as Col. John Bartholf, NEADS commander pins on a Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Staff Sgt. Richard Kirkum, NEADS Security Force Airman who deployed as well, stands at attention next to him awaiting Colonel Bartholf to pin on his medal May 2. All 30 NEADS Security Forces Airmen who deployed to Manas received the medal after returning home in March. Photo by Master Sgt. David Bishop.

This was not only a time to welcome home the Airmen - the unit expressed their thanks to the community members and organizations that supported the security force members and their families throughout the deployment. During the ceremony, plaques of recognition were presented to representatives from O'Brien & Gere, The America Legion, Adirondack Bank, Strough Elementary School, Embroiders Guild of America and New York State Family Readiness. In addition, Lynette Bartholf and Merry Speicher were honored for their contributions to the NEADS Family Support Center.

While the Central New York community banded together to support the deployment, the NEADS security force members in Kyrgyzstan volunteered their time and energy to make a positive difference in the area surrounding Manas Air Base. During their tour of duty, the Airmen delivered food and blankets to the elderly, purchased three tons of coal to heat the local nursery school, repaired 22 computers for the village school, and raised money to purchase a water supply pump and a power transformer.

While the deployment brought together a community of support for the Security Force members, the overall mission of NEADS to provide air sovereignty and execute counter-air operations over the eastern United States in support of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command Homeland Defense Missions carried on. **gt**



Northeast Air Defense Sector Security Force Airmen walk through a sea of American flags held by the Patriot Riders, a local group who supports veterans, May 2. The welcome home ceremony honored the 30 Airmen who deployed to Kyrgyzstan for six months. Photo by Master Sgt. David Bishop.

## NY Guard Engineers Raise The Roof At Fort Drum

By Staff Sgt. Dave Konig, Headquarters, N.Y. Guard



The New York Guard's 10th Engineer Battalion installs the remaining trusses and roof purlins at the Range 24 Shoot House at Fort Drum on July 16. The Guard volunteers completed the roofing project for the live-fire training site as part of the unit's annual training. Photo by Lt. Col. Bennett Gardiner, N.Y. Guard.

**FORT DRUM -- Thirty two troops from the 102nd Engineers Battalion, 10th Brigade, Task Force 10, spent their week-long summer annual training constructing a roof structure over the Shoot House at Fort Drum's Range 24 this July.**

"All N.Y. Guard members know that this project has a direct and real impact on the training of our National Guard," said Maj. John Hakola, the unit executive officer. "Simply put, better trained Soldiers are more likely to be successful and survive combat operations. That's what motivated our N.Y.

Guard engineers to labor on this important mission."

The Fort Drum Shoot House is a free-standing live fire range. The structure is designed for close-quarters combat training with small arms and live ammunition. Inside the structure is a series of corridors and rooms where 'targets' are placed. The building had no ceiling or roof, so the new roof structure will now provide protection from rain and snow for troops in training. This will permit use of the live fire Shoot House all year round. The roof also serves to protect the Shoot House itself from

the elements, extending its' useful life and reducing maintenance needs.

Representatives from Fort Drum's Range Control approached the N.Y. Guard's 10th Brigade Commander, Col. Brian Farley and his Operations Officer Lt. Col. Bennet Gardiner with the mission. Led by battalion commander Maj. Douglas Creamer, the 102nd engineers previously proven themselves a valuable force multiplier on several other Fort Drum and Camp Smith engineering missions in recent years.

Fort Drum Range Control

provided the materials and equipment and the N.Y. Guard provided the expertise and manpower. All project work, from conception planning to project construction, was executed by the engineers of the N.Y. Guard.

While many members of the 102nd Engineer Battalion work in the comparable construction trades outside of their membership in the N.Y. Guard, not all troops have that engineering background.

"Our troops come from all walks of life," Hakola explained. "Blue collar, white collar, but they're all hard workers. There

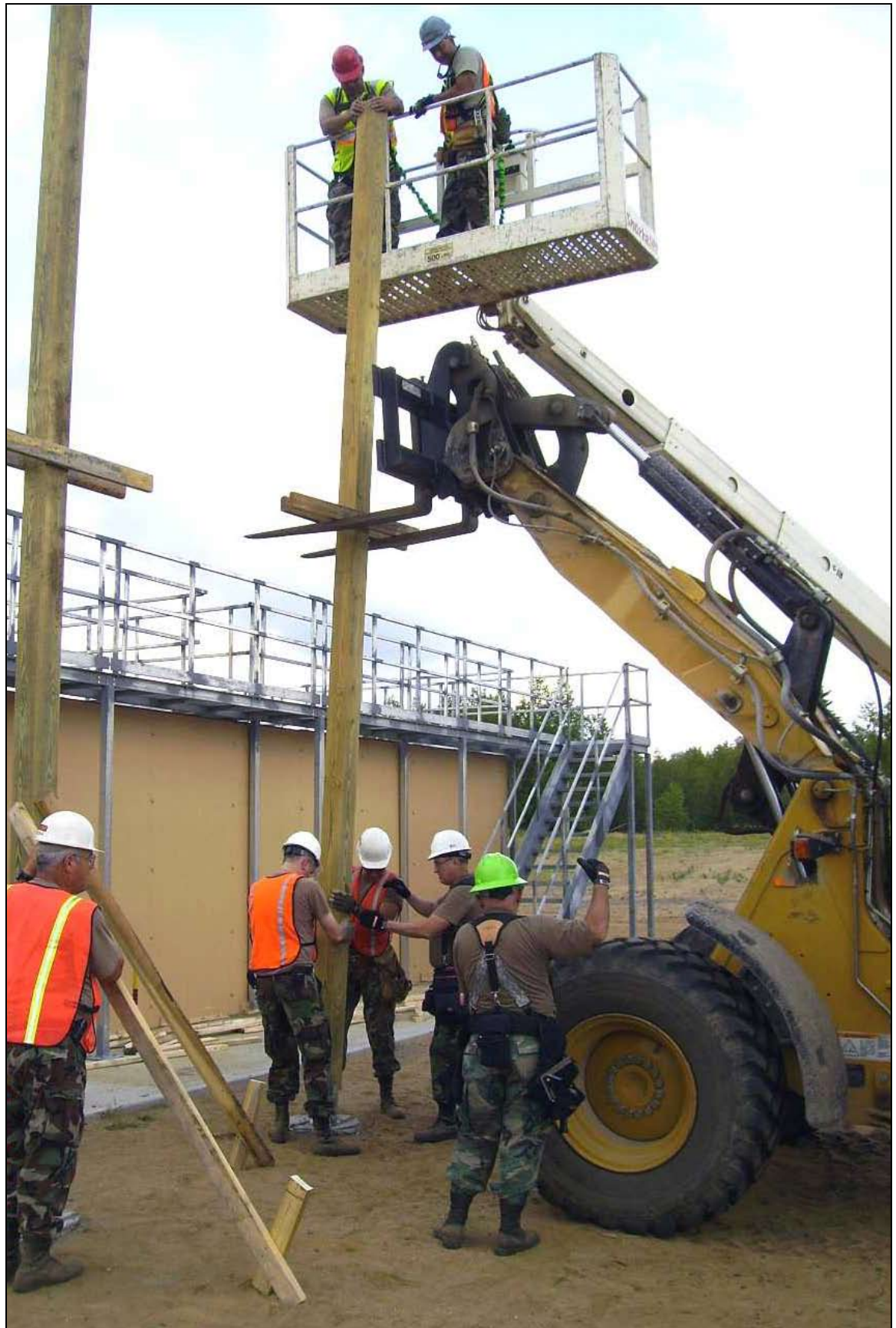
“This unit likes to get out in the field and get our hands dirty. Knowing that we help our National Guard better prepare for success in combat makes it all worthwhile.”

-- Maj. John Hakola,  
Executive Officer, 104th  
Engineer Battalion, N.Y.  
Guard

At right, members of the New York Guard's 102nd Engineer Battalion guide structural column poles for the construction of a roof at the Range 24 Shoot House, Fort Drum during the early stages of construction on July 11. The Guard completed the project for the live-fire training site as part of the unit's annual training. Photo by Lt. Col. Bennett Gardiner, N.Y. Guard.

was ongoing training for this mission leading up to annual training conducted over several months prior to execution, including construction hand tools, power tools, safety and fall prevention, construction planning and sequence of operations,” he said.

“This unit likes to get out in the field and get our hands dirty. Knowing that we help our National Guard better prepare for success in combat makes it all worthwhile.” **gt**



# Fully Trained & Ready To Respond

## New York Guard Troops Take to Camp Smith Hills During Training

Story by Staff Sgt. Dave Konig, N.Y. Guard Headquarters and Sgt. Chris Ferraro, Headquarters, 56th Brigade

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLANDT MANOR – More than 200 N.Y. Guard members from across the state undertook a wide range of certification training courses here July 12-19, to better prepare the State Guard force for defense support to civil authorities here in New York State.

Annual training gears the N.Y. Guard to put Maj. Gen. Michael Van Patten's vision of a "Fully Trained & Ready To Respond" state defense force into action.

Training included Federal Emergency Management Agency Incident Command System, NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control hazardous material technician certification, Department of Environmental Conservation Search and Rescue (SAR) training, a 48-hour field training exercise (FTX) that tested the N.Y. Guard's capabilities in SAR, Chemical decontamination, radio communications and Military Emergency Radio Network (MERN) operations, legal and medical assets, and operating a tactical operations center.

The 12th Regional Training Institute also conducted an Initial Entry Training (IET) course for the Guard's fifty newest recruits, and an Advanced NCO Course for senior NCOs.

Van Patten praised the Guard troops for their "patriotism and volunteerism," recognizing that N.Y. Guard volunteers are not paid for their training.

The FTX employed a simulated catastrophic hurricane scenario: a storm strikes New York City and Long Island with 25 inches of rain, flash flooding and potentially serious hazardous material leaks in a residential area.

To augment the National

Guard's response force, the N.Y. Guard trained in tasks specific to their expertise: SAR teams, led by Air Force veteran Maj. Jamie Bly of the 10th Brigade, combed the hills searching for casualties who fled to higher ground.

The flooding also notionally affected a petrochemical plant, contaminating the area. Simulated casualties were then put through the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) decontamination line.

With New York State Fire Safety Instructors observing, CERFP troops established a decontamination line, donned Personal Protective Equipment and decontaminated the simulated victims for medical triage with members of the 244th Medical Group, led by Lt. Col. Allen Hershman.

Evacuees were processed through a Displaced Persons center, as N.Y. Guard legal officers from the 5th Civil Affairs Regiment, 56th Brigade and 7th Civil Affairs Regiment, 88th Brigade took care of coordinating with local authorities to provide victims with food and shelter.

Additionally, a legal team assembled data bases to assist families locating relatives still listed as missing in the disaster. The legal team, under the command of Col. Steve Molik, has provided free legal assistance to deploying National Guard troops over the past six years.

The N.Y. Guard also tested its crisis management capabilities as certified Critical Incident Stress Management personnel assessed simulated victims for signs of post traumatic stress syndrome. N.Y. Guard Chaplains were on hand to provide further comfort to victims.



Members of the N.Y. Guard CERFP Decontamination Team train for hazardous material decon during the Guard's hurricane response exercise. Photo by Capt. George Lamboy..



The latest New York Guard recruits conduct Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) as part of their initial entry training at the Guard's Camp Smith Training Site during annual training July 12-19. Photo by Capt. George Lamboy..



New York Guard Search and Rescue (SAR) team members conduct training to provide support to civil authorities in the event of a hurricane landfall in New York State. The SAR teams are trained to locate, assess and extract casualties and are prepared to support the Department of Environmental Conservation Park Rangers or National Guard military forces to aid in emergency response. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer Joey Nickisher..

"Training with all of these different people in order to help people makes me very happy," said newly commissioned 2nd Lt. Avi Korner, a rabbi and assistant chaplain for the 56th Brigade.

Maj. Edward Murray and his team of MERN operators kept communications going throughout the exercise. Commanders, intelligence officers, logisticians and liaison officers trained to coordinate with civil authorities and TOC operations at the exercise command post.

Brig. Gen. Patrick Murphy, Director of the JFHQ-NY Joint Staff, observed the training on the second day of the FTX, walking the hills with Van Patten to visit SAR teams in the field. Murphy came away impressed with the Guard's capabilities – and equally impressed with the troops' motivations for serving.

"There are so many great stories in the NY Guard," Murphy said.

One member he spoke with, Spc. Michael Romanych from the 10th Brigade, described why he enlisted in the N.Y. Guard.

"My son is serving in the Army in Iraq. I wanted to serve with him, but I'm a couple of years past the age I could enlist, so I joined the N.Y. Guard," Romanych said. "I've trained hard these past two years, I'm SAR qualified, and I've never looked back." **gt**

# The U.S. Army's Spirit of America



Battle Scene

**When:** Friday, September 12, 2008 (10:30 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.)  
Saturday, September 13, 2008 (2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.)

**Where:** Blue Cross Arena - Rochester, N.Y.  
*\*New York Active Duty, Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, Families and Civilians are encouraged to attend this FREE event with their families and friends and celebrate the service and strength of Soldiers for more than 233 years.*

**Who:** The U.S. Army Military District of Washington Presents Spirit of America  
Maj. Gen. Richard J. Rowe - Commander JFHQ-NCR / MDW  
Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond P. Houston - Command Sergeant Major JFHQ-NCR / MDW

**Why:** Presented on behalf of The United States Army, Spirit of America is designed to inform, entertain and inspire audiences of all ages. Bringing history to life, the FREE patriotic, live-action show tells the history of our nation through the eyes of the America Soldier. With a unique combination of stirring music, historical narration and live action dramatization, Spirit of America is the true story of men and women who have left friends and families behind to protect and defend the United States of America. Spirit of America commemorates the brave actions of ordinary men and women, who as U.S. Army Soldiers preserve the freedoms we enjoy today.

**What:** During the show, Soldiers in period uniforms reenact key moments in history. From the Revolutionary War to current operations, these reenactments feature a unique perspective of American history -- that of the citizen Soldier. The show includes battle scenes, short periods of simulated gunfire, and performances by the Army's elite ceremonial units. The show features the U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own," and Soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), the oldest active-duty infantry unit in the Army. Elements of the Old Guard include The Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, the Caisson Platoon, the Commander-in-Chief's Guard and The U.S. Army Drill Team.  
[www.soa.mdw.army.mil](http://www.soa.mdw.army.mil)

**Contact:** Spirit of America Public Affairs, Kristen Parker .  
202-685-4026, [kristen.m.parker@us.army.mil](mailto:kristen.m.parker@us.army.mil)



U.S. Army Band Singers



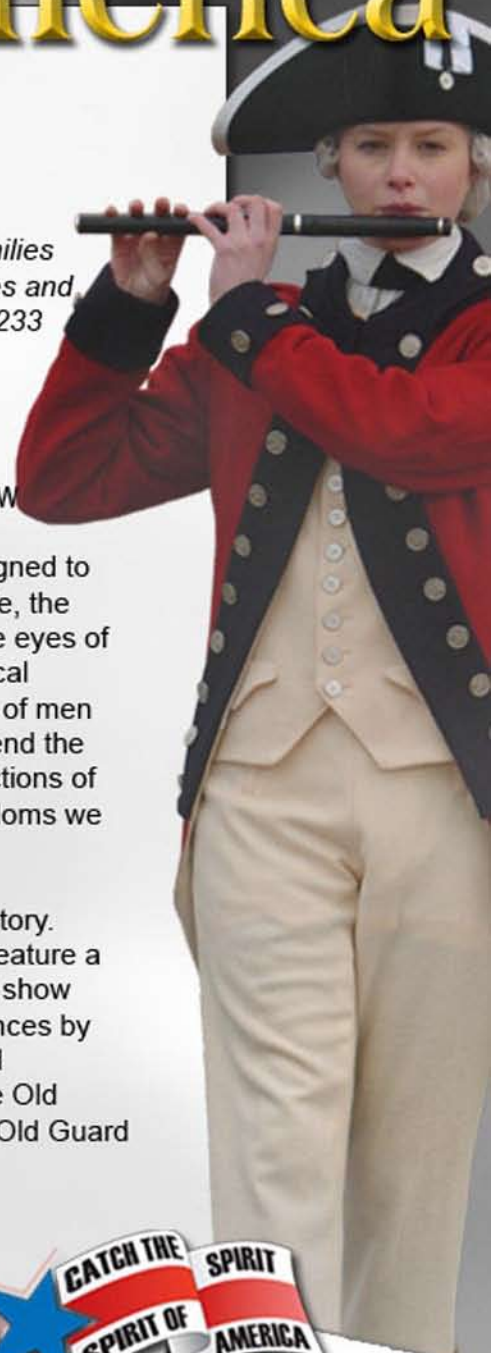
The Cast & Crew



U.S. Army Drill Team



Civil War Reenactment





Petty Officer First Class Donald Heart of the New York Naval Militia directs boaters coming from Canada into the U.S. to an inspection dock at Lake Champlain. The New York Naval Militia will be assisting U.S. Border Patrol Agents throughout the summer as part of “Mission Lake Champlain”.

## Keeping New York’s Waterways Clean

*Story and photo by Spc. Jimmy Bedgood, Guard Times Staff*

**ROUSES POINT, Lake Champlain-** The New York Naval Militia expanded their waterway mission support this summer by assisting state, federal and local law enforcement agencies with security at the U.S./Canadian border at Lake Champlain.

Master Chief Petty Officer Michael Clark and Petty Officer 1st Class Donald Heart of the Naval Militia worked in Rouses Point at Lake Champlain.

Their joint mission with U.S. Customs and Border Patrol—called Operation Lake Champlain—serves to secure the once still waters, now troubled by the uncertainty of high-volume boater traffic.

During summer months Lake Champlain has more than 200 boats reporting each day and about 30 boats reporting every hour during peak times.

This makes Lake Champlain an area of security concerns. Officials hope beefing up security will discourage smuggling and other

illegal activities.

Border Patrol Officials have set up a temporary-inspection dock near the abandoned Fort Montgomery in Rouses Point. Previously three private marinas served as inspection docks.

“The boaters are used to going to one of the three marinas,” said Mark Henry, a spokesman for the Border Patrol’s Swanton Sector

Clark and Heart operate a 34-foot Patrol Boat 330 to direct Canadian Boaters entering the US to an inspection dock. Once at the inspection dock boaters undergo a thorough inspection by Border Patrol officials.

“I am particularly pleased with the role the Naval Militia is playing,” Henry said.

He says the N.Y. Naval Militia’s support frees Border Patrol agents up to secure other parts of the lake and land.

The Naval Militia has been assisting Border Patrol Agents since 1978. An increase in boat traffic led to the replacement of an old swing bridge in the late 80’s. The new bridge allows

boaters from Canada entering the U.S. through the Richelieu River and drivers traveling to and from Vermont and New York to travel simultaneously—without stopping.

In the past agents have broken up drug runs and illegal-immigrant smuggling.

Vermont’s U.S. attorney announced last fall that two illegal-immigrant smuggling rings—one based in Montreal, the other based in Toronto—had been disbanded after they had smuggled hundreds of Asians and Latin Americans into the U.S. It hasn’t been concluded that the illegal immigrants were smuggled in through Lake Champlain.

Since beefing up security Border Patrol officials reported a 22 percent increase in violent incidents during the first nine months of the current fiscal year.

“They’re getting frustrated (because) they’re being denied entry,” Henry said.

Mission Lake Champlain began July 3rd and will continue until August 31st. **gt**



# 'The More Things Change, the More Things Stay the Same'

## Naval Militia Missions in NYC Reflect Years of Service, Experience

Story by Spc. Jimmy A. Bedgood, HQ 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division

NEW YORK CITY - Veteran New York Naval Militiamen took to the waters off Manhattan to secure New York's East River during the city's Fourth of July celebrations.

The mission for the New York Naval Militia Military Emergency Boat Service supported the U.S. Coast Guard and law enforcement maritime security efforts to ensure a safe and successful Fourth of July. Leading the effort were three sailors with countless hours of service along New York's waterways.

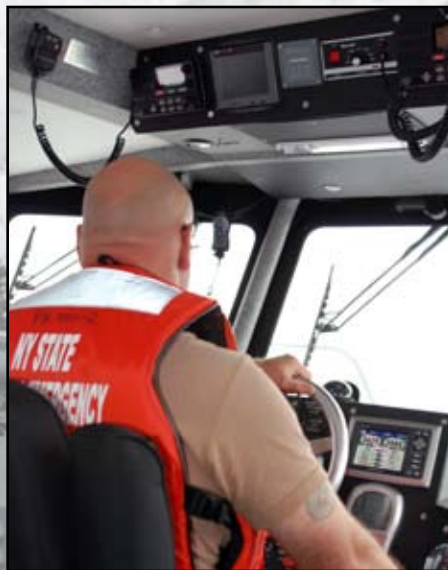
Chief Petty Officers William E. Palmer, Martin P. Timperio and Petty Officer 1st Class Sean F. Mesmer have a combined total of 52-years experience between them securing New York's Hudson, Harlem and East rivers.

The employment of Naval Militia personnel alongside other maritime forces within New York's borders is a common mission in recent years, but it was not always the case. While the New York's Navy Militia holds the honor as the oldest state naval militia in the U.S. However their endeavor hasn't always been smooth sailing.

Since September 11, 2001, the New York



A Fire Department of New York patrol boat uses on-board water cannons to shoot huge flumes of water into the air as part of the Fourth of July celebration on the East River. Photo by Sgt. Matthew Johnson.



Petty Officer 1st Class Sean F. Mesmer sits behind the Naval Militia Patrol Boat 440's helm patrolling the East River keeping an eye out for civilian boater's getting too close to barges loaded with Fourth of July fireworks. Photo by Sgt. Matthew Johnson.

Navy Militia had been tasked with patrolling the water point at the Indian Point Nuclear Plant. "...but we had no boats" said Timperio.

Mesmer, Palmer and Timperio started out with one borrowed 14-foot fireboat from the Ossining Fire Department.

"Now we have ten boats in the Navy Militia," said Palmer.

"Since 9-11 we have grown leaps and bounds," added Timperio, as he retraced the militia's history since the World Trade center attack.

The Navy Militia not only has more boats and manpower than it had before September 11, 2001, it now has a state-of-the-art naval patrol boat.

The crew members showed off their one-of-a-kind Patrol Boat 440 (PB 440) as they secured the East River with on Independence Day. A mouse, like the one attached to your personal computer, controls this \$821,000 boat; this allows one sailor to operate and dock

the boat in an emergency situation.

But the more things change the more things stay the same.

"Due to accessibility, we still use small boats to secure our waterways," said Timperio about the highly agile and easily maneuvered PB 440.

These veteran Naval Militia sailors thank Lt. Col. Bill Lockridge for their well manned and equipped Naval Militia. Lockridge served with the Joint Force Headquarters to plan and supervise the requirements, funding, fielding and training of the emergency boat service.

"If it were not for him there would be no Navy Militia," said Timperio. **gt**

## Born to ride with safety in mind

### Motorcycle Safety Courses for Guardsmen

By Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone, *Guard Times* Staff

LATHAM - Although the height of the motorcycle season is quickly passing, the National Guard's Safety Office actively promotes



motorcycle safety all-year long.

According to Sgt. Shawn Murray (pictured), safety specialist for the New York National Guard, the rise in gasoline prices and the motorcycle related deaths of 20 Army Guard Soldiers in fiscal year 2007 has spurred a demand from Soldiers to enroll in these courses.

In accordance with Army Regulation 385-10, prior to operating a motorcycle, Army personnel must successfully complete an Army-approved hands-on motorcycle rider course. Anyone registering a motorcycle on an Army installation must show proof of completing a Motorcycle Safety Foundation course.

In fiscal year 2008, the New York Army National Guard offered nine motorcycle safety courses at various community college locations throughout the state. Six Basic Rider courses and three Experienced Rider courses.

The Basic Rider course provides a new rider with a motorcycle to use for instructional purposes.

The Experienced Rider course requires an individual to provide their own licensed motorcycle to practice the techniques of managing

traction, stopping quickly, cornering, swerving and limited space maneuvers. There is also emphasis on proper safety gear including boots that cover the ankle, motorcycle-riding jackets and pants, full-fingered gloves, safety vest, and most importantly, a Department of Transportation approved riding helmet.

The added incentive for taking the Basic Riders course is the Points and Insurance Reduction Program (PIRP) or defensive driving that offers an insurance reduction and points off your driver's license.

The Basic Rider course also serves as a road test for riders to obtain their operators license after successful completion of the course.

Major General James W. Nuttall, deputy director of the Army National Guard, said there were 13 motorcycle fatalities in the Guard and 21 in the Army this year. Military leaders must "emphasize safety" to help reduce the number of fatal accidents".

For more information or to find out more about motorcycle safety courses go to:

<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/arng/safety/cycle.html>. **gt**

## New York's Firehawk Makes West Coast Appearance for Firefighting Support

LATHAM-Army Aviation Support Facility #3 was a hub of activity July 9 as local Albany news media and a six-man Florida Army National Guard flight crew arrived at the Latham-based hangar at virtually the same time but for different purposes. The Florida aircrew came to Latham to fly the specially-configured UH-60 Blackhawk to Sacramento, Calif. to assist in fire-fighting efforts. With trained New York aircrews currently deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom because trained N.Y. pilots are deployed to Iraq. California requested assistance on July 3 through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, an agreement between all states and territories to share emergency management duties. The Firehawk is expected to remain in California through the end of the fire season this fall. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Petibone, 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.



## 'Hometown Heroes' Run Raises Funds for Troops, Family Support

Donald Bowman completes the Family Readiness Council 5K "Hometown Heroes Run" June 14. Bowman is the spouse of Master Sgt. Kimberly Bowman, a recruiting supervisor with the 109th Airlift Wing. The couple participated in the event to help raise awareness and funds to support families of deployed troops. The Family Readiness Council is a not-for-profit group able to accept and distribute donations on behalf of New York's military families. Photo by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo.



## Reintegration Program Welcomes Home Soldiers NY Aviation Soldiers



BUFFALO -- Sergeant First Class Jeffrey Bailey and wife Darlene talk with Education Care Manager Scott Kaczmarek, Department of Veterans Affairs. The Soldiers of Company B, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation and family members took part in the New York Army National Guard Reintegration Program, July 12 in Buffalo.

The Reintegration Program is an effort to help Soldiers and families cope with the stress of returning to civilian life after deployment. Soldiers from 126th Aviation based in Rochester returned home May 31 following a ten-month tour in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott.

## Same Humanitarian Mission, Different Destinations for Afghan Children



ALBANY - New York Army National Guard Soldiers load supplies collected by sixth grade students from Sand Creek Middle School bound for Afghanistan on June 16. The supplies will be shipped to Afghanistan and be distributed by New York Army National Guard Soldiers in the 27th Brigade Combat Team and the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix headquarters. The wife of a Soldier in Afghanistan suggested this as a good way to help less fortunate children. Heather Penn, associate principal at Sand Creek Middle School and Julie Rutledge, volunteer coordinator for the Family Readiness Group in Latham organized the event. Photo by Spc. Amanda MacWhinnie.



MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan - Soldiers from the Afghan National Army's 209th Corps from nearby Camp Shaheen with support from U.S. military personnel deliver boxes of school supplies to students at Mazar-e-Shahid School in Northern Afghanistan. The supplies were donated by Craig Elementary School in Niskayuna and the Joseph E. Zaloga American Legion Post #1520 in Albany. Col. Edward Daly, commander of U.S. Forces in the northern Afghanistan region known as Army Regional Security Integration Command-North (ARSIC-N) which comes under command and control of the 27th Brigade Combat Team, is a native of the Schenectady area. His sister, Rosemary Spataro, is a 2nd grade teacher at Craig Elementary School.

"We don't have a lot," Daly said to school Principal, Khodad Khezra, "but we're giving you all that we have." These students were the first to receive the supplies, which included small backpacks donated paper, crayons, pens, pencils and other simple school supply items. Courtesy photo.



## Guards women in the spotlight



COHOES - Cohoes High School student Kourtney Hebert tries on Individual Body Armor belonging to Staff Sgt. Karin Coons, 42nd Infantry Division June 4 at the Cohoes Visitor Center.

## Troops Staying on to Honor and Defend

CAMP SMITH – The 4th Personnel Services Detachment (PSD) from Brooklyn participated in a Consolidated Training Exercise with the 56th Personnel Services Battalion June 5-8. While at Camp Smith, the 4th PSD was extremely proud to reenlist three outstanding Citizen Soldiers. From left are Sgt. Sandra Greene, Spc. Nicole Daly and Pfc. Olimel Garcia.

"I want to thank you for deciding to stay in the service of our great state of New York and our great Nation," said Capt. Mark Frank, the 4th PSD Commander. "Outstanding Soldiers like these stand shoulder to shoulder in the 4th PSD, always defending this great Nation and our way of life." Courtesy photo.

The Cohoes High School toured the new exhibit at the Visitors Center that highlights the accomplishments of Capital Region women who served in the military and are currently serving in the New York Army and Air National Guard. The exhibit was sponsored by The Spindle City Historic Society of Cohoes and Cohoes Remembers Vets with the assistance of the New York National Guard and the Foundation of New York State Nurses.

The exhibit illustrated the opportunities afforded to women in the military and reveals the contributions made through their military service as camp followers, in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, National Guard and Women's Air Force Service Pilots.

Photo by Spc. Amanda MacWhinne.

## Memorial Day Observance at Seventh Regiment Honors World War 1 Soldiers



NEW YORK - A wreath and remembrance for those who made the ultimate sacrifice was presented by New York Army National Guard Soldiers from the 53rd Army Liaison Team (ALT) and approximately 75 civilians participating in a Memorial Day parade and wreath-laying event in Manhattan on May 26. The parade started at the Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Avenue, Manhattan and ended at the Seventh Regiment Monument on 5th Avenue. In attendance were Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, the Veteran Corps of Artillery, veterans from area American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars organizations and the Veteran Corps of Artillery band. Pictured from the left are Col. Glenn Marchi, Commander of the 53rd ALT, retired Brig. Gen. Thomas Principe and American Legion Post 107 commander, retired Lt. Col. Henry Lamour. The Memorial Day observance concluded with a luncheon in the legendary Seventh Regiment Armory's "Tiffany" room.

Photo Courtesy of the 53rd Army Liaison Team.

# 'Rainbow' Liberation Expressed in German Jeweler's Token of Gratitude

Story by Spc. Jimmy A. Bedgood, 42nd Infantry Division

FREDERICKSBURG, Va.— German Jeweler and Goldsmith, Ludwig Stoeckl made a one-of-a-kind jewel he calls the Purple Heart Jewel for the 42nd Division "Rainbow" Veterans Memorial Foundation. Stoeckl says it is a token of 'friendship and thankfulness' for the 42nd's aid in liberating one of many Nazi concentration camps during World War II.

Dachau, Stoeckl's hometown, was the first of more than 500 Nazi concentration camps. Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated on April 29, 1945 by Soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division, known as the Rainbow Division.

Stoeckl presented the Purple Heart Jewel to the foundation during a ceremony at Hurkamp Park in Fredericksburg, Va. on June 15th.

"We of the 42nd Rainbow Division Veterans Memorial Foundation are sincerely honored," said James Clemmons, Rainbow Foundation's memorial officer. "But of equal importance is Stoeckl's expression of values in choosing a time-honored American medal, the Purple Heart, by which to communicate his expression of thanks."

Clemmons chose Fredericksburg—the childhood town of Washington—as the site of the ceremony, keeping with the historical theme that inspired Stoeckl.

Stoeckl knew it had to be inspired by something very special so he researched the history and meaning of various medals.

"I tried to put thought and value into the design. I felt the Purple Heart medal's design shouldn't be copied, but that my design should mean more," he said.

The Purple Heart Jewel is made of 18-karat gold with 29 diamonds around a profile of



Stoeckl at work at his jeweler's bench in his shop in Dachau, Germany. Courtesy photo.



New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Karin Coons of the 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division presents a framed illustration mapping the division's path through Europe during World War II to Ludwig Stoeckl for creating and donating a bejeweled Purple Heart medal to the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Richmond, Va. The medal (below) was created to honor the Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry who liberated the Concentration Camp Dachau in April, 1945. Courtesy photo

George Washington's head; The 29 diamonds represent the day the members of the 42nd aided in Dachau's liberation from Hitler and Nazism.

During his speech he referred to the Purple Heart medal as: "...a very special medal to honor soldiers who gave their health, or even made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight for freedom, liberty and justice."

Over 60 years have passed since the Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated. The 42nd has gone on to fight many more battles. However Stoeckl says it's never too late to celebrate Dachau's freedom, liberty and justice. Stoeckl said he believes these precious values are threatened in today's world:

He acknowledged the daughter-in-law of decorated German soldier Hans Oster during his speech.

Stoeckl and Oster's daughter-in-law, Anna, both live in Dachau. Anna was a long-time customer of Stoeckl's shop in Dachau. They later found out Anna's Father-in-law and Ludwig's Father were both persecuted by Nazis. Through

this common history they became friends.

Hans Oster was hung at the Flossenburg Concentration Camp just 20 days before the Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated by the 42nd. Anna was scheduled to be killed by Nazis, but escaped the same fate as her father-in-law.

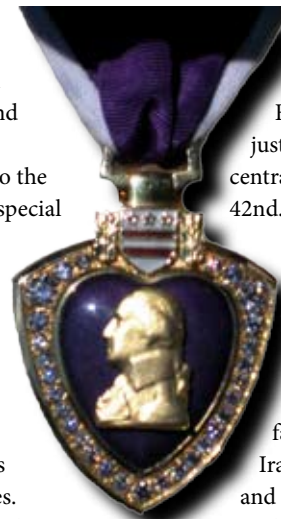
The Purple Heart Jewel is just the start of Stoeckl's gift to the 42nd.

Ludwig initiated a fundraiser for family members of 42nd troops in Iraq. "The fund-raiser for 42nd troops and families is very important. It was my explicit wish that a monetary benefit will result from my gift."

The Foundation initiated a public donation program to support the 42nd Family Readiness Group Foundation with its own donation of \$1,000 to meet the goal of raising \$20,000.

The Purple Heart Jewel is on display at the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Richmond, Va.

A ceremony of the Foundation's dedication of the Purple Heart Jewel to the Virginia Holocaust Museum is slated for September. **gt**



# Syracuse Airmen take part in Baghdad Boilermaker

by Tech. Sgt. Amanda Callahan, 447th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

SATHER AIR BASE, Iraq --The first Baghdad Boilermaker this summer started with two Airmen from New York who just wanted to run the country's largest 15-kilometer race. Master Sgts. James Carrabba and Jeffrey Conant, both deployed from the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse, N.Y., have run the original Boilermaker in Utica, N.Y., a combined eight times and wanted to relive the occasion here, as well as share it with others deployed to the camps surrounding Baghdad International Airport.

"I love the race and was bummed out that I was going to miss it," said Sergeant Conant, a Mohawk, N.Y., native. "I was so excited to see so many runners at our race."

With temperatures hovering around 90 degrees at the 5 a.m. start time, more than 240 deployed servicemembers from the Victory Base complex gathered to begin the more than 9-mile race.

The route took runners from paved roads on Sather Air Base through gravel and sand, adding new challenges for those who have run the traditional Boilermaker.

"The biggest difference of course was

running in a desert environment," said Sergeant Carrabba, a native of Laurens, N.Y. "A lot of our Baghdad Boilermaker was on gravel road. It was an awesome run here."

Conant dealt with different challenges.

"It is hot in Utica, but here, right after I would take a drink of water, I needed water again," he said.

The two master sergeants worked together to plan the event in less than two weeks. They recruited more than 50 volunteers from the 447th Air Expeditionary Group.

"There was a lot of stress and nervousness, but we pulled it off," Conant said. "We couldn't have done it without the super performance of all of the volunteers."



Master Sgt. Jeffrey Conant, one of the organizers of the Baghdad Boilermaker, smiles after finishing the 15-kilometer race. Conant, from the New York Air National Guard's 174th Fighter Wing, is serving with the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen.

"All the runners I talked to -- and that was a lot of them -- said the same thing: it was a great race, a great experience, and 'thank you' for putting on the race," Sergeant Conant said. "I am thrilled. Without a doubt, this is the high point of my deployment." **gt**



More than 240 deployed servicemembers from around the Victory Base complex participate in the Baghdad Boilermaker 15-kilometer race July 13 at Sather Air Base, Iraq. The race was organized by Master Sgts. James Carrabba and Jeffrey Conant who have both participated in the Utica, N.Y., Boilermaker for years. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen.



Mr. Herman Giersch, former Commander of the 42nd Infantry Division Band during WWII conducts the New York Army National Guard's 42nd "Rainbow" Infantry Division Band during a concert on July 12, 2008 at the Waterford Senior Living Center in Columbia, SC. The two groups of musicians came together during the Guard Band's annual training this summer. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Becky Rapp.

## Reuniting Past and Present in Music

Story by Sgt. Jennifer Lucas, 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division Band

FORT JACKSON, S.C.-- For 42nd Infantry Division Band members, their annual training at Fort Jackson was the opportunity of a lifetime; a chance to meet and perform with seven of the 11 surviving members of the Rainbow Division's World War 2 band.

"Our members were regaled with stories of these men's lifelong accomplishments which included playing with such legends as Bob Hope and Glenn Miller, performing with other Army bands and in a variety of orchestras," said Chief Warrant Officer Mark Kimes, the band's commander.

The band performed their annual training playing for the Division Band's reunion in addition to three Change of Command ceremonies and two basic training graduations. They filled in for the 282nd Army Band; Fort Jackson's Active Army band.

Every five years the Army National Guard rotates selected bands to fill in for active duty bands conducting their annual block leave.

The highlight of the two-week concert tour came when the World War 2 veterans-- Her-

man Giersch, Gino Marco, Paul Pickens, Donald Youngdahl, Allen Myers, Ellis Day, and Jack Scorpino-- joined the 42nd "Rainbow" Infantry Division Band for a concert performance on July 12, at the Waterford Senior Living Center in Columbia, S.C.

"With only a few succinct rehearsals before the big event, the retirees picked right up on the musical selections without missing a beat, adding an immeasurable quality to the band that resonated throughout," Kimes said.

"To feel the fire alive in these veterans and to hear it come together humbled each and every one of the band members," he added.

The concert included an arrangement of 'The Rainbow Division March' and 'Stars and Stripes Forever' guest conducted by the 85 year-old World War 2 band commander, Herman Giersch.

As the roar of the applause died down, the voice of Pickens rang through as he summed up the general high morale of the entire room saying, "If the Army would take an 85 year old, I'd re-enlist today!" **gt**

### Soldier Makes TV "History"



ROCHESTER – More than fifteen minutes of fame came to Sgt. Stephen Tschiderer, 249th Air Ambulance Company, as he is interviewed by Frank Grimes, a contract video producer for The History Channel June 27.

Tschiderer, who served as a medic with E Troop, 101st Cavalry under the 256th Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana Army National Guard, was deployed in 2004-2005 to Iraq.

While deployed, he was shot by a sniper from a van. The sniper videotaped the attack and was surprised by Tschiderer when his protective body armor stopped the bullet resulting in Tschiderer and other members of Troop A pursuing and capturing the sniper and his accomplices.

The interview will be part of The History Channel's "Shock Wave" series and is expected to air in the Fall. Photo by Sgt. Ally Andolina.

