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

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PG 4 > **Joint Response**

CST & CERFP trained to aid civil authorities

PG 8 > **Orion Preps for Afghan Deployment**

PG 12 > **Bright Star 2007**
Rainbow Soldiers train in Egypt

PG 26 > **Navy Goes High-Tech**
MEBS Newest Patrol Boat

FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Welcome to the First Issue of Guard Times Magazine

This new magazine provides an excellent forum for me to communicate with you, the members of New York's Military Forces.

Nothing can replace face-to-face dialogue and feedback, but as the commander of 20,000 members of the Army and Air National Guard, the New York Guard and New York Naval Militia, this is my way of reaching out to you and sharing some personal philosophy and news about our organizations.

We changed from a newspaper to a magazine because I think it is a more professional way to communicate with you. I think communications, specifically command information is a vital component in achieving maximum efficiency in our military organizations.

You'll also note that every element of New York's military forces has a section in our magazine. This reinforces the fact that we are one team. Each force plays a different role, but we all work together.

We have also made the Division of Military and Naval Affairs Website more timely and relevant.

Go to www.dmna.state.ny.us to find changing news and photographs about our state military forces, along with information you and your families can use.

This year will be a very busy and productive year. Among our challenges this year are:

- Continuing to retain our returning veterans and attracting new Americans into the ranks of all our Military Forces;
- Supporting 2,500 members and families of the Army and Air National Guard units deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan this year. The Army National Guard's 27th Brigade Combat Team will assume their role in Afghanistan, while the 3-142nd Aviation and a large expeditionary element of the Air Guard's 174th Fighter Wing go to Iraq;
- Implementing a new and more effective reintegration program that improves communications between returning Soldiers and their families.

We will begin working the full program for returning units this summer. When the units deploying this year return in 2009 the new program will go into full swing.

- Finally, redesigning Joint Task Force Empire Shield, our State Active Duty homeland security force, to become more useful and effective in the New York City metropolitan area, while continuing to respond to domestic emergencies with traditional Guard forces.

I hope you enjoy the new Guard Times magazine.



Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto

Guard Times Enters New Era

After a few months of preparation we welcome you to the premiere issue of the Guard Times news magazine. The Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs staff has redesigned the command information publication to better feature our New York State Military Forces. Our goal is to better tell the stories of all our Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and New York Guard volunteers.

The Guard Times will be published quarterly, providing you with a highlight of operations, training and missions across the State of New York and around the world. Your four issues each year will make a yearbook of events from the entire New York National Guard.

After announcing our transition last fall and the retirement of the Guard Times military forces newspaper, we asked for submissions to rename our new publication. Your input was both fun and creative, with many names keeping to our National Guard theme or the nicknames so common to our Empire State. In the end, we chose to keep the Guard Times name because it is so well known throughout our force and maintains our ties to the past. Besides, we all really like the whole **gt** logo for brand identity!

Here, in our premiere issue, we have quite a bit of ground to cover. In the time it took to redesign our magazine, our state has mobilized its largest single contingent of Army National Guard forces for combat when we bid farewell and Godspeed to the 27th Brigade Combat Team as they take on the mission to train Afghan army and police forces this year as Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix. Similarly, Air Guard personnel from across the state all deployed this fall and winter as part of the Air Expeditionary Forces overseas or supporting Operational Readiness Exercises. And working jointly, elements of the New York Guard, Army National Guard and Air National Guard continue to train to respond to the worst possible incidents in support of civil authorities. Our coverage of all our commands is found throughout this issue.

We rely heavily on submissions from our commands, their Public Affairs officers and from our servicemen and women. So to ensure that your unit and its accomplishments are featured in the Guard Times, let us know what you're doing and what you have done.

Keep watching the web for regular Guard Times postings at www.dmna.state.ny.us and grab the next issue of the Guard Times when it comes out later this spring.

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guardtimes

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Submissions

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

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Complimentary or Back Issues of the *Guard Times* are available. Contact us at the address above or visit us on the web for current news, photos or to download prior issues at www.dmna.state.ny.us.



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This Issue's Highlights:

The Joint Force

- 6 Disaster exercise brings civil and military agencies together

Army National Guard

- 8 27th BCT on deck for Afghan mission
- 10 Governor joins statewide farewell to 27th BCT
- 12 There's a Rainbow in Bright Star
- 14 NASCAR puts Guardsmen on ice
- 16 Guard chopper makes NYC premiere
- 18 Guardmen garnished with USO award

Air National Guard

- 22 107th Airmen go to Baghdad
- 23 Air Guard recruits get a leg up
- 24 107th bid farewell to legacy aircraft

New York Guard

- 26 N.Y. Guard medics oversee training
- 27 Serving with CERFP

New York Naval Militia

- 28 New patrol boat makes a splash
- 26 Marine takes helm of Naval Militia

Guard News Briefs and Photos

- 30 Aviation Guardsmen mourned
- 31 Army Aviation chief hosts Italian media
- 33 Air Guard in position to assist FEMA



◀ McMurDO STATION, Antarctica - New York Air National Guard aircrew members of the 109th Airlift Wing use a jet-assisted takeoff to depart Shackleton Glacier, Transantarctic Mountains, 500 miles south of McMurdo Station, Nov 26., 2007 The aircrew conducted an open field landing to deliver a small National Science Foundation geology field camp team to the area. The aircrews are flying the Antarctica missions in support of Operation Deep Freeze. Photo courtesy of Mr. Charles Kaminski Raytheon Polar Services Company

On the cover: Soldiers of the 27th Brigade Combat Team practice tactics at Fort Drum during their final pre-mobilization training event in December, 2007. Photo by Capt. Robert Romano

Back cover: Guardsmen of the 105th Airlift Wing at the Stewart Air National Guard Base board a C-5A Galaxy on Oct. 15 for transport to Volk Field Air National Guard Base in Wis. to participate in an operational readiness exercise with the 128th Air Refueling Wing from the Wisconsin Air National Guard and the 157th Air Refueling Wing from the New Hampshire Air National Guard. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran.

Changes Coming to Soldier Systems

Payroll, Personnel management to be combined online

Guard Times Staff

LATHAM -- Soldiers throughout the New York Army National Guard will see changes to the way the Army payroll and personnel system support them when they login to view their records later this year. Army National Guard Soldiers will be getting a DIMHRS (pronounced "dime-ers") dropped on them in October.

That's when the Army plans to begin using the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System—thus DIMHRS—to track Soldiers pay, records, and personnel actions.

The military will go from having 83 separate computer systems to track training, pay, education, medical status, personnel actions, and family information to one system that Soldiers will be able to access and update on their own. This means cutting out the trip to the admin NCO in order to update basic information like address changes and pay allotment changes adjustments.

Eventually the system will be utilized by both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, but the Army Guard will implement the change first.

The new system is based on commercial computer applications already used in civilian business, said Chief Warrant Officer Scott Turner, New York Army National Guard personnel specialist charged with overseeing the transition in New York.

Soldiers will be able to access online training to explain how the self-service functions of the DIMHRS system work and how they can change addresses, update their dependent information and change allowances and banks online. Battalion and company personnel specialists will receive training on how to handle their transactions in the new system.

The changeover will not be without some friction, Turner warned. There is a chance that inputting of pay and orders during the month of October will have to be put on hold while the new systems are put in place. This could mean delays in monthly drill checks, or a holdup on new orders, he explained.

In order to make the transfer to DIMHRS, the MyPay on-line system will be turned off at some point, Turner said. That could come as early as the spring. While Soldiers should still be able to access LES information on-line, they would not be able to change banks or make allotment to tax information changes at the Web site.

The personnel office is urging Soldiers to print out and save their LES pages regularly and to make allotment or bank changes as soon as possible.

Accessing the DIMHRS system will require logging in with a Common Access Card (CAC) which means most Soldiers will be unable to access the system from home without installing a card reader for their home computer. The National Guard is working to acquire computers to be placed in each Armory for Soldiers to use in accessing DIMHRS.

DIMHRS will also mean another change for Soldiers and Airmen, the return of the separate military serial number. Since 1969 the Army



and Air Force have used Social Security Numbers as the identification number for members of the military, replacing the old serial number system of World War II and Korean War days.

Because DIMHRS is based on civilian systems, service members will continue to use their SSN's for pay purposes, but will use another identification number to handle other functions. This is designed to preserve the confidentiality of the SSN.

For more information on this year's implementation of the new system, go to the DIMHRS Website at www.dimhrs.mil. **gt**



The National Guard turned 371 years old on Dec. 13, 2007. Check out the New York National Guard 371st Birthday video at www.dmna.state.ny.us/video

Governor Proposes Free Tuition for New York's Veterans

ALBANY -- New York Governor Eliot Spitzer praised the National Guard and proposed new benefits to veterans during his annual State of the State speech in Albany on Jan. 9 in the Assembly Chamber here at the State Capital.

"There is one group of guests I would especially like to recognize," said Spitzer, "New York's combat veterans. Here with us today are Sgt. Esther Rodriguez and Sgt. Jeffery Lord, who served with the Army National Guard in Iraq, and Sgt. Miguel Torres and Master Sgt. Donald Morrell, who served with our Air National Guard in Kuwait and Afghanistan, respectively.

"Next week that tradition of service continues as roughly 2,000 of New York's Citizen Soldiers will be shipping out to Afghanistan. On behalf of the

State, I will be there to wish them well, share our pride, and offer our prayers for their safe return, Spitzer said of the 27th Brigade Combat Team's mobilization for Operation Enduring Freedom.

"And when they do return, we owe them our gratitude, but also something more -- we owe them the chance to enjoy the freedoms and opportunities at home they have so honorably fought for overseas. In the name of all of those who have served on our behalf, I will send you a bill guaranteeing New York's returning combat veterans a benefit that covers the full cost of SUNY or CUNY tuition, and that can be used at any college or university in New York State."

The Governor's proposal is expected to be presented to the legislature later this year. **gt**



New York Governor Eliot Spitzer meets with leaders from the New York Army and Air National Guard during his visit to Syracuse to announce the mobilization of the 27th Brigade Combat Team for service in Afghanistan on July 31, 2007. Photo by Judy Sanders.

Postal Service Offers First-Time Military Discount

WASHINGTON -- Planning to send a care package to a military service member serving abroad? Send it after March 3 to take advantage of a new flat-rate box from the Postal Service that is 50 percent larger and delivered for \$10.95 to an APO/FPO address -- \$2 less than for domestic destinations.

"This is the first time the Postal Service has offered a special price for our armed forces serving overseas," said Postmaster Gen. John Potter. "We're proud that family and friends will be able to use this new larger-sized box to send much appreciated packages from home to our dedicated troops overseas."

The new priority mail large flat-rate box (12" x 12" x 5 1/2" or 800 cubic inches) will be available in post offices nationwide beginning March 3, but customers can begin ordering them Feb. 20 at usps.com/supplies or by calling 800-610-8734. Some of the new boxes are co-branded with the logo of "America Supports You," which is a Department of Defense program that connects citizens offering support to the military and their families.

"It's terrific that the Postal Service continues to think of ways to help Americans support our troops and their families. Postage is always

a concern when shipping care packages, and this new flat-rate box means our home front groups and supportive citizens can do more with their resources," said Allison Barber, the deputy assistant secretary of Defense. "We're especially pleased that some of the boxes will bear the America Supports You logo reminding our service members that they have our nation's support."

The \$2 discount applies when the large flat-rate boxes are shipped to an APO/FPO destina-

tion. The two existing flat-rate boxes (11 7/8" x 3 3/8" x 13 5/8") and (11" x 8 1/2" x 5 1/2"), which currently retail for \$8.95 for U.S. addresses, are not available for the military discount. All flat-rate boxes can be used for international shipping.

The America Supports You branded box will be available online, at select post offices near military bases, or by calling 800-610-8734.

For more information, please visit www.usps.com. **gt**

Reader Praises Volunteer Efforts

Dear Guard Times:

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the full time personnel that work at the Masten Avenue armory in Buffalo.

These are the full time Army individuals, who work for the New York Army National Guard.

These individuals are currently in training for a future deployment overseas. Still, they have found the time to help children less fortunate than themselves.

Each Christmas, for the last six years, these

individuals have gone shopping for cloths and toys for children. For the last two years they have generously given to children from the Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club.

Acts of generosity like this, that are done without expecting anything in return, make me glad that I am a veteran.

Thank you for you concern,
Charles V. Canosa
Sgt. Maj., Retired

THE JOINT FORCE

In Case of Emergency, Break Out the Guard

Story by Staff Sgt. Dennis Gravelle, 138th Public Affairs Detachment



CST and CERP teams train to assist and aid local authorities if needed

ALBANY – An explosion demolished the State Accounting Office trapping 300 people inside. To make matters worse, first responders detected mustard gas, a chemical weapon that causes the skin to blister, on site.

Now, specially-trained members of the New York National Guard, clad in gray chemical suits with face masks swarmed over the rubble pile, sifting through the wreckage looking for survivors. Sometimes they pulled out a horribly wounded victim, other times it was a corpse.

On this day, fortunately, the Soldiers and Airmen were participating in the Defense Support to Civil Authorities exercise held Nov. 2 and 3, 2007 at the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control's Urban Search and Rescue training site. The joint exercise tested the ability of Guard members, and volunteers from the New York Guard, to respond to a major incident when civil-authority first responders need help.

"This training environment tested our extraction capabilities and put our Soldiers to the test in looking for survivors," said Sgt. 1st Class Sandra Moody, a training NCO for the exercise.

Taking part in the training was the 2nd Civil

Support Team, a unit especially trained and equipped to detect chemical and biological attacks, and the National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological and High Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package, or CERFP, a joint element trained to provide support to civilian first responders in a major terrorist attack.

The purpose of the training was to build interagency coordination between the 2nd Civil Support Team and CERFP and the State's Urban Search and Rescue Task Force. The goal, said Lt. Col. John Andonie, Director of Military Support for the New York National Guard, is to build relationships so that if a major disaster strikes, it will not be the first time these teams work together.

The training provided an opportunity for individuals to improve and refine their skills in supporting civil authorities during an incident requiring casualty evacuation from a collapsed building.

"Obviously, no-one wants to think of a disaster in this state," Andonie said. "We have to be prepared, and the purpose of this exercise is to make sure that when we are called upon and



Major General Joseph Taluto, Adjutant General, receives an assesment by a member of the CERFP team on the condition of a survivor found in the "rubble" pile at the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control's Urban Search and Rescue training site in Albany. Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara.



Two members of the New York National Guards' 2nd Civil Support Team simulate chemical exposure detection during a two-day exercise. A joint Domestic Response to Civil Authorities exercise that included the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) team to provide an opportunity for Soldiers and Airmen to improve and refine their Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) reaction skills. Photo by Staff Sgt. Dennis Gravelle.

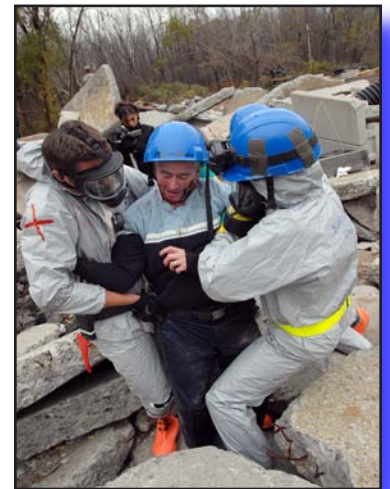


Photo Captions

Top right: Three CERFP team members announce their arrival and direct simulated disaster victims to first-aid and safety as they prepare search and rescue operations during a two-day joint Army-Air Force exercise. Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gazara.

Right: A 2nd CST team leader makes last minute inspections to a member preparing to analyze contaminated areas around the "rubble" pile. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott.

Far right: CERFP team members rescue a survivor after searching the simulated "rubble" pile at the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control's Urban Search and Rescue training site in Albany. Photo by Master Sgt. Willie Gizara.



needed, that we are ready to do our jobs.”

The 2nd CST originated in 2001 and is made up of 22 full-time National Guard members who have been specially trained and equipped to provide a technical reach-back capability to other experts.

“The purpose of the CST is to support civil authorities by assisting them with identifying chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear high yield explosive agents or substances,” said Maj. Matthew Cooper, commander of the 2nd CST. “We assess the situation, provide recommendations for decontamination, medical treatment, and also provide them assistance with getting follow on forces through the National Guard, like the CERFP team to provide a response capability for the Governor including: incident search site capability of damaged buildings, rescuing trapped casualties, providing decontamination, and performing medical triage

and initial treatment to stabilize patients for transport to medical facilities.”

The CERFP is comprised of four elements staffed by personnel from already established New York National Guard units. The elements are Command and Control, Medical, Decontamination, and Search and Extraction.

The 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry provided the command and decontamination elements for the team, while the 152nd Engineer Company provided the search and extraction team. Medical personnel came from the Air National Guard.

Day one of the exercise required the 2nd CST Perimeter Monitoring Team (PMT) to clear what they call a *Footprint*.

According to Capt. Peter Mehling, 2nd CST survey team leader, a *Footprint* is a spot, free from contaminants which will be occupied later on by command and support structures.

On day two, search and extraction teams searched the collapsed building and began pulling survivors out of the rubble. Each simulated casualty was escorted to a decontamination tent where Soldiers washed them down to remove any potential chemical hazards. A trained medical professional checked each person to determine the extent of their injuries.

“This whole Task Force exists in case of an unfortunate WMD incident, which could be caused by a terrorist act or by a chemical accident in an industrial or urban area,” said Lt. Col. Dennis Deeley, commander, 2nd Bn, 108th Inf. and the CERFP. “These teams are designed to get casualties out of a hot zone, get them decontaminated and into medical care.” **gt**



27th Brigade Troops Surge Toward Afghan Mission

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, HQ, 27th Brigade Combat Team

FORT DRUM - Nearly 1,300 Soldiers of the 27th Brigade Combat Team completed two three-week combat training periods during the months of October and December 2007, preparing for their deployment to Afghanistan.

The 27th will deploy to Afghanistan and take command of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII later this year to train the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan comprises nearly 7,000 military and civilian personnel from active duty, Guard and reserve forces, as well as troops from NATO nations including Great Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy, Spain, France.

Two hundred advanced party personnel from the 27th trained at the Fort Bragg, N.C. mobilization station and deployed ahead of the rest of the brigade. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry and 1st Bn. 69th Inf. serve as a security force company for the advance personnel.

"I believe this is the absolute best brigade in the Army," said Col. Brian Balfe, 27th commander, attending a first-ever brigade prayer breakfast.

"I realize how far we have come in a very short time. For the last six months we have been preparing ourselves physically and mentally – developing our Soldier craft so we will be able to train, mentor and sometimes lead the Afghan National Army and Police," Balfe said.

"I am taking this time to reflect on family, friends and I consider every member of the brigade a member of my family. I wouldn't be here if it were not for all of you," Balfe added.

During the October training period Soldiers focused on individual skills. Every duty day lasted more than 16 hours. To meet pre-mobilization goals, emphasis was placed on completing key individual objectives ranging from warrior task briefings to individual and crew-served weapons qualifications. Time was the resource in shortest supply.

Non-deploying 27th personnel comprised a training unit called Task Force Orion and managed the training at Fort Drum, in conjunction with the 42nd Inf. Division's Training and Evaluation Battalion.

Hundreds of troops underwent special training, which included electronic simulation systems such as the Call for Fire Trainer, GUARDFIST, the Humvee Egress Assistance



Soldiers of Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry practice house-to-house combat operations at the Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) site at Fort Drum on Dec. 7, 2007. Photo by Cpt. Robert F. Romano.

Trainer (HEAT), the Electronic Skills Trainer 2000 and the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer (VCCT).

More than 150 Soldiers completed the four-day Combat Life Saver course and 300 completed three days of training on the Blue Force Tracker system.

Units conducted day and night live fire for both the M4A1 Rifle and M9 Pistol. Members of the 101st Cavalry and the 427th Brigade Support Battalion trained in convoy and tactical movements.

Three days before the end of the tour, the brigade executed a 4-1/2 mile formation march in full battle armor and weapon.

Following home-station mobilization in January, the 27th will undergo pre-deployment



Soldiers of Troop B, 2nd Squadron 101st Cavalry wait in a four-man stack for the right moment to clear a room during urban combat training at Fort Drum. Photo by Cpt. Robert F. Romano.

Right: Second Lieutenant Andrew Joyce from the 27th Brigade crawls through a culvert during obstacle training at Fort Drum, Oct. 10, 2007. Photo by Maj. Kathy Oliver.



training at Fort Bragg, N.C. (see pages 10-11 for send-off ceremony coverage.)

“We are preparing for the combat zone in deliberate steps,” said Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. David Piwowarski.

“This is a good team with an important mission but with a distance to go still ahead,” said Piwowarski. “We must and will keep our focus and we will build in our intensity with each step forward.

We haven’t reached our peak yet, but we will.” **gt**



Bidding a Statewide Farewell to the 27th

New York Army National Guard Combat Brigade is State's Largest Single Mobilization of Troops in GWOT

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

HANCOCK FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Syracuse -- More than 1,400 New York Army National Guard Soldiers bound for Afghanistan bid farewell to friends and family Jan. 16 at deployment ceremonies held across the state.

In Syracuse, at a farewell ceremony at the headquarters of the 27th Brigade Combat Team, Gov. Eliot Spitzer praised the Citizen Soldiers and invoked the words of former President and New York Governor Theodore Roosevelt.

Roosevelt often said that the credit belonged to "the man who was actually in the arena," Spitzer said.

"These men and women have chosen to enter the most difficult and dangerous arena of all," the governor said. "They have chosen to put their lives and personal safety on the line so their fellow citizens can be protected."

While the Soldiers are deployed the state will watch out for their families, the governor promised.

Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General, urged Soldiers to do their jobs and watch out for each other.

"Focus on your mission and never compromise your standards and watch out for each other every day," Taluto said.

Nine ceremonies were held across the state, ranging from 35 Soldiers saying goodbye at the Connecticut Street armory to 130 Soldiers of the 1st Battalion 69th Infantry bidding farewell at Suffolk County Community College Sports Center.

Other farewells occurred in Rochester, New York City, Ithaca and at Camp Smith in the Hudson Valley.

Colonel Brian Balfe, 27th BCT commander, evoked the history of the brigade and urged his Soldiers to follow in the footsteps of the 27th Division of World War I and II. He also praised the brigade Soldiers for never faltering during the ten-month train-up that brought them to the deployment.

"Everything we have done in the 27th and

will do here forward will be done as a team," Balfe said.

Staff Sergeant Mathew Storm, a member of the brigade logistics section, who received a coin from Gov. Spitzer, said it was exciting to meet the governor face-to-face and good of him to come see the brigade's Soldiers off.

"It shows he cares about the National Guard," Storm said.

A total of 1,700 New York Army National Guard troops are being deployed for Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, making this mission and this deployment the largest in New York since the beginning of the Global War on Terror. **gt**



Staff Sergeant Arlyn C. Cunningham, 27th BCT Embedded Training Team, gives his daughter one last good-bye before heading out the door for the Fort Bragg mobilization station. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse.



Governor Eliot Spitzer and 27th Brigade Combat Team Commander Col. Brian Balfe cut cake at a ceremony marking the mobilization and deployment of the 27th BCT held Jan. 16 in the Hancock Field hangar. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott.

Bayshore



Syracuse



Buffalo



Tears and Cheers Across the Empire State

Photos by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Senior Master Sgt. Raymond L. Lloyd, Sgt. Christopher Connelly, Sgt. Kevin Abbott, and Spc. Jennifer Ocque.

From Suffolk County Community College Sports Center on Long Island to Ralph Wilson Stadium in Buffalo, New Yorkers gathered Jan. 16 to cheer the men and women of the 27th Brigade Combat Team, as they prepared to leave for mobilization stations.

On Long Island the United Services Organizations entertained members of 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, who are deploying as part of 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry.

In New York City members of the famed "Fighting 69th" said goodbye at a Hunter College ceremony, while the Soldiers of the 106th Regional Training Institute mustered at Camp Smith for a farewell.

In Ithaca, 2nd Bn., 108th Inf. Soldiers gathered for a small ceremony.

The largest gathering was at Hancock Field in Syracuse, where 240 members of the 27th BCT HQ heard N.Y. Governor Eliot Spitzer speak.

In Rochester, two companies of the 427th Brigade Support Battalion, were hailed in individual ceremonies.

In Buffalo, Company C, 427th BSB conducted a sendoff at the Connecticut Street armory, while later in the day, troopers of 2nd Squadron 101st Cavalry marched into Ralph Wilson Stadium.

All the events had one thing in common: tears came as Soldiers and their families realized they were about to say goodbye for a year. **gt**

Partners in Planning

42nd Infantry Division trains alongside Egyptian Army

Story by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

CAIRO, Egypt—Nearly 200 members of the Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division headquarters, based in Troy, executed a large-scale command post exercise jointly with Egyptian army staff officers in Cairo as part of Bright Star 2007.

The division, comprised of National Guard Citizen Soldiers from across New York State, teamed with members of the Egyptian army's 9th Armor Division command and staff to

replicate a multi-national senior headquarters during the Bright Star battle simulation exercise for a Joint Multinational Force.

The Bright Star deployment of the division headquarters staff and Special Troops Battalion Soldiers supported the biennial multi-national exercise that included more than a dozen allied, coalition or partner nations in Egypt.

"For more than 23 years, since 1983, the success of Bright Star demonstrates to enemies

around the world, as well as allies, that we can deploy a division headquarters, deploy an army headquarters, conduct an airborne operation from halfway around the world, and insert an infantry company on the ground," said Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, commander of the Third Army and U.S. Army Central (USARCENT), the 42nd Division's higher headquarters for the training exercise, "And you can interface and interact with conventional forces almost routinely."

This year's exercise included a large-scale battle simulation exercise, meant to challenge senior leaders and staff in the command and control of combat forces operating jointly.

"All of us know that a command post exercise exerts pressure on the generals, colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors because it is a brain exercise," Whitcomb said to the combined American and Egyptian staff. "So challenge each other, learn from each other."

The computer-generated battlefield is based on fictitious nations in conflict and a coalition of nations responding to restore security and an internationally recognized border. The 42nd Inf. Div. commander and staff controlled a fictitious force of more than 110,000 troops for the command post exercise.

"There is no better expert on warfare in this maneuver box that we are conducting operations in than the Egyptians. This is their territory, they know how to fight this fight and we ought to learn from them," Whitcomb said.

Nearly three dozen Egyptian officers from the Egyptian 9th Armored Div. partnered with the 42nd Div. staff for the exercise. Joint training began almost immediately after the division's deployment as members of the Egyptian staff learned about the Army's military decision-making process and techniques for the command and control of combat forces.

"We question each other and learn from each other," Whitcomb said, "and that is the real value of Bright Star."

The training in Egypt completed nearly a year of planning, training and coordination for the leaders and staff of the 42nd Division. Soldiers trained with Third Army leaders and Egyptian training officers throughout 2007, including numerous site and staff visits, hosting the Egyptian and USARCENT leaders in New York during March, 2007.

"We came with a plan," said 42nd Div. Chief of Staff Col. Carl Pfeiffer. "We demonstrated to the Egyptians that we were willing to work,



Captain Dale Thurber, assistant operations officer and battle captain for the 42nd Infantry Division, explains tactical maneuvers to his counterparts of the Egyptian Army's 9th Armor Division battle staff as the two groups prepare for Operation Bright Star 2007, a battle simulation exercise staged at the Cairo West Air Base Nov. 9, 2007. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter K. Towse.

partner and listen to them as we worked through the (training) scenario.”

“Our report card here is when our Egyptian partners write a letter to Lt. Gen. Whitcomb,” Pfeiffer continued, “and tell him that they enjoyed working with the 42nd Infantry Division.”

Many members of the 42nd Division who deployed to Cairo are veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom, having served with the headquarters in Tikrit, Iraq in 2005. Much of the training



Lieutenant General R. Steven Whitcomb, commander of the Third Army and U.S. Army Central meets with Soldiers and staff of the 42nd Infantry Division and their Egyptian counterparts from the Egyptian 9th Armored Division as part of Bright Star 2007. Photo by Lt. Col Richard Goldenberg.

sessions and mission planning involved applying lessons learned from that deployment to the control of thousands of troops in the simulated combat environment.

Part of the cooperative training included discussion and comparison of the two unit's capabilities and techniques for battle command. The two division commanders, Maj. Gen. El Araby El Suray from the Egyptian 9th Armored Div. and Brig. Gen. Paul Genereux from the 42nd Inf. Div. both led discussions among the joint staff.

“This exercise is a good way to bring our Soldiers together,” El Araby said. “When we train like this, we'll know everything about each as well as we can.”

“I cannot be more pleased in the cooperative effort I'm seeing between our two staffs,” Genereux said. “My goals for this mission were to safely deploy our command post and train alongside the Egyptian 9th Armored, achieving real unity in our two organizations for the exercise. Ninety percent of what I wanted to achieve in Bright Star, we have already done.”

“They (the Egyptians) are taking our products to get synchronized with us,” Pfeiffer said. “That is unusual, but of all the units I've worked with in this part of the world, this unit (the Egyptian 9th Armored Division) is the best, by far.”

The division was selected to support Bright Star 2007 immediately after its redeployment from Iraq in November of 2005. While overseas, the division led a mixed task force of more than 23,000 Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard forces, including two active duty brigade combat teams.

The deployment marked the first time a National Guard division headquarters led forces in a combat theater since the Korean War. The division chief of staff credits the unit's successful operations commanding combat forces in Iraq as part of the rationale in the Army and Central Command's selection of the Rainbow Division for its role in Bright Star.

“It was great to have the 42nd Infantry back in theater again,” noted Whitcomb in his remarks to the combined U.S. and Egyptian staff members.

“We are, I believe, the National Guard division of choice,” Pfeiffer said. **gt**

“All of us know that a command post exercise exerts pressure on the generals, colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors because it is a brain exercise, so challenge each other, learn from each other.

-- Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, commander, Third Army and U.S. Army Central



Brigadier General Paul Genereux, right, the 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division commander listens as his staff brief him on the battle plan of the maneuver forces during Operation Bright Star 2007, a battle simulation exercise staged at the Cairo West Air Base Nov. 9, 2007. With Genereux is Maj. Gen. El Araby El Seruy, commander of the Egyptian army's 9th Armored Division. Photo bySgt. 1st Class Peter K. Towse.

Bobsled Challenge Teams Soldiers, NASCAR Drivers

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo

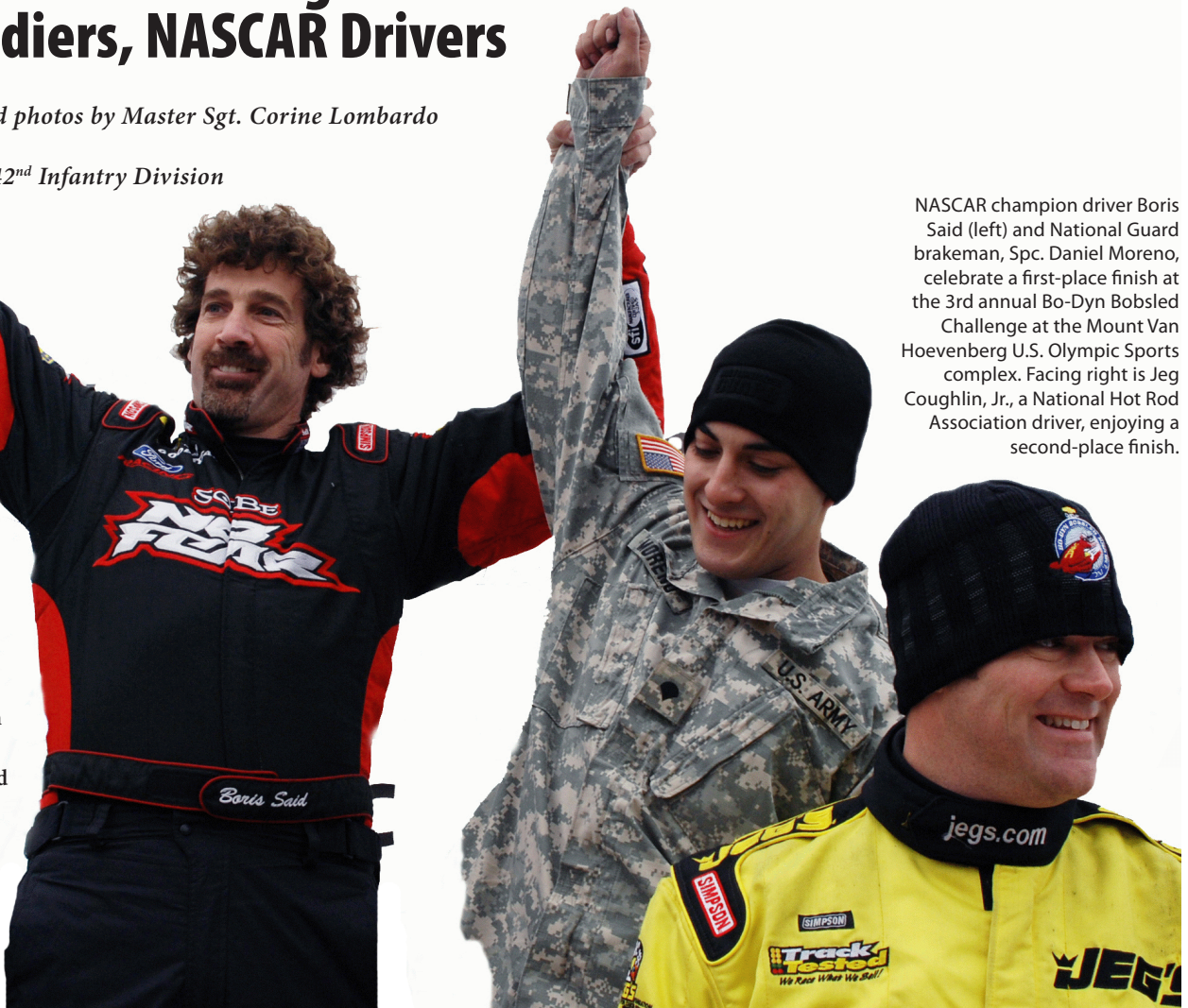
HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

LAKE PLACID—Going from zero to 60 miles an hour in less than 60 seconds down a bobsled run was an adrenaline rush Cpl. Adam Barber has not experienced since leaving the streets of Iraq in 2005. Barber, along with 46 New York Army National Guard recruits and new recruits joined veteran NASCAR and National Hot Rod Association race drivers Jan. 5, for the 3rd Annual Bo-Dyn Bobsled Challenge at the Mount Van Hoevenberg, U.S. Olympic Sports complex.

This year's challenge marked the second time Hall of Fame NASCAR driver Geoff Bodine invited National Guard Soldiers to participate in this event. A former National Guard Soldier, Bodine wanted to recognize the young men and women serving in the New York National Guard.

"They're doing a great job and its important to remind Americans that if it weren't for what they and the rest of the military are doing to protect our country, we wouldn't be able to do what we do," said Bodine, adding "I'm extremely proud of what they do; they're heroes."

Barber, a former cavalry scout and Iraq vet-



NASCAR champion driver Boris Said (left) and National Guard brakeman, Spc. Daniel Moreno, celebrate a first-place finish at the 3rd annual Bo-Dyn Bobsled Challenge at the Mount Van Hoevenberg U.S. Olympic Sports complex. Facing right is Jeg Coughlin, Jr., a National Hot Rod Association driver, enjoying a second-place finish.

eran, served with Troop E, 101st Cavalry, 42nd Infantry Division conducting raids and patrolling the northwest sector of Baghdad. Now he recruits for Company B, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry in Morrisonville. He prepares new recruits for basic training through the Recruit Sustainment Program or RSP.

"This was an awesome experience. We were able to meet all these drivers and our new recruits were able to practice hands-on the skills they have been learning," Barber said.

Because of his size and weight, Barber was selected as brakeman for reigning NHRA Pro Stock champion Jeg Coughlin Jr. The pair took 3rd place in the challenge.

"Having Adam and the rest of these brave young men and women with us is an honor," Coughlin said. "I think they had as much fun as we did and they sure showed their bravery rid-

ing along with a bunch of rookie drivers.

Geoff Bodine created the Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project Inc. after watching the U.S. team race in the 1992 Albertville Games in European-built sleds. Bodine's goal was to ensure U.S. sleds would be made in America, and his efforts have helped provide sled designs involving NASCAR technology.

Donning the helmet worn by former National Guard NASCAR driver, Todd Bodine during the 2003 Winston Cup series, Spc. Daniel Moreno from Watervliet, served as brakeman for NASCAR champion road racer Boris Said. The team won first place in both races.

"This has been an experience of a lifetime for all the Soldiers here," said Moreno who is assigned to the Army National Guard's Mobile Recruiting team. Moreno helps local recruiters during events and has seen a tremendous



Private Kelly Gower

transformation with the RSP since he was in the program two years ago.

“We learned the basic skills when I went through the program and now these Soldiers have the chance to practice what they learn by participating in events like this.” Moreno said.

In the three years this unique event has taken place, Said has won five of six races. “It’s an honor to have Moreno as my brakeman,” he said. “It takes a lot of courage to serve all over the world protecting us so we can do this. It’s probably safer to go to Iraq and fight terrorists than to get into the back of one of these bobsleds,” Said added.

This was a capstone event for training conducted in December and January for these new Soldiers in the Recruit Sustainment Program. Prior to the event, the new Soldiers executed training on team building, cold weather survival training, and first aid. Their participation in the bobsled event was hands-on application.

“The bonus was finding out that good things come to those who train hard,” said Maj. David Palmieri, recruiting operations and training officer.

Private Kelly Gower from Stillwater joined the National Guard’s 42nd Infantry Division in November.

“I chose the medical field since it is something I can use in my civilian life to help others,” Gower said.

When offered the opportunity to participate in this event as a sled handler she jumped at the chance and never imagined she would be selected to ride as a brakeman.

“This has been a great experience meeting the NASCAR drivers and I know it is something I never would have had the chance to do if it weren’t for the National Guard.” **gt**

Sleepless in New York: **A Soldier’s vigil**

Story by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell, National Guard Bureau

NEW YORK – The city may never sleep, but the Big Apple was certainly resting at 2 o’clock on an October Saturday morning when Army National Guard Pfc. Adriel Rodriguez was on duty at Penn Station.

Yes, there was a steady stream of traffic outside on West 33rd Street and 7th Avenue during the wee hours of Oct. 13, 2007. A couple of working girls were available for some nocturnal pleasure if the price was right. And business was brisk at a 24-hour drugstore across the way from the station’s entrance and down the street from the dark, towering presence of the Empire State Building. It was not, however, the vibrant city depicted in Frank Sinatra’s rendition of “New York, New York.”

But there was enough activity inside Penn Station to keep Rodriguez and Amtrak Police Officer Rich Byrnes on their toes even if it was about as quiet as the station gets during a 24-hour cycle. Rodriguez was Byrnes’s Army Guard partner that evening in case the cop needed some help from the Soldier.

“I’m here to help the police officer if I’m asked,” Rodriguez explained. “Otherwise, I just stay back.”

Rodriguez was pulling his 11th night of duty, during the third shift, since joining the New York National Guard’s homeland security team, Task Force Empire Shield, 13 days earlier.

“A lot of drunks on Friday and Saturday nights. Homeless people hitting on people for money or just making a nuisance of themselves. Earlier this evening, a couple of transvestites were blowing kisses at one of my partners,” laughed Rodriguez when asked if he had seen anything unusual. “You see just about everything.”

It was, in short, a quiet, nothing-special night for the National Guard Soldiers who have been part of the homeland security presence at the Pennsylvania and Grand Central stations in New York City every day and night since the terrorists attacked America on Sept. 11, 2001. The scene this fall evening seemed a lot more dull than dangerous. It was the routine, unspectacular side of how Guard Soldiers

and Airmen are serving their nation at war.

Homeless people cocooned in blankets on the hard floor were trying to grab a few hours of sleep, comforted a bit by the classical music from the public address system. An intense young man with a goatee was lamenting the injustices of his life to a young woman who was listening just as intently in a corner they had staked out for their conversation.

No one seemed intent on blowing the station to Kingdom Come.

Yet, there is something comforting about seeing Rodriguez and other Army National Guard Soldiers like him vigilantly manning their posts and walking the corridors of these venerable transportation centers more than six years after America’s worst terrorist catastrophe. They are on watch when business people and tourists are pouring onto and off the trains and when most New Yorkers are asleep or watching television.

These Soldiers, distinctive in their Army Combat Uniforms and caps and minimal combat gear, remind people that New York has not let its guard down when it comes to standing up to the threat of terrorism.

“Oh, yeah. It’s kind of reassuring to see these Soldiers here, working with the police,” said one man after asking Rodriguez for directions to the Long Island Railroad platform. “It tells me that we’re still paying attention. But I’m so used to seeing these Soldiers here that I don’t really think about it.”

The Guard troops have become as much a part of the scene as the Hudson News stand and the announcements of arriving and departing trains.

“I like the duty. It’s what I do,” said Rodriguez, 29, who is comfortable with working deep into the night. “I used to be a truck driver, and I drove a lot at night. So I don’t mind this.”

He is doing one thing right when it comes to gaining attention. He’s pulling the duty that others do not care for – in this case working the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shifts – and making the best of it. **gt**



Left: Paul Teutul Sr. of Orange County Choppers fame rides the National Guard's "Patriot Chopper" in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., during a Sept. 27, 2007 unveiling ceremony. Above: More Guardsmen take time out to amire the "bike". Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn National Guard Bureau

First of Three National Guard Sponsored Bikes Unveiled

Story and photos by Sgt. Mary Flynn, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - Hundreds of Soldiers gathered here in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center on Sept. 27, 2007 to witness the unveiling of the "Patriot Chopper," the first of three motorcycles to be built by Orange County Choppers for the National Guard.

Orange County Choppers has a history of building patriotic bikes, and have produced multiple theme bikes for other branches of the military.

The "Patriot Chopper" was the result of submitted designs from four National Guard Soldiers.

Earlier this year, the Army National Guard invited Soldiers around the country to submit ideas for the custom design of the Guard-sponsored bike. Four winners were chosen: Chief Warrant Officer David Vasquez of Colorado; Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Billet of Georgia; Sgt. 1st Class Richard Crawford of Illinois and Pfc. Joseph Scheibe of Ohio.

Major General James Nuttall, deputy director of the Army National Guard, presented certificates to the four winning Soldiers during the unveiling ceremony.

Paul Teutul Sr. from OCC made a grand entrance on the bike, coasting in coolly and revving the engine to the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd.

The winning Soldiers were very excited.

"To be a part of something like this is pretty cool stuff," said Pfc. Scheibe. "We went to the OCC shop in New York last month, and we saw pieces and parts of the bike. But to see it finished was just really cool."



An employee of OCC makes last minute checks to the National Guard motorcycle outside the Ed Sullivan Theater in Manhattan, Jan. 17. The "bike" was later driven on the David Letterman Show by actor Sylvester Stallone. Photo by Maj. Kathy Sweeney.

The finished bike showcases a minuteman air cleaner. The blade spokes of the wheels feature 3-D inlaid spearheads, representing the seven Army values and an ammunition belt lines the handlebars. Chromed M-4 magazines serve as the struts, and an M-4 carbine is mounted on the side of the rear wheel.

The color of the bike is red, white and blue with an Army Combat Uniform pattern used throughout. A list on top of the bike includes every war and conflict the National Guard has been involved in since its founding in 1636.

"We took the Soldiers' ideas and put them to work," Teutul explained, "I think for them, it really is their bike. It was a bike they designed and that we fabricated. I think it made it that much more special."

The "Patriot Chopper" is the first of three bikes commissioned by the Army National Guard. The bikes are intended for a recruiting tool. Army Guard recruiters will display them at rallies across the country to entice potential Soldiers to talk with them.

Despite the television program's tough-guy image, the American Chopper stars remain extremely conscious about safety. The stars wear helmets and other protective gear religiously, a practice they hope to impress upon Soldiers.

"They're very willing to help us out in terms of safety awareness and wearing the proper gear for our Soldiers," said Nuttall. "The bike is one part of it - the build. But the safety is really what we're trying to get after." **gt**

Editor's Note: The "Patriot Chopper" also made a NYC appearance on the Late Show with David Letterman on Thursday, Jan. 17.

Trees for Troops Gets Boost from National Guard Veterans

Story and photo by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

CHARLTON – Volunteers from the New York Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division helped spread holiday cheer this season by loading donated Christmas trees bound for overseas troops and home station families across the United States.

The five volunteer Soldiers joined local area tree farmers, veterans and military family members at Ellms Tree Farms on Nov. 28 to load a FedEx delivery truck with nearly 150 Christmas trees, bound for Fort Drum, N.Y. and the Army's 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry).

The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation and FedEx - in cooperation with the National Christmas Tree Association - organized this nationwide effort called Trees for Troops to boost the Christmas spirit for U.S. military men and women.

"It sends that message that somebody cares, you know, here's a package from home; it's a big package from home, a Christmas Tree," said Chip Ellms, Ellms Tree Farm Owner.

For the third consecutive year, the Trees for Troops program will deliver real Christmas Trees to the

families of troops serving in the military.

"It's tough to be away on Christmas in a war zone," said 1st Sgt. Tony Coluccio, a National Guard Soldier with the N.Y. Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division. Coluccio spent the 2004 holiday season deployed to Samarra, Iraq with the Guard's 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry.

"You hear on the TV stations a lot of negative stuff about the war, and when this came out there were a lot of people who came forward and said, we want to support the troops. Soldiers are getting something from home they can feel and touch," said Ellms Tree Farm owner Chip Ellms.

The 2007 Trees for Troops program launched November 13 when 300 trees from Ohio's Operation Evergreen and the Indiana Christmas Tree Association were gathered and shipped to

overseas bases.

"It gets your mind off the war, a little thing from home," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Brunner, another volunteer from the 42nd Infantry Division. Brunner spent Christmas last year deployed to Iraq.

The shipment of trees also included handwritten holiday messages from area schoolchildren for troops and their families. Messages included "thanks for defending our country," "come home safely" and "good luck in the war - I hope you all come back."

"We never dreamed it would get this big," said Ellms. "We were just a bunch of local farmers, and then we knew other farmers, and they knew others."

"It means a lot when you're over there," said Sgt. Launa Dupigny who served in Tikrit, Iraq with the 42nd Infantry Division in 2005. **gt**



Staff Sergeant Daniel Brunner, 42nd Infantry Division, passes a donated Christmas tree to fellow volunteer 1st Sgt. Tony Coluccio at Ellms Farms in Charlton, Nov. 28. Coluccio and Brunner volunteered to help other area veterans and military family members in loading more than 150 trees for shipment from Ellms Tree Farms. Photo by Lt. Col. Richard Goldenberg, 42nd Infantry Division.



First Sergeant Troy Steward takes a break outside of his armored vehicle in Afghanistan. Photo courtesy of 1st Sgt. Troy Steward

Guard Top NCO Awarded USO Leadership Award

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, Guard Times Staff

NEW YORK – A Buffalo-based Army National Guard Infantry Sergeant is the newest recipient of the George Van Cleave Military Leadership Award from the United Service Organization of Metropolitan New York.

First Sergeant Troy Steward received the Top Soldier award at a gold medal award dinner at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Manhattan on Dec. 6, 2007. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mike Mullen and Mr. David Shedlarz, Vice Chairman of Pfizer, Inc. were also honored.

The USO annually presents the George Van Cleave Military Leadership Awards to a member of each service branch as a way of publicly recognizing “outstanding commitment, exceptional service, sacrifice and achievements of individuals who have shown extraordinary dedication to their country.” Recipients are honored for their selfless commitment to service and the inspiration they instill in their comrades, families, and the American people.

Steward is a traditional (part-time) Guard

member with previous active duty experience. He served in the New York Army National Guard and rose to the rank of 1st Sgt. in a Buffalo-based infantry company. His former unit, Company B, 1st Battalion, 108th Infantry, was de-activated and reorganized as part of the 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry.

He deployed to Afghanistan in 2006-2007 as the non-commissioned officer in charge of an embedded training team from New York, leading and mentoring members of the Afghan National Army during a full year “boots on the ground” tour-of-duty. He and his team returned home in May, 2007.

While deployed and since, he maintains an award-winning military blog site (recognized by Military.com) bouhammer.com, which attracted the attention of Doonesbury creator Garry Trudeau. Steward’s most appreciated entries is the list of gear and items needed for a sandbox deployment, which has been included in Trudeau’s new book entitled “The Sandbox.”

“There were many high points and I am having a hard time identifying one that stands out above the rest,” said Steward about the gala affair. “I mean, I had the chance to meet the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff -- Admiral Mike Mullen (that coin trumps all now!) and spend about 5-6 minutes with him discussing Afghanistan policy. What an opportunity that was and not one I ever thought I would have.”

“I have to thank the team I was with in Afghanistan,” said Steward. “Whether it was the 16 guys I was with from New York or the guys I spent time with at Sharana -- for as much as I hope I helped them, I want them to know that they helped me,” he said.

“I truly feel that I would not have succeeded on the tour without their friendship and professionalism and their presence by my side, fighting shoulder to shoulder,” said Steward. “Every one of those guys holds a special place in my heart and I hold memories that I will never forget and will be forever indebted for.” **gt**



Sergeant First Class Edward Perry, 7th Finance Detachment is congratulated by a loved one following the unit's Freedom Salute in Whitstone, Queens, Dec. 1, 2007.

Troops Welcomed With Open Arms

Story and photo by Spc. L.C. Campbell, 138th Public Affairs Detachment

NEW YORK — Soldiers from the New York Army National Guard's 7th Finance Detachment attended their Freedom Salute honoring their service in the global war on terror at the Whitstone Armory in Whitstone, Queens, Dec. 1, 2007.

New York State Senator Frank Padavan attended the ceremony to welcome the 21 Soldiers who just returned from a year in Iraq home, along with City Councilman Tony Avella, Col. Kevin McKiernan, Commander of the 369th Sustainment Brigade, Col. Peter Sammarco, Deputy Commander of the 53rd Troop Command and Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks, senior NCO for the Army Guard's 53rd Troop Command.

The Freedom Salute was created as a way of recognizing Soldiers in the Army National Guard for their services in Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. It was also to show thanks for the support from

spouses, family and employers.

Soldiers are awarded with a folded flag in shadowbox, a limited addition commemorative coin, and a certificate of appreciation.

The Soldiers from the detachment mobilized in June 2006 to Camp McCoy to begin their necessary training needed prior to deploying in August. They operated out of two forward operating bases, one in the Diyala Province and the other in Ninewah Province.

The Soldiers were responsible for the finances in their area of operation. This included military contractors, Iraqi contractors, and U.S. service personnel. Soldiers were able to access the 7th Finance Det. with all their personal finance concerns as well.

Upon their successful deployment to and from Iraq, the National Guard's Freedom Salute Ceremony held in their honor was to welcome them home officially and reintegrate them into their Battalion. **gt**



Recognizing Volunteers in Saratoga

Guard Times Staff

Julie Coon (right) Family Readiness Group coordinator for the Glens Falls 466th Area Medical Support Company, displays one of three unit awards presented to her on Oct. 21 for her support to the unit's Soldiers and families during their deployment to Iraq.

Coon received the awards at the Saratoga Wilton Elks Lodge during the welcome-home party for three local members of the 466th. The unit returned from Operation Iraqi Freedom on Oct. 7.

The awards were presented by N.Y. Assembly Minority Leader James Tedisco, Assemblyman Roy McDonald and Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand.

Coon, a Glens Falls area volunteer for nearly 20 years, worked tirelessly to coordinate support to the troops and their families during the unit's mission in Iraq.

"When they get deployed, it's like sending off your own kids," Coon said in an interview with the Glens Falls Post Star.

Coon organized family events to assemble and ship care packages, and frequently less visible to the community, she helped families understand military healthcare issues, payroll and finance concerns, family briefs about benefits and explained mail delays and phone systems.

The support in the Glens Falls area was tremendous, said 1st Sgt. William Ernst, one of the three Saratoga Soldiers honored. The other two were Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Rocco and Lt. Col. Jamie Green, commander of the 466th. **gt**



Empire Blizzard Takes to Afghan Skies

Aircrew members from the Rochester-based 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment prepare for a CH-47 Chinook combat mission in the skies of Afghanistan Dec. 24, 2007. The New York Army National Guard flight crews deployed for Operation Enduring Freedom in the late summer of 2007. Courtesy photo.

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Staff Sergeant David Loder, 107th ARW, cuts a pipe for a hot water tank installation, Jan. 30, at Sather Air Base, Iraq. Photo by Senior Airman Peter Dean.



Master Sergeant Jennifer Mahoney boards a New York Air National Guard 107th Refueling Wing KC-135-R tanker Jan. 4 as 27 members of the unit deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by Senior Airman Peter Dean.

107th Airmen Leaving Their Mark in Baghdad

Story by Staff Sgt. Amanda Callahan 447th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

SATHER AIR BASE, Iraq (AFPN) – New York Air National Guard’s 107th Air Refueling Wing Airmen are making a big difference as part of the Air Force’s 447th Air Expeditionary Group.

“It seems the Air Force has found out that we are a reliable and capable force,” said Chief Master Sgt. Richard King, the 447th Air Expeditionary Group superintendent, and the 107th Air Refueling Wing, New York Air National Guard command chief. “Between us, our active duty and Reserve brothers, the Air Force is one awesome force, and no one can touch us.”

Since the first day the 107th ARW members stepped of the plane in Baghdad, Iraq, they have been making an impact on the Sather AB mission. The 107th ARW arrived with 150 members covering 15 different job specialties.

While some members of the unit dig trenches for essential utilities, others have valuable command, control and administration positions.

“The 107th (ARW) assumed many of the key

leadership positions in the 447th AEG and executed a flawless transition from the last (air expeditionary force) team,” said Col. Fred Cheney, the 447th AEG commander. “The Niagara Falls team integrated seamlessly with their active duty, joint service and coalition partners.”

“The 107th’s contribution to Sather (AB) is huge,” said Capt. Bryan Dalporto, the 447th Air Expeditionary Group executive officer and a deployed 107th ARW member. “We account for more than one-third the total force here. We’ve got a lot of folks doing a lot of important jobs.”

Many of those 107th ARW team members play a vital role in the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, said Captain Dalporto, at least 90 percent of the unit is comprised of Guardsmen.

“Sather is the stepping off point for many units in Iraq,” said Lt. Col. Patrick Roemer, the 447th ECES commander and full-time base civil engineer for the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base when not performing the same role in the Guard. “The 107th (ARW) guys are instru-

mental in maintaining the base, and it’s very important that Sather (AB) stays functional.”

During their first week on base it snowed. Some joked they brought it with them.

Despite never anticipating the chill in the air and the mud, Airmen of the 107th ARW immediately got to work.

And even though the phone doesn’t stop ringing and the jobs don’t stop coming, the 447th ECES gets it done every time, said Sergeant Dodge.

“The team from the 107th ARW hit the road running upon their arrival at Sather AB,” Colonel Cheney said. “I have extremely high confidence that they will be key contributors to making this one of the most successful AEF teams in the history of Sather AB. **gt**

Integrity a Key First Step for Wing Recruits

Story by Airman 1st Class Peter Dean, 107th Air Refueling Wing

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION, Niagara Falls - Integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. The Air Force Core Values are one of the many building blocks student flight trainees will learn prior to entering basic military training.

The 107th Air Refueling Wing has developed a new training program geared toward pipeline students. Under this program, students with no more than 11 months until they are scheduled to leave for basic military training will receive organized and structured training to help ease their transition into military life.

The program goals include reducing the BMT failure rate and increasing the number of potential honor graduates, providing structured training during the drill weekend, and preparing the flight for the culture shock of BMT.

“Prior to the March unit training assembly, which was the start of the program, the 107th always tried to offer the flight some sort of training and structure. But it wasn’t standard across the board,” said Tech. Sgt. Jessica Gorski, “we did something about it,” she said.

In April, Gorski visited the 109th Airlift

Wing in Scotia, to meet with their student flight leader and evaluate their student flight program.

“I was overly impressed,” said Gorski, “I knew the 107th ARW could have that if not better,” she said.

Shortly after Gorski’s return, the sergeant along with Maj. Linda Blaszak and 1st Lt. Elaine Bieganski began to develop a student flight program tailored for the 107th ARW.

Bieganski is currently drafting a wing policy that will mandate all non-prior service Airman enlisting in the 107th ARW be automatically placed in the student flight program.

UTA weekends for the flight will include one hour of physical training each day, followed by academic training such as drill and ceremony, dress and appearance, and firearms training simulation. Students also receive a newcomers briefing and training on rank and insignia.

Students perform duties such as serving meals at the dining facility and other tasks throughout the unit. Students like Airmen Emily Conte, Sharon Gouchie and Vince Dilorenzo have participated in the program

since its inception.

“The program allows students to interact with others who will be working in different sections throughout the unit,” said Conte.

“I like the new program,” said Gouchie. “It will better prepare me for military life,” she said.

“The training will give students a head start before going to BMT,” said Dilorenzo.

First Sergeant Derrick Harris and Senior Master Sgt. Douglas Forbragd have volunteered to keep the students in line acting as the flight drill instructors.

The flight is looking for volunteers to help prepare students for their military journey. Volunteers willing to share their military experience with the flight can contact 1st Lt. Elaine Bieganski at (716) 236-2428 or Tech. Sgt. Jessica Gorski at (716) 236-2435. **gt**



Prospective Airmen get off on the right foot by attending a 107th pre-basic training program. The program is aimed at lowering basic-training cycle failure rates. Photo by Airmen 1st Class Peter Dean.



Photo above: A KC-135R Stratotanker leaves her home with the New York Air National Guard's 107th Air Refueling Wing for a new home with the 126th Air Refueling Wing, Illinois Air National Guard, on Jan. 23. The aircraft served with the 107th ARW for 14 years. The departure begins a series of farewells the 107th will give to the Stratotanker as they convert to an airlift wing.

Below: Ground crew members Tech. Sgt. Roman Jeter, Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Peace, and Master Sgt. Charles "Charlie" Ball prepare the KC-135R for departure. Members of the unit have already begun retraining on C-130 aircraft. Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Raymond L. Lloyd.



Tankers Take to Skies for Last Time in 08

Beginning of the End for KC-135 Aircraft in Niagara Falls

Guard Times Staff

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION -- The end of an era for the 107th Air Refueling Wing began in January as the first of the eight KC-135R Stratotanker refueling aircraft the wing has operated since 1994 left for a new home with the Illinois Air National Guard.

The 107th will become the 107th Airlift Wing, operating 12 C-130H aircraft in conjunction with the Air Force Reserve's 914th Airlift Wing, which is also based at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station.

Under the Air Force proposal, the 914th Airlift Wing would have primary responsibility for the C-130H airlift aircraft operated by the Airmen of both wings. This would be the second time that an Air National Guard Wing and Air Force Reserve

Wing have been associated together.

This new cooperation will allow the units to operate more efficiently by sharing resources and reducing duplication of effort, said Col. Patrick Ginavan, the 107th's commander.

Changing aircraft and missions is nothing new for the 107th. The wing started out as a fighter interceptor outfit, operating F-51H flights, a version of the famous Mustang fighter of World War II fame. Along the way the 107th flew a variety of jets ranging from the F-86 Sabre that fought in the skies over Korea to the F-4 Phantom and the F-16. The wing assumed its air refueling mission in 1994.

The KC-135R that departed the base on Jan. 24 refueled airplanes involved in Operations Deny Flight, Decisive Endeavor,

Northern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, as well as refueling fighter aircraft patrolling the nation's skies as part of Operation Noble Eagle following September 11, 2001.

Members of the 107th have already begun training on the new aircraft. The remaining KC-135Rs should be gone by the end of the year.

Placing additional C-130 aircraft at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station will provide an important capacity in Western New York," said Major General Robert Knauff, the Deputy Adjutant General and Commander of the New York Air National Guard. "Not only will these aircraft be able to fulfill national missions, but they will be made available in the event of state emergencies at the direction of the governor." **gt**



Congresswoman Gillibrand Visits Air Guard Base

U.S. Representative Kirsten Gillibrand is given a brief look at the LC-130 by 109th Airlift Wing Vice Commander Colonel Edward Kinowski at the Scotia Air National Guard Base on January 8, 2008. Congresswoman Gillibrand visited the home of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing, the only Air Force C-130 wing missioned and equipped to support the National Science Foundation research at the North and South Poles. Many of the serving men and women of the air wing live in Gillibrand's 20th Congressional district. Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood.



Secretary of State Meets NY Airmen

Secretary of State Condolizza Rice greets members of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Air Refueling Wing in Baghdad Iraq, January 15, 2008. The Airmen are (from left) Lt. Col. Ken Anderson, Capt. Bryan Dalporto, and Command Chief Master Sergeant Rich King. They deployed to Iraq in January for a routine deployment with the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Forces. The group serves with the 447th Air Expeditionary Group (see our related story on page 16) at Sather Air Base, more frequently known as Baghdad International Airport. The rotation is expected to return the Airmen home to New York later this spring. Courtesy photo.

Medical clinic ramps up training for N.Y. Guard

Guard volunteers support servicemen and women preparing for deployment

Story by Staff Sgt. Dave Konig, HQ, N.Y. Guard

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, Cortlandt Manor – For the all-volunteer N.Y. Guard, service to the state doesn't come without realistic and valuable training. To better prepare members for the demands of homeland security, search and rescue or chemical, biological or nuclear incident response, the professional medical personnel of the Guard's 244th Medical Clinic at Camp Smith are volunteers and expert trainers.

The 244th oversees medical training for N.Y. Guard members, consisting of the National Guard Combat Lifesavers Course, the Comprehensive Integrated Systematic Multi-component approach to stress and trauma (CISM), and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification. In addition, the unit augments National Guard personnel in providing medical readiness screening for Army National Guard or Reservists preparing for overseas service.

"Our primary mission has always been to serve the medical needs of the state's National Guard forces," said 244th Medical Clinic commander, Lt. Col. Allen Hershman, a forensic psychologist. "Our doctors and nurses have performed Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) medical exams for literally thousands of deploying troops."

Hershman, who joined the N.Y. Guard in 2004 after 25 years of service with the U.S. Navy, Army and Army National Guard, knows the value of good training. "When our troops are called out, whether to assist the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) with a search and rescue mission in the Adirondacks, or on a CERFP decontamination mission, we want them to be trained effectively in First Aid to render assistance if needed," he said.

Leading the training effort for the Guard's Combat Lifesavers Course is Lt. Col. John McCullogh, a chiropractor orthopedist who joined the N.Y. Guard following the attacks of

September 11, 2001. His prior military training from the Army and Navy, as well as his professional civilian experience, enhances his training of New York Guard members. "The Combat Lifesavers Course is one of the most popular hands-on training program we offer," said McCullogh.

"Maybe it's because of the live stick. There's something about learning how to administer an intravenous needle to a fellow Soldier that makes them sit up and take notice. We follow the exact curriculum of the Army National Guard."

Another key training event supported by the N.Y. Guard's medical clinic is the CISM course. Capt. Mike Lonski, a trauma psychologist and Chief of Mental Health Services for the 244th is the primary instructor for the training.

"Serving in the New York Guard has given me a great opportunity to bring my medical training to the mission of serving our state's armed forces."

*-- Capt. Ann Bollman
New York Guard*

"The course trains Soldiers to understand the psychological elements related to disaster relief, everything from trauma to addictions"



Lieutenant Colonel John McCullogh, a provider with the New York Guard's 244th Medical Clinic, examines a Soldier at Camp Smith Training Site, Cortlandt Manor Dec. 15, 2007. Photo by Staff Sgt. Dave Konig, HQ, N.Y. Guard

Lonski explained. Like many Guard volunteers, Lonski has multiple skills and responsibilities, also serving as team psychologist for the New York Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue, the state's FEMA approved Search and Rescue team.

One of the most fundamental medical skills training provided for members of the N.Y. Guard is CPR. Capt. Ann Bollman, the chief CPR instructor is a fire department Emergency Medical Technician and paramedic, the highest level of medical training for response in numerous emergency procedures. Bollman is responsible for CPR and defibrillator training for members of the New York Guard. "We strive to ensure all New York Guard soldiers are certified in CPR," Bollman said.

Bollman, like Lonski and so many other new volunteers to the N.Y. Guard, also joined in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001.

"Serving in the New York Guard has given me a great opportunity to bring my medical training to the mission of serving our state's armed forces," she said. **gt**



Joint members of New York National Guards' Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) team prepare to move a casualty into a decontamination tent, where the individual will be washed to remove chemical agents Nov. 3, 2007. Photo by Staff Sgt. Dennis Gravelle.

N.Y. Guard Volunteers Serving with CERFP

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

LATHAM – Members of the National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) team includes joint elements of New York State's Military Forces. A founding element and experienced asset for the team are the N.Y. Guard's trained, certified and proven decontamination team members.

The CERFP team provides the state with a task force capable of performing mass patient-casualty extraction, decontamination and emergency medical treatment in support of first responders.

N.Y. Guard CERFP volunteers initially assisted the Guard's CERFP mission since the team's inception in 2003. One year later, Guard CERFP volunteers deployed right alongside National Guard Soldiers at the Republican National Convention activation in New York City.

In the summer of 2007, its members integrated with the Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry as troops were embedded down to squad level for a full week

of training and validation by external evaluators at Fort Drum.

"I want the New York Guard totally integrated into the unit, no separate formations. They are on our team," said Lt. Col. Dennis Deeley, commander, 2nd Bn, 108th Inf. to the combined team.

The training culminated in certification in June, 2007 with N.Y. Guard members praised for their seamless integration.

"I am impressed," said Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, The Adjutant General. "In the past, the New York Guard was off to the side. Not anymore. Your state needs you - and we're going to use you," Taluto said. "CERFP is crucial, and you troops here are the elite of the New York Guard."

"I relied heavily on the experience and energy of the New York Guard members on my team," said Sgt. Raymond Fiederer, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and squad leader from the 108th Inf. serving with the decontamination team.

Building on that success, in November

of 2007, 45 CERFP members from the N.Y. Guard's 10th, 88th, and 56th Brigades deployed to Albany for another training mission with the 2 Bn, 108th Inf. (See our related story on page 5). The N.Y. Guard CERFP troops integrated fully with their Army National Guard partners.

The N.Y. Guard commander, Maj. Gen. Michael Van Patten is enthusiastic about the CERFP mission and the emerging role of N.Y. Guard volunteers. "Our CERFP members are on the frontlines of Homeland Defense," he said to troops of the New York Guard and Naval Militia. "CERFP is our WMD elite force. This is our day in the sun."

The CERFP team will continue to train for defense support of civil authorities later this spring when elements of New York State's military forces work alongside emergency responders from New York City for a training exercise.

First Sergeant Anthony Bertorelli, senior NCO for the team, explained why he loves the mission. "When I was a kid I served in the Marines, training South Vietnamese troops to take lives. Now, in the New York Guard, I'm training troops to help the National Guard save lives. It's a great mission, and we're ready when the call comes." **gt**

New York Naval Militia



Patrol Boat 440, the latest addition to the Military Emergency Boat Service cuts through the waters off the coast of California during sea trials. The high-tech, water-jet propelled boat was built by Mooseboats. Inc. of Petaluma, Calif. Photo Courtesy of the New York Naval Militia

Naval Militia Takes Command of High-Tech Patrol Boat

Story by Eric Durr, Guard Times Staff

The latest addition to the New York Naval Militia's fleet of patrol boats brings a host of high-tech capabilities to the Military Emergency Boat Service (MEBS).

Patrol Boat (PB) 440 is 44-foot long, catamaran hulled, and powered by two 600 horse power Cummins diesel engines driving water jets. It employs a GPS system to ensure its in the proper location, and "fly-by-wire" steering that's similar to using a computer mouse. The boat is equipped with a diving platform and its 21-inch draft means it can get in the shallow waters at the periphery of the state's rivers and harbors.

"It allows us to get into places that a conventional boat can't," said Maj. Gen. Robert Wolf, naval militia commander. "It's a more flexible platform."

PB 440 will be operated by an on-call crew belonging to the MEBS and will be employed mostly in New York harbor. When required the boat will be available to assist law enforcement officials, including members of the United

States Coast Guard, in executing maritime enforcement duties. It will also work in conjunction with the New York National Guard's Joint Task Force Empire Shield, which provides homeland security services in the New York City area.

"Acquiring PB 440 is an example of the emphasis the New York State Division of Military and Naval is placing on assisting security and law enforcement in New York City," said Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General.

The \$790,000 cost of the new patrol boat was covered by a federal homeland security grant. Berthing and fuel are being provided by the United States Coast Guard at Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, under an operating agreement with the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

PB 440 was formally christened as part of the Naval Militia's 11-vessel fleet by Susan Taluto, the Adjutant General's wife on Feb. 1 in a traditional naval ceremony held at the State University of New York Maritime College in

Fort Schuyler.

PB 440 was built by Mooseboats Inc. of Petaluma, California. The Naval Militia's MEBS also operates two patrol boats on a full-time basis to help enforce an exclusion zone in the Hudson River near the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plants in Westchester County. The other boats are operated on the state's lakes and rivers as required by security concerns and when law enforcement agencies request help.

The New York Naval Militia is one of seven state naval forces in the United States. The Naval Militia is comprised mainly of 3,200 Navy, Coast Guard Reserve, and Marine Corps Reserve members who also volunteer to perform State Active Duty missions at the direction of the governor. **gt**

Rosen Bids NYNM Farewell

Major General Robert Wolf assumed command of the New York Naval Militia, a component of New York State's Military Forces, on Feb. 15 in a ceremony at the State University of New York, Maritime College, in New York City.

The change-of-command ceremony, presided over by Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General marked the transition of command to Wolf, from Rear Adm. Robert A. Rosen, a Rhinebeck resident. He has led the Naval Militia since 1995.

The event featured the traditional passing of the colors, signifying the change of command authority from Rosen to Wolf. Deputy Secretary for Public Safety Michael Balboni, and New York State Senator Vincent Leibell, the Chairman of the State Senate Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee also spoke.

Former Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Alfred M. Gray, USMC (Ret.) attended, and the Captain of the Port of New York, U.S. Coast Guard and Commander, Coast Guard Sector New York, Captain Robert O'Brien made a presentation.

Wolf, a retired Marine Corps Lt. Col. from Ossining, Westchester County, is the first Marine Officer to lead the Naval Militia in its more than 100-year existence. Wolf has been acting commander of the Naval Militia since July of 2007.

Taluto also recognized Rosen for his service to the state and nation by presenting him the Colonel Gouverneur Morris Citizen/Soldier Award. The award recognizes members of the New York Organized Militia for outstanding support to their fellow Soldiers, local community, and the State of New York.

Rosen has served in the federal and state military forces for 49 years. He was also the president and a co-founder of The Fisher House Foundation, Inc., a member of the Board of Directors of the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum and now serves as Trustee Emeritus, and a Commissioner of the New York City Korean War Veterans 50th Anniversary Commemorative Commission, among other activities. **gt**

-Eric Durr



Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General, congratulates New York Naval Militia Major General Robert Wolf following his promotion to two-star rank on Jan. 26. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.

New Naval Militia Chief at the Helm

Story by Eric Durr, *Guard Times Staff*

The commander of the New York Naval Militia was promoted to Major General by the Adjutant General, in a ceremony at the Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters on Jan. 26.

Major General Robert Wolf, assumed command of the Naval Militia in June 2007 from Rear Adm. Robert Rosen. A formal change-of-command ceremony was held Feb. 15 at the State University of New York Maritime College in Fort Schuyler. Rosen, who retired from the Naval Reserve as a Captain, had commanded the Naval Militia since 1995.

Wolf is a retired U.S. Marine Lt. Col. and currently works as an administrator at SUNY Maritime College.

Wolf was born in Ossining, Westchester County, in 1951.

He was commissioned a 2nd Lt in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1973, and served as a Rifle Platoon Leader, a Rifle Company Executive Officer, a Rifle Company Commander, Operations officer to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, a Special Operations element, and also served as

Officer-In-Charge of the Special Missions Section of the Special Operations Training Group.

He served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Provide Comfort and Provide Promise.

In 1977 he was the Executive Officer of Marine Barracks Bermuda where he was cited for his conduct during 1977 riots in that country. Wolf was also cited for heroism while serving in Okinawa when his company came under fire during training.

After leaving the Marine Corps in 1994, he was commissioned in the New York Naval Militia and promoted to Colonel, serving as deputy commander for operations. He participated in responses to Long Island fires in 1995 and a blizzard in 1996 and in July of 1996 headed up the Naval Militia Task Force assisting in the recovery of TWA Flight 800 off the coast of Long Island.

He was promoted to Brigadier General in the Naval Militia in 1999. **gt**

Aviation Family Mourns Loss of Warrant Officer

LATHAM – Father, long-time Guardsman and hero might describe Chief Warrant Officer 2 Douglas J. Jones, who died suddenly on Oct. 26, 2007 of a blood clot while attending aviation training at Fort Eustis, Va., in preparation for a deployment to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Chief Warrant Officer Brian Smith, knew Jones as a devoted and professional Guardsman.

“Doug felt it his place to be everybody’s friend and he would do anything he could to help anybody. He was something,” Smith said.

Jones joined the New York Army National Guard in 1982 as an enlisted aviation Soldier with the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation and worked as an aircraft maintenance mechanic at the Latham flight facility.

He received his commission as a warrant officer in 2002.

In 1991, Jones and his unit were attending the Northeast Flight '91 Air Show at the Schenectady County Airport when a Canadian Army Aviation Chinook helicopter crashed shortly after take-off while making aerial maneuvers in front of the crowd.

Jones and other members of the unit immediately took action, running more than 300 meters to the flaming wreckage. He and his unit members were able to pull three of the five crew members to safety.

For his heroism, he received the New York State Medal of Valor. The medal is the state’s highest award given for non-combat heroism.

Jones also deployed to Bosnia in 2002-2003 to support U.N. Security Forces peace-keeping mission. For his service in Bosnia he was awarded the NATO medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with “M” device for Mobilization.

Jones is survived by his wife, MaryAnn Jones, who is a Captain in the New York Air National Guard and his two children, Trevor, age 7 and Anna, age 5. **gt**



New York Honor Guardsmen carry the coffin of Chief Warrant Officer Douglas Jones at the Gerald B.H. Solomon-Saratoga National Cemetery, Schuylerville, on Nov. 3, 2007. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.



“Old Kinderhook” Honored by Guard

KINDERHOOK - During a commemorative anniversary ceremony honoring the 224th Birthday of former President Martin Van Buren, 8th President of the United States, Air Force Brig. Gen. Verle L. Johnston, commander, 105th Airlift Wing and Lt. Col. Eric Olsen, chaplain, 42nd Infantry Division, prepare to place a wreath at the base of the Van Buren monument, Dec. 5, 2007
Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.



WWII Vet Receives State Medal

LATHAM - Sixty-three years after his Army National Guard company earned a Presidential Unit Citation on Saipan, former New York Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Nick Grinaldo received the New York State Conspicuous Service Star. Major General Joseph Taluto, the Adjutant General, presented the award to Grinaldo, aged 87 and a lifelong resident of Troy, in a ceremony held Dec. 27, at New York National Guard headquarters.

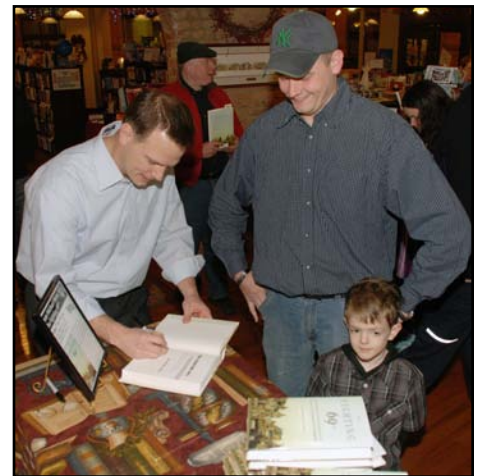
“This is the type of American that makes those of us that wear the uniform today proud to carry on the tradition of honor, bravery and courage,” Taluto said. “It is guys like Nick and (fellow veteran) Sammy Dinvoa and others who have done so much to preserve our freedom in the past and we are here to do it in the present.”

“Of my five years on active duty, going through Saipan was the worst,” Grinaldo recalled. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.



Airmen Give Blood in Spirit of the Holidays

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Newburgh --Staff Sergeant Brian Burns, 105th Maintenance Squadron, awaits preparation to donate double red blood cells in support of Stewart Air National Guard Base's annual Holiday Season blood drive, Dec. 21, 2007. Burns volunteered to give to those in need and has donated for more than eight years. The 105th Airlift Wing community is a consistent supporter of the New York Blood Service, Hudson Valley Region. Stewart ANGB holds four blood drives a year, each on or prior to a major holiday. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Halloran.



Book Traces "Fighting 69th" Journey

TROY - Sergeant Donald Leinfelder and his son Patrick, age 5, meet with author Sean Michael Flynn at the Dec. 28 book signing of "The Fighting 69th" in Troy. The book tells the story of the New York National Guard's historic infantry regiment and its journey from Ground Zero to Baghdad and back. Leinfelder served with the 69th Infantry and was wounded in action on the Baghdad Airport road. Photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning.

State Aviation Officer on Italian Television

LATHAM - Colonel Michael Bobeck, New York Army National Guard's State Aviation Officer, is interviewed by television reporter Riccardo Romani for a segment that aired on Sky TG24, an Italian cable news station.

Bobeck's interview was part of a month-long series the network is doing called America 2008. Romani and his crew are traveling across the United States to share stories about America during the news channels primary season. His goal, Romani said, is to let Italians know about typical Americans.

The Italian TV crew visited Army Aviation Flight Support Facility Three in Latham on Jan. 10 and 11 to film Bobeck's interview, as well as members of 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation training for their deployment to Iraq in June.

Romani said he wanted to include the New York National Guard in the story because it's part of the fabric of America and because the National Guard has played such an important role in America's military since Sept. 11, 2001.

Bobeck discussed his service in Iraq, the National Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina, and how the National Guard has changed since the Cold War.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone.





Chief Master Sergeant Robert Podbielski strikes a pose beside his 1957 Ford pick-up at the Scotia Air National Guard base. Courtesy Photo.

The Big Four-0!

Guard Times Staff

STRATTON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Scotia - It is often said that members of the National Guard can join a unit and stay there for their entire military career. One New York Air National Guard Airman turned that idea into reality as a 40-year military career.

Chief Master Sergeant Robert Podbielski, 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, retired after 40 years of service in the New York Air National Guard on Dec. 31, 2007.

Podbielski's career spanned nearly a dozen different airframes and maintenance functions as the 109th Airlift Wing underwent reorganization, aircraft conversions and transformation.

Podbielski's maintenance work is the story of the air wing in Scotia, progressing from aircraft such as the C-54, C-97, C-124, U-21, U-3, to the six variations of the C-130 along with support to the Guard's counter drug fixed wing aircraft C-12 and the C-26.

Podbielski started his career in January 1967 in the airlift wing's aircraft engine shop, later cross-training as a shop chief quality assurance and inspection position. His last assignment in the 109th Maintenance Squadron was equipment maintenance branch chief.

Throughout his long career, Podbielski supported more than 30 aircraft recovery missions both in the U.S. and overseas, including two maintenance missions to the Greenland Ice Cap. **gt**



Hey Guardsmen! You Outta Be in the Movies

Members of the New York Army National Guard who played extras in the latest Will Smith movie, "I Am Legend" were present at the movies premier in New York City on Dec. 12, 2007.

They are: (from left) Col. Michael Bobeck, (not an extra in movie) Joint Forces Headquarters Aviation Officer ; Cadet Stephen Trotter, Chief Warrant Officer Danny Edling, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation; Chief Warrant Officer 4 Thomas McGurn, Headquarters Company, 3rd Bn, 142nd Avn; Sgt. Jorge Jara, Co. A, 1st Bn, 69th Infantry; Staff Sgt. Bolivar Hernandez, Headquarters Co. 1st Bn, 69th Infantry; Sgt. Richard Alicia, 427th Support Bn and Spc. Paul Lukasik, Co. B, 3rd Bn, 142nd Avn. Photo by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, 27th Brigade Combat Team.



Oh Yeah? Guardsmen Take It Outside

Michael Laduke, an assistant instructor at Empire Martial Arts in Colonie, demonstrates an "Americana" hold-down technique on Pvt. Craig Depuy while Spc. Turel McKinney looks on. Soldiers from Detachment 3, Company E, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation took the opportunity to do some extra combative training on Nov. 3, 2007. Members of Det. 3 are anticipating a deployment in 2008. Photo courtesy of Alicia Sherman

Rainbow Soldiers Benefit from Reup

By Sgt. Christopher Connelly, HQ, 42nd Infantry Division

CAIRO, EGYPT – Soldiers of the 42nd Infantry Division traveled halfway around the world to receive more than \$172,000 tax free dollars, the rough currency equivalent of one million Egyptian pounds for re-enlisting and extending their service with the New York Army National Guard.

The 42nd Infantry Division Soldiers were deployed to Egypt during November, 2007 in support of Bright Star, the U.S. Central Command's biannual multinational training event conducted in Egypt (see related story on page 9). Soldiers reenlisting while in Egypt were eligible for up to a \$15,000 tax-free bonus.

"A free round trip flight and hotel, meals and a once-in-a-lifetime trip to one of the eight wonders of the world would normally be enough incentive for me, but also getting paid

"Keeping Soldiers in the force is what keeps our division strong."

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

\$15,000 tax free, you would think you won the lottery," said Sgt 1st. Nicasio "Nick" Velazquez, a member of the 42nd Division Special Troops Battalion.

With 28 years of service, Velazquez, who re-enlisted for six years, noted that his oath of reenlistment did not earn him a bonus, but that the incentive is a great deal for younger Soldiers.

Standing in formation outside the division main command post at Cairo West Air Base, Brig. Gen. Paul Genereux, the division



Twelve 42nd Infantry Division's Special Troops Battalion Soldiers take their re-enlistment oath Nov. 12 at Cairo West Airbase, Egypt during Operation Bright Star 2007. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Peter Towse



Ready When Needed

STEWART AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWBURGH - Airmen of the 105th Logistics Readiness Squadron's Aerial Port and 137th Airlift Squadron Loadmasters load Pre-positioned Equipment (PEP) onto a C-5A Galaxy. The 105th Airlift Wing in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Administration, Region II conducted a deployment exercise loading a C-5A Galaxy with FEMA's deployable PEP, which is used for protection, detection, decontamination, communications, and explosive ordnance disposal. The equipment is used in multiple environments and is specifically tailored to sustain and reconstitute local and state first responders sufficient for 72 hours of response and recovery. This is the first time this equipment has ever been loaded onto an airframe. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael OHalloran.

commander, congratulated and offered words of encouragement to the reenlisting Soldiers. Genereux and Division Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Fearnside presented each Soldier with a division coin for their commitment to stay in the Guard family.

"Keeping Soldiers in the force is what keeps our division strong," Genereux said. "I look out at this group of Soldiers and see the experience of combat veterans and the energy of our first-term troops. Together they are the backbone and the future of our Guard and our Army."

"It was an honor to have the CG (Commanding General) take the time out from the exercise to acknowledge us," said Spc. Karolyn Irizarry, an operations cell radio operator from the 4th Personnel Services Detachment out of Brooklyn, N.Y. "The ceremony was a reminder of the commitment that I have to my country and the Guard."

"We could have reenlisted these Soldiers anytime throughout the year back home," said Lt. Col. Russell Howe, commander of the STB, "but being able to offer them the opportunity to receive a tax free bonus and also visit the pyramids of Egypt was a great opportunity for our Soldiers and paints a great image for the N.Y. Army National Guard with all that is going on in the world today." **gt**

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Chaplains Corner

Commentary by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Eric Olsen, HQ 42nd Infantry Division

RETREAT? Not what you think.

Anyone familiar with military history or operating on a post will recall the term retreat. Often believed to be an act of running from the enemy the term retreat was a bugle call sounded to bring the troops back together as a last act of the working day. Retreat was a time to rest and prepare for the days ahead. Those familiar with the churchly term might remember retreats as childhood getaways or for the benefit of marriage. A retreat is intentionally taking time to rest oneself after being engaged at work or in efforts that have taken their toll on you.

We live in a stress filled world and as military personnel our lives are more complicated and busy than most. Current mission levels for our organizations in New York State have Soldiers and Airmen giving 100%...all they have. Our training and experience has shown the world that we have a deeply committed and professional force that is second to none. Continuing to carry this responsibility without detrimental consequences to ourselves or our loved ones means that we must rest well and rejuvenate ourselves.



A mother and daughter prepare to depart the 27th Brigade Combat Team's send-off ceremony after the conclusion of the event. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott.

As a chaplain for Soldiers and their families I often encounter individuals who are in need of a retreat, a personal getaway. Here are a few



A New York Army National Guard 27th Brigade Combat Team Soldier spends a few moments with his family during the 27th's January send off ceremony. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abbott.

things that I have noticed that are clear signs that a retreat might be necessary for you or for someone you know;

The first is a change in personality and behavior - Stress can alter our moods and our behaviors little by little over time to such a degree that we might become unrecognizable to our loved ones or even ourselves. Unhealthy and prolonged stress can make a joyous person irritable, a happy person, sad and an industrious person unmovable. You might not enjoy doing what was once pleasurable and fun, or be irritable, cranky or angry most of the time. Someone who is stressed can sink into depression if left unchecked because anger and frustration over unresolved issues can turn inward and eat away at their spirit and psyche.

The second is a change in your physical self. - Unhealthy stress and being over extended can bring about physical changes in you. Being tired all the time or being unable to sleep when tired is a sign of too much input without the bodies ability to deal with the issues at hand. Signs of over eating or binge eating or drinking can be a sign of unresolved issues and feelings associated with stress. When stressed, little things become larger and large things unfathomable. For the unchecked individual with stress the world can become hopeless.

Where do you go? On retreat! A retreat is a get away for health. It can be of any duration but it has the intention to restore the ones mind, body and spirit. A retreat can be a day away with friends and family but is best when done alone in a setting with time to reflect and rest. In the Holy Scriptures we hear of Jesus taking time away to pray when the things became overwhelming. It is an old idea that often gets overlooked.

Taking time away to think, reflect and feel oneself again is not a sign of weakness but a sign of wisdom and strength. It is a different form of exercise. When was the last time you had a day of rest? When was the last time you spent a day without TV or a list of things to do? Take time for yourself, a 24-hour period to search your spirit. If you do, you'll be better equipped to face the days ahead. **gt**



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