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Welcome Home 143rd CSSB!



Sgt. 1st Class Katie Zarzycka and Master Sgt. David Schappa, 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, receive a warm welcome home from loved ones just four days before Christmas. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

In Future Issues

February

Black History Month
RTI Receives Accreditation

March

Women's History Month
UPAR Training
Unit Deploys

April

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny



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(Front Page American Flag photo by Buddy Altobello)

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143rd CSSB Gets Job Done, Returns for Christmas

SPC. DANIELLE L. LEACH
143 CSSB

CAMPARIFJAN, Kuwait – Dec. 21 was unusually warm, both in temperature and in the hearts of many as the 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion returned home from its deployment to Kuwait. This marks the first time since 2003 that all Connecticut National Guard units are home, although two Army Guard and 15 Air Guardsmen are individually deployed with units from other states.

The 143rd CSSB's journey began Feb. 19, when 67 Soldiers said goodbye to their families at the Army Air Support Facility in Windsor Locks, Conn. The unit's endeavor started off with the pre-mobilization process in Fort Hood, Texas and continued when it arrived at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait on March 26.

Since getting boots on ground, the 143rd CSSB had been hard at work running 24 hour operations in the tactical operations center, managing warehouses and yards throughout Camp Arifjan, running quarterly missions and providing logistical support to subordinate units.

The 143rd CSSB Operations Section (S-3), run by Capt. David Tripp and Master Sgt. David Schappa, successfully managed the unit's tactical operations center 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout nine months in country. The S-3 was also responsible for distributing and analyzing information and submitting recommendations to the commander.

1st Lt. Douglas Jackson was tasked with running the current operations section of the S-3 which was in charge of receiving action reports and Red Cross messages, as well as tracking missions run by the battalion's truck company. 1st Lt. Kevin Bahr led the future operations section which was responsible for receiving and publishing fragmentary orders and processing out of country packets.

The S-3 section also initiated numerous key leader engagements with the Kuwait National Guard allowing the 143rd to gain more cultural awareness and build foreign relationships.

The 143rd's W7A Warehouse team led by Capt. Lee Anne Thompson and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Gene Daily spent the last nine months downsizing the warehouse and numerous yards. The downsizing aided the closure of Zone 7 at Camp Arifjan. The warehouse team was also responsible for processing high priority requests and directly supporting the majority of supply activity going in and out of Afghanistan.

When Daily took over the warehouse in April, it contained around 21,000 lines of items and supplies totaling approximately \$223,000,000. Since then, he has gotten the number of lines down to 13,959 costing approximately \$92,280,571, meaning the warehouse team has been able to get 7,041 lines out of country.

The battalion supply section (S-4), of Capt. Michael Lackey, Master Sgt. Thomas Curry, Sgt. 1st Class Katie Zarzycka and Spc. Michelle Ortiz-Soto, was responsible for managing and tracking supply and sustainment operations to include the organizational and non-tactical

vehicle fleet, executing the Command and Supply Discipline Program (CSDP), providing logistical support to subordinate units, and advising the commander on all logistical matters.

Zarzycka turned in approximately \$6,500,000 worth of equipment. By doing so, Zarzycka decreased the CSSB footprint and gave other units throughout the Army an opportunity to acquire equipment they need to complete their assigned missions.

Curry, the battalion maintenance officer, was responsible for managing the CSSB fleet which has a total dollar value of approximately \$33,000,000. Curry tracked approximately 600 parts throughout the mission and played a major role in assisting the subordinate units in maintaining a high operation readiness rate.

The 143rd's Support Operations (SPO) Transportation section, with the help of the battalion truck company,

successfully completed 553 missions, using 2,733 trucks driving a total of 668,622 miles with 9,641 pieces of cargo.

The SPO section was able to organize and conduct four quarterly missions while in country. During the quarterly missions, the truck company and more than 200 contractor flatbeds transported 570 20-foot containers full of cargo.

Aside from the usual missions, the SPO section was tasked with assisting the Air Force Central Command to move 55 connex containers from Kuwait National Base to Al Jabber.

Over the past nine months, the Soldiers of the 143rd have been challenged and pushed to their limits, but one thing never left their minds: accomplishing the mission. The 143rd successfully handed over the reigns to their replacements, the 751st CSSB from South Carolina on Dec. 7..

Capt. Ryan Miller is all smiles as he is surrounded by loved ones upon his return from Kuwait where he spent nine months with the 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Family, friends and co-workers of the Soldiers of the 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion cheer, wave American flags and hold up signs as the plane carrying their loved ones home approaches the hangar. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

COMPILED BY SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCO

Deployments

Deployments once again kept the men and women of the

Connecticut Army and Air National Guard busy in 2013. Whether it was being deployed or assisting units that were being deployed, Connecticut's Soldiers and Airmen continued to prove they are dedicated to the mission at hand.

The 143rd Military Police Company was in the midst of

its deployment to Afghanistan when 2013 began. While there, the men and women of the MP Company ran Operating Base Andar, conducting the day-to-day operations, ran patrols and trained with the local police force. Their mission involved embedded and full partnership with joint service units and civilian agencies that conduct comprehensive and counterinsurgency operations with the Afghan Uniformed Police, Afghan National Army, Coalition Forces and Security Assessment and Advisor Teams to better secure the local population and disrupt insurgent activities throughout key terrain districts in order to set the conditions for a sustainable security and a stable environment for the Afghan populace.

The MP Company returned to Connecticut in June.

The 1048th Medium Transportation Company was busy running commodities and retrograde equipment throughout Afghanistan. During the unit's Transfer of Authority to its follow-on unit, Lt. Col. Don Gillespie, 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Commander who presided over the ceremony, said that the Connecticut company exceeded the standards in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"During their time, they raised the bar in all aspects of the deployment, becoming a model company for the other transportation companies to emulate," he said.

The 1048th returned to Connecticut in August.

The 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group (TASMG) was kept busy in Afghanistan providing aircraft depot level and back-up field level maintenance,



Sgt. Tone Margarido receives hugs from his wife Tricia and their daughter after arriving home from Afghanistan on June 5 at Bradley Air National Guard base. Margarido is a member of the 143rd Military Police Company, Connecticut Army National Guard. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

aviation logistics and special aviation project management for units in the U.S. Central Army Materiel Command's Aviation and Missile Command to sustain aviation readiness. They are credited with developing a cradle system to keep the aircraft they were working on completely stable which resulted in repairs being completed more quickly.

The 1109th returned to Connecticut in May.

The 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion left for its deployment to Kuwait in February. The mission for the men and women of the CSSB was to provide logistical and operational support to the region. They took control of the mission during a Transfer of Authority ceremony in April.

"As with all Connecticut Army National Guard units that have deployed over the past ten years in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the 143rd CSSB is fully prepared and ready for the mission at hand," said Command Sgt. Maj. Orlando Anderson, command sergeant major of the CSSB. The unit returned home Dec. 21.

A joint Freedom Salute, Hometown Heroes event was held in March to honor

Soldiers and Airmen who had returned from their deployments late in 2012. The 103rd Air Control Squadron, 142nd Area Support Medical Company and the 246th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting) were honored for their service during the ceremony at the William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford. Among those on hand to thank the Soldiers and Airmen were U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy and Connecticut's Lieutenant Governor, Nancy Wyman.

Also returning from deployment in 2013 were the men and women of the 248th Engineer Company. The unit provided security and was responsible for all base and perimeter security at Isa Air Base in Bahrain. The unit collaborated with the Bahraini Security forces on the base and developed the first base anti-terrorism plan and organized the first anti-terrorism working group. They also conducted an island wide Anti-terrorism / force protection exercise, during which time they validated the anti-terrorism plan developed by the unit. The unit also trained the Royal Bahraini Air Force (RBAF) Air Police on Tactics Techniques and Procedures for patrolling, engaging targets from vehicles, and proper entry control point procedures.

A Freedom Salute was held for the 248th Engineer Company and the 143rd Military Police Company in August.

After deploying to Afghanistan in October 2012, 60 Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment returned home in September. While in Afghanistan, the unit provided aviation support consisting of transporting supplies, equipment and personnel with the theater of operations. This was the third deployment for the Chinook unit.

A Freedom Salute is scheduled for the 143rd CSSB, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment and the 1048th Medium Transportation Company in the spring.

Training, MILCON & State Missions

Much happened in Washington, D.C. this past year that affected Connecticut Guardsmen and their families. The Department of Defense rescinded the Women in Combat Exclusion early in the year, paving the way for Guardswomen to serve in

many units previously unavailable to them.

Because there was no federal budget passed early enough in the year, sequestration was invoked causing large across-the-board budget cuts resulting in federal employees, to include dual-status military technicians, being furloughed one day a week for six weeks to make up for some of those cuts. These same dual-status military technicians, as well as civilian contractors, were



Soldiers of the 143rd Military Police conduct one of many dismounted patrols in Afghanistan. (Photo by 1st Sgt. Santo DeFelice, 143rd Military Police Company)

also furloughed again in October when no budget was passed, forcing a partial government shut-down. Some of those employees were called back to work after only three days, while others remained on furlough. Drills during October were cancelled. A continuing resolution passed by Congress, funding DoD and the federal government, put those remaining furloughed employees back to work and authorized back pay for all technicians.

The Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act paved the way for eight C-130H cargo planes to come to the Connecticut Air National Guard with the first of the new airframes arriving at the Bradley Air National Guard Base in September.

“The arrival of the C-130 mission finally brings some much needed stability to the men and women of the Connecticut Air National Guard after many years of change and uncertainty,” said Maj. Gen. Thaddeus Martin, adjutant general and commander of the Connecticut National Guard.

But while the arrival of the C-130 was being celebrated, the 103rd Air Operations Group (AOG) and the 103rd Centralized Repair Facility (CRF) were closed in Connecticut.

“The 103rd Air Operations Group has had a great impact not only on the Connecticut Air National Guard, but on Joint Forces globally. In its short life, the men and women of the 103rd AOG stood up a combat-ready weapons system in record time and executed crucial missions both in state and throughout the world. Their ‘Give Nothing but Our Best’ attitude marked each and every action that they took during their tour at the 103rd AOG,” wrote Col. (Ret.) Joseph D. Hammer, past commander of the AOG, in a November Guardian article.

Since its inception in late 2007, the CRF has been a cornerstone in support of the A-10 attack aircraft community with the overhaul of its TF34-GE-100A Turbofan Engines. The creation of the CRF built an independent mission within the Connecticut Air National Guard, employing 38 full-time personnel (80 including Guardsmen.) Now, six years later and nearly 200 engines built and shipped, the CRF officially closed its doors Oct. 1, 2013, due to budget cuts and the decentralization of maintenance within the A-10 fleet.

The Army Guard was not immune to mission changes. September saw the aviation community retiring the last

of its C-23 Sherpa fleet. In 1990, the 1109th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (now the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group) was the first unit in the Army to field the

C-23 Sherpa, replacing the C-7A Caribou. The aircraft flew multiple missions in support of deployments to Iraq, Central and South America and Egypt. The Connecticut aircraft and crews also supported relief operations after hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

“Today we celebrate the team effort responsible for successfully delivering to our Army aviation community a facility that provides significant improvements to both operational efficiency and training,” said Maj. Gen. Thaddeus Martin, adjutant general and commander of the Connecticut National Guard during the Windsor Locks Readiness Center Ribbon Cutting on Nov. 17. Martin highlighted the project as an example of state and federal government initiatives to invest in the Connecticut National Guard.

The 120,000 square foot facility provides classrooms, offices, storage space, mechanical, electrical space and computer training simulators. The building will house more than 300 Soldiers from three units previously located in different parts of the state.

Connecticut’s medics were busy with training this year, working twice with Hartford Hospital and conducting their annual trainings.

The 141st Medical Company conducted a simulated

mass casualty exercise with Hartford Hospital in February, testing their skills and ability to react to multiple issues at a time. This was the third year the Army Guard medics trained with the hospital staff. Then in November, the Soldiers of the 142nd Area Support Medical Company had their chance to train with their civilian counterparts. The facilities at the Hartford Hospital Center for Education, Simulation and Innovation provide exposure to such things as trauma, working with a psychiatric patient and delivering babies.

Connecticut’s Army Guard medics spent much of June training in Hawaii, New York and Stone’s Ranch, Connecticut.

Members of the 118th Medical Battalion traveled to Hawaii with nearly 500 Soldiers, Sailors and Airman and converged on the Hawaiian islands of Maui and Lana’i to conduct Operation Tropic Care 2013, occupying schools, churches and community centers all over the islands. The primary purpose of the mission was to exercise jointly with all the services in rapid response and disaster relief. Secondly, it provided the local population with free medical screenings, eye exams, glasses and dental care.

The 141st Medical Company (Ground Ambulance) conducted its annual training at Fort Drum, NY this year. It concluded with an assault into a mock city. The mission was to enter, extract the patients they had been told to get and exit. Unfortunately for the

medics they would face fierce resistance from opposition forces to include well hidden booby traps and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Having recently returned from deployment in Afghanistan,

the Soldiers of the 142nd Medical Company (Area Support) trained at Stone’s Ranch Military Reservation in Connecticut where the medics conducted training on soldier skills and tested themselves on the confidence course.

See 2013: THE YEAR THAT WAS Page 6



Staff Sgt. Kenneth McDonald, an aircraft mechanic section lead deployed with the 1109th TASMG, originally from Wilbraham, Mass., completes repairs to a UH-60 MEDEVAC aircraft that is resting on wooden cradles fabricated by the AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade’s AC First wood shop. (U.S. Army photo)



Airmen of the 103rd Airlift Wing welcome the first of eight C-30H aircraft expected to be assigned to the Connecticut Air National Guard moments after it touches down at the Bradley Air National Guard Base. (Photo by Maj. Jefferson Heiland, CTANG Public Affairs)

In addition to the medics training with their civilian counterparts, National Guard firefighters also had the opportunity to conduct joint training with the Guilford Volunteer Fire Department, Company 3 in March.

Working together during state emergencies requires an understanding of how the civilian and military firefighters work and communicate and this training helped both groups gain a better understanding of the other. The training day culminated with a live fire complete with a flashover and rescue simulations.

The forward observers (FOs) of 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain) proved they were ready to destroy, neutralize, or suppress the enemy by cannon, rocket, or missile fires and to help

integrate fire support assets into combined arms operations during their Brigade mandated certification on a snowy cold weekend in northern Vermont. The weekend consisted of a written job knowledge portion and practical exercises utilizing the Brigade Call for Fire Trainer MkII simulator, with all Soldiers being 100% certified across the board.

Members of the 14th Civil Support Team received calls early on the morning of April 25 that a Connecticut DEEP state park police officer had discovered what appeared to be a pop-up meth lab hidden among the dense forest vegetation of a state park. While a simulated event, the Soldiers and Airmen of the team responded immediately to the event at Stone's Ranch. As part of the team's mission they were required to don protective equipment, monitor and sample as well as potentially analyze samples on the scene in support of other responding agencies.

More than 100 Soldiers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry Regiment (MTN) trained to be ready and prepared to respond to a chemical, biological or nuclear (CBRN) event on United States soil as part of the Region 1 Homeland Response Force (HRF).

Elements of the Region 1 HRF participated in a Culminating Training Exercise (CTE) at the New England Disaster Training Center (NEDTC) in Windsor Locks, Conn. and Camp Niantic, Conn. C Co, the Crusader Company, was externally evaluated on conducting the

mission of the HRF Casualty Assistance Support Element (CASE) in preparation for taking over that mission from the 643rd MP Company. The 643rd MP



Soldiers from the 250th Engineer Company clear snow from an intersection in Stratford, Conn. as a part of relief efforts in the aftermath of a blizzard that hit Connecticut. The storm, which hit on Feb. 8-9, blanketed the state with 24-40 inches of snow. Members of the 250th worked with the Department of Transportation and other state agencies throughout the state to clean up the mess left by the storm. (Photo by Sgt. Jerry Boffen, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)

Company has been tasked with the CASE mission since August of 2012.

At Camp Edwards, Mass, Soldiers of the 143rd Regional Support Group tested and refined Standard Operating Procedures in a war game that depicted the unit running a forward operating base in the Caspian Sea region. The four-day command post exercise was designed to enhance battle staff and leader proficiency in w a r f i g h t i n g functions, mission essential task list and the military decision making process.

The 192nd Multi-F u n c t i o n a l Engineer Battalion has trained for d o m e s t i c response at previous ATs, but this year i n t r o d u c e d advanced tracking systems designed

for wartime to train simultaneously for its federal and state missions. The systems included Blue Force Tracker and Command Post of the Future, which the 192nd said will allow faster responses and more efficient use of personnel and engineer assets.

The 250th Engineer Multi-Role Bridge Company

traveled to North Carolina and made the most of its opportunity at Marine Base Camp Lejeune. In addition to working with its Improved Ribbon Bridge, the 250th MRBC, which is part of the 192nd Engineer Battalion, 143rd Regional Support Group, utilized the state-of-the-art training facilities at the Marine base to conduct military operations in urban terrain training, in conjunction with urban breaching and demolitions.

The Air Guard was kept just as busy with training in 2013 as the Army Guard. During the Connecticut Air National Guard's April Unit Training Assembly, the 103rd Security Forces Squadron took to the field to train in fire team communication drills. Armed with M-4s with Simuntion-style ammunition, the security forces practiced shooting, moving and communicating to further enhance their base defense capabilities.

Armed with 220 million more scent receptors than humans, a detection dog can make short work of sniffing out dangerous threats and drugs. They could probably even smell what you had for last night's dinner which, if true, would be very impressive. Nevertheless, man's best friend has been by our sides since our earliest days and still continues to prove her worth in our modern times. In order to utilize this highly specialized creature, however, their masters must find the time and place to train them and teach them to put their unique skills to use.

During the months of July and August, the Connecticut Air National Guard satisfied this training requirement by hosting the Connecticut State Police and allowing them to train state and municipal K-9s and their handlers.

Preparation and conduct of an Operational Readiness Exercise, baton training and C-130 training kept the Air Guard busy this year.

2013 was a year full of training on all levels for members of the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard, keeping

them ready for state and federal missions, and that training came into good use when Winter Storm Nemo blasted the state with anywhere from 24 to 40 inches of snow on Feb. 8 and 9. Soldiers and Airmen from across the state were called out to help with snow removal, route clearance and any other mission assigned. With many of the heavy equipment operators deployed, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) was used, calling in assets from the National Guard in Maine, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island to assist in snow



Fire Fighters assigned to the 103rd Civil Engineer Squadron respond to a burning building, March 9, on Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Conn. The simulation of the burning air building was part of a base-wide exercise. (Photo by Senior Airman Emmanuel Santiago)

removal and route clearing.

While on a storm-related mission in Bridgeport, members from the 246th and 256th Firefighter Detachments assisted the Bridgeport Fire Department by responding to a residential fire at 158 Robert Street in Bridgeport and extracting two people that were inside.

The National Guard firefighters, who were assisting the Bridgeport Fire Department, were the first fire responders on the scene. Robert Street had not been fully cleared and the military fire truck was the first vehicle that was able to get up the treacherous unplowed hill. The Guardsmen utilized a water turret that is mounted on the military style fire engine and several hoses to quickly put the fire out and gain control of the situation.

Family Life, Personal Achievement & Competitions

National senior leadership saw changes in several key positions in 2013. Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke was confirmed as Director of the Air National Guard, replacing Lt. Gen. Harry "Bud" Wyatt; Chief Master Sgt. James Hotaling was named as the Air National Guard's command chief succeeding Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Muncy; and Command Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell Brush was named senior enlisted advisor to the chief of the National Guard Bureau, following the retirement of Chief Master Sgt. Denise Jelinski-Hall; and Chuck Hagel became the 24th Secretary of Defense.

Several Connecticut Guardsmen participated in the Outward Bound – Veterans Program during the past year. Capt. Brian Osowiecki, 2nd Lt. William Gombos, Col. Richard Young and Sgt. 1st Class William Appleby chose programs as varied as sailing, mountaineering, canoeing in the Everglades and dogsledding.

Pfc. Steven Birge and Sgt. Johnny Peralta represented their units in the State Best Warrior Competition and took top honors in the Soldier and NCO portions, moving on to represent Connecticut in the Regional Best Warrior Competition. Birge did well enough at the regional event to place second and continued to train for Nationals in case the Soldier of the Year winner was unable to compete. This was the second win for Peralta, who won the Soldier of the Year Competition in 2012 and came back this year to win the NCO of the Year title. While he did not place in the top two at Regionals, he did



Senior Airman Francis Gelada negotiates an obstacle at the West Hartford Reservoir during the ninth annual Connecticut SWAT Challenge Aug. 22. The event pits law enforcement and military special weapons and tactics teams from across New England in a competition that fosters teamwork and enhances skills. (Photo by Maj. Jefferson S. Heiland)



Logan Schoenhardt tries on a pilot's helmet and a small smile during the Pilot for a Day Program at Bradley Air National Guard Base. (Photo by Sr. Airman Jennifer Pierce, 103rd AW Public Affairs)

earn a place in the regional history books, shattering the 10K Ruck March Course record by nearly 7 minutes, a time so fast that the next three finishers, struggling to keep up with Peralta, also finished in under the course record time. Ironically, the record Peralta broke had previously been set by another Connecticut Guardsman, Staff Sgt. Devon Caffazzo.

What started off as a nice spring day cheering on friends running the Boston Marathon, turned into a nightmare and brought out the best in several National Guardsmen, among them, Staff Sgt. Dustin Wonoski of the Connecticut Air National Guard. After getting his mother and children to safety, Wonoski was one of the Guardsmen who ran towards the bomb blast site to offer what assistance he could. A former volunteer EMT, Wonoski had participated in several mass casualty exercises and said instinct kicked in. He assisted with applying a tourniquet on one victim, treated a child for shock and stayed with him until he was evacuated.

More than 20 members of the 643rd Military Police Company took the oath of reenlistment in a ceremony presided over by Brig. Gen. Mark A. Russo, assistant adjutant general in May.

In September, Spc. Joseph Colavito shared his story of survival with members of the Connecticut Guard. In his article, he told of riding his motorcycle home from his job with the National Guard, the harrowing crash after being forced off the road by

a car, losing control, hitting the guardrail at 60 miles per hour and being thrown over the handlebars. He credits AAR 385-10, which requires Soldiers to wear specific personal protection clothing and equipment when riding motorcycles, with saving his life.

Three major, and popular, competitive events rounded out the year: the TAG Match, the SWAT Team Challenge and the NGACT Golf Tournament, with the Air Guard coming out on top in two out of the three.

The Air Guard fielded three teams in the TAG Match, an annual marksmanship competition, while the Army Guard fielded 8 teams. The Air Guard teams finished in first and third places, and five of the Air Guardsmen finished in the top ten in the individual overall competition.

Competing against 27 quick response teams from around New England, mostly civilian law enforcement teams, the 103rd Security Forces Squadron Team finished in eighth place overall. The team also boasted the only female competitor, Senior Airman Alecia Aldrich, in this year's event.

And members of the 103rd Air Control Squadron completed the trifecta by wresting the TAG Cup away from the 102nd Infantry Battalion in the NGACT Annual Golf Tournament. This is the second time in three years the ACS has walked away with the trophy.

The Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut National Guard continue to show their courage and skills in all areas of life which, in turn, makes the Connecticut National Guard that much stronger.

Support to Military & Civilian Communities

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy and Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman unveiled a new state Website, veterans.ct.gov, designed to give military Veterans one-stop access to the wide range of Veterans' services and benefits offered by the state and federal governments.

The Connecticut National Guard Child and Youth Program hosted the 16th annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny in March, bringing together nearly 500 Guardsmen and their children to hunt for 3,000 eggs, have breakfast and visit with the Easter Bunny.

The Air National Guard played host to cancer patient, 6-year-old Logan Schoenhardt as part of the Pilot for a Day Program. Logan was sworn in as a member for the day, sat in the cockpit of C-21 and got to ride in a base fire truck.

Loadmasters, Flight Engineers and Navigators Needed

MAJ BRYON M. TURNER
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

12/7/2013 - BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn. — The Connecticut Air National Guard is looking for loadmasters, flight engineers and navigators to support the Flying Yankees' new C-130H mission.

"The team effort required to accomplish the mission in the C-130H is a wondrous thing to witness," said Maj. John Saunders, a recent C-130H navigator school graduate. "The idea of being able to do that mission as part of the Connecticut team in locations worldwide is just amazing."

Enlisted aircrew members play vital roles on that team as loadmasters and flight engineers. These two career fields are in high demand in Connecticut as the state's C-130H mission develops.

Loadmasters accomplish loading and offloading functions on the C-130H. They perform weight and balance calculations and other mission-specific requirements to ensure safety and comfort of personnel and cargo security during flight. Loadmasters also perform cargo and personnel airdrops in direct support of ground forces in a variety of environments.

"As a C-130 loadmaster, I'm proud to be a part of history as we build this new mission," said Tech. Sgt.

Gerald R. Sisco. "The C-130 brings with it a diverse mission set ideal for building a diverse team of Airmen from all walks of life."

Enlisted members are also needed to monitor and maintain the various aircraft systems aboard the C-130H, assisting the aircraft's pilots as necessary during flight. The role of the flight engineer is critical to ensuring smooth and safe flight as they work together with the rest of the crew to accomplish the mission. The flight engineer must have a solid understanding of all of the aircraft's unique systems to trouble shoot potential issues both in flight and on the ground.

"Future flight engineers should be able to generally think quickly on their feet, have a confident mindset to be able to recognize and handle emergencies and situations independently that require actions (and) quick thinking—the personality to be a part of a crew and accomplish the mission," said Master Sgt. J.R. Torres, flight engineer.

The crew also needs commissioned officers to operate the aircraft's navigation systems to help guide the C-130H as the crew accomplishes assigned missions. Navigators also play a key role in ensuring the timely and accurate delivery of critical supplies, equipment and personnel through air drops. Navigators must have an understanding of the theory of flight, air navigation, meteorology, flying directives, aircraft operating

procedures and mission tactics.

"As a navigator, the responsibility to airdrop paratroopers or equipment on time and on target is huge, but that is dwarfed by the satisfaction of knowing you are part of the crew that is getting the mission done; whether that's getting troops into the fight, delivering much needed supplies to our troops on the ground, or helping people during search and rescue and relief operations," said Saunders.

The new C-130H mission has opened the door to new career opportunities here at the Bradley Air National Guard Base. Recruiters are actively working to fill these opportunities, but there's still time to seek out one of these new jobs.

"We have many opportunities available for new recruits and prior service members," said Senior Master Sgt. Daniel P. Jenkins, recruiting and retention superintendent. "Some of these jobs could even come with incentives in some cases."

Those interested in rising to the challenge and supporting these emerging skillsets should visit GOANG.com or contact recruiting at 1-800-TO-GO-ANG for more information. If you are a prior service member with skills that would make you a good fit for one of these positions, please call our local recruiting office at 1-800-992-4793.



The first of eight C-130H aircraft expected to be assigned to the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing taxis onto the flightline at the Bradley Air National Guard Base moments after it touched down at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Conn., Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2013. (Photo by Maj. Jefferson Heiland)

Maintainers Get Home Schooled on New Mission

SENIOR AIRMAN JENNIFER PIERCE
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

12/7/2013 - **BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn.** — After five years with the C-21A Learjet, the 103rd Airlift Wing received a new aircraft on Oct. 5. Bradley Air National Guard Base is now home to three C-130H Hercules aircraft, with another five slated to arrive over the next several months.

Along with the new aircraft and diverse mission set of the C-130H comes the task of training maintenance squadron personnel. Fortunately, because of the hard work completed by the wing, a “schoolhouse” of instructors and trainers were sent to Bradley Air National Guard Base so the Airmen could train on their own planes, and on their own turf.

“It’s beneficial having the training here because we’re still working a normal schedule and it doesn’t interrupt family life,” said Tech. Sgt. Jarrett Gran, 103rd Maintenance Squadron.

“We are receiving the same quality of instruction as we would at a schoolhouse. We have very experienced C-130 instructors from the active duty side along with trainers from our Guard counterparts in Kentucky and Minnesota.”

Another reason having the training here is beneficial is because we are training and working on the aircraft we own, said Gran. Each aircraft is unique and each individual aircraft has its own quirks and issues. Learning about these issues and training with them gives us an advantage that we wouldn’t receive going to a traditional schoolhouse with pipeline students.

Tech. Sgt. Terrence Jones II, Kentucky Air National Guard, has worked with the C-130 for the last nine years and is one of the instructors providing on-the-job training to Flying Yankee maintenance personnel. His job is to cover training criteria for everything required to maintain the C-130H aircraft and keep them mission-ready. Having the training at this base allows the Airmen to work on aircraft that will be performing real-world missions, Jones said.

The Airmen will be finding discrepancies on their own aircraft and get to learn their aircraft inside and out. Learning on your own turf and operating with your own equipment is much more beneficial, said Jones. Along with the added benefit of holding in-house training at Bradley, the quality of instruction with this training is equal to that provided by a traditional schoolhouse.

There are schoolhouse trainers here along with other qualified personnel teaching the same course curriculum and providing the same training, said Jones. Training so far has been going smoothly. These guys aren’t starting from square one, they’re just learning a new airframe. Jones also believes that it is not just the 103rd Airmen who are receiving all the benefit from having the training at Bradley.

“It’s been a pleasure working with the Connecticut Air National Guard Airmen,” said Jones. “As much as I’m teaching them, I’m learning from them as well. It’s great to have this family-oriented type unit and connection. I appreciate them having and giving me the opportunity to train with them and I wish the best of luck to them, their unit and their future missions.”



Senior Airman Robert DiMauro and Senior Airman Zachery Savluk, both crew chiefs assigned to the 103rd Airlift Wing, receive training from Tech. Sergeant Terrance Jones from the Kentucky Air National Guard, aboard a C-130H Hercules assigned to the 103rd Airlift Wing. (Photo by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce)



Staff Sergeant Ryan Sullivan and Senior Airman Zachery Savluk take part in maintenance training on a C-130H aircraft assigned to the 103rd Airlift Wing. (Photo by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce)



Tech. Sgt. Jarrett Gran and Senior Airman Nicholas Dill train on a C-130H Hercules assigned to the 103rd Airlift Wing. Instructors from the active duty Air Force are working with Airmen from the Kentucky and Minnesota Air National Guard to train maintainers at the Bradley Air National Guard Base. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce)

CST Starts FY14 by Hitting the Ground Running

TECH. SGT. MICHAEL GURSKE
14th CIVIL SUPPORT TEAM UPAR

Have you ever had a time span at work where you found it difficult to catch your breath? Members of the 14th Civil Support Team (CST) can certainly say they have.

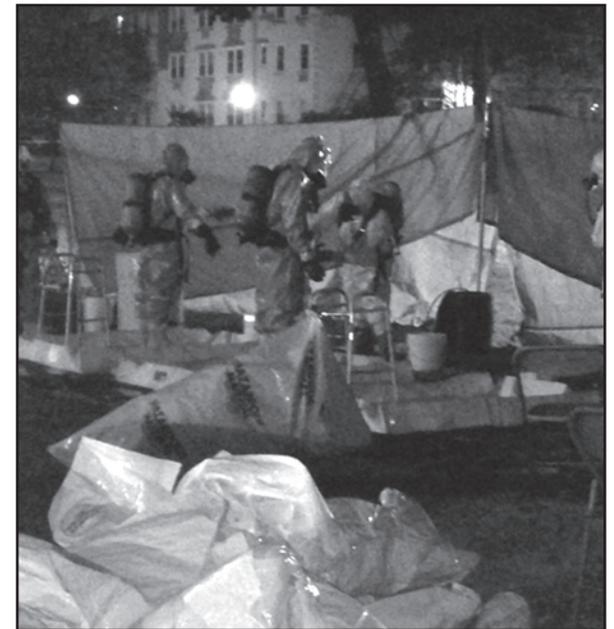
In the first two weeks of October the CST completed over 80 percent of its annual AWT requirements and found themselves responding to two high-profile incidents. The first being a suspected biological hazard in Stamford and the second was the team's participation in the Hartford Marathon. Each event brought its own challenges that put the CST to the test.

The first event occurred on Oct. 3 when it was verified that a resident of Stamford, Conn. was involved in an incident at a White House Security checkpoint in Washington, DC. Once authorities verified the address of the suspect they quickly moved to collect evidence. Federal Law Enforcement Authorities, mainly the FBI, conducted a search of the premises locating a suspicious letter in close proximity to the residence. The 14th CST, a WMD response team, was contacted to conduct biological sampling alongside the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT

DEEP). The Connecticut and New York CSTs simultaneously ran the samples collected in their state of the art mobile laboratories and were able to provide on-scene analysis to Federal Law Enforcement Officials. The samples ran came back negative allowing other residents of the apartment complex to return to their homes.

Just ten days later the CST assisted state and local law enforcement with security for the Hartford Marathon. After the tragedy that occurred at the Boston Marathon, law enforcement officials have ramped up security efforts to keep the public safe and put National Guard resources to good use.

On Oct. 12, nine members of the 14th CST set up remote monitors and patrolled with members of the Hartford Police Department and the Hartford Bomb Squad. Members of the 14th CST were responsible for monitoring for chemical and radiological hazards while on patrols with bomb squad and K9 police units. The 14th CST was able to provide valuable assets in equipment, manpower and expertise as they contributed to the overall success of the event. In addition to working the marathon, the 14th CST also had three members of the 22-person unit complete the race.



Members of the 14th CST work in Stamford setting up a decontamination site. (Photo courtesy of the 14th CST)

Reserve Components' Yellow Ribbon Program Remains Vital

DONNA MILES
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2, 2013 - A program that has helped ease the post-deployment process for thousands of Guard and reserve members and their families in recent years will remain vital even after combat operations wind down in Afghanistan, a senior defense official who helped establish it told American Forces Press Service.

The Defense Department launched the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program in 2008 to ensure reserve-component members have access to the information and resources they need to effectively reintegrate with their families, communities and their employers, said Ronald G. Young, who oversees the program as executive director of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Over the past 12 years, about 900,000 Guard and reserve members have been called to duty, many for extended combat deployments. But unlike their active-duty counterparts, who returned to the extensive support of an installation after deployment, many reserve component members returned to communities that didn't always understand the depth of their experience and to families unfamiliar with military demands.

"When we brought home our units from mobilizations in Iraq and Afghanistan, they would demobilize at an active-duty installation" often far from their homes, Young explained. "Here we were, trying to tell unit members about all the services and support they were entitled to now that they were returning home, yet nobody from the local vicinity where they lived or where the unit was located was there to support them."

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program helped bridge that gap, ensuring geographical separation from the military didn't leave troops emotionally or socially

isolated. Yellow Ribbon coordinators fanned out across the United States to deliver support and services where service members and their families could access them.

Although DOD has oversight of the program, each service tailored its own program to its members' needs. But they share a general format, with at least one event scheduled at the alert phase, during deployment, and at 30, 60 and 90 days after redeployment.

In addition, family programs help ensure family members understand the deployment and reintegration processes and know about resources available to help them.

"We as a department have recognized the importance of a program to reintegrate our service members back into their local communities with the local support organizations right there," Young said.

Now that combat deployments are drawing down and fewer reserve-component units are being mobilized, Young said it's critical that the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program remains strong.

"We have learned that the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is important to readiness, regardless of whether you are mobilizing for a war or mobilizing to go to Europe to backfill for a unit there. You don't have to be leaving to go into a war zone to need the type of support this program provides," Young said.

"So I see the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program as an enduring program for the department," he said. "It helps us to reorganize, refit and prepare our units so they are ready when they are needed again in the future."

Based on the key role the reserve components play in national defense, Young said that future is now.

"Today, we have 55,000 Guard and reserve members on active duty around the world," he reported.

"The Guard and reserve are no longer just a strategic force, to be put on the shelf and await the next engagement somewhere," Young added. "They are part of the operational force, and my belief is that the Guard and reserve will continue to be utilized into the future for operational missions."

By some estimates, members of the reserve components could be even more important as the services reduce the size of their active forces, he noted.

"When they return home, they are going to need that same support and assistance to reintegrate with their families," Young said. "And therefore, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is going to remain important to the readiness of our future force. It helps keep our force ready, it keeps our family ready and it is vitally important for our operational Guard and reserve."

To remain relevant post-conflict, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program has to be reliable, resourced and with trained coordinators ready to provide support when needed, whether during peacetime or war, Young said. DOD is exploring ways to deliver online training and a centralized, ready source of information for those who need it, he said.

As the program incorporates best practices learned from current operations, Young said it must be agile to adapt to future needs and operating environments.

"As part of that, we are adjusting the program content to make it scalable" to suit the size and duration of future mobilizations, he said.

"And the program has to be committed," Young said. "We must remain dedicated to those who serve and those we support through a process of continuous evaluation and improvement of the program to ensure it provides enduring support to the services."

'Flying Governor' Photo is Worth a Thousand questions

MAJ BRYON M. TURNER
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

12/7/2013-BRADLEYAIRNATIONALGUARDBASE - East Granby, Conn. — The late Governor John H. Trumbull was known as the “Flying Governor” of Connecticut due to his love of aviation and habit of flying his own aircraft to speaking engagements, according to his biography on file with the Connecticut State Library.

The biography also indicates that Trumbull served in the First Connecticut Infantry and rose to the rank of Colonel in the state guard. There is no mention of Trumbull serving in a military aviation role, but a photo on the library’s website pictures Trumbull at the controls of a bi-plane with what appears to be the Flying Yankees patch emblazoned on the side.

The same photo was found in the 103rd Airlift Wing’s historic archives with no label or caption and was published with an article in the Sept. issue of the Yankee Courier and later re-printed in the Guardian newspaper, with this caption, “An aviator from the Flying Yankees at the controls of an aircraft assigned to the 118th Observation Squadron.”

We also added an editor’s note asking for help in identifying the mystery “Airman” who almost seems to stare back at us through time in this unique photo.

Shortly after the image was published another copy was found in the archives with a caption that identified the “aviator” as the late governor. We were later contacted by a retired member of the unit who helpfully informed us of our error and confirmed what we suspected. The aviator was in fact Governor Trumbull. But it appears that we are not the only organization confused about this image.

The version of the photo posted on the Connecticut State Library website has a long caption associated with it, but it gives us more questions than answers regarding the nature of the photo.

The first part of the caption states, “Connecticut Governor John H. Trumbull (1925-1931) is shown

seated in a biplane. A running caped messenger in colonial dress is painted on the side, possibly an early logo of Colonial Air Transport, which was awarded the New York/Boston airmail contract in 1926, and of which

Trumbull was part owner.

The caption makes no reference to the Flying Yankees, and alludes to a possible commercial past to the organization’s famed icon. Is this a long-forgotten error, or does this reveal the little-known origin of the unit’s patch?

This would certainly add a new twist to the legend of Capt. Joseph Wadsworth, who the patch portrays on the

Governor John H. Trumbull, Connecticut’s flying governor. Appointed the first state commissioner of aviation shortly after WWI. His solo flight in 1928...”

And apparently a note on the back of the photo reads, “Hartford Courant article dated October 24, 1927 - ‘Governor Trumbull becomes first governor in the nation to qualify for a pilot’s license and makes his first solo flight’ in an Alexander Eaglerock plane.”

The website states Trumbull developed an affinity for aviation in 1926, and received his pilot’s license at the age of 53 which would have been on that same year, not in 1927. This also begs the question, why would Trumbull’s first solo flight take place two years after he earned his pilot license? And what is an Alexander Eaglerock plane?

According to Wikipedia, an Alexander Eaglerock was a two-seated biplane that was, “especially popular with barnstormers... They were also used for carrying airmail, aerial photography, crop dusting, and air racing.”

The page makes no direct reference to specific military use, but does note at least one version of the craft was powered by the Curtiss OX-5 engine, the same V-8 aircraft engine that powered the JN-4 “Jenny” flown by the Flying Yankees. Did the Flying Yankees ever fly an Alexander Eaglerock plane? Is the aircraft properly identified in the original Hartford Courant article referenced on the library’s website?

This photo is surrounded by questions; some that may never get answered. But it seems likely this was in fact an aircraft assigned to the Connecticut Guard, and the commercial reference associated to the patch and the dubious aircraft identification were probably errors made at the time. Regardless, today’s conventional wisdom states this was in fact the late Governor pictured at the controls of an aircraft.

While it appears Trumbull never served as a Flying Yankee, his efforts along with those of others from that period are credited with successfully securing the first air service unit for the state, according to the Flying

Yankee’s 50th Anniversary history book. Perhaps that accomplishment alone made his supposed flight in the unit’s aircraft a well-deserved thank you.



The late Governor John H. Trumbull, known as the “Flying Governor” of Connecticut is pictured at the controls of what is presumed to be an aircraft assigned to the 118th Observation Squadron. Governor Trumbull’s efforts, along with those of others from that period, are credited with successfully securing the first air service unit for the state. (U.S. Air National Guard file photo)

run as he rushes Connecticut’s Colonial Charter to a hiding place safe inside the beloved Charter Oak to keep it from being seized by the British.

The second portion of the caption reads, “Former

Of Interest to Veterans

VA to Expand Benefits for Traumatic Brain Injury

Adds Five Illnesses Related to Service-Connected TBI

WASHINGTON (Dec. 16, 2013) – Some Veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of five other ailments will have an easier path to receive additional disability pay under new regulations developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The new regulation, which takes effect 30 days from today, impacts some Veterans living with TBI who also have Parkinson's disease, certain types of dementia, depression, unprovoked seizures or certain diseases of the hypothalamus and pituitary glands.

"We decide Veterans' disability claims based on the best science available," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "As scientific knowledge advances, VA will expand its programs to ensure Veterans receive the care and benefits they've earned and deserve."

This regulation stems from a report of the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM) regarding the association between TBI and the five

diagnosable illnesses. The IOM report, Gulf War and Health, Volume 7: Long-Term Consequences of Traumatic Brain Injury, found "sufficient evidence" to link moderate or severe levels of TBI with the five ailments.

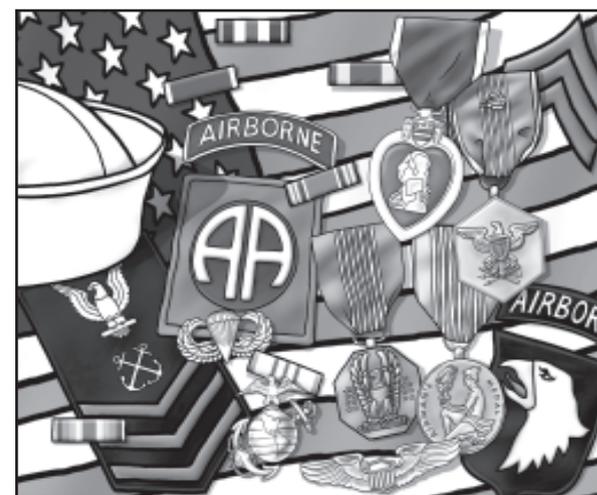
The new regulations, printed in the Federal Register, say that if certain Veterans with service-connected TBI also have one of the five illnesses, then the second illness will also be considered as service connected for the calculation of VA disability compensation.

Eligibility for expanded benefits will depend upon the severity of the TBI and the time between the injury causing the TBI and the onset of the second illness. However, Veterans can still file a claim to establish direct service-connection for these ailments even if they do not meet the time and severity standards in the new regulation.

Veterans who have questions or who wish to file new disability claims may use the eBenefits website, available at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebenefits.

Servicemembers who are within 180 days of discharge may also file a pre-discharge claim for TBI online through the VA-DoD eBenefits portal at www.eBenefits.va.gov/ebenefits.

The published final rule became available Dec. 17 at <http://www.regulations.gov>.



TSA Expands Precheck Air Travel Program to U.S. Military Members

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON (12/20/13) - The Transportation Security Administration today extends its Precheck expedited screening benefits to all U.S. service members including members of the U.S. Coast Guard, according to a Defense Department news release.

As the result of the ongoing partnership with the Department of Defense (DoD), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will officially extend (today) TSA Precheck expedited screening benefits to all U.S. service members.

Service members, including those serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, Reserves and National Guard will be able to enjoy the benefits of this expedited screening program at more than 100 participating airports when flying on nine major U.S. airlines.

If a service member has entered their DoD identification number correctly in a flight reservation, they will be permitted access to TSA Precheck lanes. The expedited screening will allow service members to keep their footwear on as well as light outerwear, laptop in its case and their 3-1-1 compliant liquids/gels bag in a carry on in select screening lanes.

DoD has worked closely with service members worldwide to inform them of the process of updating current and/or future reservations along with their airline profiles to include their DoD identification number. That ID number will be used as their Known Traveler Number, and enables TSA to expand the program to all airports offering TSA Precheck.

Previously, members of the U.S. Armed Forces could utilize TSA Precheck lanes at 10 domestic airports by presenting their Common Access Card (CAC).

Further information on TSA Precheck for military members can be found at www.TSA.gov and www.defensetravel.dod.mil.



Connecticut National Guard AMEDD Professional Education Seminar



COL Robert Nett Hall, Camp Niantic, Niantic Conn.

Saturday March 1 * 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Medics, Nurses, Physicians, Physician Assistants, Dentists, EMTs, Behavioral Health professionals, and all members of the Medical Community, Military and Civilian, are encouraged to attend.

Sponsored by:
Recruiting and Retention Battalion
CTARNG Medical Detachment

Accreditation: This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and Policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) by Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Connecticut Children's Medical Center designates this educational activity for a maximum of 5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

NOTE: There is no cost to attend the Seminar. A CME certificate is available at the cost of \$5.00 (payable in cash during Registration).



For Information or to Register for this Program:
chanthavivone.chanthavong.mil@mail.mil



Resilience Center

Detect Icebergs before they sink your relationships

SGT. MAJ. JAMES SYPHER
STATE RESILIENCE COORDINATOR

Everyone is familiar with the metaphor of the iceberg. It's all about what lies beneath the surface. When it comes to resilience, detecting icebergs relates to an individual's self awareness. Icebergs, in this context, are an individual's core values and core beliefs. These are traits that are ingrained in us from the time that we are young and can evolve over time. They can be values instilled in us by our parents, teachers, and clergy or they can stem from significant emotional events that we have experienced.

Some examples of icebergs are:

- Always finish what you start
- Respect your elders
- Don't trust people you don't know
- The world is a dangerous place
- Children should be seen but not heard
- Seeking help is a sign of weakness

Iceberg beliefs are not necessarily negative; however, they can invoke disproportionate reactions to situations that, on the surface, may not seem to warrant that kind of response. The key to detecting icebergs is recognizing

which ones apply to you and preventing negative outcomes.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Is my iceberg useful, accurate, and flexible?
- How do my icebergs contribute to my effectiveness in the Army and with my family?
- How do my icebergs undercut my effectiveness in the Army and with my Family?
- How can I use the skill of detecting icebergs to make myself a better Soldier, leader, and family member?
- How do icebergs get in the way of my asking for help when I need it?

The detecting icebergs skill is used to identify and evaluate deep beliefs and core values that are driving your emotions and reactions. Use this concept when your reaction seems out of proportion or is undermining your performance and effectiveness.

Resilience Tip of the Month

A prepared family anticipates plans and practices their emergency plan so that everyone in the family will know the role they are to play. Families who are prepared are more likely to be resilient through life-changing situations.

Resilience Resources:

Outward Bound: www.outwardbound.org/veterans
Healing Waters: www.projecthealingwaters.org
Strong Bonds: Chaplain David Nutt: 800-858-2677
Connecticut VA: Newington: 860-666-6951
West Haven: 203-932-5711
Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.mil
GKO Website: https://states.gkoportal.ng.mil/states/CT/ARNG_Staff/G1/Resilience/SitePages

There will be three Resilience Training Assistants (RTA) Courses conducted in FY14 with the next course at Nett Hall at Camp Niantic, Jan. 13-17. Also, the Junior Resilience Training Assistants Course will be conducted Jan. 23-24. This course is designed for Soldiers in the grades of E1-E4. More information is contained on the Resilience Portal of the GKO website.

All units of company size or larger are required to have at least one Master Resilience Trainer. Seats for FY 14 have been sub-allocated to the Major Commands and all Separate Units. More information is contained on the Resilience Portal of the GKO website.

In next month's issue we talk about problem solving. Until then Connecticut, Stay Resilient!

Suicide Prevention: Speak Up if You are Worried About Your Soldiers

MAJ. DEREK MUSGRAVE
SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM MANAGER

If you are worried that someone in your unit is suicidal, you need to speak up.

Whether you speak directly to the Soldier in need or you report the issue to your unit's Suicide Intervention Officer, you need to take action.

Talking about suicide can be uncomfortable but we owe it to our Soldiers to speak up if someone is showing signs of need. The best way to find out if a Soldier is suicidal is to ask them directly.

Don't know where to start? There are many ways to start a conversation about suicide.

Ask them if they are feeling OK or tell them you are concerned about them because of changes in their behavior. Showing that you care could provide relief to the Soldier and prevent a suicide attempt.

Recognizing the symptoms of suicide and intervening saves lives. The Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training course (ASIST) teaches this.

The Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training course (ASIST) is a two-day intensive, interactive and practice-dominated course designed to help caregivers recognize risk and learn how to intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide until the person at risk can be seen by a professional.

The workshop provides opportunities to learn what a

person at risk may need from others in order to keep safe and get more help. It encourages honest, open and direct talk about suicide as part of preparing Soldiers to provide suicide first aid.

Our next ASIST course is scheduled for January 25-26 at the Armed Forces Reserve Center, Middletown, Conn.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Suicide Prevention program, or to sign up for the two-day ASIST class, have your chain of command contact MAJ Derek J. Musgrave at 860-493-2703

or derek.j.musgrave.mil@mail.mil

Other Resources:

Connecticut National Guard Behavioral Health Team:
855-800-0120

Suicide Prevention Life Line: 800-273 TALK (8255)

Fulltime State Support Chaplain: 860-548-3240 (office)
860-803-7748 (cell)





NATIONAL GUARD
A RESILIENT AND READY FORCE

PHYSICAL * EMOTIONAL * SOCIAL * FAMILY * SPIRITUAL

Resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and to bounce back from adversity.

Master Resilience Trainers (MRTs) are the core of the ARNG resilience training program and serve in an M-day or full-time capacity based on the needs of the state. These Soldiers attend a 10 day MRT training course and are authorized the 8R additional skill identifier.

Master Resilience Trainers

- Live and teach the skills they have been taught
- Provide resilience training during NCOCP / OPD and Sergeants' Time
- Serve as the Commander's principal advisor on Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and resilience
- Assist the unit Training NCO ensuring resilience training is incorporated and documented at least quarterly into the unit training calendar
- Assist Commander in providing resilience training for family members
- Train other leaders on incorporating resilience skills and techniques into professional and developmental counseling

If becoming an MRT is a job for you, notify your chain of command or contact your State Resilience Coordinator for more information and eligibility requirements.

When you complete your annual requirement to take the GAT, encourage your spouse to take it too. You will be amazed at what you both learn.

Find us on



<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/armgmt> <https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/>

Find out more information at <http://csf.army.mil/>
james.a.syphe.mil@mail.mil

Operation ELF Brings Smiles to Faces of

Sgt. ALICIA M. BROCUGLIO
130th PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Connecticut National Guard Family Service member and Family Support Center hosted its 11th Annual Operation E.L.F. (Embracing Lonely Families) holiday reception for the families of deployed, those scheduled to deploy and recently returned Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut National Guard, Dec. 15, at the William A. O’Neil Armory.

Maj. Gen. Thaddeus J. Martin, adjutant general of the Connecticut National Guard, and Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman each spent time with service members and their families during the event.

“We can see the efforts of everyone from General Martin all the way down,” said Kim Hoffman, Director of the Connecticut National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center. “We have the opportunity to show service members that we recognize that what they do isn’t easy and we have ways to help them and that this is a second family in addition to the one that they have.”

The reception included holiday crafts, face painting, ping pong for fish and a performance by the USO “Liberty Bells” before Santa came to visit and hand out gifts. Food and sweets were available for the families, including hot cocoa, a sundae buffet and candy table, chili and other foods provided by area businesses.

Despite a snowstorm that hit the state the evening prior, the 60 volunteers and 26 staff members were there to serve the more than 200 service and family members that had planned to attend.

“They have to know that we care, that we support them 100 percent,” said Barbara Pasha, Southington, Conn., first-year volunteer for Operation E.L.F. “It is tough when they are deployed throughout the holidays and it is important to keep them happy during the holidays and help fill a void,” she said.

Operation E.L.F., established in 2001 by then Governor M. Jodi Rell, provides support to military families who are dealing with the stresses of separation due to deployment, and helps to lessen financial hardship as a result of their service. Monetary contributions, toy drives, gift cards, home heating oil, and snow plow services are just a few of the gifts donated by the community to give to families at Operation E.L.F.

“I think the [service members] like knowing that their community appreciates, that their own agency appreciates them and their sacrifice has an effect; especially around the holidays it is not easy to be a family and be without the people that they love,” said Hoffman.



Gene Daily, 4 years-old, slides down an inflatable slide during Operation E.L.F. Dec. 15, William A. O’Neill Armory. There were three inflatable play houses, all of which were donated by Michael and Marissa Pratt. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th PAD)



Jenna Columbus, Family Program Volunteer, paints the face of Alexander Gargoni, 8, volunteer, during Operation E.L.F. Dec. 15 at the William A. O’Neill Armory. The event was held by the National Guard Service Member and Family Support Program. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th PAD)

Connecticut Guardsmen, Their Families



Maj. Gen. Thaddeus Martin, adjutant general, Connecticut National Guard, addresses the crowd Dec. 15, at the 2013 Operation E.L.F. at the William A. O'Neill Armory. This is the eleventh year Operation E.L.F. has been held. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th PAD)



Governor Nancy Wyman holds baby Quinn Pratt, seven months-old, during her visit to the William A. O'Neill Armory during Operation E.L.F. Dec. 15. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th PAD)



Wyatt Pratt, 4 years-old, sits on Santa Claus' lap during Operation E.L.F. 2013 at the William A. O'Neill Armory. Operation E.L.F. is an event held every year by the National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th PAD)

Battaglia Presents First Armed Forces NCO, Petty Officer Book

ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 2013 - The military's top enlisted service member debuted a new noncommissioned officer and petty officer book here today in what he called a significant moment for all enlisted leaders.

Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Bryan B. Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was joined by the chairman, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, as he unveiled "The Noncommissioned Officer and Petty Officer: Backbone of the Armed Forces."

"Welcome each of you to what is a very, very special moment in our military's lineage," Battaglia said. "I'd really like [the book] to serve its intended purpose, and that's [as] a developmental and educational tool."

Though the book is focused on the military's noncommissioned officer and petty officer force, Battaglia said, it carries a larger message.

"I think you'll see this book will serve the reader whether they serve in uniform or not," he said. It addresses commitment, selflessness, teamwork, trust, courage and loyalty, to mention a few qualities, he noted.

Battaglia lauded the book's contributors, co-led by Dr. Albert C. Pierce, professor of ethics and national security at National Defense University, and retired Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Curtis L. Brownhill, as a "cadre of professionals."

"Obviously, this couldn't have been done without the team," he said. "I just need to tell you how proud I am of each and every one of them."

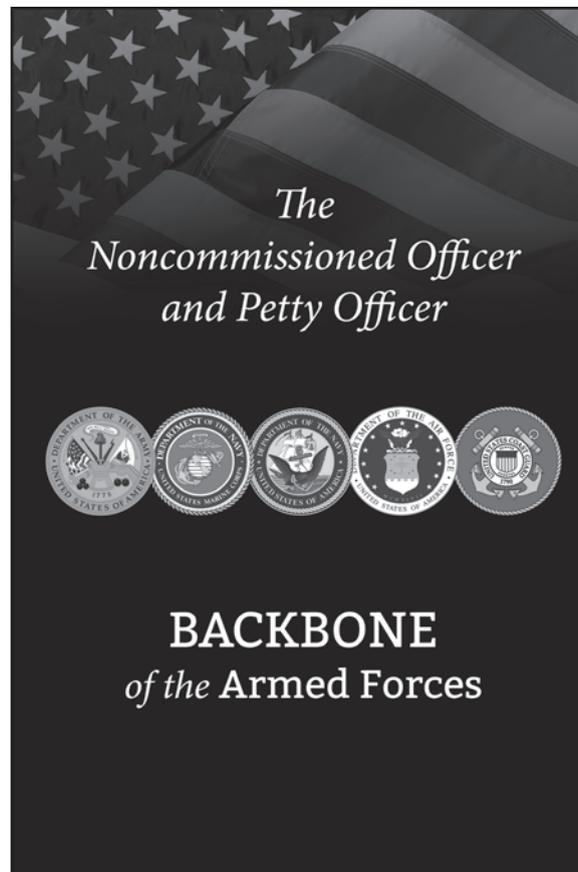
The book took shape from a variety of perspectives, the sergeant major said.

"Like many military projects, I felt that for this one to be successful, it would require a unique blend of art, and science and even some academia," he explained. "I'm not singling out Mr. Curt Brownhill or Dr. Al Pierce, but these two gentlemen were really the catalyst and the glue that propelled it forward while holding it together."

Battaglia said creating the book was "an effort that was coated with risk, challenge, excitement and opportunity all wrapped in one mission statement."

"Back in the middle of 2011, I reached out to Curt and

Al to ask them if they would co-lead this never-done-before monstrosity of a project for our NCO corps," he said. "Both of them immediately committed."



With Pierce having "book-building experience" from his involvement in the development of the "Armed Forces Officer" book, Battaglia said, it was important the books "not mirror one another but mesh."

Brownhill brought his experiences rising up through the Air Force enlisted ranks, Battaglia said, and from his time serving as the command senior enlisted advisor for U.S. Central Command.

"At times, Chief Brownhill, Dr. Pierce and I drove the team pretty hard," Battaglia said. "From re-scoping a particular chapter message that was slightly missed to further research over a weekend, to detailed critiquing of

each other's chapters."

The NCO and petty officer corps would not have become what it is today without the trust and confidence of commissioned officers, the sergeant major said. "And that's what's inside the covers of this book," he added.

Dempsey told the Pentagon Auditorium audience that he initially was unsure of what the book would be, but that he knew he didn't want it to "gather dust on a shelf."

"But then it occurred to me that, actually, the journey to put the book together might be more important than the book itself," the chairman said. "It would cause you to take a look at who you are as a group of noncommissioned officers and petty officers."

"The journey has actually been really important, I think, and we'll see what the book becomes," said he continued. "You really don't know what a book becomes until you put it on the shelf."

The chairman said he hopes it becomes a source of conversation, discussion and even passionate arguments about who and what the NCO and petty officer corps is and needs to do for the nation.

Dempsey said the opening chapter of the book started 236 years ago with Gen. George Washington at Valley Forge, when he realized he needed to appeal to the "soul of his army."

"He did it through the establishment of a noncommissioned officer corps," he said. "And here we are today, 237 years later, publishing this book, which I hope captures a bit of that historical soul."

Following the formal presentation of the book, Battaglia, Dempsey and Medal of Honor recipient Army Sgt. 1st Class Leroy A. Petry signed the inaugural copy of the book, which will be placed in the Library of Congress.

"This is really a great moment for the noncommissioned officer and petty officer corps," Dempsey said.

Electronic copies of the handbook can be found on the National Defense University Press Website at www.ndu.edu/press/nco.html and at the Joint Electronic Library at www.dtic.mil/doctrine/nco.htm.

(Follow Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone Marshall on Twitter: @MarshallAFPS)

**Thank you to all of our
Connecticut National Guard Families
for all that you do
and all that you sacrifice**



Chief Master Sgt.
John Carter

Enlisted Update

Happy New Year 2014, I hope that all of you and your families had a joyous and festive holiday season.

As we enter into calendar year 2014 and I write this article a budget has been sent to the

White House awaiting a signature from the president. The reason that I mention this is that even though it is a budget, which is basically an outline for spending, it is not a continuing resolution, which is an appropriations bill that gives federal agencies money to spend in lieu of a budget being passed.

Within this new budget there is a piece that affects military Retirees' pensions. Here's how it affects working age military Retirees, which are defined up to the age of 62. These Retirees would get a reduction in pensions until reaching that age point. The cost of living adjustment for those Retirees younger than 62 would decrease by one percent starting on Dec. 1, 2015, until the age of 62 is reached. Disabled Veterans are not exempt from the new pension changes.

Federal civilian employee pensions are also affected. This is something that everyone should keep their eyes on even though many are saying that the military piece of this budget will be fixed before the implementation deadline date. So, as you can see, we are still going to be dealing with fiscal issues and sequestration. We should remain vigilant and aware.

The 2014 National Guard Posture Statement is now available for viewing at www.nationalguard.mil/features/ngps/2014_ngps.pdf. This statement gives an executive overview from Chief of the National Guard Bureau Gen. Frank J. Grass, who gives his vision on the following areas: our ability to be ready and able to respond; how cost effective that the National Guard does business; State Partnership Programs; elevating defense processes; assisting and taking care of our guardsmen, families, employers and keeping a watchful eye on the future; and readiness for both the Army and Air Guard. This is a good read for some strategic vision on guard programs and how they impact missions and communities.

As we are still in the middle of the winter months safety is still paramount. Command Sgt. Maj. John Carragher spoke on the drinking and driving aspect during the holidays during the last enlisted update article. Let's remember about the driving speeds and motor vehicle accidents that injure our members every year due to the inclement weather conditions. Let's operate our vehicles at reasonable speeds in order to keep from being an accident and injury casualty this winter season.

As the holidays come to their close with the entrance of the New Year, I want to remind everyone that stressful times are still here and we need to be extra

cautious concerning our members.

Right after the holiday season financial pressures can mount due to overspending and as the bills pour in. The joint support services have a Financial Management Awareness Program (FMAP) that is available on line to assist in financial readiness and personal financial management. Being resilient in our own personal fiscal matters is very important for a member's peace of mind.

These types of issues do not only occur when the member is away, but play large roles in members' lives today. As we enter into the New Year this will be a very helpful website for tax information and financial tips. To get to this financial management awareness program website please log onto <https://jointservicesupport.org/FMAP/>.

At any time benefits can be changed and members must be aware and proactive in order to keep what they have. As fiscal challenges are placed upon us due to drawdown and downsizing we must have a strong and important voice speaking for our concerns and issues both in Hartford and Washington.

Yes, I am again talking about professional military organizations. They are our linchpin into keeping the essential and vital benefits that we enjoy at this time. So I ask, are you a member of a professional military organization that assists with National Guard issues? If not I suggest that you really take another look at becoming a member of one. I am sure that working age Retirees did not feel that their pension benefits would ever be changed because they earned them.

In these tough political times and with the upcoming fiscal challenges that we still face, benefit changes can and will affect us all. If we don't have strength in numbers, (i.e. membership and/or involvement), how can we fight these challenges that will continue to emerge because of the impending fiscal issues driving political decisions?

In closing, we must all remain vigilant on issues important to our profession. Learn about the new budget on the verge of being signed which includes changes to working age military and federal employee retirees' pension; read the National Guard 2014 posture statement it's a good read to get some strategic vision; be careful during the winter months driving; remember that financial resiliency is important also and use the FMAP; and finally, I challenge you to join a professional military organization to assist the National Guard to have a strong voice when it comes to decisions being made that affect the members benefits.

Have a safe and enjoyable month see you again in March!!

Editor's Note: President Barack Obama signed the Bipartisan Budget Act and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Dec. 26.

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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Legal Affairs: A Privileged Communication

1ST LT. ALAN MERRIMAN
JA, CTARNG, TRIAL DEFENSE COUNSEL

The relationship between an attorney and their client is considered sacrosanct in our legal system. That relationship is protected by various rules created under the law.

In order for an attorney to be effective in their representation of a client there must be open, frank communication between an attorney and their client. Attorneys are ethically bound to protect their client's interests to the utmost of their ability.

The foundation of this relationship, like most other types of relationships, is trust.

Attorneys, including Judge Advocates, are bound by a code of ethical conduct and laws regarding evidentiary privilege that exist to help facilitate trust in the relationship. The attorney-client privilege is a powerful tool created under the law to facilitate attorney-client communication.

The attorney-client privilege protects communications made in confidence by a client to his or her attorney. A "confidential communication" is defined by American Jurisprudence, 2d, as including the legal opinion formed and the advice given by an attorney in the course of the attorney-client relationship.

More specifically, a "confidential communication" between a client and lawyer means information transmitted between a client and his or her lawyer in the course of that relationship and in confidence by a means which, so far as the client is aware, discloses the information to no third persons other than those who are present to further the interest of the client in the consultation, or those to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for the transmission of the information or the accomplishment of the purpose for which the lawyer is consulted.

These third persons may include a 27D Paralegal Specialist, who is acting as an agent of the Judge Advocate for the purpose of furthering the representation of the client.

If a communication is made with a third person present who is NOT part of the legal team, then the privilege may have been inadvertently waived.

Although the attorney-client privilege is viewed in broad terms, extending to all communications made to a legal adviser, not every communication during the attorney-client relationship is deemed in confidence. Certain types of information communicated to an attorney may be subject to disclosure as non-privileged.

These non-privileged communications are limited in

nature and include situations where public interests outweigh clients' rights. Disclosure is warranted when necessary to prevent reasonably certain death or substantial bodily injury. Another example is when there is reasonable certainty that disclosure will prevent a client from committing a crime or fraud that will result in substantial injury to the financial or property interests of another.

It is critical to understand the nature of communications with attorneys, especially in our military system. For Army Judge Advocates, the Army is the client, which takes form in various capacities. We may work directly with a Soldier as a Legal Assistance Attorney (LAA) or Trial Defense Counsel (TDC). Generally speaking, only the TDC and their immediate staff have a fully independent attorney-client relationship with client - Soldiers.

The privilege also attaches to most client communications with LAAs. Communications with military attorneys facilitate military operations. However, confidentiality or privilege does not always attach to communications with a Judge Advocate, for example when a Soldier seeks advice from a Judge Advocate who is acting as an ethics counselor.




1st Battalion (OCS/WOCS), 169th Regiment (RTI)
Officer Candidate School

OCS OPEN HOUSE
Information Brief

25 January 2014
Report Time: 0900
0900-1100 at The RTI, Camp Niantic

Uniform: ACU's with PC or Business
Casual (Civilians Only)

Staff and Cadre will be on hand to answer
questions and support administrative
requirements.



Please RSVP through your chain of command and to:
CPT David Lord david.m.lord.mil@mail.mil
CW3 Michael Mottolo michael.v.mottolo.mil@mail.mil



Connecticut National Guard Foundation Inc

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation Inc announces its 2014 scholarship program. This year the foundation will award a total of **Eleven** scholarships.

1. **One \$4000.00 scholarships honoring SGT Felix Del Greco Jr. will be awarded to a son or daughter of a member of the Connecticut ARMY National Guard.**

Please note that a special application is required for the Del Greco scholarship which may be obtained from: <http://www.comcf.org>. No other application will be accepted.

2. **Five \$2000.00 scholarships and Five \$1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded to Connecticut National Guard and Organized Militia members or their sons, daughters, or spouses. Application forms may be found on the Foundations web site at: www.ctngfoundation.org**

Additional Information:

1. Complete application packets must be postmarked no later than **15 March 2014**
2. The selection committee will choose students based on achievement and citizenship
3. You must be enrolled in, or planning to enroll in a regionally or nationally accredited degree or technical program
4. Mail application form (CTNGF Scholarship Only) and completed package to:

CTNG Foundation Inc.
Attn: Scholarship Committee
360 Broad Street, Hartford Armory
Hartford, CT 06015

5. Please contact the foundation at (860) 241 1550 or e-mail ctngfi@sbcglobal.net for further details.

Red Cross Offers 10 Steps People Can Take to Stay Safe During Big Chill

RED CROSS PRESS RELEASE

Temperatures are expected to dip below normal across much of the eastern half of the country from the Plains to the East Coast and as far south as Texas and Florida. As this first taste of winter moves in, the American Red Cross offers ten steps people can take to stay safe during the big chill.

1. Wear layers of lightweight clothing to stay warm. Gloves and a hat will help prevent losing your body heat.

2. Don't forget your pets - bring them indoors. If they can't come inside, make sure they have enough shelter to keep them warm and that they can get to unfrozen water.

3. Protect your pipes - run water, even at a trickle, to help prevent your pipes from freezing. Open the kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals out of the reach of children. Keep the garage doors closed if there are water lines in the garage.

4. Keep the thermostat at the same temperature day and night. Your heating bill may

be a little higher, but you could avoid a more costly repair job if your pipes freeze and burst.

5. If you are using a space heater, place it on a level, hard surface and keep anything flammable at least three feet away - things such as paper, clothing, bedding, curtains or rugs.

6. Turn off space heaters and make sure fireplace embers are out before leaving the room or going to bed.

7. Never use a stove or oven to heat your home.

8. If you are using a fireplace, use a glass or metal fire screen large enough to catch sparks and rolling logs.

9. Use generators correctly - never operate a generator inside the home, including in the basement or garage.

10. Don't hook a generator up to the home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator.

For more information on how to stay safe this winter, visit the winter storm safety information available on the Red Cross Website.

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1st Battalion (OCS/WOCS), 169th Regiment (RTI) Warrant Officer Candidate School



WOCS OPEN HOUSE

Information Brief

25 January 2014

Report Time:

9:00-11:00 at The RTI, Camp Niantic
38 Smith Street, Niantic, Connecticut 06357

Uniform: ACU's with PC or Business
Casual (Civilians Only)

Staff and Cadre will be on hand to answer
questions and support administrative
requirements.

Please RSVP through your chain of command to

CW3 Michael Mottolo
michael.v.motollo.mil@mail.mil

or

CW2 John V. Nerkowski, III
john.v.nerkowski.mil@mail.mil



Healthy Lifestyles

Army Safe Winter Campaign launched in December

STAND-TO!

What is it?

The annual Army Safe Winter Campaign, part of the Know the Signs safety communication initiative, promotes awareness and individual responsibility among leaders, Soldiers, family members and civilian employees to help prevent fatalities and injuries during the winter months.

What has the Army done?

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center launched the Army Safe Winter Campaign Dec. 2 to highlight hazards unique to cold weather activities. Topical feature articles, posters and videos provide

leaders an opportunity to engage with their Soldiers on risk management, thereby reducing accidental injury and death. The campaign, which runs through Feb. 28, 2014, emphasizes prevention and vigilance and is driven by a theme asking all audiences to make safe decisions wherever their adventures take them.

Topics include privately owned weapons, home safety, cold weather injury prevention, physical training, winter driving and winter sports/recreation. The complete campaign is available online.

What efforts does the Army have planned for the future?

Cooler temperatures and winter weather present persistent challenges for Soldiers and civilians operating

in theater and at home. The Army team must remain aware of the hazards and stay engaged throughout this high-risk season.

Why is this important to the Army?

The Know the Signs safety communication initiative includes four separate seasonal campaigns designed to encourage year-round risk management and assist unit and organization leaders, safety officers and NCOs in executing their safety programs. Campaign content, which sometimes includes non-seasonal items, will continue to heighten Soldier, family and civilian awareness of the risks associated with on- and off-duty activities.

DOD Adds Synthetic Marijuana to Random Drug Testing

ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13, 2013 - The Defense Department has expanded its zero tolerance for the use of illicit drugs to include synthetic marijuana, also known as "spice," the director of DOD's drug testing and program policy said in December.

In an interview with American Forces Press Service and the Pentagon Channel, Army Lt. Col. Tom Martin said that in addition to the broad range of drugs for which the military already randomly tests service members, synthetic marijuana will also be included.

"The message we're getting out now is that when you participate in our random urinalysis program, synthetic marijuana products or synthetic marijuana will now be tested along with our other drugs," he said. "It's been known in the general population, both in the medical community and various media reports, that synthetic marijuana drug use is a serious health concern."

Martin noted that while the military typically has a much lower level of drug use than in society at large, synthetic marijuana "still poses a significant risk to both the safety and readiness of our force."

"Prior to synthetic marijuana being banned," he said, "the department went out and did a random study looking at a sampling of military urine specimens from all the different services to see if synthetic marijuana was being used by our members. At that time, the positive rate, or the number of service members who tested positive, was about 2.5 percent."

To put that in perspective, he said, in 2012 the overall positive rate for all the drugs tested for in the urinalysis program was 0.9 percent.

"In 2012, synthetic marijuana products were banned through legislation," Martin said. "So we went back and

did a similar study, and what we found is that the actual numbers went down." However, he added, a high number of service members are using synthetic marijuana.

In addition to testing for synthetic marijuana, Martin said, the military also randomly tests all service members for marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines and other drugs in the amphetamine class, including methamphetamines and the drug known as "ecstasy." The test also looks for codeine and morphine, oxycodone, oxymorphone, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, Vicodin, and different diazepam, such as Valium and Xanax.

Martin said even deployed troops are subject to random drug testing. "They are still mandated to be tested under the military's random urinalysis program; however, the frequency is determined by the operational tempo," he said.

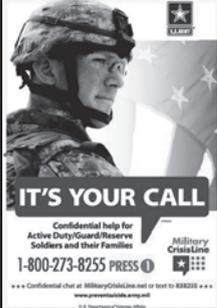
If a random drug testing detects the presence of illegal drugs, Martin said, troops are subject to punishment under military law guidelines.

"Any service member who tests positive for either an illicit drug or misuse of a prescription drug falls under any actions deemed appropriate under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, as well actions that are appropriate as deemed by their commander," he said.

With the addition of synthetic marijuana to an already stringent drug testing policy, Martin reiterated the department's commitment to zero tolerance for the abuse of illicit drugs.

"All service members participating in our urinalysis program will be tested for cannabinoids," he said. "And if they do test positive, they will be dealt with according to the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

(Follow Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone Marshall on Twitter: @MarshallAFPS)



"WE STAND FOR LIFE"

The Army Suicide Prevention Office is not a crisis center and does not provide counseling services. If you are feeling distressed or hopeless, thinking about death or wanting to die, or, if you are concerned about someone who may be suicidal, please contact [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](tel:1-800-273-TALK) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

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akselanne@yahoo.com

Inside OCS: New Beginning for a Seasoned Veteran

OC ROBBY RAGOS
OCS CLASS 59

As I stood in line waiting my turn to in-process on day 1, I began to wonder what will transpire during Phase 1. The last time I was in a training environment was 13 years ago during Basic Combat Training.

I quickly learned that OCS is nothing like Basic Combat Training. Instead of following the entire time, each officer candidate is thrown into a leadership position and is evaluated on their performance of leading Soldiers.

During in-processing I was handed a large green book that said CO on the cover. Because I was the most senior ranking person with the most time in service, I was chosen to be the company commander. At first I expected the task to be relatively simple - establish SOPs, keep the platoon leaders and first sergeant informed at all times, and ensure the entire company was meeting the standard and timelines. What I didn't foresee, was the majority of the class had little to no leadership experience, and that's where the challenges began.

Growing up my hero was my grandfather. He was a Korean War veteran and served 25 years in the Navy and Air Force. To the rest of the family he was grandpa,

but to me he was Sarge. As a boy I would sit on Sarge's lap and he would tell me stories of his experiences. Fascination set in after hearing his stories. I wanted to be just like Sarge when I was older. I have a more unique background than most of the other OCs in my class.

I enlisted in the Army National Guard in 2000 as a CBRNE specialist. I kept that MOS until 2008 when I reclassified my job to infantry. From 2008-2009 I deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan with the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team as a section leader. Upon my return I filled a dual role of a platoon sergeant and battalion CBRNE NCO.

I felt an enormous amount of pride in my work, but I wanted something more from my career. I wanted to take on more responsibility and was ready to take on the challenges of becoming a second lieutenant. I felt as a commissioned officer, I would have a greater influence and impact on my Soldiers. After receiving approval from my battalion commander, I eagerly submitted my packet to enroll.

Phase 1 of Officer Candidate School simulated the challenges, pressures, and situations similar to what a platoon leader would face in Iraq or Afghanistan. Last minute changes to a mission, losing or gaining personnel,

and changes to time deadlines are something a platoon leader faces daily. The key teaching point during Phase 1 was working as a team. No matter how exhausting or intense the training would become, it could be accomplished if you work with the Soldier on your left and right.

I expect Phase 2 to be similar to what a typical drill schedule would be for a platoon leader. The majority of the work and preparation will be done outside of drill weekends. A normal platoon leader will attend staff meetings at the battalion, company, and platoon level. Besides planning, self-improvement will be required to strengthen each OC as a Soldier and as a team. This will take up a lot of the OC's personal time, but is a necessity to be successful in Officer Candidate School.

I look forward to the challenges and accomplishments Officer Candidate School has to offer over the next 12 months. I expect the knowledge, tools, and resources provided by the cadre will prepare me for what is expected of a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army and the state of Connecticut. I am proud to be an officer candidate in the greatest army in the world, and am thankful for the opportunity to serve.

Diversity: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

MAJ. KRISTINA L. GARUTI
STATE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICER

Martin Luther King, Jr., born January 15, 1929, was an activist and prominent leader in the American civil rights movement. The son of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. and Alberta Williams King, he was a Baptist minister that became a civil rights activist early in his career. He led the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, serving as its first president. In 1963, King led a march on Washington where he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. There, he raised public consciousness of the civil rights movement and established himself as a great orator. King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his work to end racial segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other non-violent means. By the time of his assassination on April 4, 1968, King had refocused his efforts on ending poverty and opposing the Vietnam War, both from a religious and a civil rights perspective. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and Congressional Gold Medal in 2004.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was established as a U.S. national holiday in 1986 and is observed on the third Monday of January each year, around the time of King's actual birth date, January 15. It is one of four United States federal holidays to commemorate an individual person. When first introduced to the U.S. House of Representatives, the bill seeking to create this day

originally fell short of the required number of votes needed to pass. But with the efforts of The King Center which turned to support from the corporate community and the general public, along with contributions from musician Stevie Wonder with his single "Happy Birthday" to popularize the campaign in 1980, and his hosting of the Rally for Peace Press Conference in 1981, six million signatures were collected for a petition to Congress to pass the law.

At the White House Rose Garden on November 2, 1983, President Reagan signed a bill creating a federal holiday to honor King. It was observed for the first time on January 20, 1986.

At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2006.

Connecticut has a number of King birthday activities occurring within the state, the majority of which are free to attend. The following are just a sample of events happening. Check your local newspapers and community activity boards for events happening in your own city or town!

EVENTS:

16 January 2014, 1800 – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, YMCA Meeting Rooms, YWCA Greenwich, 259 East Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830. <http://www.ywcagreenwich.org/eliminating-racism/racial-justice-initiatives/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-celebration/>

19 January 2014, 1200-1630; 20 January 2014, 1000-1630

- 18th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Legacy of Environmental and Social Justice 2014, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, The Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University is located in the Science Hill section of the Yale campus, at Whitney Avenue and Sachem Street in New Haven, Connecticut. <http://peabody.yale.edu/events/18th-annual-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-s-legacy-environmental-and-social-justice-2014>

20 January 2014, 1000-1700 - Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Day: Art & Activism, Wadsworth Antheneum, 600 Main St, Hartford, CT 06103. <http://www.thewadsworth.org/event/martin-luther-king-jr-community-day/>

20 January 2014, 1000-1600 - Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Day Celebration, All events are free with Museum admission (adults \$7.00, students ages 5-22 with valid ID \$6.00, seniors age 65 and up \$6.00, and museum members and children under 5 Free). Celebrate this year with performances by Connecticut's Arts for Learning **Hip Hop Dimensions** at **1100** and again at **1300**. Audiences are educated on the history, culture, foundation, and the dance styles of Hip-Hop. Students of all ages and abilities will have the opportunity to make **"I have a dream ..."** buttons and add their **self-portraits** to the Circle of Friends mural, as well as explore the Museum's galleries and exhibitions. http://bruceumuseum.org/site/calendar_detail/annual-martin-luther-king-jr-family-day-celebration1



National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT)

NGACT Award Nominations Being Accepted

KENDRA ROSS
NGACT AWARDS CHAIRMAN

Greetings to all Connecticut Army and Air National Guard Members, Family and Friends. 2014 is creeping up on us, and I encourage you to nominate a deserving member for one of the National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT) awards listed below. Each winner will be recognized at the 2014 NGACT Annual conference to be held on March 22. Nomination forms are due Feb. 1, 2014. Some awards require chain of command endorsements, so please don't wait until the last minute. Nomination forms are available on the NGACT Website: www.ngact.org Point of contact is Kendra Ross, Kendra.Ross@yahoo.com.

NGACT Awards & Eligibility

The Minuteman Award: The highest honor bestowed on a member of the Association. It recognizes exceptional achievement, a patriotic act, highly distinguished service and/or an outstanding contribution to a military organization, community, the State, the Nation or the National Guard Association of Connecticut. Posthumous awards may be made to the next of kin. (Previous Recipients include Staff Sgt. Joseph Phaneuff, Lt. Col. Steve Gilbert, Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Sevigny)

Eligibility: Member or former member of the military and NGACT

The NGACT Leadership Award: Recognizes a company grade officer who epitomizes the loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage exemplified in the Officer's Creed. (Previous Recipient Capt. Rick Marshall)

Eligibility: Company grade officer, member of the Connecticut National Guard, Member of NGACT and recommendation endorsed by the respective chain-of-command.

The Commander Sergeant Major Anthony V. Savino Award: Recognizes a noncommissioned officer who epitomizes the loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage exemplified in the NCO Creed. (Previous recipients include Command Sgt. Maj. John Carragher, Sgt. Tammy Foular, Master Sgt. Daniel Reilly and Chief Master Sgt. Wanda Warwuck)

Eligibility: NCO and member of the Connecticut National Guard, member of NGACT and recommendation endorsed by the respective chain-of-command.

The Meritorious Service Award: Bestowed on an individual, firm or organization for outstanding service

to the Connecticut National Guard and/or NGACT.

Eligibility: Any individual, firm or organization; military or civilian. (Previous Recipients include Commissioner Linda Schwartz, State Rep. Ted Graziani, State Senator Andrew Maynard, Mr. Neil McKiernan, Cong. Joe Courtney, State Rep. Linda Orange, State Rep. Len Greene, Mr. Jim Howard, Capt. Dave Fecso, Mr. Paul Tarbox, Mr. Larry Voyer, Mr. Dan McHale, Gov. M. Jodi Rell and Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton)

The President's Corporate Member Award: Recognizes a corporate member that distinguishes itself through noteworthy contributions in furtherance of the purpose, goals and objectives of NGACT. (Previous Recipients include Sikorsky, USAA and SBC)

Eligibility: Current corporate member of NGACT.

The President's Retiree Award: Recognizes a retiree member who distinguishes themselves through noteworthy contributions in furtherance of the purpose, goals and objectives of NGACT. (Previous Recipients include Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Savino and Frank Perry)

Eligibility: Current member of NGACT.

Have the Courage to Help a Buddy

"One suicide is one too many."

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

For assistance:

- ▶ Talk to your Battle Buddy and chain of command
- ▶ Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

USAPHC U.S. Army Public Health Command (Protections, Prevention, and Promotion)

Save the Date

March 22, 2014
NGACT Annual Conference and Awards Luncheon

August 10-14, 2014
EANGUS Annual Conference
Phoenix, Arizona

August 22-25, 2014
NGAUS Annual Conference
Chicago, Illinois

September 5, 2014
17th Annual NGACT Golf Tournament

January 15, 2014
How to Testify Before the State Legislature Workshop
Legislative Office Building

Small Arms Simulations Course Being Offered

Seats are now available for the Small Arms Simulations Course (SASC) running Jan. 5-19, 2014. The state will no longer be running separate certification courses for any of

the items listed below, therefore commanders are highly encouraged to send Soldiers to the SASC.

This course trains Soldiers to be confident in their abilities to return to their units with the knowledge needed to act as an operator of the following major training systems:

Fire Arms Training Simulator (FATS)

Virtual Convoy Operations Trainer (VCOT)

Engagement Skills Training (EST) 2000

Beam Hit/Laser Marksmanship Training System (LMTS)

HMWWV Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT)

Students will learn how to set up, test, conduct mild troubleshooting, and configure all systems in both the marksmanship and collective training modes. Students will become familiar with the types of scenarios available for training and will gain exposure to the flexibility of the systems in order to incorporate into various training opportunities within the unit.

Courses teaching individual simulators will no longer be available in the state. This course allows Soldiers to be trained on a multitude of training systems in one opportunity at a minimal expense to the unit.

School: 980 - NG UNIT/SPEC SCHOOLS-CT

Course: MTC-006

Course Title: SMALL ARMS SIMULATIONS COURSE

Class 301: 5-19 JAN

Please contact your unit Training NCO to be enrolled into the course.



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Off the Bookshelf : "Edgar Huntly; or Memoirs of a Sleepwalker"

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
COMPANY A, 102ND INFANTRY BATTALION UPAR

The first half of Charles Brockden Brown's novel, "Edgar Huntly; or Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker," is extremely boring. Published in 1799, when the attention spans of readers were presumably longer than they are today, the monologue, descriptions and early plot of this book are colorless, dry, overly pragmatic and appear to validate Brown's title selection.

But then, something happens. Brown thrusts his readers into a world of sociopathic murderous natives, town drunks and kidnapped beautiful women. The protagonist, Edgar Huntly, miraculously transforms from a boring and uninteresting intellectual to an action hero, fighting in the wilderness to save a woman who he'd never before seen.

"Edgar Huntly," can be read in a single day, but the mystery of its sudden onslaught of action and adventure is perplexing and long lasting. What really happens? Who are the culprits? Who is

Edgar Huntly? And, can the narrator be trusted?

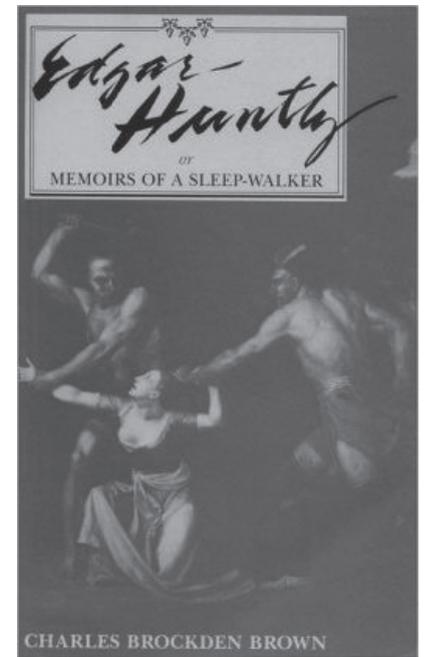
Gothic novels of the late 18th and early 19th centuries asked readers similar questions. In "Frankenstein," for instance, the question can be asked whether or not the monster even existed.

These strange gothic tales did have a genesis. This period of American (and European) history was very 'bi-polar,' to say the least. Cities were growing; factories were built; new machines were invented. And yet, wilderness surrounded towns and cities. The men and women who lived during this period had to operate in both spheres.

"Edgar Huntly," and other similarly themed gothic tales, may present metaphors for the experiences of people who lived in the American industrializing world of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and perhaps, didn't enjoy it very much.

If evidenced by the dead body count in "Edgar Huntly," Charles Brockden Brown may not have enjoyed his split existence either. His refined and well-mannered protagonist leaves his safe and manicured town and is catapulted by primal instincts to fight for love and the freedom of his soul.

And then he returns to sleep-walking.



Retiree's Voice

Attention All Connecticut Army & Air National Guard Retirees

The Connecticut Guardian is seeking someone to write the monthly Retiree Affairs column beginning with the February 2014 issue.

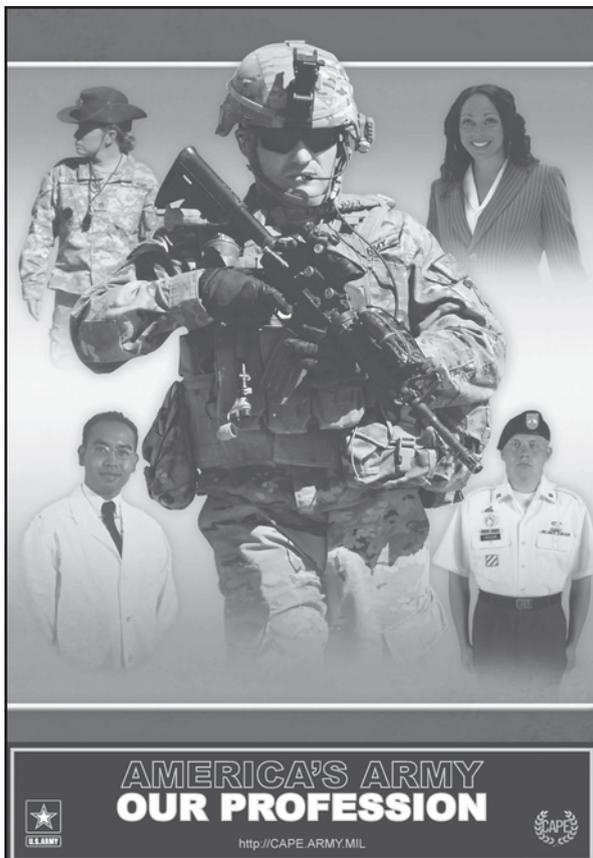
We are looking for someone with an understanding of the issues facing today's Retirees and their families, good writing skills and the ability to conduct research on Retiree

issues and bring the information to the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard Retiree audience in a clear and concise way.

Army and Air National Guard Retirees are all invited to submit their name for consideration. You do not need to live in Connecticut but you do need internet access. The

editor of the Guardian and State PAO will be available to you for questions and feedback.

If you are interested, please send your Name, Rank, email address and daytime phone number to debra.i.newton.mil@mail.mil no later than Friday, Jan. 17.



Need a hand helping your Veteran get into care? Reach out to us.

When a loved one returns home from military service, it can be a hard adjustment for everyone. If the Veteran in your family is reluctant to get help, we're here to help you. Make a confidential call today. **1-888-823-7458.**

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Veterans Services and Where to Find Them

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the VA. Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions, and certain benefits require service during wartime. If you are new to the VA, the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors booklet will help you get started.

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/2012_Federal_benefits_ebook_final.pdf

Health Care

VA's health care offers a variety of services,

information, and benefits. As the nation's largest integrated health care system, VA operates more than 1,400 sites of care, including hospitals, community clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities.

Benefits & Services

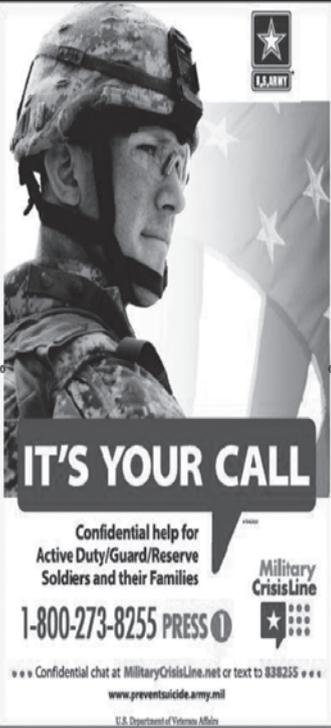
VA administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to Veterans, their dependents, and survivors. Major benefits include Veterans' compensation, Veterans' pension, survivors' benefits, rehabilitation and employment assistance, education assistance, home loan guaranties, and life insurance coverage.

Burial and Memorials

Burial and memorial benefits are available for eligible service members, Veterans, reservists, National Guard members, and eligible family members. Service include interment, headstones and markers, and Presidential memorial certificates. VA operates 128 national cemeteries in the United States and Puerto Rico, together with oversight and management of 33 soldiers' lots, confederate cemeteries, and monument sites.

Veterans Benefits Fact Sheets

<http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/factsheets/#BM1>



“WE STAND FOR LIFE”

The Army Suicide Prevention Office is not a crisis center and does not provide counseling services. If you are feeling distressed or hopeless, thinking about death or wanting to die, or, if you are concerned about someone who may be suicidal, please contact Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

IT'S YOUR CALL

Confidential help for Active Duty/Guard/Reserve Soldiers and their Families

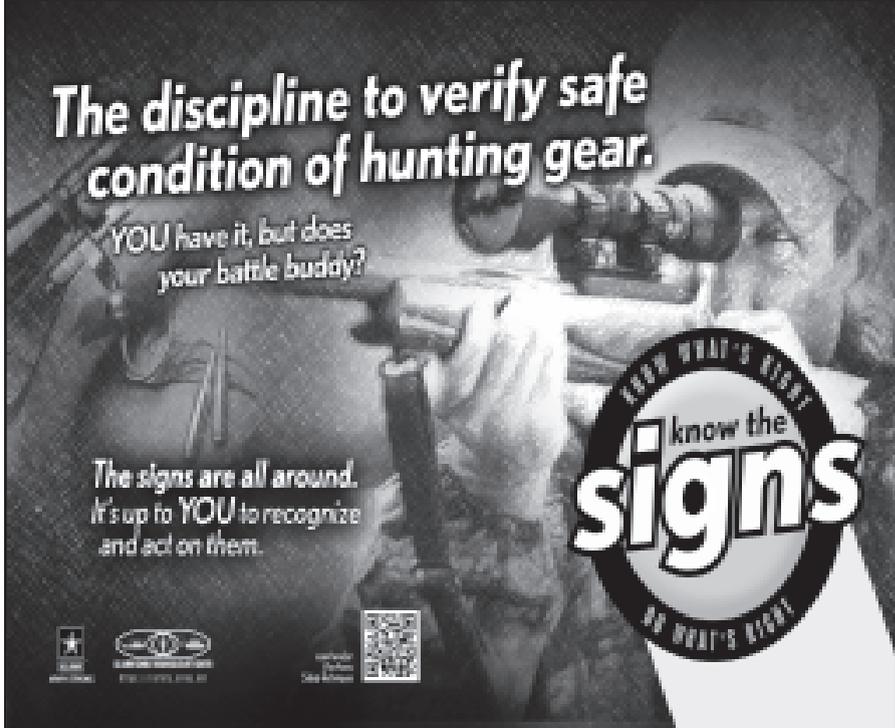
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Military CrisisLine

*** Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text to 838255 ***

www.preventsuicide.army.mil

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



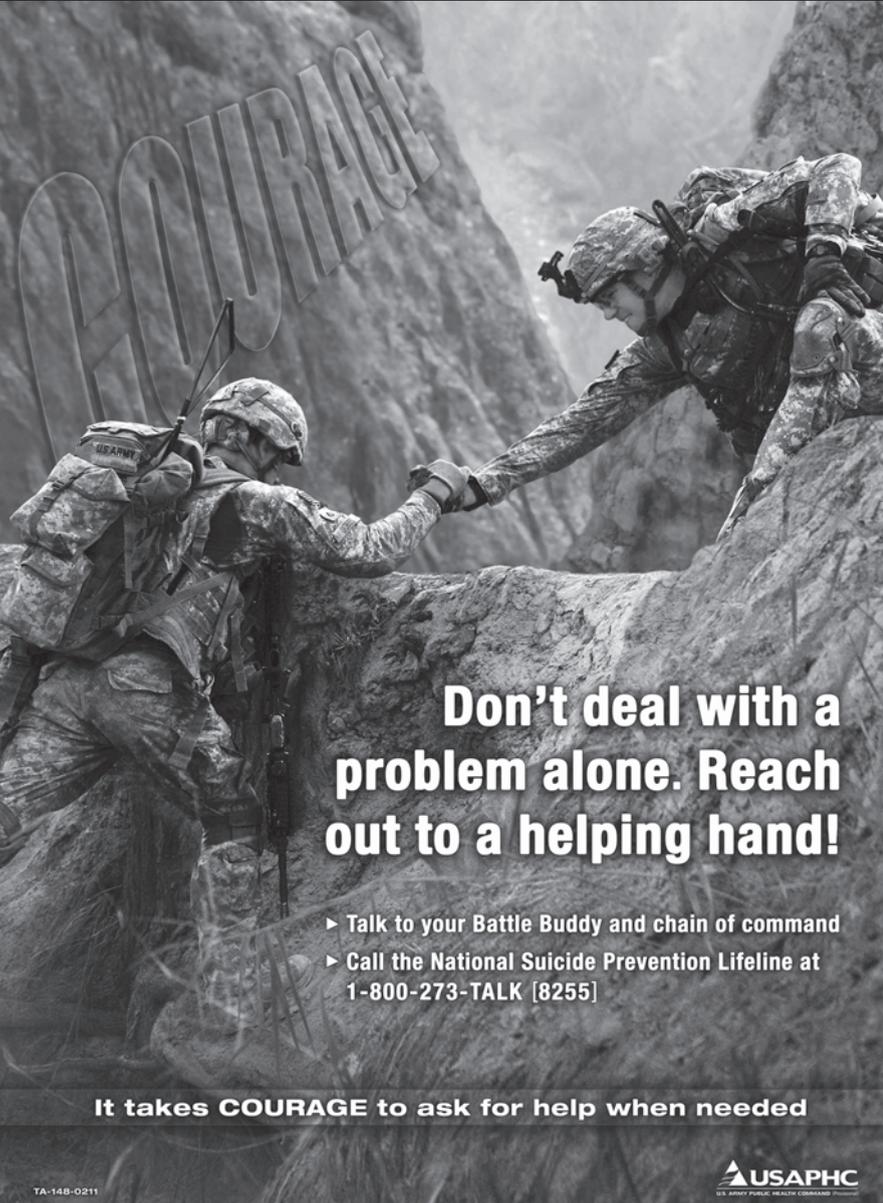
The discipline to verify safe condition of hunting gear.

YOU have it, but does your battle buddy?

The signs are all around. It's up to YOU to recognize and act on them.

know the signs

SEE WHAT'S THERE
DO WHAT'S RIGHT



Don't deal with a problem alone. Reach out to a helping hand!

- ▶ Talk to your Battle Buddy and chain of command
- ▶ Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK [8255]

It takes COURAGE to ask for help when needed

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In accordance with Federal statutes and regulations, no person on the grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program activity receiving financial assistance from the Department of Defense.

Connecticut National Guard Promotions

Army

To Private 2

Tousignant, Kevin S.
Benton, David P. Jr.
Garrigentas, Elvin O.
Sanchezmora, Adrian
Sears, Randall W.III
Hess, Ethan C.

To Private First Class

Gonzalez, Julio A. Jr.
Clemmons, Alexander C.
Hary, Michael G.
Montford, Derrick D.
Sotiridy, Nicholas E.

To Specialist

Johnston, Nicholas B.
Reyesscheiner, Ricardo
Ferreira, Daniel R.
Richardson, Ryan S.

To Sergeant

McBriarty, William P.
York, Collin G.
Johnson, Kyle P.
Evola, William G.
Shackett, Casey A.
Peters, Shane M.
Mingoia, Joseph M. Jr.
Woods, Miles A.
Bell, John S. IV
Joubert, Trista E.
Teeples, Stanly R.
Macias, Demetrius A.
Woodard, William J. II
Riley, Michael J.
Valenti, Mario W.
Fijalkowski, Kyle S.
Encarnacion, Marlyn
Lozano, Gregory T.
Marolda, Daniel J.
Hightower, Kevin C. Jr.
Stuart, Ryan F.
Zack, Roberta I.

Morrison, Ryan J.
Davis, Neal A.
Cruzacevedo, Antonio
Hudobenko, Nicholas P.
Plante, Joshua D. Sr.
Spring, Corey R.

To Staff Sergeant

Flagg, John K. Jr.
Gulino, David J.
Macarz, Robert J.
Kokotiukbraaten, Joseph
Rosa, Mary L.
Casagrande, Christopher
Raffuse, Douglas J. Sr.
Davila, Angelica
Swagger, Nathan L.
Osorio, Tara I.
Dumeny, Jhonny G.
Sklanka, Cory T.
Rosa, Jose C.
Borden, Charles E.

To Sergeant First Class

Trahan, Nicholas J.

To Chief Warrant Officer 3

Michaud, Lori L.

To Major

Hafner, Patrick S.
Bache, Jeffrey A.
Stadolnik, Donald F. Jr.
Anderson, Justin

To Lieutenant Colonel

Roitsch, Paul E.
Sipples, Michael J.

Air

To Airman

Cross, Nathaniel R.

To Senior Airman

Forgue, Jeremy M.
Day, Lindsey M.
Briggs, Olivia D.

To Staff Sergeant

Sledge, Adam. M.
Smith, Bruce A. Jr.

To Technical Sergeant

Zelaya, David U.
Keenan, Davitt D.

Coming Events

January

January 1

New Year's Day

January 8

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

January 20

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 23

Guardian Deadline for February

February

Black History Month

February 12

Lincoln's Birthday

February 14

Valentine's Day

February 17

President's Day (Washington's Birthday observed)

February 19

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

February 20

Guardian Deadline for March

March

March 17

St. Patrick's Day

March 20

Guardian Deadline for April

March 22

NGACT Annual Conference & Awards Luncheon

April

April 15

First Day of Passover

April 17

Guardian Deadline for May

Life Lines

CTNG Behavioral Health Help Line - **1-855-800-0120**

Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline - **1-800-984-8523**

Emergency - **911**

www.armyfamiliesonline.org - **1-800-833-6622**

www.militaryonesource.com - **1-800-342-9647**

National Suicide Hotline - **1-800-SUICIDE**

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org - **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Deadline for the February Issue of the Guardian is January 23
Deadline for the March Issue of the Guardian is February 20

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Connecticut FAMILY Guardian



VOL. 15 NO. 1

HARTFORD, CT

JANUARY 2014

Annual Drop & Shop keeps kids busy while parents shop

MICHELLE McCARTY
CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Connecticut National Guard Child & Youth Program partnered with CT Operation: Military Kids for their 8th Annual Drop and Shop event this past December and kicked it up a notch by offering this great program in two locations.

The first location was at the Berry-Rosenblatt United States Armed Forces Reserve Center in West Hartford. This location had a small group but boy did they have fun, listening to holiday music, making cookies and dessert Christmas trees, playing games all while their parents were able to have time to do some holiday shopping.

The second location was held at the New London Armory where they had a large group of kids come and enjoy the festivities to include crafts, pizza, the mobile technology lab, desserts and more.

We look forward to hosting this event next year and hopefully opening this event up to more locations. For more information about the CT National Guard Child & Youth Program events and programs contact the Child & Youth Program Coordinator, Michelle McCarty at 860-548-3254 or michelle.m.mccarty4.ctr@mail.mil or like the program on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CTCYP.



Haylee Reyes finishes her ice cream cone Christmas tree during the 8th annual Drop & Shop program held in December at the Berry-Rosenblatt United States Armed Forces Reserve Center in West Hartford. The program, sponsored by the Connecticut National Guard Child and Youth Program, encourages Guard parents to drop their children off for crafts, food and games while they go shopping. The program expanded this to two locations, West Hartford and New London. (Photo by Michelle McCarty, Child & Youth Program Coordinator)



Haylee (left) and Jasmine Reyes decorating cookies and ice cream cones for Christmas during the Drop & Shop event held at the Berry-Rosenblatt Armed Forces Reserve Center in West Hartford in December. The 8th annual event was hosted by the Connecticut National Guard Youth & Child Program. (Photo by Michelle McCarty, Child and Youth Program Coordinator)



CATHERINE GALASSO

God's plan for you is a plan for victory

In my new book, *The Open Window*, I wrote about a man in the Bible named Caleb.

Beginning in the Old Testament after freeing the people from Pharaoh, Moses led them including Caleb to the edge of the Jordan River. God delivered His people so that they may enter the Promised Land and enjoy the blessings He prepared for them. Before entering the Land of Canaan, though, Moses sent twelve spies to explore the land to see what they were up against.

When the spies returned, the fearful, negative account from ten of the 12 spies was that the Canaanites were huge, eight-foot giants. Plus, there were locked gates and high walls that were impenetrable.

However, the other two spies, Caleb and Joshua, had different mind-sets. They were focused on God, not the giants. And they believed that they should go forward into the land. God had already promised it to them, and God urged them to go and take it.

Caleb stilled the people and said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30). God had displayed His power before, and Caleb had faith that God would go before them and help them once again. Regardless of what the negative reports said, Caleb trusted God and His word. So Caleb continued to appeal wholeheartedly, "Do not rebel against the Lord. Do not be afraid of the people of the land. We will swallow them up. The Lord is with us" (Numbers 14:6-9).

But the people were fearful and full of doubt. They didn't believe and lost their sense of value. Paralyzed by the thought of facing those giants, they decided to turn away, forfeiting their opportunity to go forth into a land 'flowing with milk and honey.' Thus, they returned to life wandering in the wilderness.

Yet, Caleb did not settle, give up on his dream, nor ever doubted God's goodness to fulfill His promise. Twenty years later, God guided the people back to the same river's edge. And with Moses' passing, Joshua led Caleb and the Israelites victoriously across the Jordan River to the Promised Land. Moreover, because of Caleb's faithfulness, all of his descendants also inherited the land.

Is there something in your life that is holding you back from walking into your miracle? What is standing between you and accomplishing your God-given aspirations?

Perhaps, you were a person who always went after your dreams. But then, something happened along the way that caused you to recede. Thereafter, the negative voices in your head reminded you of your shortcomings, all the times you tried and failed; the fears, and the regrets. Then you began to take the easy way out by convincing yourself that, "Your situation will never improve," "You are not good enough" or "You've made too many mistakes to succeed."

Recently, I heard about a man who was sifting through mud from a friend's well, and he stumbled across a rough, irregular-shaped piece of rock. The man decided to have the rock checked by a mineralogist, and it turned out to be a 1.2 carat diamond! Although it was covered in mud, it was still a diamond and of tremendous value.

Maybe you've come up against some challenges in the past. But are you going to allow what someone said about you, who hurt you, or a setback, stop you?

Similar to the diamond in the well, you are of incredible value. So don't take the safe route and settle for the mediocre. God has given you amazing skills, creative ideas and superb talents. Set your standards high. You have the courage and strength to overcome any obstacles and can still live a life for which you are passionate and achieve your dreams.

Remember, God's plan for you is a plan for victory, so put your faith, trust and confidence in Him. God wants you to be free to dream again. And not just dream, God wants you to see your dreams come true.

It's a new year. Brush off the mud of fears, self-imposed limitations and regrets, and begin again. Reflect on gratitude and what brings you joy. Praise God all through the day, centering your attention on everything that's good, right and positive. Surround yourself with those who are passionate and supportive, because the wrong people and environments can infect your potential. Replace old habits with new, more empowering ones, scheduling time for what is important to you.

See the beauty in every moment. Simplify. Take care of your health and exercise daily. Go outside; take a walk in the fresh air and sunshine. And find ways to help others.

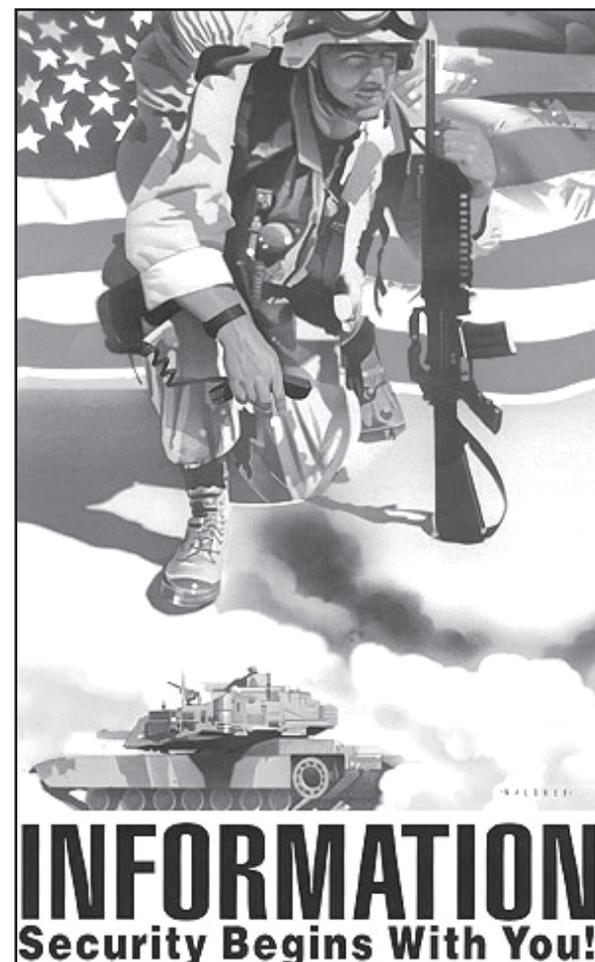
Take out a pen and notepad and spend a few moments making a list of your heart's desires. Be as specific as you can. And pray about each aspiration on your list, asking God to bless your path and help you accomplish goals for His glory.

Next to the items on your list jot down: "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). And after that statement, develop a plan and write what action steps you will take to complete the desired goal. Action steps can be similar to snowflakes. Bit by bit, when snowflakes are piled together, they can stop traffic. Action will get you to your goals.

Write to Catherine Galasso-Vigorito, nationally syndicated columnist and author, in care of Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795 or e-mail her at cgv@anewyouworldwide.com.

Visit her website at www.anewyouworldwide.com

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 **Office of the Chief of Public Affairs**
Online & Social Media Division

Officials announce 2014 Military Housing Allowance Rates

TERRI MOON CRONK
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 2013 - The 2014 basic allowance for housing rates for service members released today represent an average increase of 5 percent, or up to \$75 to \$80 per month, the Defense Department's BAH program manager said.

The new rates will take effect Jan. 1 at a cost of about \$20 billion for the Defense Department program, which will affect nearly 1 million service members, Cheryl Anne Woehr said. The allowance differs by pay grade, location and whether or not service members have dependents.

"How each service member is impacted is local," Woehr said, explaining that BAH rates are based on the costs of housing for civilians with comparable incomes in 306 areas in the country with significant military populations.

"The program focuses strictly on the rental market and certain types of housing, such as rental prices for townhouses, apartments and single-family homes," Woehr said.

BAH rate adjustments, she said, are based on three factors: data gathered from property managers for existing vacancies in each area, the costs of utilities based on data from the American Community Survey, and renter's insurance costs, based on data collected from insurance carriers in each state.

BAH rates are routinely reviewed and are adjusted each year to account for fluctuations in rent, utilities and renter's insurance in a given location, said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen, a Pentagon spokesman. "BAH is designed to assist service members assigned to permanent duty stations within the United States with acquiring housing comparable to civilians in the same income range at that location," he added.

The largest BAH area increase for 2014 will be in Mobile, Ala., at an average of 14.9 percent, which translates into about \$1,500 for BAH per month for service members with dependents, compared to \$1,305 per month for 2013. Increases in Honolulu County, Hawaii, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., follow at 14.7 percent and 14.5 percent, respectively.

The areas with the largest BAH decreases are Sacramento, Calif., where a 7.7 percent BAH reduction translates into \$1,998 monthly for service members with dependents, compared to \$2,132 in 2013. Yuma, Ariz., sees a 6.1 percent decrease in 2014, and BAH rates will drop by 5.9 percent at Altus Air Force Base, Okla.

The BAH rate decreases will apply only to service members who are newly reporting to those locations. Service members already assigned to an area where BAH decreases in 2014 are "grandfathered" by the program's individual rate protection, and their rate will not go down. In areas where BAH is increasing, service members who already live there will receive the new rate.

"We do want to make sure we're fair to the service members regardless of where in the country they're stationed," Woehr said.

A BAH primer on the Defense Travel Management Office website lays out the data collection process and has a table that links housing types to pay grades, she added.

H&R Block Basic free tax filing frequently asked questions through Military OneSource

CHRIS ROULEAU
CT MILITARY ONESOURCE CONSULTANT
JOINT FAMILY SUPPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What can I do with H&R Block Basic?

Using a simple Q & A interview to walk quickly through the tax preparation process, you can:

- prepare and electronically file your federal return and up to three state tax returns
- check your e-file status after you submit your return
- get free, in-person audit support
- experience 100 percent accuracy and maximum refund, guaranteed

When does the IRS accept tax returns online?

The IRS will begin processing e-file returns in late January or early February 2014. The IRS will announce their opening date in December 2013. If you prepare and complete your returns with the H&R Block Basic Online software offered through Military OneSource prior to the IRS opening date, your return will be held on H&R Block secure servers until the IRS begins processing. Once IRS e-file opens, the system automatically submits the return to the IRS.

How long will I have access to the H&R Block Basic program free of charge?

Once the service launches in early January, 2014, the link to the software will be available through the Military OneSource program through June 30, 2014 at www.militaryonesource.mil

Who is eligible for this free tax filing service?

- All Active-duty service members of the U.S. Army,

U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Air Force.

- Members of the National Guard and of the Reserve (regardless of activation status). Spouses and dependent children of the eligible service members, and those who are authorized in DEERS.

- A family member who is taking care of the affairs of an eligible service member when the service member is deployed.

- A severely injured service member of one of the services noted above, or a designated family member of a severely injured member who is incapable of handling his or her own affairs. Medically retired individuals are eligible until 180 days past their End of Tour of Service, retirement date, or discharge date.

- Members of the DoD Civilian Expeditionary Workforce when deployed (as defined by DoD Directive 1404.10) during the 90 days prior to deployment and 180 days post deployment.

Can someone at H&R Block or Military OneSource complete my taxes for me?

No, you must complete your return yourself online. The H&R Block Basic program is easy to use, and technical assistance is available if you need it. For technical assistance (How do I print my return, Where do I enter..., etc.), please call 1-800-HRBLOCK (472-5625) and follow the prompts. In addition, Military OneSource provides free tax counseling should you have any personal tax related questions. If you have questions about preparing your own tax returns, please call 1-800-342-9647 and ask to speak with a Military OneSource tax counselor. During tax season (January through April),

trained tax counselors are available 7 days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., ET. **After April 15, tax counselors are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET.**

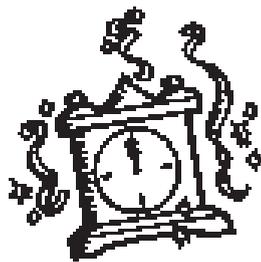
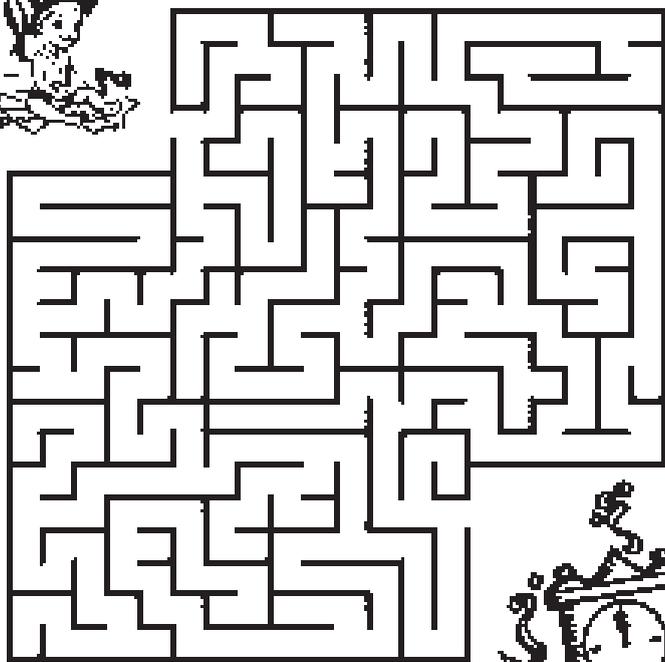
Are Military OneSource tax consultants really qualified to help with my return?

Military OneSource tax counselors are qualified to provide tax education. If you require additional assistance, Military OneSource can refer you to the appropriate resources including your nearest installation tax or legal office.

Is the H&R Block Basic online program and filing process secure?

The H&R Block Basic online program and filing process protects the security and confidentiality of your personal information by using industry-recognized security safeguards. These safeguards include firewalls coupled with carefully developed security procedures to protect your information from loss, misuse, or unauthorized alteration. Whenever sensitive information is asked for, such as credit card numbers, it is encrypted. Further, tax return information is not made available to anyone for any marketing purpose and personal information is not sold or rented.

What is the timeframe to receive a refund? Your refund may arrive in as few as 21 days or as many as 8 weeks, depending on how the refund is delivered. Please visit the IRS website and see the "Where's My Refund" tool for more information (<http://www.irs.gov/Refunds/Where's-My-Refund-It's-Quick,-Easy,-and-Secure>)



Happy New Year!

How many words can you make using the letters in Happy New Year?

KID'S CREATIVE CORNER

A monthly feature of fun and educational activities for the children of the Connecticut National Guard by the Members of the Connecticut Youth Council (CYC)

Service Member and Family Support Center Locations

Waterbury Armory
64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702
(203) 574-2406
Open Tuesday - Friday

103rd Air Control Squadron
206 Boston Post Rd., Orange, CT 06477
(203) 795-2961
Mrs. Donna Rivera and Ms. Nancy Cummings

Norwich Armory
38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360
(860) 887-3911
Open Wednesday

103rd Airlift Wing
100 Nicholson Rd., Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026
(860) 292-2730
Mrs. Donna Rivera, Mr. Sean Brittell and Mr. Troy Walcott

Windsor Locks Readiness Center, Bradley International Airport
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
1-800-386-4071 EXT 149
Mr. Troy Walcott and Mr. Sean Brittell

New London Armory
249 Bayonet Street, New London, CT 06320
(860) 441-2975 Ext. 25
Ms. Elizabeth Rivera

William A. O'Neill Armory
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105
800-858-2677

Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Ms. Melissa Adams, Mrs. Michelle McCarty, Mrs. Rita O'Donnell, Mrs. Andrea Lathrop, Staff Sgt. Melody Barber, Ms. Deena Saccente, Mr. Steven Poulin, Ms. Megan Macsata, Mr. Joshua Hamre, Ms. Cindy Hould and Dr. Vicky Scully-Oakes, Ms. Amanda Johnson, Ms. Ashlynn Stone, Ms. Danielle Cummings, Mr. Chris Rouleau

Stratford Armory
Armory Road, Stratford, CT 06497
203-378-8709 EXT 11
Mrs. Nancy Cummings

Camp Niantic Readiness Center
38 Smith St., Niantic, CT 06357
860-858-2677
Open Monday

Volunteers are needed in each facility. Those wishing to help can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, State Family Readiness Advisor at 1-800-858-2677. Family members or loved ones of a deployed Soldier/Airman with questions about benefits or deployment issues should contact: kimberly.j.hoffman.civ@mail.mil Please visit our Website at www.ct.ngb.army.mil/family