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Connecticut Guardsmen Vie for Title of Best Warrior

SPC. BRIAN HOLLORAN
130TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

Soldiers from across the state gathered at Camp Niantic, Niantic, Conn. to compete in the annual Best Warrior competition held March 27-30. Select Soldiers and non-commissioned officers from units throughout Connecticut came to test themselves during an intense weekend full of challenges designed to push the competitors to their limits both mentally as well as physically.

The Soldiers began their weekend on Thursday evening with a showdown inspection to ensure they had everything on their packing list, a weigh-in and recitation of the Soldier's Creed or the Creed of the NCO.

Day two began with a physical fitness test before the competitors were bused to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. where they were tested in the pool.

"This is the first time we have been thrown into the pool," said Sgt. Johnny Peralta, Best Warrior competitor, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry.

"The pool was pretty tough, probably the toughest thing I've done in any of the local competitions."

The water survival event tested the Soldiers in three different events. The Soldiers had to swim the length of the pool in boots and uniform while keeping a rubber rifle held above the water. Then they had to jump in the water wearing a load bearing vest and carrying a rubber rifle, take off the vest and drop the rifle before swimming to the surface. The last event was a jump off the 10-meter board blindfolded.

"The pool was pretty scary," said Pfc. Jocelyn Mahoney-Balestracci, 248th Engineer Company. "Most of the other events we are familiar with, but this one is something new."

After the water survival event, the Soldiers were taken to the rifle range in East Haven to test their marksmanship and their warrior tasks.

"Once we got to the range we were split up," said Staff Sgt. Brian Shattuck, a mentor from Headquarters

Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry. "The Soldiers went to the range, while the NCO competitors started with warrior tasks."

All the competitors had to complete five warrior tasks, shoot the individual weapon qualification and complete a stress shoot.

"After such a long day that stress shoot really beat me up," said Staff Sgt. Alyssa Pendleton, BWC competitor, 1109th Theater Aviation Support Maintenance Group.

The third day began with a 10K ruck march around Stones Ranch Military Reservation, with a 35-pound rucksack.



Connecticut Army National Guardsmen competing for the title of Soldier of the Year don their protective masks during the stress shoot portion of the State Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)

"The ruck course is pretty tough," said Staff Sgt. Alyssa Pendleton, competitor, 1109th Theater Aviation Support Maintenance Group. "There are a lot of hills here, and some of them are pretty steep."

This year's ruck march was a record breaker, with the first three competitors finishing quicker than the previous best time, and the first female competitor to make it to the end did so faster than any previous female.

"To have the four people finish faster than ever before is incredible," say Sgt. Maj. Cindy Trantor, G3. "And to have (Sgt. Johnny Peralta) finish in under an hour to

break the record he set last year, that's just unimaginable."

After the grueling march pushed their bodies, the competitors sat down and took a written test designed to push their minds, then right back into the field.

"They need to get a little break," said Trantor. "Then we get them right back out

there for the day land (navigation) course."

The competitors each had three hours to plot and locate four points for the day course, and then they got to go back and do it all again in the dark.

"Land (navigation) is always a good way to test a Soldier's skills," said Sgt. Michael Riley, competitor, C Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry. "I'm not too worried about the day course, but the night one might be a challenge."

The final day saw the appearance boards as the final event, after which the winners were announced.

Sgt. Johnny Peralta, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry was named NCO of the Year for the second consecutive year and Spc. Stephanie Landry, 143rd Military Police Company came out on top as the Soldier of the Year.

Both now go on to the regional Best Warrior Competition this month where they will represent Connecticut against seven other states at Camp Ethan Allen, Vermont.

The Connecticut Army National Guard will host the regional competition in 2016.



A Soldier drops his 'rubber duck' weapon and removes his load bearing vest before surfacing in the U.S. Coast Guard pool during the water survival portion of the State Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Spc. Brian Holloran, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)

Leader's Corner

General Encourages Social Courage to Combat Sexual Assault

AMAANI LYLE
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, April 18, 2014 - During Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Defense Department Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office director encouraged "social courage" and a recognition of the cues and behaviors that lead to the under-reported crime to help eradicate it.

"Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of all ranks know what right looks like, because it's instilled early in their careers," said Army Maj. Gen. Jeffrey J. Snow. "When they see something that isn't right, social courage is having the moral courage step up to address it on the spot or tell somebody else of equal or higher rank so that something is done about it."

Snow said over the last decade, DOD leaders have gained a greater understanding of the nature and complexity of the problem. "We knew this was an under-reported crime in the military and recognized that there was no 'silver bullet' to addressing sexual assault," he said. "It would take a multidisciplinary approach."

Snow explained a number of recent policy changes made to the SAPRO program, particularly the need for a confidential reporting system, professionalized advocates, mandatory investigation of sexual assaults and transparency from the time of reporting through disposition.

But perhaps the last two years, Snow noted, have shown the most fundamental evolution in victim support.

"We've taken steps to ensure that all of our sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates are credentialed, [and] we've fielded specially trained investigators and prosecutors," he said. "There's now a certification program to ensure that we are identifying and training the individuals who have a very important role in our sexual assault response."

The general also reported that the DOD has provided critical support to victims through enhanced legal

advocacy. "We've put a support system in place that ensures victims have access to dedicated legal representation from the time they report, through the disposition of their case," he said. "Counsel is there for the victim to navigate the system and some that have worked in this field for a number of years categorize this as a game-changer."

Officials continue to gain greater awareness of factors and behaviors that may contribute to an incident of sexual assault occurring. For instance, sexual assault is more likely to occur in environments where crude and offensive behavior, unwanted sexual attention, coercion, and sexual harassment are tolerated, condoned or ignored. Though leaders have learned much about sexual harassment and assault, Snow added, there is still work to be done to promote a climate of dignity, respect, team commitment and values.

"The vast majority of our force is doing the right thing," Snow said. "We want to make sure that leaders are emphasizing the right things so that individuals are sensitive to the behaviors, actions and attitudes of individuals so if they see something that is not right, they can take action to intervene."

"We are a leader-centric organization," he continued, "so I think our ability to leverage leaders to get after this is an advantage."

Leaders, he said, have balanced options to eliminate

the chance of victims coming in further contact with their alleged offender by establishing a policy for expedited transfers. "It gives commanders the ability to either transfer the victim or the alleged offender," he said.

Since Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel brought in key leaders from across the enterprise to discuss efforts to combat sexual assault, Snow said, the secretary has approved a number of initiatives based on promising practices.

"Once we've taken steps to implement them, he wants to make sure we're holding ourselves accountable and that each service is in compliance with a particular initiative," the general added. "Civilian and military leaders are committed to doing whatever is necessary to get after this problem."

Snow urged victims of sexual assault to see a sexual assault response coordinator or a victim advocate, who will treat them with confidentiality and link them to necessary medical and legal services to make an informed decision on whether they want to file a restricted or an unrestricted report.

He noted that referrals to military treatment facilities are immediate, as all sexual assaults are treated as medical emergencies.

"We're there for survivors," the general said. "All they've got to do is reach out."

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Teamwork, Courage Save Airman's Life

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

4/18/2014-**BRADLEYAIRNATIONALGUARDBASE - East Granby, Conn.** — An individual once said, “Fate rarely calls upon us at a time of our choosing,” a piece of wisdom several Flying Yankees can personally attest to after their combined efforts saved the life of a fellow Airman on April 4.

As Col. James Galloway, commander of the 103rd Medical Group, completed his annual physical fitness test, he and the physical training leader who administered the test, Tech. Sgt. Anthony Gagliardi Jr., a budget analyst with the 103rd Maintenance Group, noticed a fellow Airmen in distress off in the distance.

Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Salsbury, a labor relations specialist with the Connecticut National Guard was struggling to stay on his feet after completing self-paced physical fitness training moments before. His heart began to beat irregularly; shortly thereafter he collapsed, sustaining a significant injury to his head after impacting with the hard pavement.

Salsbury was about 35 yards away when he crashed to the ground, said Galloway who immediately ran with Gagliardi to see what happened.

Galloway immediately went to work to assessing Salsbury's vital signs as he took charge of the area and began issuing orders to nearby Airmen who were eager to help.

Salsbury was non-responsive and gasping for what would likely have been his final breaths, known by medical professionals as agonal respiration, said Galloway.

Galloway was unable to detect a pulse and immediately

began cardiopulmonary resuscitation, including mouth-to-mouth resuscitation as Senior Master Sgt. Curt Robichaud, avionics section supervisor and Chief Master Sgt. Greg Boswell, the component maintenance chief, both from the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, ran into the nearby base gym to retrieve an automated external defibrillator.

A number of Airmen, including Tech. Sgt. Angel Santos, machine shop supervisor with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, saw the commotion and immediately called 911 for emergency medical assistance.

According to Galloway, two cycles of cardiopulmonary resuscitation were completed before the automated external defibrillator arrived at the scene.

As Boswell and Robichaud attended to Salsbury's head wound, Master Sgt. Jonathan Shepard, an aircraft fuel systems specialist with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron and Gagliardi worked to connect the defibrillator to Salsbury's chest.

Shepard, who was trained on both CPR and the AED, operated the device in concert with Galloway's guidance.

“Having used the real one now, I know the training AED is exactly the same as the real one,” said Shepard. “...it talks you through the process.”

The training automatically kicks in, blocking everything else out, and you know what to have to do, said Shepard.

“I almost didn't want to push the button,” said Shepard. “But I did, thankfully.”

The AED was able to re-establish an effective heart rhythm, and the team successfully revived Salsbury; within a few seconds he gasped for breath and the team began to stabilize him.

“For him to come back was an awesome feeling, that

we all did that good deed. It's changed my life,” said Shepard. “I've never had a feeling like that to save someone's life. It was an intense feeling; I had adrenaline for the rest of the day.”

Within seconds, paramedics from the base fire house were on the scene and worked with Galloway to further stabilize Salsbury, connecting him to medical monitors and a steady flow of oxygen as he slowly began to regain consciousness.

Within 10 minutes of the initial incident a civilian ambulance arrived on scene and brought Salsbury to the hospital for more extensive medical care, said Galloway.

According to the American Heart Association, “A strong Chain of Survival can improve chances of survival and recovery for victims of heart attack, stroke and other emergencies.”

The American Heart Association includes immediate recognition of cardiac arrest and activation of the emergency response system, early cardiopulmonary resuscitation with an emphasis on chest compressions, rapid defibrillation, effective advanced life support and integrated post-cardiac arrest care as links in that theoretical survival chain.

“The reason why this worked was because we acted as a team,” said Galloway. “Every one of these people was an important part of this link.”

Salsbury underwent quadruple bypass surgery several days later and is recovering well.

“How very, very fortunate I was to have that event happen where it did, and with such a caring group of professionals willing to step up on my behalf,” said Salsbury. “I am forever in their debt.”



Senior Master Sgt. Curt Robichaud, avionics section supervisor with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, Chief Master Sgt. Greg Boswell, the component maintenance chief with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, Master Sgt. Jonathan Shepard, aircraft fuel systems specialist with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, Tech. Sgt. Angel Santos, machine shop supervisor with the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, Col. James Galloway, commander of the 103rd Medical Group and Tech. Sgt. Anthony Gagliardi Jr., a budget analyst with the 103rd Maintenance Group proudly display an automated external defibrillator at Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Conn., April 6. The team is credited with saving the life of Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Salsbury, a labor relations specialist with the Connecticut National Guard, using an AED. (Photo by Master Sgt. Erin McNamara, 103rd AW Public Affairs)

Landry Named Connecticut's Soldier of the Year



SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
130TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

Spc. Stephanie Landry, 143rd Military Police Company, has been named the Connecticut Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year after beating out several other competitors in the state Best Warrior Competition last month.

"It's pretty surreal that I won," said Landry who has been in the Guard for four years. "Going through the events was tough. Coming out of them you just want to win."

Landry said she spent a lot of time studying for the written test, board appearance and warrior tasks. She also spent a lot of time in the gym working out to prepare for the four day competition.

But none of that prepared her for the water survival events held in the pool at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London on the second day of competition. After

Spc. Stephanie Landry is all smiles as she races to the finish of the 10K ruck march during the State Best Warrior Competition in March.

Staff Sgt. Alyssa Ulrich and Spc. Stephanie Landry plot their course for the Day Land Navigation portion of the State Best Warrior Competition. Landry went on to win the title of Soldier of the Year and will represent Connecticut in the Regional Best Warrior Competition later this month in Jericho, Vermont. (Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)



having completed the physical fitness test that started before sunrise, the competitors had breakfast and moved on to the pool where they faced three challenges: swim the length of the pool in full uniform, to include boots, while holding the 'rubber duck' replica weapon above water; jump in the pool and drop the weapon and load bearing vest to the bottom of the pool before surfacing for air; and stepping off a 10-meter board blindfolded.

"The water survival tests were tough," said Landry. "That swim across the pool was extremely tough, especially with the boots on." A petite Soldier, Landry did not make it the length of the pool as her uniform and boots, once wet, kept dragging her down. A new event to the competition, the water survival tests were not scored. According to Sgt. Maj. Cindy Tranter, G-3 and senior lead non-commissioned officer of the competition, the water survival events will be scored next year.

Landry also said the night land navigation was tough because it was raining and very dark.

"It's an honor to win this competition," said the Plymouth resident. "I wanted to do this to set myself apart from my peers. If you get a chance to compete, do it. This was an opportunity as a Soldier to get new training and to meet people who are passionate about being a Soldier."

While not a member of the same unit, Staff Sgt. Alyssa Ulrich, 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group, and Landry went to high school together and Ulrich's sister will be a bridesmaid in Landry's wedding. Ulrich was competing for the NCO of the Year title after having won Soldier of the Year a few years ago. The two were each other's support throughout the competition, even crossing the finish line of the 10K ruck march together.

She said Ulrich gave her the key to success: writing everything down on study cards and having them with you all the time.

Landry said that support was invaluable to her. She also said the support she received from her mentor, Sgt. Nicole Knoll, also of the 143rd Military Police Company, and Landry's best friend, kept her going through training and competing.

"You have to study," said Landry. "You have to do ruck marches. Being mentally tough and being confident in yourself is important."

Other events during the competition included a show down inspection, reciting the Soldier's Creed, weigh-in, individual weapons qualification, stress shoot, five warrior tasks and day land navigation.

Landry will now represent Connecticut at the regional Best Warrior Competition in May at Camp Ethan Allen, Vermont against Soldiers from seven other states.

She plans to do more physical training and ruck marches, continue studying and getting smart on weapons systems.

A technician at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Windsor Locks, Landry has a degree in fine arts and when she has time, likes to paint, draw and work in pastels. She has a painting she did of Afghanistan hanging in her office.

Peralta Takes State Best Warrior Title for Third Consecutive Year: Once as Soldier, Twice as NCO

**SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
130TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT**

Three attempts. Three victories.

“This is becoming a habit,” said State Command Sgt. Maj. John S. Carragher when announcing the Non-commissioned Officer of the Year during the closing ceremonies of the state Best Warrior Competition.

Sgt. Johnny Peralta, Headquarters/Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry had once again earned the top position against all competitors in the annual event. He took top honors as Soldier of the Year in the 2012 Best Warrior Competition, came back to take top honors as NCO last year, and repeated the feat this year.

“It’s pretty crazy,” Peralta said of the three-peat. “Luckily I have a great team behind me, a lot of people behind the doors working for me.”

A senior sniper with his unit’s scout section, Peralta trained and studied hard this year to come out on top. His mentor, Staff Sgt. Brian Shattuck, has been with him all three years and Peralta says that when he got tired, Shattuck was the one who would push him to keep going.

“I wasn’t sure I could win again,” Peralta said. “Just to be able to represent my unit, the history my unit has, the guys that are in my unit. There is so much history we have, to be able to be the person to represent all that lineage is really a great feeling.”

The four day event began on March 27 at Camp Niantic, Niantic, Conn. with a showdown inspection, weigh-in and recitation of the Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer and was followed by an in-brief and social.

The next morning saw the competitors up before the sun to knock out the physical fitness test. After breakfast, the Soldiers and NCOs headed to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London for water survival tests.

This was the first year the water survival events were held. Sgt. Maj. Cindy Tranter, G-3 sergeant major and senior lead NCO of the state Best Warrior Competition, said they were trying to add in events that would make the competition a bit tougher and bring it more in line with the regional and national competitions.

Peralta said the water survival tasks were the hardest of the competition.

“I had no idea my boots would be like cement blocks when they got wet,” he said.

Other events included individual weapons qualification, a stress shoot, five warrior tasks, a written test, a board appearance, day and night land navigation and perhaps Peralta’s best event, the 10K ruck march. Peralta said he spent more time this year preparing for the appearance board and the written test than he had in previous years.

As an NCO competitor last year, Peralta broke the state ruck march course record. When he moved on to the regional competition at Camp Smith, N.Y., he shattered the course record there in a time so fast, the three

competitors chasing him also came in under the course record time.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Peralta spent many hours rucking in a state park near his home in Danbury, and again broke the course record coming in at just over 58 minutes. Yes, he completed a 10K ruck march with a 35-pound ruck in little more than 58 minutes.

“I did a lot of ruck marching to prepare for this year,” said Peralta. “I live near a state park and would just slap on a ruck and go. We’re light infantry, that’s our bread and butter.”

Peralta has broken and set many records and is now entering the history books in another way. He is the first to win the NCO of the Year title, not only twice, but in consecutive years. Previously, once you won, you could not compete again the following year, however, that rule was changed this year, allowing Peralta to compete.

Peralta now moves on to his second regional competition against NCOs from seven other states in May at Camp Ethan Allen in Vermont. He missed the regional competition as Soldier of the Year in 2012 because his first child was being born. He missed his daughter’s birthday last year to compete as the NCO of the Year, and while he did not take top place honors there, he is looking forward to his return trip this year.

“Preparation is key,” said Peralta, who works for the Department of Corrections, “lots of preparation and lots of help.”

He said his unit readiness NCO helping to pull his paperwork and enlisted records brief together and his unit supply sergeant making sure he had all the equipment needed was a huge help and showed that his unit supported him as he moved forward.

“No way you are winning this without your unit behind you,” he said.



Sgt. Johnny Peralta runs to the course record shattering finish of the 10K ruck march during the State Best Warrior Competition in March. This is the second year that Peralta broke the course record on his way to the title of NCO of the Year.



Sgt. Johnny Peralta and Sgt. Michael Riley rest in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy pool after swimming the length of the pool in full uniform while holding their ‘rubber duck’ rifle above the water during the State Best Warrior Competition in March. Peralta finished first as the NCO of the Year. (Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)

Military, Civilian Joint Training for Mass Casualty at NEDTC

SPC. JYOTSNA KHATTRI-CHETTRI
130TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

WINDSOR LOCKS, Connecticut - Members of the 141st Medical Company (Ground Ambulance), 142nd Area Support Medical Company, Connecticut Army National Guard and 103rd Medical Group, Connecticut Air National Guard, participated in the Surgery in an Austere Environment pilot course with civilian medical staff and first responders at Hartford Hospital and at the New England Disaster Training Center, Camp Hartell, on April 11 and 12.

Service members worked together with civilian responders to train on performing surgery in an austere environment by simulating the aftermath of an explosion at a concert that resulted in multiple casualties requiring medical attention.

On the first day of the exercise, medical professionals worked on simulated surgical procedures at Hartford Hospital, using medical training dummies.

The scenario on the second day involved a notional IED explosion at a concert resulting in mass casualties, including deaths and life-threatening conditions. Service members evaluated casualties, performed triage and evacuated the casualties to the treatment area. Medical personnel had to perform a birth by Cesarean section on an anatomic simulator, simulate amputation of a leg and perform other life-saving procedures.

Spc. Jackie Keefer of the 141st Medical Company was part of the team that performed medical evacuations.

"This training is useful, it's practical and in a real life situation we would probably have to be working with civilian services, so this is really good for us," said Keefer.

Dr. Bruce Browner, site director for the residency program at Hartford Hospital, was the course co-director for the exercise and discussed the value of training with the military at the NEDTC.

"This is a unique facility in Connecticut and I hope this course will be continued by Hartford Hospital," said Browner. "Hopefully, this will set up a model for future courses all around the country."

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) James Skiff, NEDTC director, said the combined military and civilian training was valuable in that it gave military and civilian emergency personnel the opportunity to train together before a situation arises where they will need to cooperate to provide services needed.

"This has been the culmination here, a situation similar to the Boston Marathon bombing," Skiff said of the mass casualty exercise on the second day of the course. "This was a multiple scenario driven exercise to give [participants] an idea of what first responders do; what search and rescue does. There's injuries. There's significant injuries."

Skiff said the exercise was "very successful in terms of what they learned and how to work with humanitarian assistance or disaster recovery. They need to understand for themselves the security issues and the teamwork issues."



Connecticut Army and Air National Guardsmen work together to get a bombing victim to help during a mass casualty training exercise in April at the New England Disaster Training Center. (Photo by Spc. Jyotsna Khattri-Chettri, 130th PAD)



The scenario on the second day of a mass casualty training exercise included a notional IED explosion at a concert resulting in mass casualties, such as deaths and life-threatening conditions. Service members evaluated casualties, performed triage and evacuated the casualties to the treatment area. Civilian medical personnel had to perform a birth by Cesarean section on an anatomic simulator, simulate amputations of a leg and perform other life-saving procedures. (Photo by Spc. Jyotsna Khattri-Chettri, 130th PAD)

Joint Exercise Provides Integrated Training for 103rd Air Control Squadron

SENIOR AIRMAN JENNIFER PIERCE
103RD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

4/14/2014 - **ORANGE AIR NATIONAL STATION - Orange, Conn.** — Two operations modules sit inconspicuously on top of a hill beneath the shadow of a skyward facing radar unit. Huddled inside each module are air surveillance technicians, weapons directors, and a mission commander taking part in a joint training exercise. The airmen inside are communicating with the 255th Air Control Squadron out of Gulfport, Miss., all while receiving their training simulation feed from the Air Force Distributed Training Operations Center in Iowa.

“These integrated training events with other units out of state are conducted two or three times annually,” said Lt. Col. William Neri, the 103rd ACS squadron commander and mission commander for the training exercise.

This particular training exercise, held March 5 at the 103rd Air Control Squadron in Orange, Conn., was not only an opportunity for the Airmen to practice their wartime jobs, but it allowed requisite tasks to be completed. These tasks include providing radar control and monitoring of air weapons during offensive and defensive air operations as well as managing and operating aerospace control and warning systems, including functions involving electronic countermeasures and electronic counter-countermeasures, surveillance, data link management, identification and weapons control.

These types of training events are important because it provides a real world scenario for our Airmen to work through and we are able to complete recurring qualification evaluations for our Airmen which come due every 17 months, said Neri.

The fact that this training exercise was held jointly with an out-of-state unit provided the 103rd Air Control Squadron a training scenario which could not be accomplished within the unit.

“The purpose of the training exercise is to have joint operability with another unit in a distant location,” said Master Sgt. Raheem Reggler, an air surveillance technician with the 103rd Air Control Squadron.

“We are training with the 255th Air Control Squadron out of Gulfport to see how our units communicate with each other in a joint environment. We do this type of training when state side because while deployed, we have to communicate with other commands and control agencies. This is because if we have tracks of interest while in theater, we need to make sure everyone is able to see what we are seeing. We have data links set up so other units can see our air picture, which ultimately gets forwarded all the way up to the Pentagon,” said Reggler.

“From an Airman’s perspective, training with another unit gives us the ability to see how they do things versus how we do things,” said Senior Airman Joseph Pennell, air surveillance technician with the 103rd Air Control

Squadron. We are able to learn from these interactions and apply what we’ve learned in our next training scenario.

“As air surveillance techs, our job responsibilities include detecting, identifying and tracking airborne interests in our assigned (areas of responsibilities). We use the radar with an ID matrix which helps us to identify tracks based on their points of origin and flight patterns, helping us to determine friend or foe in the air,” said Pennell. “If any of our tracks of interest deviate, then we need to pass this information up as soon as possible.

You have to be quick, efficient and flexible. Different scenarios are going to happen that you need to be ready for and this joint training helps prepare you.”

Ultimately, the joint training exercise keeps the geographically separated 103rd Air Control Squadron mission-ready.

“These exercises are robust and are excellent training for all units involved,” said Neri. “Mission readiness is a critical component of our jobs and I’m here to make sure the ACS is prepared and primed for any future deployments.”



The 103rd Air Control Squadron has two operations modules, both of which were used in a training exercise at the Orange Air National Guard Station, Orange, Conn., April 5. Technicians work inside these modules providing radar control and monitoring of air weapons during simulated offensive and defensive air operations as well as managing and operating aerospace control and warning systems during exercises. (Photo by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce)



Tech. Sgt. Manny Montanez, weapons director with the 103rd Air Control Squadron, coordinates with air traffic during a training exercise at the Orange Air National Guard Station, Orange, Conn., April 5. Montanez works inside one of the operations modules there as he communicates with pilots during the exercise. (Photo by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce)

Ready, Set, GTMO: 192nd Military Police Prepares for Cuba

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 192nd Military Police Battalion is scheduled to deploy to Guantanamo Bay Cuba in support of detention operations and area security in spring 2015.

The 192nd will fill in as brigade staff at the detention center, which has been operational since 2002.

192nd executive officer, Maj. Matthew Boski, said that although the number of detainees at the detention facility has reduced significantly over the past few years, the 192nd must be ready and must not complacently walk into their GTMO mission.

Members of the 192nd are currently training at Gates Correctional Institution in Niantic, Conn. to prepare for their deployment. Boski said the 192nd will also train at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. for two weeks in June.

192nd battalion commander, Lt. Col. Paul Deal, said the work the 192nd has undertaken over the past seven years has prepared them for GTMO.

"During the course of this mission, we will utilize everything that we've built towards," he said.

Deal said the 192nd' deployment to Iraq in 2008 to 2009 at Camp Crocker in support of detention operations there gave them experience that will help them succeed.

Many members of the 192nd are former and current Connecticut Department of Corrections employees. Deal said their experience will assist in Cuba as well.

This mission is extremely important because GTMO still has a great amount of strategic importance in the world theater, said Deal.

"We're extremely excited," he said.

In January the 192nd will begin pre-mobilization training before mobilizing at Fort Bliss, Texas.



The colors of the 192nd Military Police Battalion will be flying in Cuba when the unit deploys there as brigade staff at Guantanamo Bay detention center in 2015. Members of the unit are training for the mission in Connecticut and will spend time training at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. for two weeks before mobilizing from Fort Bliss, Texas. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs)

CTARNG EBDL Program Back, With Changes

SGT. 1ST CLASS BRIAN AMERICAN
CONNECTICUT DTMS MANAGER

In an effort to increase unit readiness, the Department of Defense was authorized to provide monetary compensation to members of the Army National Guard, for the successful completion of Electronic-Based Distributed Learning courses by the 2002 National Defense Act.

Although authorized since 2002, compensation for EBDL is not an entitlement and remains unfunded by the National Guard Bureau. In order for ARNG members to receive payment for coursework, states have to allocate a portion of their annual budget to pay for the program.

The Connecticut Army National Guard was among the first states in the nation to implement an EBDL compensation program and provide payment to Soldiers for EBDL course completion. The intent of the program was to provide a financial incentive to Soldiers required to complete structured self-development courses during off-duty hours and \$350,000 of the Inactive Duty Training budget was earmarked for EBDL compensation beginning October 2013.

Requests for EBDL came pouring in, and by January 2014 EBDL compensation requests had claimed the entire \$350,000. After scouring all available accounts for additional funds, another \$35,000 was set aside exclusively for EBDL compensation, bringing fiscal year 2014 total EBDL compensation to \$385,000.

Currently, requests for EBDL compensation far exceed funding levels and modifications to reimbursement

procedures have been implemented to maximize the benefits of the program. Effective Feb. 15, only SSD I and SSD III requests will be approved for compensation, pending fund availability. Additionally, all Soldiers who were approved for EBDL compensation must complete their courses within 90-days of the date their request was approved or the funds will be redirected to the next Soldier on the list.

These changes are necessary to ensure the limited amount of funding is used to improve our biggest readiness challenge - Soldier primary military education, but even with these changes, requests exceed available funds. Future modifications to the EBDL compensation program may be necessary until it is funded nationally.

Soldiers who are interested in receiving compensation for EBDL coursework should contact their training NCO for information and guidance. Soldiers are encouraged to continue to submit requests for SSD I & SSD III through their chain of command and complete their PME without delay. While every attempt to compensate approved Soldiers' requests will be made, the EBDL program is an unfunded mandate and funds may not be available.

Unit administrative personnel who process EBDL requests and payments should visit the G3 Training and Operations Branch sharepoint site for the latest policy memoranda, form templates and process flowcharts to assist them in the EBDL compensation process.

https://states.gkoportal.ng.mil/states/CT/ARNG_Staff/G3/SitePages/Training/Inactive%20Duty%20Training.aspx

-  facebook.com/USARMY
The Official U.S. Army Fan Page
-  twitter.com/USARMY
The Official U.S. Army Twitter
-  youtube.com/USARMY
The Official U.S. Army YouTube
-  flickr.com/SOLDIERSMEDIACENTER
The Official U.S. Army Flickr
-  army.mil/BLOG
ARMY | LIVE - The Official U.S. Army Blog
-  vimeo.com/USARMY
The Official U.S. Army Vimeo
-  slideshare.net/USARMYSOCIALMEDIA
U.S. Army Social Media Resources
-  socialmedia.DEFENSE.GOV
Dept. of Defense Social Media Hub
-  [Office of the Chief of Public Affairs](#)
Online & Social Media Division

New Simulation Building at Camp Niantic Allows Additional Training Opportunities for CTARNG Soldiers

STAFF SGT. JERRY BOFFEN
JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NIANTIC, Conn. – In the past several years, many changes have been made to the buildings and layout of Camp Niantic, the Connecticut Army National Guard's primary training location. Among the most recent of those changes is a newly added simulation training building located on the corner of Camp Niantic's parade field.

The new building, which was completed last fall, allows CTARNG Soldiers a place to train on crew-served weapons simulators, small arms weapons simulators and a SimMan patient simulator for medical training all under one roof, said Lt. Col. Joe Danao, construction and facilities management, Connecticut Army National Guard.

Funding for the building came primarily from the State of Connecticut with some federal funds going to the building construction as well, said Danao.

"When we designed and built the building," Danao said, "we tried to blend it with the other new buildings here so that it didn't look like an ordinary pre-engineered building."

On the weapons simulation side, the building features the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000, said Staff Sgt. Gerald Santos, training technician, CTARNG Training Center, and it offers several benefits over the older weapons simulation training buildings on post.

"We took everything from two separate 5-lane systems located in two separate buildings and consolidated it into a single 10-lane system under one roof," Santos said. "Before heavy weapons and small arms were located in two buildings, now they're all in the same place."

Additionally, the EST 2000 is authorized for limited visibility weapons qualification, which is an annual training requirement for all Soldiers, Santos said.

"Your average National Guard Soldier, those not in the infantry or like units, gets to fire their weapon one or maybe two days out of the year," Santos added. "Having the ability to use these trainers ensure them the ability to protect themselves and others."

"This is an excellent way for Soldiers to practice basic weapon handling and serves as a great supplemental training tool," said Santos.

Santos added that the EST is used by CTARNG units nearly every weekend. The medical simulation side of the building is also used with a high frequency he said, most recently for a medic recertification course, which is a bi-annual requirement for Army medics to maintain their medical certification.

"The purpose of the medical side of the building," said Santos, "is providing a place for the medical staff to provide assistance to Soldiers in the field to ensure they are properly trained. Proper training could mean the difference between life and death on the battlefield."

The building also features a class room for training and in the future they hope to move the HMMWV Egress Assistance Trainer, that is located in a different location on Camp Niantic, into the new simulation building, said Santos. The HEAT is used to familiarize Soldiers with the feeling of being in a vehicle rollover and the proper procedures to follow in such a situation.



The Connecticut Army National Guard's new simulation center stands at the end of the parade field on Camp Niantic. The building offers a singular place for Soldiers to train using weapons simulation and the SimMan patient simulation system. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ Public Affairs)



A medical simulation training room is one feature of the new simulation center at Camp Niantic. The room features a SimMan patient simulation training system set up inside of a mock casualty treatment center as well as lighting and sound systems that can be used to create a more realistic battle field-like training experience. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ Public Affairs)



The weapons simulation room inside of the Connecticut Army National Guard's new simulation center at Camp Niantic features an Engagement Skills Trainer 2000, which allows Soldiers to conduct weapons training on small arms and crew served weapons. This building brings much of Camp Niantic's simulation trainers under one roof, which allows Soldiers to conduct several facets of training in one consolidated place. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ Public Affairs)

Chamber of Commerce Members Participate in Third Annual Military Orientation Day

ITSN ALEXA GONZALEZ
U.S. NAVY

GROTON, Conn. - Members of the local community received a behind-the-gates tour of Naval Submarine Base New London (SUBASE) and Southeastern Connecticut military installations and commands during the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut Leadership Program's third annual Military-Defense Day, Apr. 10.

Thirty-five business and community leaders from such sectors as banks, healthcare facilities, and service organizations visited SUBASE as well as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA), the Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group (TASMG) and Camp Niantic of the Connecticut National Guard, for a day filled with tours, briefs, and activities.

In welcoming the group at the day's kick-off, Bob Ross, Executive Director of the State of Connecticut's Office of Military Affairs, spoke to participants about the significance of one percent of American society.

"You have a long but exciting day ahead of you," said Ross. "You'll get to see what a very important one percent of America is doing for you, because right now, only one percent of our society is involved in military service."

To raise the awareness of even more citizens, Ross encouraged participants to share the insights and experiences they gained from the day within their own circles of influence.

"By talking about what you've seen and the service members you've met back at the office or during other interactions, you can help raise awareness and appreciation in the other 99 percent of Americans who have increasingly fewer interactions with the military."

From flying in Connecticut National Guard helicopters and touring the TASMG aviation maintenance facilities, Military-Defense Day allowed Chamber participants to see and experience various roles and missions carried out by members of the Guard.

Maj. Gen. Thad Martin, adjutant general for the Connecticut National Guard, highlighted the breadth and width of the Guard's operations.

"Connecticut's National Guard is one of the best kept secrets in this region of the state," said Martin, pointing out that since 2003, more than 5,000 service members from the Connecticut National Guard have been deployed. "Locally the Guard has conducted five large deployments in response to events such as hurricanes and winter storms under the governor, and continues to deploy to places like Afghanistan."

Martin also spoke to the group about the National Guard's good fortune over the last few years to have benefited from infrastructure investments. One of the biggest benefits being the state-of-the-art training facilities at Camp Niantic which participants had a chance to tour.

The day's experiences with the National Guard were insightful for Patrick Turek, a specialist at Backus

Hospital.

"What the military has done for us today is really appreciated," said Turek. "I was able to check off riding in a helicopter from my bucket list thanks to the National Guard, and it's really opened my eyes to see how the military is involved in economic relationships with public and private partners in the Eastern region."

As Chamber members transitioned to learning about the local sea services, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy opened the doors to its Officers' Club where participants had a moment to recharge and enjoy a lunch buffet before proceeding to Hamilton Hall for overviews of the Academy's leadership program and local Coast Guard operations on Long Island Sound.

"The lunch was outstanding," said Michael Ballirano, branch manager for Charter Oak Credit Union. "Having the opportunity to participate in the helicopter ride, then touring the aviation facility was truly tremendous and extremely fun, but it was nice to have this lunch and see the Academy. I live around the corner and drive past it every day and I always wondered if I would see what's behind these gates. Now I can tell others how inviting and beautiful this location is."

The Navy hosted the last tours of the day, and Capt. Carl Lahti, SUBASE commanding officer, provided a brief on the submarine force and base operations to participants.

"Our Nation principally calls upon Groton for deployable, combat-ready submarines and crews, and a

corps of professionally trained submariners," said Lahti. "Our job at SUBASE is to provide the services and the infrastructure, and create the environment, to ensure the waterfront and school house can deliver on that call."

Lahti then joined the Chamber members on a tour of the Pressurized Submarine Escape Trainer in Momen Hall and the Virginia Weapons Handling Trainer and Torpedo Lab in Wilkinson Hall, before concluding their Military-Defense Day experience with a top-side tour of the Virginia class fast-attack submarine, USS California (SSN 781).

Jill Drobiak, a tax accountant at CohnReznick, was amazed at the hard work that goes into training men and women to make them "fleet ready" for the Navy and Submarine Force.

"To walk out on the pier with the subs, see how the trainers work, and go behind the scenes for the day-to-day operations, was a great experience," said Drobiak. "I feel like I have a much better understanding of what military members go through, and I can say it doesn't seem easy."

As the Chamber's third annual Military-Defense Day concluded, organizers felt the day lived up to expectations and more.

"I think it was a very memorable day for all of our participants," said Megan Cronin, Program and Event Manager for the Chamber. "I'm seeing them spreading the good word on social media already!"



Members of the Chamber of Commerce Eastern Connecticut Leadership Program get assistance strapping in to a Black Hawk prior to moving on to the next stop on their tour of military facilities in southeastern Connecticut. Thirty-five business and community leaders took the tour to learn more about the military and how the civilian business communities can support the military. (Photo by ITSN Alexa Gonzalez, U.S. Navy)

242nd Engineer Detachment Regains the 130th Patch

SGT. BRENDAN McLAUGHLIN
242nd EN DET UPAR

The 242nd Engineer Detachment passed an important milestone on March 31.

This day marked more than 30 days in the Combined Joint Operating Area-Afghanistan. A patching ceremony was held in Kabul, Afghanistan officially authorizing the unit to wear the 130th Engineer Brigade patch as a combat patch.

The 130th Engineer Brigade Commander Col. Diana Holland conducted the ceremony and presented the 242nd with the patch and the coin symbolizing the pride and honor associated with receiving a combat patch.

This event brings the patch back to the 242nd and Connecticut.

So how did the patch come back to the 242nd and the Connecticut Army National Guard? The history of the two units began with the CAPSTONE program. The CAPSTONE program was established by the Chief of Staff of the Army on Dec. 6, 1979. The program organized and integrated active and reserve units to meet total Army wartime requirements. This was an expansion of the WARTRACE program that dated back to 1973. The

objective of the program was to align TDA/MTOE units with an Active Army unit with a wartime mission. The 242nd Engineer Battalion was a Connecticut Army National Guard unit at the time and became one of the CAPSTONE units that fell under was the 130th Engineer Brigade.

The original 242nd Engineer Battalion (Combat) was organized and federally recognized on Dec. 13, 1922 as the 1st Battalion Coastal Artillery Corps in Bridgeport, Conn. The unit was converted and re-designated as the 242nd Engineer Battalion on July 1, 1961. The 242nd Engineer Battalion was decommissioned and folded its colors in 2005.

The current members reached out to former members of the 242nd Engineer Battalion to gain some historical perspective of the past relationship.

Col. (Ret) Gary Thorstenson, former battalion administrative officer of the 242nd Engineer Battalion recalled, "I was the Battalion Administrative Officer when we (the 242nd) changed from the 1st Army patch to the 130th. At the time the Battalion Commander was then-Lt. Col. William Cugno. He visited the 130th in Germany as they were our CAPSTONE trace after the 36th Engineer

Group. Cugno sought and received permission to wear the 130th patch. We had documentation for the request and approval. All this took place in 1990."

"I felt great giving up the 1st Army patch for the 130th because it signified to other units we had a very real and specific mission to support our active duty CAPSTONE brigade," Col. (Ret) Pat McGovern said in reporting the lineage.

The recently organized 242nd Engineer Detachment, Construction Management Team (CMT), was federally recognized in August of 2011. The CMT has nine members with engineer-specific military occupational specialties. Its mission is to oversee survey and design projects and manage construction projects.

A third of the current individuals of the 242nd CMT are former members of the 242nd Engineer Battalion. They include Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Young, Sgt. Maj. David Moorehead and Staff Sgt. Robert Cromer.

"Deploying under the 130th and being able to wear their deployment patch upon returning to Connecticut is a great way of keeping the heritage alive" said Moorehead.

Essays, Devoir and Sappers In!



Members of the 242nd Engineer Detachment wear the combat patch of the 130th Engineer Brigade, bringing the patch back to Connecticut where it was worn for years before the decommissioning of the 242nd Engineer Battalion (Combat) in 2005. A third of the current individuals of the 242nd CMT are former members of the 242nd Engineer Battalion. They include Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Young, Sgt. Maj. David Moorehead and Staff Sgt. Robert Cromer. (Photo courtesy of the 242nd Engineer Detachment)

Army Tightens Personal Appearance, Tattoo Policy

DAVID VERGUN
ARNEWS

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, March 31, 2014) — The number, size and placement of tattoos have been dialed back under revised Army Regulation 670-1, which governs the Army's grooming standards and proper wear of the uniform. The revised regulation was published March 30, along with Department of the Army Pamphlet 670-1, outlining the new standards. Effective dates for the various changes can also be found in All Army Activity message, or ALARACT 082-2014. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III addressed why the changes were made.

"The Army is a profession, and one of the ways our leaders and the American public measure our professionalism is by our appearance," he said. "Wearing of the uniform, as well as our overall military appearance, should be a matter of personal pride for all Soldiers.

"Every Soldier has the responsibility to understand and follow these standards," he continued. "Leaders at all levels also have a responsibility to interpret and enforce these standards, which begins by setting the example."

Some of the changes include:

TATTOOS

Tattoos cannot be located anywhere on the neck or head above the lines of a T-shirt. They also cannot be located anywhere below the wrist bone.

Visible band tattoos cannot be longer than two inches wide. There can be no more than one visible band tattoo. Sleeve tattoos on arms or legs are not allowed.

Each visible tattoo below the elbow or knee must be smaller than the size of the wearer's extended hand. There cannot be more than four total tattoos below the elbows or knees.

Soldiers who currently violate these revisions can be grandfathered in as long as commanders validate their current tattoos. Also, each year, commanders must check each Soldier for new tattoos that might be prohibited. The checks will be done when Soldiers are in their physical fitness uniform and do not include tattoos that might be hidden by the shorts or T-shirts.

Prohibited tattoos include those just mentioned, as well as ones that could be deemed extremist, indecent, sexist or racist.

UNIFORMS

Soldiers on official travel and traveling by commercial carrier are no longer allowed to wear the Army Combat Uniform, or ACU. Instead, they must either wear civilian attire or the service uniform.

The only ACU exceptions are when Soldiers are deploying, on rest and recuperation leave to and from theater and when authorized to do so by commanders for emergency leave or casualty assistance duties.

Identification tags must be worn at all times while on duty in uniform unless otherwise directed.

Soldiers can carry plain, black umbrellas only during inclement weather when in service, dress and mess uniforms. However, umbrellas are not allowed in formations or when wearing field or utility uniforms.

Revisions also cover the wearing of badges and tabs, the carrying of bags, sewing on of nametapes, U.S. Army tape and grade insignia; wearing of insignia representing regimental affiliation, windbreakers, all-weather coats and other garments.

MALEGROOMING

Fancy-style haircuts, including the "tear drop," "landing strip" or "Mohawk," and "horseshoe" are no longer authorized.

Sideburns cannot extend below the bottom of the ear opening and cannot be flared or tapered to a point, and the length of the sideburn hair cannot exceed one-eighth of an inch.

A mustache cannot extend past the corners of the mouth and no portion can cover the upper lip line or go higher than the lowest portion of the nose.

Fingernails cannot extend past the tip of the finger and nail polish cannot be worn.

FEMALEGROOMING

Hair must be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned. Bangs are now authorized, as long as they don't fall below the eyebrows. "Bulk of hair," measured from the scalp up, as opposed to the length of hair, will not exceed two inches, except for a bun, which can protrude three inches from the scalp. The bun cannot be wider than the width of the head.

Also hair needs to be properly secured, cannot be unbalanced or lopsided and parting of hair must be in a straight line.

Hair extensions and wigs are now authorized as long as they have the same general appearance as the natural hair and conform to all other hair regulations.

During physical training, women can now wear the full length of their hair in one pony tail that's centered on the back of the head.

Fingernails cannot exceed 1/4 inch from the tip of the finger and only clear nail polish is authorized with all uniforms.

OTHER

Soldiers cannot mutilate their bodies in any manner, such as tongue bifurcation.

Tooth caps or veneers of any unnatural color, design, shape or texture cannot be worn.

Jewelry or objects cannot be attached to, through or under the skin or other body part. This applies to all Soldiers on or off duty. The only exception is that female Soldiers can wear authorized earrings.

Commanders can authorize the wearing of sunglasses in formations or field environments. Glasses of any type cannot be worn on top of the head.

Soldiers cannot walk in such a way as to interfere with saluting, giving salutations or in a manner that detracts from a professional image. Examples include walking while eating, using electronic devices and smoking. All restrictions that apply to cigarettes also apply to tobacco-free cigarettes.

Personnel in civilian clothing, whether on-duty or off-duty, on or off post, must dress in a way that does not detract from the profession.

The wearing of wireless and non-wireless devices such as earpieces while in uniform is prohibited. However, hands-free devices used in a vehicle or bicycle are allowed as long as they are not prohibited by policy or civilian law.



A Soldier displays his tattoos March 31, 2014, the day new regulations on tattoos and other appearance standards went into effect. This Soldier's tattoos no longer conform to the new regulations. However, he could be grandfathered in under the older uniform regulations. The number, size and placement of tattoos has been dialed back under revised Army Regulation AR 670-1, which governs the Army's grooming standards and proper wear of the uniform. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Xaime Hernandez, U.S. Army)

Resilience Center

Five Dimensions of Strength and MRT Competencies

SGT. MAJ. JAMES SYPHER
STATE RESILIENCE COORDINATOR

The five dimensions of strength consist of family, physical, social, spiritual and emotional.

The family dimension is about maintaining trusted relationships that foster good communication including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views and experiences.

The physical dimension of strength relates to performing and excelling in physical activities that require fitness, endurance, strength and flexibility derived through exercise, nutrition and training.

The social dimension involves developing valued friendships that are personally fulfilling.

The spiritual dimension is about having a set of beliefs, principles and values that sustain a person beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength.

The emotional dimension of strength has to do with approaching life's challenges in a positive, optimistic manner by demonstrating self-control, stamina and good character with your choices and actions.

Master resilience trainers utilize six competencies, which fall within the five dimensions, to cope with adversity and remain resilient under difficult circumstances. The

six competencies on which master resilience trainers rely are as follows:

Self-Awareness: Identify thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Identify patterns in thinking and behaviors; particularly counterproductive patterns in order to combat negativity.

Self-Regulation: Regulate impulses, emotions and behaviors in order to achieve goals. Express emotions appropriately and stop counterproductive thinking.

Optimism: Hunt for what is good and remain realistic. Identify what is controllable, maintain hope and have confidence in yourself and your team.

Mental Agility: Flexible and accurate thinking. Identify and understand problems; be willing to try new strategies and take other perspectives.

Strengths of Character: Be aware of your top strengths and how to use them to overcome challenges and meet goals. Have faith and confidence in your strengths, talents and abilities; have an "I am strong" attitude.

Connection: Maintain strong relationships through positive and effective communication. Have the willingness to ask for help when help is needed. Demonstrate empathy and support others.

Resilience Tip of the Month

Make it a priority to visualize yourself achieving your goals. Not only will you build confidence by seeing yourself attain your goals, but you will also feel and experience the act of achieving, which can create positive emotional balance.

Resilience Resources

Outward Bound: www.outwardbound.org/veterans

Strong Bonds: Contact Chaplain Nutt at 800-858-2677

Connecticut VA: Newington: 860-666-6951

West Haven: 203-932-5711

Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.mil

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 separateu. Ask your Readiness NCO for more information.

Upcoming Resilience Training

RTA: May 20-23

Jr. RTA: July 17-18

In next month's issue we will cover "hunt the good stuff."

Until then Connecticut, stay resilient!

Mental Health: The Mind-Body Connection

YANIA PADILLA, MS
SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM MANAGER

It is a fairly well-known fact that mental health is integral to our overall health. The mind and body are intricately connected; there can be "no health without mental health." When a person has "good" mental health, they deal better with what comes their way. Poor mental health can significantly harm a person's general health; stress has a huge impact on our lives and can make day-to-day life significantly difficult. The good news is there are many healthy choices and steps that individuals can adopt to promote and strengthen mental health—and overall health and well-being.

A healthy lifestyle can help to prevent the onset or worsening of depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions, as well as heart disease, diabetes, obesity and other chronic health problems. It can also help people recover from these conditions. Everyone can take steps to protect and strengthen their minds and bodies, and while living a healthy lifestyle may not be easy, it can be achieved by gradually making small changes and building on those successes.

If you are feeling stressed, there are steps you can take to feel better. As you read the following suggestions, remember that conquering stress will not come from a half-hearted effort, nor will it come overnight. It will take determination, persistence and time. Some suggestions may help immediately, but if your stress level doesn't seem to improve, it may require more attention and/or lifestyle changes.

- Exercise: Regular exercise is a popular way to relieve stress. Twenty to thirty minutes of physical activity benefits both the body and the mind.

- Hobbies: Take a break from your worries by doing something you enjoy. Whether it's gardening or painting, schedule time to indulge your interest.

- Be realistic: If you feel overwhelmed by some activities (yours and/or your family's), learn to say NO.

- Meditate: Just ten to twenty minutes of quiet reflection may bring relief from chronic stress as well as increase your tolerance to it. Use the time to listen to music, relax, and try to think of pleasant things or nothing.

- Make social plans: Make a short list of friends and family members who are supportive and positive. Also include a list of people you feel the need to stay in touch with regularly such as parents, a close friend or adult child who lives far away, or an aging relative who lives alone. Make a commitment to yourself to call, email or get together with them on a schedule that's reasonable for you. Try to reach out to make at least one emotional connection a day, but plan realistically. Looking forward to special activities boosts our spirits, gives us energy, and makes us more productive. If you find yourself anxious or timid about social interaction, consider talking to a therapist or counselor to build your confidence in social situations.

- Share what's on your mind honestly and openly: Talk about your concerns in a straight-forward way, but try to keep it constructive. Try to be direct about what you need – for example a sympathetic ear, help solving a

problem, a fresh perspective, new ideas or a good laugh. Don't hesitate to ask for the kind of help you'd like. Ask what other people think about your situation, and show them you value their opinion.

- Take one thing at a time: For people under tension or stress, their day-to-day workload can sometimes seem unbearable. The best way to cope with this feeling of being overwhelmed is to take one task at a time. Make a list of things you need to get done and start with one task. Once you accomplish that task, choose the next one.

- Be flexible! If you find you're meeting constant opposition in either your personal or professional life, rethink your position or strategy. Make allowances for other's opinions and be prepared to compromise. If you are willing to be accommodating, others may meet you halfway. Not only will you reduce your stress, you may find better solutions to your problems.

- Visualize: Use your imagination and picture how you can manage a stressful situation more successfully. Many people feel visualization boosts self-confidence and enables them to take a more positive approach to a difficult task.

Mental self-care is crucial in helping us achieve our maximum potential and lead productive and engaged lives. Taking care of our bodies, honoring our needs, and making time to engage in positive and rejuvenating activities are just some of the measures we can implement to improve our quality of life and reduce stress.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: (800) 273-TALK

It Travels Down Leash: The 928th Military Wo

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The little dog worked hard to become a good soldier. He learned to stand at attention. He learned to salute by sitting down and raising his right paw to his face. The soldiers called Stubby their mascot. The little dog had never been so happy. The camp had become his home, and he wanted to stay there forever (11).

In the tradition of Stubby, and the brave Connecticut men whom he accompanied into battle in World War I, the Connecticut 928th Military Working Dog Detachment is ready and motivated for all of their future missions.

The 928th from Newtown, Conn. is a part of the Connecticut Army National Guard, but is not a traditional 'one weekend a month' reserve component unit.

The 928th is a full-time AGR (Active Guard/Reserve) unit and is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is the only U.S. Army Guard/Reserve component military working dog unit in the United States.

Kennel Master, 928th Commander, Sgt. First Class Gerald Fountaine said his Soldiers come to work every day and eagerly await new assignments. Fountaine said between assignments, the 928th teams train each day on current and new training certifications.

"Our training minimum is four hours on odor detection and four hours on patrol and obedience training per week," he said.

Fountaine said his Soldiers spend more time with their dogs than any other working dog unit in the United States, and that it shows.

"Our Soldiers are not here for short tours. They're here for their careers. They have bonds with their dogs that won't be found elsewhere."

The 928th currently consists of four dog teams: four dogs and four handlers. Two of the teams are FORSCOM certified PEDD (Patrol Explosives Detective Dogs), trained in explosives tracking; one PDDD (Patrol Drug Detective Dogs), certified in narcotics detection and one is re-training to be a tactical explosives detection dog (TEDD). The unit is fully staffed with Soldiers, but has a few canine partner vacancies. It takes a great deal of time to train a dog before the unit receives the canine member of the team.

The detachment currently has three German Shepherds and one Belgian Malinois named Balou.

Balou's handler, Sgt. Kimberlee Ruppap, joined the 928th following a 2013 deployment to Afghanistan. She said she feels very fortunate to work with such a dedicated organization, and with Balou. Ruppap said the members of the 928th receive such strong support for their training and readiness from their leadership and that the result is fantastic morale across the board.

"We have a saying, that we use here," Ruppap said. "Enthusiasm travels down leash. When we're feeling great, the dogs are feeling great."

"That's what makes our jobs unique in the military," said Fountaine.



Balou, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., leaps over a hurdle during obedience training with her handler Sgt. Kimberlee Ruppap in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Ruppap and Balou, a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois, have been working together for approximately six months and are the 928th only narcotics detection team. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)

Fountaine said the teams have to be aware of the intangible factors of dog-handling.

"It translates into other areas of their readiness," he said.

Most of the 928th dog teams have deployed. The detachment traveled to Balikatan in the Philippines for narcotics, explosives and combat tracking training in 2012, and the kennel master and three PEDD teams deployed to Qatar in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2013.

In May, unit members and dogs will deploy to train with the Uruguayan military in support of their continuing narcotics/terrorism prevention mission as part of the Connecticut Army National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Fountaine said the 928th has been tasked to support the patrol and explosives detection mission at the Boston Marathon in the fall of 2014. Two teams will be supporting the Massachusetts Army National Guard and Boston Police on this assignment.

"Our teams are fully ready for that mission," said Fountaine.

Although the 928th was not used for President Obama's visit to Central Connecticut State University in March, the teams have provided military working dog support to 25 President of the United States (POTUS) missions since

the kennel began operations in 2007. They also supported Pope Benedict's visit to Yankee Stadium in 2008.

The 928th is currently working on new tracking training certifications.

"We're doing everything we can to ensure future readiness," said Fountaine.

Balou's readiness level may exceed that of the other dogs. In 2012, in New York City, the Belgian Malinois was awarded an American Kennel Club Award for national service.

The 928th members are proud of her. Her medal and plaque hang in their detachment's common area.

"According to the Army, Soldiers and dogs are all functional pieces of equipment," Fountaine said. "Here, that's different. Our Soldiers know that, and the dogs know that. That translates into success."

Stubby's dog tags flashed in the sun as he strutted proudly with the troops to their camp in France. The young soldiers in the Yankee Division knew that this was serious and dangerous business. Stubby seemed to know that too. His legs hurried to keep in step with the marching soldiers. His duty was to stay with friends (22).

Glendinning, Richard, and Sally. *Stubby Brave Soldier Dog*. Champaign, Ill: Garrard Publishing Company. 1978.

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Working Dog Detachment is Unique and Ready



Balou, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., exits a tunnel during obedience training in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Balou, a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois, has been with the 928th, the only Military Working Dog detachment in the entire Army National Guard, since 2011. She is the 928th's sole narcotics detection dog. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)



Balou, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., waits in her kennel before conducting obedience training in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Balou, a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois, has been with the 928th, the only Military Working Dog detachment in the entire Army National Guard, since 2011. She is the 928th's sole narcotics detection dog. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)



Balou, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., bounds over an obstacle during obedience training with her handler Sgt. Kimberlee Rupp in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Rupp and Balou, a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois, have been working together for approximately six months and are the 928th only narcotics detection team. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)



Dino, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., sniffs around for explosives that have been planted under a vehicle for the purpose of explosives detection training at the 928th's training facilities in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Dino, an 8-year-old German Sheppard, has served in several missions home and abroad, including local visits by past Presidents of the United States, U.S. Customs and Department of Homeland Security missions and a deployment to Qatar, all as a member of the 928th, the Army National Guard's only Military Working Dog detachment. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)



Dino, a military working dog with the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Newtown, Conn., sniffs around for explosives that have been planted under a vehicle for the purpose of explosives detection training at the 928th's training facilities in Newtown, Conn., March 21. Dino, an 8-year-old German Sheppard, has served in several missions home and abroad, including local visits by past Presidents of the United States, U.S. Customs and Department of Homeland Security missions and a deployment to Qatar, all as a member of the 928th, the Army National Guard's only Military Working Dog detachment. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Boffen, JFHQ, CTARNG)

Conquering Fears to Become an Army Musician

SGT. FELIX GIUFFRA
102ND ARMY BAND UPAR

There are many factors that come into play when a potential applicant of the 102nd Army Band makes the decision to enlist in the Connecticut Army National Guard.

Spc. Tara Borchert enlisted July 30, 2012. She graduated basic training on June 6, 2013 and the Army School of Music that August. She has been performing as an Army Musician for a few months now.

Borchert graduated from UCONN with a bachelor's of music performance in 2012. While at UCONN she performed in symphonic band, wind ensemble, the symphony orchestra, the Collegium Musicum and various chamber groups. In 2011, she attended the Julius Baker Flute Masterclass and performed for Tadeu Coheleo, Susan Hoepfner and Gary Shocker. In high school, she attended the New England Conservatory pre-college division and received the Woodwind Department Award upon graduation.

"I had recently graduated college with a music degree, and I was attracted to a reliable music job with benefits," said Borchert of her decision to join the National Guard and audition for the 102nd Army Band.

Before making the decision to enlist, Borchert had her reservations about joining. She had fears about having to go through basic training, meeting physical standards and firing a weapon for the first time. Ultimately her decision to move forward and conquer her fears worked in her favor.

"I enjoyed getting paid to essentially go to school and learn things I never thought I'd learn," she said. "Some parts of Basic Training really stunk but it just made me a stronger and more capable person."

In addition to being a member of the 102nd Army Band,



Spc. Tara Borchert practices her flute during drill weekend. "I enjoyed getting paid to essentially go to school and learn things I never thought I'd learn," she said of her training to become a member of the 102nd Army Band, Connecticut Army National Guard. (Photo by Sgt. Felix Giuffra, 102nd Army Band UPAR)

Borchert is employed as a tutor for students with special needs at E.O. Smith High School in Storrs, Conn.

For qualified musicians considering making the decision to join the 102nd Army Band of the Connecticut

Army National Guard, Borchert offers this advice.

"Get in shape and practice. Physical training tests and auditions on your instrument at the Army School of Music don't have to cause you stress if you are prepared."

CT National Guard Band Performs During MCC Faculty Recital

The 102nd Army Band Jazz Quartet performs during the Manchester Community College Music Faculty Recital on March 28. One of the 102^d Army Band members, keyboardist and music director Sgt. Ed Knoeckel, teaches music at MCC as an adjunct faculty member. The jazz quartet wrapped up an eclectic concert with some swingin' jazz pieces. Knoeckel was glad that the community could see the artistry of the 102^d Army Band musicians. "The 102nd Army Band represents the U.S. Army and it is good for the public to know that the Army strives for excellence in the musical arts in addition to national defense, which is what most people think of. There is so much wonderful musical heritage in the U.S. Army. I hope people will also come out to see the 102nd during their summer concert series at different locations around the state in late July," said Knoeckel. Members of the Jazz Quartet are Sgt. 1st Class David Finn, Sgt. Ed Knoeckel, Staff Sgt. Bob Hibson, and Sgt. Steve Fitzgerald. (Photo by Sgt. Felix Giuffra, 102nd Army Band UPAR)





Chief Master Sgt.
John Carter

As we enter May, we look forward to the beginning of the summer season, especially after this long winter which seemed like it did not want to go away with snow flurries still occurring in the middle of April. May is National Military Appreciation Month and has been deemed so because it has the most days for celebrating and honoring military achievements. National Military Appreciation Month for May 2014 includes Loyalty Day (1st), Victory in Europe (VE) Day (8th), Military Spouse Appreciation Day (9th), Armed Forces Day (17th), and Memorial Day (30th). This month allows the nation to observe and publically honor all of the sacrifices and achievements that have been made by our service members. Enjoy the appreciation throughout the month. I think we have earned it!

Even though we are being appreciated there are still challenges and changes affecting the military: fiscal constraints, manpower drawdowns, readiness issues, equipment purchases and shortfalls, and mission sets and resets. As Airmen and Soldiers we must stay vigilant and aware of what is going on and how it is affecting our members and units. We must be involved and be heard. As I have said in the past, the only way that our voices can be heard effectively is through our professional military organizations. Members and membership numbers equate to power and can be very influential when major ideas are brought to the forefront that will impact large numbers of military members. Few members and weak professional organizations can also have the opposite affect by limiting our voice and influence in what types of changes may be implemented. We must be proactive not reactive. So, be a professional and join a professional military organization so that we have a strong voice when we need it. With the drawdown, manpower reductions and fiscal changes that are coming, we need a strong voice within the process.

During these trying economic times we need to remain

watchful over our battle buddies and wingmen. Listen, communicate, and care for each other because you never know how much a moment of caring might impact the life of someone going through some type of hardship. The moments that you give to your battle buddies and wingmen might keep them from going down the road of suicide. These are the numbers that cannot be captured, but the suicide attempts and actual completions are always captured. Our empathy and time for each other can and will be the difference in how we impact this problem, which not only affects the service member but their families and friends as well.

Last, but not least, as I wrap up this article it will be my last one. I am retiring on May 4. I will be ending my military career with 30 years, eight months and 14 days, but who's counting? There have been a few changes that have taken place in my life over the past two months. First, I retired from the Connecticut State Police with 26 years of service and took a full-time position with the Las Vegas Metro Police Department as a civilian polygraph examiner for their department. I left the state of Connecticut to start my full-time position on March 31.

While writing this I started thinking about the military career life cycle. It seems like yesterday when I joined the Guard in August of 1983. As a young member of the military I was introduced to many members who have had large and positive impacts on my life and career. I would not have become a state trooper if it was not some personal recruitment by a Guard member, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Blanchette, who urged me to apply. Throughout my military career in the Connecticut National Guard I had many mentors as my career moved forward, stagnated and then propelled forward again. The places I have seen and the experiences I have shared with our Guard members both past and present have chiseled me into the person that I am today, by shaping both my life and civilian career. While looking back it seemed as if others could see the direction that I should be headed even if I did not at the time. There also becomes a point in your career in which you become comfortable in your position and you don't wish to move from that comfort zone. This is when you become stagnant and sometimes it

takes a big push for you to move from being comfortable to placing yourself in uncomfortable positions in order for your career to continue to grow. This happened to me when Chief Wawruck told me that I should be doing more with my military career and challenged me into looking at applying to become a first sergeant. This stimulated my career in moving forward where I became a chief master sergeant, first sergeant. I was then chosen to become the state command chief by Maj. Gen. Martin which is now leading me to the end of my professional military career cycle.

During this time I was fortunate to work with Army National Guard Command Sergeants Major Sevigny and Carragher who became my team members and battle buddies. During my whole career the backbone of my support came from my family, for without their support I could not have completed the numerous deployments, times away from family events and eventually this long career. To my family, I would like to say thank for all of your support and love. To my Guard family, I would like to also say thank you for allowing me to grow personally and professionally within the guard. So, to all you young Soldiers and Airmen when you look back on your career you will always remember how much being a part of the less than one percent who protects the freedoms of Americans means to you. Remember to enjoy each other because time goes by so fast and you will soon turn around it will be the end of your professional military journey.

As I leave this position I would like to briefly introduce my successor, Chief Master Sgt. Edward Gould. All I can say is good luck Ed and take care of the Connecticut National Guard members and their families. I am sure you will hear more from him in his upcoming article in July.

In conclusion, I would like to say thank you to the readers for making the writing of this column a pleasure and to all of the Connecticut National Guard members thank you for allowing me to serve for, with and beside you for all of these years. As the sun is now setting on my military career it is never goodbye, but so long for now. If you are ever in Vegas...the story continues...

Enlisted Update

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

Legal Affairs

AWOL Under the Connecticut Code of Military Justice and the Uniform Code of Military Justice: Similar Provisions, Similar Results

CAPT. KYLE B. WILKINSON
STAFF JAG, CTARNG

Absence without leave is a serious act of misconduct for military members. Since the misconduct is prohibited under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the Connecticut Code of Military Justice, Guard members need to be aware of the serious consequences, whether their military status is Title 10 or Title 32, active or M-Day.

According to the CCMJ, found in Connecticut General Statutes Section 27-225, "Any person subject to this code who, without authority: (1) Fails to go to his appointed place of duty at the time prescribed; (2) goes from that place, or (3) absents himself or remains absent from his unit, organization, or place of duty at which he is required to be at the time prescribed shall be punished as a court-martial may direct." For Guard members on Title 32 orders, this is the provision of the Connecticut Code of Military Justice that applies.

Similarly, according to Article 86 of the UCMJ, "Any member of the armed forces who, without authority: (1) fails to go to his appointed place of duty at the time prescribed; (2) goes from that place; or (3) absents himself or remains absent from his unit, organization, or place of duty at which he is required to be at the time prescribed;

shall be punished as a court-martial may direct." This provision applies to Guard members when called to federal active duty on Title 10 orders.

These mirror-image provisions contained in the two military codes spell out what seems clear from the title of the offense: military members cannot be absent from duty without approved leave from their military chain of command.

Under CCMJ, the maximum punishment for AWOL is "(1) A fine of not more than two hundred dollars; (2) forfeiture of pay and allowances of not more than two hundred dollars; (3) a reprimand; (4) dismissal or dishonorable discharge; (5) reduction of enlisted persons to a lower grade, or (6) any combination of these punishments." However, under Connecticut General Section Sec. 27-162, a *sentence of confinement in lieu of fine* may be imposed stating "In the state military forces not in federal service, a court-martial may, instead of imposing a fine, sentence to confinement for not more than one day for each dollar of the authorized fine."

Under UCMJ, the maximum punishments for AWOL are as follows:

"(1) *Failing to go to, or going from, the appointed place of duty.* Confinement for one month and forfeiture of two-thirds pay per month for one month; (2) *Absence*

from unit, organization, or other place of duty. (a) For not more than three days: confinement for one month and forfeiture of two-thirds pay per month for one month; (b) For more than three days but not more than 30 days: confinement for six months and forfeiture of two-thirds pay per month for six months; (c) For more than 30 days: dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for one year; (d) For more than 30 days and terminated by apprehension: dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for 18 months; (3) *From guard or watch.* Confinement for three months and forfeiture of two-thirds pay per month for three months; (4) *From guard or watch with intent to abandon.* Bad-conduct discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for six months; (5) *With intent to avoid maneuvers or field exercises.* Bad-conduct discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for 6 months."

The UCMJ and CCMJ have essentially identical definitions of the offense of AWOL. While the punishments vary slightly to reflect the differences between active and reserve service, the practical consequences of AWOL are the same: serious consequences.

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Governor's Horse and Foot Guards

Stepping Out Savannah Style



Members of the First Company, Governor's Foot Guard Color Guard, under the command of 2nd Lt. Kevin McCrewell, march in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Savannah, GA on March 17. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Lorie Macsata)

Playing with the Kids



The First Company, Governor's Foot Guard Band, under the command of Capt. David Carlson, performs with the students at Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School in Marlborough, Conn. on March 24. Conducting the combined bands is Mr. Bruce Foote, instrumental music director at the school. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Pat Boudreau)

ESGR: CEI Data Compliance is Back Online, Ready to Go

JOSHUA MEAD
EMPLOYER SUPPORT SPECIALIST CONNECTICUT COMMITTEE FOR THE
EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

In a recent letter sent to all of the Adjutants General, the moratorium for a familiar program, the civilian employment information program, has been lifted.

Some of the more experienced Guardsmen may remember this program and the importance of providing the information this program needs.

For those who don't, the civilian employment information program, known in the Guard as CEI, is a very powerful tool for unit commanders and National Guard leaders to help assess unemployment and the impact of call-ups on the civilian world.

When the Guard has to activate its Soldiers and Airmen, certain civilian career fields are affected due to the critical skill set of those citizen-warriors. Police officers, firefighters and medical personnel could all be called up causing a serious staffing issue for the civilian work force during a time of crisis.

What does this mean for Airmen or Soldiers in the Connecticut Guard? This means the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the Connecticut Guard need your cooperation

by filling out your civilian employment information. Accurate and timely information ensures we have the ability to make the right decisions.

With this information, ESGR will be able to assist with reducing the unemployment rate of Guardsmen and Reservists. The organization will also be able to determine what employment workshops would be necessary and be able to better recognize employers that value the employment of their military employees.

Filling out your information is easy and can be done from the comfort of your own home. For starters, you can visit the main web-portal at the Defense Manpower

Data Center's website to update your CEI, or follow the information and links provided on Joint Support Services. You can login to update or verify your information with or without a Common Access Card, as long as you have some personal information ready. Once logged in, filling out the information fields that apply to you will take no more than ten minutes.

Currently, this is an annual requirement for the Reserve component and the Department of Defense has set the bar high with a 100 percent annual compliance rate. By the end of September we must reach 95 percent compliance.

This is an achievable task — with your help. So please, take the time now to get ahead of the curve by logging on and updating your CEI data.

Official DMDC CEI website
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/esgr/logonAction.do>

JSS, information and web redirect
<https://www.jointservicesupport.org/ESGR/CEI.aspx>

ESGR, CEI information and web redirect
<http://www.esgr.mil/service-members-family/additional-resources.aspx>



***Healthy Lifestyles:* Improved Sexual Assault Prevention Training**

AMAANI LYLE
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, April 14, 2014 - As part of efforts to eliminate the crime of sexual assault in the military, Defense Department officials today announced improvements to sexual assault prevention and response training for all members of the armed forces and civilian employees.

Officials said the improvements center on development of consistent sexual assault prevention and response core competencies and learning objectives for: Training for new accessions; Annual and refresher training; Pre- and post-deployment training; Professional military education; Training for commanders and senior enlisted leaders before assuming their new positions; and Training for sexual assault response coordinators, victim advocates and chaplains.

Within the first 14 days of service, officials explained, new accessions to the armed forces receive training that provides a basic understanding of the sexual assault prevention and response program, specific information on reporting options, and the services and resources available both on base and in the local region. Additionally, service members receive annual refresher training in sexual assault prevention and response, as well as before and after deployments.

At the professional military education level, officials said, the training emphasizes participants' leadership role in supporting the Defense Department's sexual assault prevention and response efforts.

In their training, officials said, commanders and senior enlisted leaders learn about: The complexities of the crime and their role in fostering a command environment of professional values, team commitment, and dignity and respect; Proactive measures to reduce sexual assaults in their units; The protections afforded victims and the accused; and The elements of quality victim care.

Training for sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates emphasize effective crisis management in addition to advocating for the victim and coordinating care, officials said.

For chaplains, training competencies focus on awareness of sexual assault as a crime, its impact on victims, and sexual assault prevention and response resources the Defense Department provides.

"The department is committed to eliminating sexual assault and ensuring an environment that provides dignity and respect for all members of the military community," said Army Col. Litonya Wilson, deputy director of prevention and victim assistance in the DOD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. "We took steps to improve the quality of SAPR training with

a specific focus on developing core competencies and learning objectives, ensuring consistency, and implementing methods for assessing the effectiveness of these training programs."

The training improvements incorporate a coordinated effort designed to ensure that everyone in the military community -- including first responders, commanders, new service members, and those deployed around the world -- have consistent training standards and effective tools to prevent and respond to sexual assault, officials said. The services and the National Guard Bureau developed the core competencies and learning objectives jointly to incorporate best practices from the field and input from sexual assault survivors, they added.

"The entire military community must be engaged in creating an environment where sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexist behaviors are not tolerated," Wilson said. "It is our aim to field innovative prevention strategies, new training approaches, and incorporate best practices for SAPR training to instill an environment that promotes respect and proper treatment of everyone within the department.

"Our focus is on creating a climate where sexual assault and sexual harassment are seen as unacceptable," she continued, "not just because they are illegal, but because they are wrong."

***Diversity:* Evoking the American Spirit: Asian Pacific Heritage**

MASTER SGT. CONRAD WALKER
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR, 1109th TASMG

May, the month when the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the U.S. in 1843, has been set aside as Asian Pacific heritage month.

This is the time we set aside to recognize the contributions and achievements of our fellow Americans of Asian /Pacific decent as we continue to reinforce our sense of unity with diversity as symbolized by our nations motto, "E Pluribus Unum" — out of many, one.

The theme for this year's celebration is "I am beyond: evoking the American spirit."

This statement captures the heart of Americans who are of Asian /Pacific island decent that always sought to excel beyond the barriers of equal opportunity and the challenges and limitations set before them.

Daniel K. Inouye, decorated World War II veteran and longtime U.S. Senator representing Hawaii embodies the essence of this theme. He was a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an elite force that consisted entirely of Japanese-Americans, which fought fiercely and valiantly for this country at a time when they were viewed with suspicion and prejudice, sometimes hated as potential enemies. They were an all-volunteer force.

Inouye a second-generation Japanese-American living in Honolulu was 17 years old when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. He was striving to become a doctor and had knowledge of first aid. For five days after the attack he worked attending wounded military personnel. He went

to enlist into the U.S. Army and even though he was born an American citizen, the military department classified him and other "American born children of Japanese decent as "enemy aliens," unfit for service."¹ Inouye and others petitioned the White House and eventually the Army accepted Japanese-American men into segregated units.

His unit participated in the brutal Rome-Arno campaign of 1944. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his service in France, which included the two-week mission to rescue the "Lost Battalion" of Texans trapped behind enemy lines. The last battle he participated in speaks to the depth of commitment of the Asian/pacific America heart, as revealed in the following excerpt from his biography:

"On April 21, 1945, weeks before the fall of Berlin ended the war in Europe, Inouye led an assault on a heavily defended ridge known as Colle Musatello, near the town of Terenzo. Inouye's unit was pinned down by fire from three machine gun placements. An enemy bullet tore straight through Lieutenant Inouye's midsection, but he continued to lead his troops forward, hurling two hand grenades into the enemy position. Inouye had pulled the pin on a third when an enemy grenade launcher struck his right arm, severing it almost completely. Inouye's own live grenade was still clutched in the right hand over which he longer had any control. Warning his troops away, Inouye pried the grenade loose with his left hand and pitched it into the remaining machine gun nest. With his damaged arm spewing blood, he continued to lead

his troops forward, firing his machine gun with his left hand until an enemy bullet struck his leg, and he lost consciousness.

When he revived, he refused evacuation until he was sure his men had secured the captured ridge. Inouye was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroism; he remained in the Army until 1947, when he was discharged with the rank of captain.

At the time, it was clear that Inouye's exploits, and those of other members of the 442nd merited the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military decoration, but no Asian American received the award at war's end."²

Inouye committed himself to the cause of equal rights for all Americans, and for all residents of Hawaii as fully enfranchised American citizens."

Inouye served as Hawaii's first U.S. Representative in 1959 when it achieved statehood. He was first elected U.S. Senator in 1962 and served continuously in office until his death in 2012. At the time of his death, he was the most senior U.S. Senator and president pro tempore of the Senate. On June 21, 2001 President Clinton righted the nation's previous wrong and awarded Inouye the Medal of Honor alongside 19 other servicemen who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and had been denied proper recognition of their bravery due to their race.

(Footnotes)

¹ www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/ino0bio-1

² www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/ino0bio-1

Inside OCS: Using OCS to Travel Path to Life Goals

OC DAVID MACFARLAND
OCS CLASS 59

Being trained to be an officer in the U.S. Army and ultimately be part of a loyal team of distinct Soldiers, I am genuinely honored to defend our country and devote my hard work and time to Officer Candidate School. Growing up in Brooklyn, Conn., I always knew I wanted to be part of the greatest military faction, and the best way to truly excel in this life was to enter OCS.

In addition to my military career, I wanted to ensure my civilian education matched my growth in the Army. I graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University with a bachelor of science in sociology and a minor in criminology. I currently work at a Department of Children and Families' nonprofit organization with children who suffer from extreme behavioral and cognitive impairments. Working within the behavioral and criminal justice field outside of drill allows me to stay in a consistent mindset of crisis management and alertness.

Phase one was one of the most challenging experiences of my life but also one of the most rewarding; it opened my eyes to what being an officer candidate really meant. Every day of phase one included intense mental and physical stress on me and the other candidates. It didn't take me long to figure out that to make it through this, we would all have to work together.

The most memorable part of phase one was day two—when we received “physical corrective training.” As we were executing “front, back, go” and low crawling in the sand, the motivation and encouragement from my squad helped me fight through one of the hardest days of my military career. This teamwork and unity carried me to a successful completion of phase one. Through this experience, it allowed us to come together as a team.

I am currently broadening my leadership qualities in phase two by developing skills to allow me to be an efficient leader in the U.S. Army. So far, the tasks given have improved my abilities as a Soldier and as a civilian

by developing my critical thinking, planning skills and ability to execute tasks assigned to me. Within phase two, I am being mentally and physically pushed to my limits to guarantee that I commission as the best officer possible through rigorous field, combat and mental training.

Continuing my path in law enforcement, I intend to commission as a military police officer. I know that MP will lead me to the best life possible because I have wanted and worked toward this path for years. After I graduate from OCS, I plan to attend Basic Officer Leadership Course as soon as possible. From there, I hope to work as a civilian state police officer as well, but I am willing to accept any opportunities that present themselves to further my career in the criminal justice field. I know I will use my extensive training as an OC and apply it to my civilian career. I am thankful for the chance to be a part of this honorable program and will surely carry on the OCS name well.



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May be awarded posthumously

Participants should submit an 8x10 photo in military uniform or appropriate civilian business attire to:

Commander, 1/169th (OCS) BN
ATTN: Training Officer
38 Smith Street, RTI Bldg
Niantic, CT 06357

Need additional information? Contact Capt. Lord at 860-691-4236



National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT)

2014 Scholarship Applications Now Available On-Line

The National Guard Association of Connecticut announces the 2014 Scholarship Application for NGACT members and their dependents. For a full list of those eligible to apply and an application, visit www.ngact.org.

NGACT was founded in 1994 as a combined officer and enlisted organization for the purpose of representing active and retired members of the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard.

NGACT was originally organized as a non-profit organization designed to serve as the collective voice of all Guard officer and enlisted personnel. Together,

members share in the pride, patriotism and vigilance that keep America strong, accomplishing together what no person could accomplish alone. This united voice helps keep the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard ready and equipped to defend our freedom and represented at the national level through the National Guard Association of the United States and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S.

NGACT provides a means to express the wishes of its many members. In the past it has proven its value through improved benefits, modern facilities and better

equipment. Moreover, NGACT offers individual and family benefits otherwise not available including ; Group Insurance for members and families, the annual NGACT Conference; support services including co-sponsorship of National Guard events and support of send-off and welcome home celebrations. The Scholarships program is just one of the many ways the organization gives back to the members, and recognizes its members for exceptional service and academics.

Applications are available on-line at www.ngact.org and must be postmarked by June 1, 2014.

NGACT Annual Conference Showcases Successes, Involvement

SENIOR AIRMAN JENNIFER PIERCE
103RD AIRLIFT WING/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

According to the Air Forces little brown book, *The Enlisted Force Structure*, all Airmen should join professional organizations and participate in community organizations through volunteerism. Part of that core requirement to being an Airman could be fulfilled by the National Guard Association of Connecticut. This professional organization is always looking for new members to add to its already growing ranks.

The NGACT is a nonprofit Veterans organization, 501(c)(19), that is a state chapter of its national counterparts the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States and the National Guard Association of the United States. Incorporated in 1994, NGACT provides a voice through lobbying efforts for all members and veterans of the CT National Guard in order to maintain earned benefits such as tax exemptions and tuition waivers and any enhancements, quality of life issues or modernization for the National Guard, its members, and Veterans at the state legislative level.

"We rely on our membership and our partnership on the national level with EANGUS and NGAUS to do the same, but on a much broader & national scale," said Master Sgt. Daniel B. Reilly, past-president of NGACT, and a water and fuels superintendent with the 103rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

"For example, Connecticut is one small state. If some issue happened on a national level where they tried to eradicate a mission or remove aircraft from our base and we wanted to prevent that from happening, then the NGACT would rely on the arm of our national counterparts within EANGUS and NGAUS to rally up the troops for us and express our concerns," said Reilly.

Currently, Guard members are facing a variety of issues from a legislative standpoint.

As wartime missions slow and our peacetime and domestic operations increase, safeguarding pay, jobs, educational and medical benefits remains important, according to Reilly.



U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal tells NGACT Conference attendees that he will proudly display the organizations coin he just received from past-president Daniel Reilly after stopping by to speak at the gathering in Cromwell. Blumenthal started speaking at NGACT conferences when he was the attorney general for Connecticut. (Photo by Senior Airman Jennifer Pierce, 103rd AW Public Affairs)

"This is why members of the National Guard need to stay informed of what is going on around them and get involved with our organization," said Reilly.

Not only does NGACT combat budget cuts and further reductions of Guard benefits, the organization is also proactive in its approach to legislation.

Some of the current legislative priorities NGACT is working towards include increasing the military retired pay exemption for state income tax to 100 percent, establishing an exemption of state active duty pay from state income tax during times of state emergencies and exempting all military pay for military members who reside in Connecticut from state income tax.

Other legislative priorities include establishing student fee waivers for members, increasing state active duty pay, low to no-cost business loans for veterans, waiving all motor vehicle operator's license and registration fees

for members, free admission to state parks and free or discounted Connecticut hunting and fishing licenses.

"Membership in the NGACT, EANGUS and NGAUS is vital to keep our current benefits and to fight for new ones," said Reilly.

"Not only will members have the opportunity to be involved in legislation affecting them, the NGACT, EANGUS and NGAUS provide networking and professional development opportunities that are able to be applied in their military and civilian careers. Members will have the ability to meet and converse with the top leadership from the National Guard Bureau as well as their particular counterparts around the country," said Reilly.

This was apparent during the 20th annual NGACT conference held March 22 in Cromwell, Conn. Keynote speakers at the conference included Senator Richard Blumenthal, Governor Dannel Malloy, and Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman.

"We have an obligation to do everything in our power to make sure that military members are getting the services and assistance that they require," said Malloy during the NGACT conference.

"My fidelity is to you all, to the United States of America. My mission is to support your mission," said Malloy.

Not only do NGACT members have the opportunities to become involved from a Guard standpoint, there are personal benefits as well. These include scholarships, affordable life insurance that can be kept after retirement through State Sponsored Life Insurance, affordable home and auto insurance through NGACT's partnership with Liberty Mutual, an annual awards recognition program and networking and job opportunities for members.

"We are always looking to improve and offer more benefits to our members," said Reilly.

For more information about NGACT, please visit NGACT's official website at www.ngact.org or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Guard-Association-of-Connecticut/214309868592370>.

Plan - Prepare - Execute: Making Training Happen

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY LT. COL. PAUL THOMPSON
STATE TRAINING OFFICER

This is the first in a monthly series of short training planning articles. The information is extracted from *The Leader's Guide to Unit Training Management* found on the Army Training Network. Each month will cover the training responsibilities prior to the execution of a planned training event.

The Unit Training Plan (UTP) is the unit's over-arching plan to attain key collective task proficiency in the time allotted to train (planning horizon). Commanders, leaders and training managers plan-prepare-execute and assess each training event as the UTP progresses. Each training event is planned and coordinated in detail prior to execution. This is done during company-level training meetings using the "T-Month" construct. This process has to start early enough in the planning cycle to ensure all required resources are present and accounted for as training begins. Unless this is done, training proficiencies the commander envisions will not happen. Each unit has

to have a deep understanding of the local and installation-level resources available. This also includes understanding training resource cycles and conferences to ensure the unit can influence these cycles early enough to get the resources needed to train. The following is a breakdown of major "T-Month" activities to use as a guide for units to follow in the development of training events. Keep in mind that each major training event would fall into the T-Month concept at different points in time on the training calendar.

Month T-21 to T-13 ID major training facilities. As the UTP is developed, and as training events are planned, major facilities/resources are identified and earmarked for use. This ensures the facilities are scheduled and locks the unit in for their use. As the plan is refined, it may be necessary to cancel or modify events, enabling other units to use the facilities as necessary. Installations or divisions and corps usually have periodic scheduling conferences to lock in major facilities. These conferences may be quarterly, semi-annual and/or annual. They

provide all units on the installation visibility of facility usage and also opportunities when they are available for unit scheduling. Examples of these kinds of facilities

include ranges, gunnery complexes, MOUT sites, obstacle courses, simulation centers, rail spurs, airfield support centers, air load trainers, etc.

Next month will feature **Month T-12: Conduct training event mission analysis and Sergeant's Time Training.**





192nd REGIMENTAL BALL



All present and past members and friends of the 192nd are hereby invited to attend the
1st Annual 192nd Regimental Ball.
The 192nd Military Police Battalion, the 192nd Field Artillery Association and the
Connecticut Chapter of the Military Police Regimental Association request your
presence



Date: 10 May 2014

Time: 1830-1900 Social Hour
1930- Dinner

Place: Sheraton
100 Capital Boulevard; Rocky Hill
Rooms available for \$89.00

Menu: Rib Eye Steak
Chicken Marsala
Grilled Salmon

Dress: Dress Blue/ Blue Mess
ASUC/Class A (w/Bow Tie)
Civilian- Semi formal

Guest Speaker: CSM John F. McNeirney
11th Military Police Regimental
Command Sergeant Major

Cost: 45.00 per person
RSVP: NLT April 10th 2014
Contact: 2LT Ryan A. Michalak
ryan.a.michalak.mil@mail.mil

Please detach and return along with check made payable to:
192nd MP Battalion
38 Smith Street, Niantic, CT 06357
Attn: 2LT Ryan Michalak / CSM Dan Lawler

Name: _____ Rank: _____ Unit/Former Unit: _____
 Guest: _____
 Address: _____
 I/we will _____ will not _____ attend. Total Attending _____

Entree Choice: _____ Rib Eye Steak
 _____ Chicken Marsala
 _____ Grilled Salmon

ARMED FORCES DAY LUNCHEON

MAY 16TH 2014

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JESSICA.TORRES2@mil.mil
or visit
the Connecticut National Guard
on Facebook and Twitter
Facebook.com/ConnecticutNationalGuard
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Courage Honor Strength Duty Dedication
Excellence Valor Commitment Professionalism

Off the Bookshelf : Stubby, Brave Soldier Dog

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

In the entranceway of the 928th Military Police Dog Detachment kennel in Newtown, Conn., resting on a shelf, is a book purchased by a 928th Soldier at a garage sale, and given to Kennel Master, Sgt. First Class Gerald Fountaine, as a gift.

It's a children's book about how a stray dog was adopted by a group of Connecticut Soldiers when they were mobilizing in New Haven for their deployment to France during World War 1.

Stubby Brave Soldier Dog, written by Richard and Sally Glendinning, was published in 1978, 60 years after the famous Bull Terrier, Stubby, served with the brave men of the 102nd Infantry (26th Yankee Division) in combat.

Many books and articles have been written about Stubby's exploits: his fearlessly accompanying the men of the 102nd into 'no man's land' on assaults, his alerting the unit to German mustard gas attacks, and even his capturing (with his teeth) a German reconnaissance Soldier.

Only a book published for children, however, could truly capture the spirit of the small dog who became one of the most famous animals of the 20th century.

Colorful illustrations in the Glendinning's book depict the little dog's tail wagging, handsome Soldiers smiling, and the New Haven skyline shimmering in a manner that slightly resembles Norman Rockwell's iconic American illustrations.

Even the battlefield trenches are illustrated in a manner that, like Rockwell's paintings, gives them an appearance of righteousness and wholesomeness. And Stubby, the small Bull Terrier, is depicted in a similar fashion.

Stubby was eventually injured in a German mustard gas attack. After returning to the United States, he lived like a hero and celebrity until he died. He is still the Georgetown Hoyas mascot.

Considering 116,516 American service members died

in World War 1, Americans needed a hero—anthropomorphic or otherwise. And although military working dogs have served in war for as long as there has been war, something about Stubby made him special.

Perhaps it was his stature. Bull Terriers do not grow incredibly large, and their shorter legs give them a comical appearance.

Or maybe it was his story: his journey from homeless stray—to war hero must have been uplifting and captivating. Orphan tales have always been popular. *Oliver Twist* still resonates with readers. And *Harry Potter* has become one of the most famous literary orphans of all time.

Whatever reason can be attributed to his popularity, Stubby's story seems better suited for a children's book than for more realistic and less romantic accounts of war.

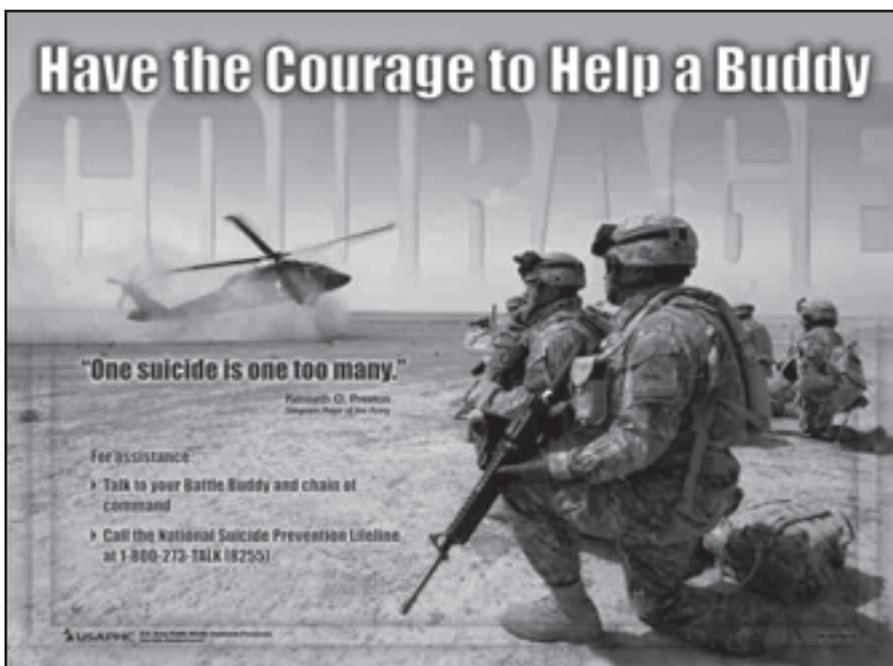
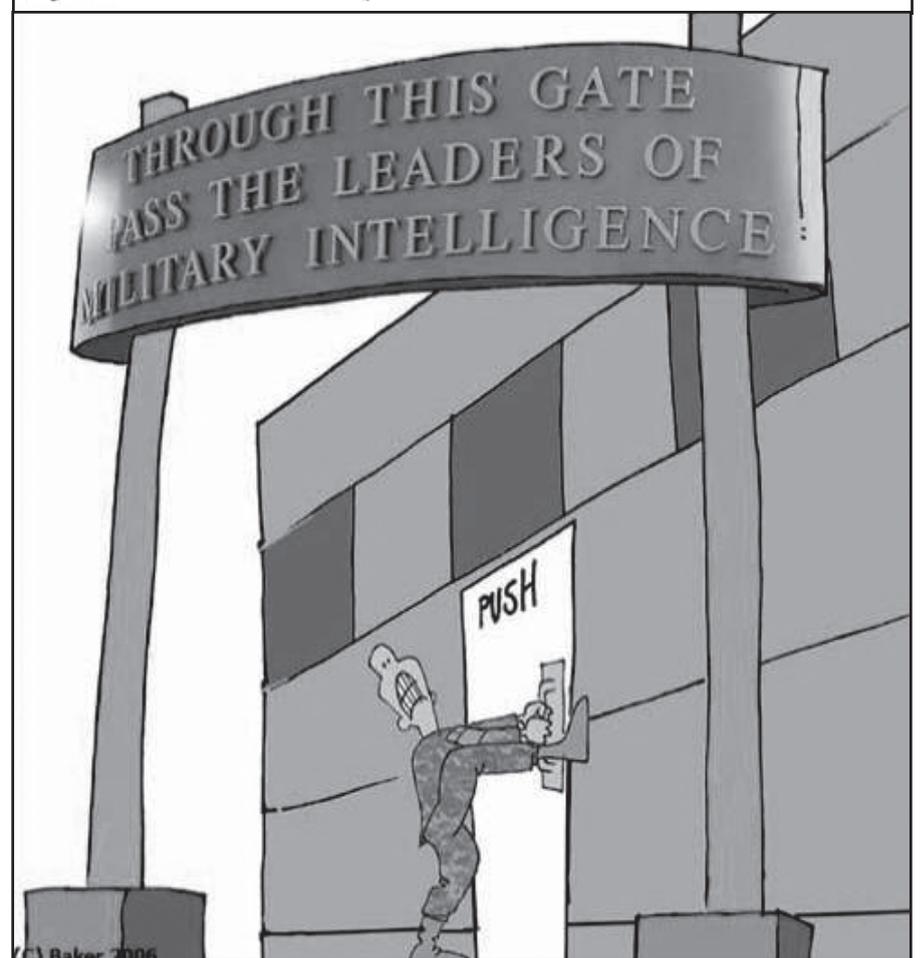
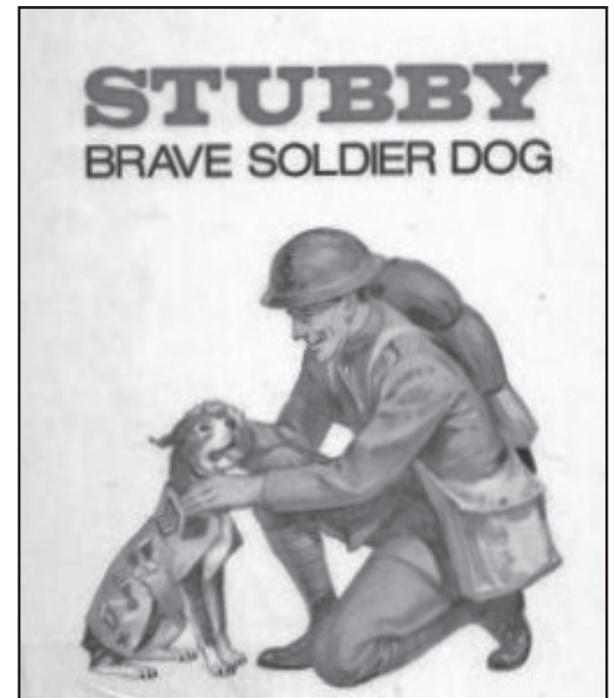
The Glendinnings thought so. Their illustrations and simple narrative truly gives life to the brave little dog from New Haven.

There is a statue/memorial of Sgt. Stubby on the lawn of the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment kennel in Newtown, Conn. There are similar memorials around the country.

Stubby, himself, is on display at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

He is survived by thousands of military working dogs and their handlers whose work has assisted the American military in countless battles and operations in the decades since World War 1.

They're the reason why remembering Stubby is still important.



Retiree's Voice: Today's Veteran's Administration

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER FOUR (RET.) JOHN GODBURN
RETIREE AFFAIRS COLUMNIST

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series. Please see the June issue for part two.

As a recent AGR Retiree, one of the many tasks as part of my retirement process has been to file for VA benefits and/or disability compensation.

I must admit that prior to retiring, I had heard all the horror stories about the VA – that's it's a huge bureaucracy that is unresponsive to one's needs; claims get lost; you're just a number, etc.

Well, I am happy to say that my experience as been very positive. I have found the claims process to be efficient and the people that work for the VA to be dedicated and hard working, truly caring about taking care of the service members.

Before I talk about the "process," let me first discuss what disability compensation is. Disability compensation is a tax free monetary benefit paid to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. Compensation may also be paid for post-service disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service.

To be eligible for compensation benefits, your disability must be service-connected. You must also have separated or been discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions. Your disability must be the result of an injury or disease that was incurred or aggravated while on active duty or active duty for training; or from injury, heart attack, or stroke that occurred during inactive duty training. A disability can apply to physical conditions, as well as mental health conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). While this list is not all inclusive, I encourage everyone to go to the VA website www.va.gov for more information.

There are numerous types of claims that apply to disability compensation. They can be based on disabilities that existed when entering the military service, but were made worse; disabilities that occurred during service; or disabilities that arose after you left military service. In addition, there are claims that are filed for special circumstances.

Pre-Service Disabilities: Some people enter the military service with a known disability. Should this disability become worse due to military service, the VA *may* be able to pay compensation. This is known as aggravation; however, compensation can only be paid for the level of aggravation.

In-Service Disabilities: These claims are based on disabilities that are a result of injury or disease that occurred in active service, *and are in the line of duty*. Injuries or diseases as a result of the Veteran's own willful misconduct or abuse of alcohol or drugs are excluded.

Post-Service Disabilities: These claims would include claims for disabilities that are a result of disabilities considered to be service-related, even though the disability arose after service. There are various classifications of presumptive disabilities which can be based on location or circumstances of service or just by military service itself. This is especially important to our deployed service members who were exposed to burn-pits or other respiratory irritants and/or had orthopedic injuries during deployments. It may take years for disability symptoms to manifest themselves, so it is critical that this exposure or injury be documented now.

Special Circumstances: Claims regarding compensation are not always based on an in-service event. After a disability has been determined to be service connected, there may be other types of claims a Veteran or surviving spouse may wish to file. This may include a claim for a temporary 100 percent rating due to surgery for a service-connected disability, or additional compensation based on being in need of regular aid and attendance.

Retirement Service Officer Notes

SGT. 1ST CLASS REBECCA AVERY
RETIREMENT PROGRAM MANAGER

Army AKO Email Change: Access to AKO email ended for retirees and family members on Jan. 31, 2014. Their access to all other AKO services will end June 30, 2014, with exception of email auto-forwarding which will end Dec. 31, 2014. Users who did not set a forwarding email address in AKO can still do so until Dec. 31.

In January 2014, more than 357,000 retired Soldiers and annuitants still had an AKO email address in their myPay accounts. Retirees should immediately change these to commercial email addresses. This is where they'll receive all future notices from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and where they will receive Army Echoes.

To change an email address in MyPay, simply log in at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. Then click on "email address" and look at "personal email address." AKO email addresses end in "@us.army.mil." Change the personal email address to a commercial email address, and click on "primary." Finally, click on "accept/submit."

If you see an account that ends in ret@mail.mil, *do not use it!* This is an error in the system the Army G-6 is trying to fix. You can call the DMDC Help Desk at (800) 538-9552 to have the address removed from your record.

More information about the AKO transition can be found at the migration page for retirees and family members at <https://us.army.mil/suite/page/AKOMigration> or www.eis.army.mil/ako.

Retirement Briefings: Do you need to attend your

retirement briefing? Please sign-up today. Retirement briefings are mandatory for all Soldiers who have their 20 years of Service, and available again for Retiring Soldiers entering Gray Area Retirement, or at age 60 and ready to file their Retire Pay application with HRC, Ft. Knox, KY. Upcoming retirement briefings are being held on July 13 and Aug 3 (no briefings in June, October or December). Please RSVP with the RPAM Office, Sgt. 1st Class Avery at (860) 524-4813 or rebekah.j.avery.mil@mail.mil.

Upcoming Events:

Groton Sub Base Retiree Seminar: Saturday, June 28. Call for a reservation, 860-694-3284.

4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament: Friday, Aug. at Tower Ridge Country Club, 140 Nod Rd, Simsbury. Contact: Maj. Gen. (Ret.) James Throwe, 860-289-2318.

Monthly Retiree Breakfast: May 29, 9:00 a.m. at Charlie's Place, West Main St, Niantic.

9th CT Nike Soldier Reunion: Sept. 8 - 10, at the Clarion Inn, 269 North Frontage Road, New London, 1-800-442-0631/32. When making a reservation indicate that you are with the "Nike Reunion 9" group. For more information about the reunion, please contact Karen Atkinson at jratkinson@hotmail.com.

Air National Guard Retirees Point of Contact : Retirees from the Air National Guard needing information or assistance can contact the full-time POC for traditional Air Guard Retirees, Master Sgt Lisa Todaro at (860) 292-2573, e-mail: lisa.todaro@ang.af.mil; or the part-time (drill weekend) POC Master Sgt. Diana Nelson at (860) 292-2366, e-mail: diana.nelson@ang.af.mil. Often times, Air

Upcoming Retirement Briefing Dates:

May 24

July 13

August 3

No briefing in June or
September 2014

TY- 2015 briefings schedule TBD

Guard Retirees will be referred to the Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC) in Colorado, 1-800-525-0102; Website Portal at: www.mypers.af.mil; HQARPC/DPTTR, Retirement Division, 18420 E. Silver Creek Ave., Bldg 390 MS68, Buckley AFB CO 80011.

ECHOES: register for your ECHOES newsletter and get the latest news, updates and changes applicable to Retirees: https://www.armygl.army.mil/rso/echoes_issues.asp



"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).

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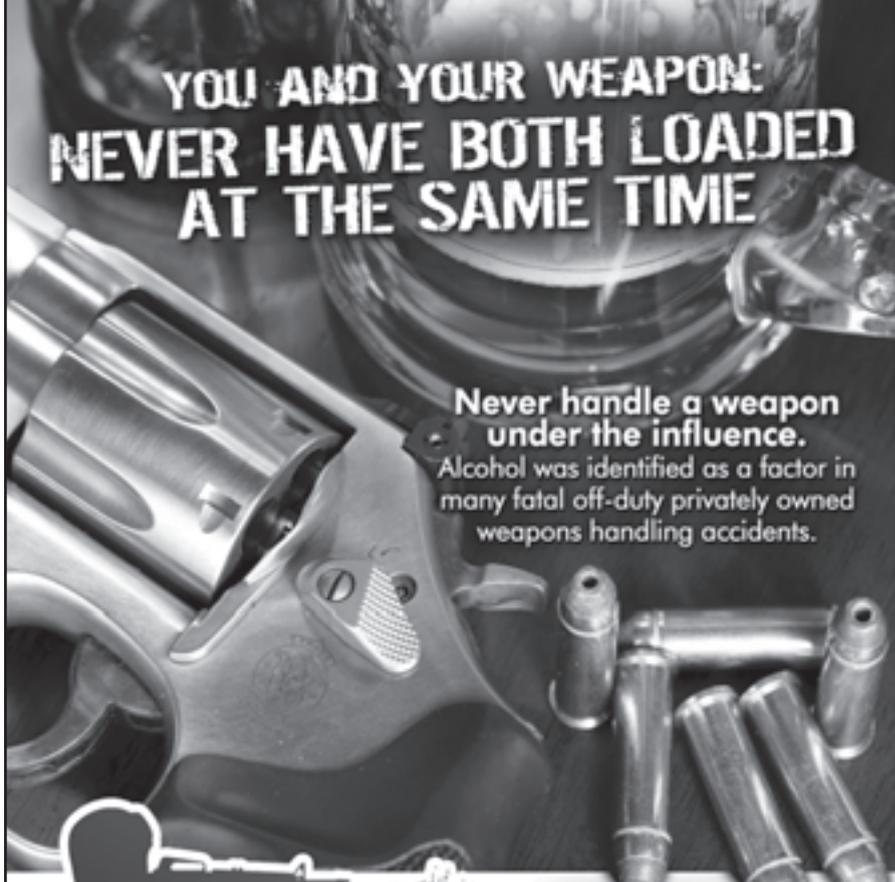
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Military CrisisLine

*** Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text to 832838 ***

www.preventsuicide.army.mil

U.S. Department of Defense



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Army

To Private 2

Brown, Jordan A.
Humphrey, Isaiah C.
Lopez, Christina M.
Newell, Kadajah V.
Kleinschmidt, Alex J.
Troiano, Carlo S.
Risley, Lucas M.
Chung, Wesley J.
Hill, Zachary E.
Sierra, Janice M.
Martin, Travis V.
Gartley, Jamie L.
Rivera, Reuben J.

To Private First Class

Norwood, Blair A.
Brown, Richard M.
Garrigentas, Elvin O.
Blodgett, Sarah

To Specialist

Ocasiorodriguez, Coraly
Leite, Raphael
Heller, Aaron M.

To Sergeant

Tyler, Joshua T.
Gigas, Alexander G.
Okafor, Stanley C.
Narvaez, Jose R.
Kehoe, Joseph M.
Suto, Ross J.
Bentley, Brian M. Jr.
Campos, Ferdinando
Slater, Timothy J. Jr.
Maloney, Caleb J.

To Staff Sergeant

Mack, Andre E.
Bonetti, Edward C.
Long, Tyler G.
Conroy, Sean P.
Scott, Forrest J.
Roberts, Riaan E.
Whitfield, Brandon C.
Shivers, Clinton R.

To Sergeant First Class

Rodriguez, Daniel Jr.

To Master Sergeant

Uccello, Nicholas J.
Lopes, Marco A.

To Chief Warrant Officer 3

Degennaro, Mark M.
Riordan, Denis P.

To Chief Warrant Officer 4

Weaver, John R.
Jambor, Kenneth A.
Lussier, Robert H. Jr.

To 1st Lieutenant

Soltau, Hewan M.

To Captain

Nicolas, Richard A.

To Major

Landry, Steven D.

Air

To Airman

Knightly, Jordan J.

To Senior Airman

Lao, Phillip C.
Keaveney, Ryan J.

To Staff Sergeant

Ellingwood, Daniel D.

To Technical Sergeant

Gladdin, Nathan L.

To Master Sergeant

Dumouchel, Daniel K.
Collins, Jeffrey M.
Rule, Scott D.

To Senior Master Sergeant

Foran, Kirkland T.

To Chief Master Sergeant

Daniel, Harry J. Jr.
Daigneau, Jeanne E.

Coming Events

May

May 11

Mother's Day

May 14

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

May 16

Armed Forces Day Luncheon

May 17

Armed Forces Day

May 22

Guardian Deadline for June

May 26

Memorial Day

May 28

CSMS Groundbreaking

May 31

Danbury Armed Forces Reserve
Center Dedication

June

June 11

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

June 14

Army Birthday & Flag Day

June 15

Father's Day

June 19

Guardian Deadline for July

July

July 4

Independence Day

July 16

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

July 17

Guardian Deadline for August

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 June Issue of
the Guardian is May 22
Deadline for the July Issue of the
Guardian is June 19

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JUNE 14-23 JULY 11-27.
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for more details: 860-691-4214/5900

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Connecticut FAMILY Guardian



VOL. 15 NO. 4

HARTFORD, CT

APRIL 2014

Easter Bunny Shares Breakfast with Guard Children, Families



Children were able to expend some energy waiting for the Easter Bunny's arrival by jumping around in bounce houses. This young lady took a break from jumping around to smile for the camera during the 15th Annual Breakfast With the Easter Bunny. The event is popular with Connecticut National Guardsmen and their families. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, 143rd RSG Public Affairs)



1st Lt. Christopher Coutu, 1109th Theater Aviation Support Maintenance Group, his daughter, Alexandria, and wife, Neringa, check out the rabbits on display in the petting zoo at the Breakfast With the Easter Bunny held April 19 in Hartford. The rabbits were given away to a few lucky families. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, 143rd RSG Public Affairs)



Lt. Col. Daniel Spinetti, 143rd Regional Support Group, and Col. Stephen Gilbert, Joint Force Headquarters, serve pancakes, sausage, bacon and cheesy eggs to children and families of the Connecticut National Guard during the 15th Annual Breakfast With the Easter Bunny at the William A. O'Neill Armory. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, 143rd RSG Public Affairs)



And the hunt for sweet treasures is on as children storm the drill shed floor at the William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford. Thousands of plastic eggs filled with candy were gathered into Easter baskets by Connecticut National Guard children during the 15th Annual Breakfast With the Easter Bunny on April 19. The popular event features breakfast served by volunteers and a visit from the Easter Bunny. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, 143rd RSG Public Affairs)



This young man shows off his jackpot of sweet treats during the Connecticut National Guard's annual Breakfast With the Easter Bunny on April 19. The egg hunt was just one of many activities that kept children busy while waiting for a visit from the Easter Bunny. Arts and crafts, a petting zoo with live bunnies and bounce houses kept smiles on the faces of the children. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, 143rd RSG Public Affairs)



CATHERINE GALASSO

New Doors Will Soon be Opened Before You

“Anyone can recede and give up; it’s the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell

apart, that’s true strength.” Author unknown

Layers of pine needles muffled my sneaker-clad footsteps, as the children and I were taking a walk through the woods near our home. Listening to the birds singing their charming songs and seeing brushy-tailed squirrels scamper by, I turned to the left and noticed a large cobweb that was spun in-between two trees. The image of the spider’s web sparked my memory. And as we walked further, I shared with my children an interesting story that I had once heard.

I told them how late one afternoon a man was at work in his office, and he noticed a white envelope on his desk with his name printed on it. “It must have been placed there while I was working in the warehouse,” he thought to himself, as he reached for it.

Casually, the man sat back in his leather-bound chair and opened the envelope. He read the paragraph slowly and was completely stunned. It was a termination notice. The company was eliminating his job, as well as the entire department.

“I’ve been here for so long. What’s going to happen to me and my family now?” the man questioned in absolute disbelief. Becoming increasingly bitter and in despair, degrading thoughts paraded through his mind. “I’m too old to start over. I’ll never succeed again. I’m done,” he whispered.

It was one of the most painful, discouraging days of his life.

Suddenly, the man saw a little spider crawling on his desk. So, he brushed it off with his hand. But instead of falling to the ground, the spider automatically spun a strong strand of silk to hold its weight. The man sat quietly and watched the spider, as it swung gracefully to the floor, unharmed.

After a few minutes, the man looked up and prayed, “Dear God, if a tiny spider can draw forth its God-given resources and strength from within to meet with life’s challenges... than, so can I.”

My children were intrigued by the story, so I continued.

Gradually, I explained, that the man’s negative thinking turned onto the positive, as he pondered, “God has blessed me with strength and inner resources. My security is not in my job. My security is in my connection with God, who has seen me through difficulties in the past, and He will see me through this setback.”

With that, the man stood up, held his head up high, walked out of his office and didn’t look back. Strong and confident, he declared, “The company might have taken me off its payroll. Yet, no one can take away the flow of God’s grace and abundance in my life.”

Then, he thanked God for the new doors that he believed would be opened before him. And, in time, the

hand of God, indeed, guided the man to a wonderful, new career.

Maybe you, like this man, have been frustrated, upset or disappointed because of an unforeseen challenge. Now, you just don’t know what to do next. Tired and weary, sometimes all hope seems to be gone, and you feel like throwing your hands up in the air and saying, “Forget it.”

But if God could give a tiny spider the wherewithal to protect itself from a fall, think about all the assets He has given to you. You’re resilient and capable, with many exceptional abilities. You are “God’s workmanship,” (Ephesians 2:10) set apart, and have a “spirit of power, love and a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

So move forward and strive earnestly. You may have had some bad breaks in the past. But don’t settle or toss away your precious dreams because of a setback, a naysayer or temporary problem. God wants to bless and use your life. Thus, “use whatever gift you have received to serve others...” (1 Peter 4:10).

Starting from humble beginnings, a young housewife and mother of five daughters had a passion for sharing her delicious homemade chocolate chip cookies with family and friends. And she dreamed of owning her own fresh-baked cookie business. Although she had determination and a hard work ethic, she didn’t have the money, the connections, experience or a formal education.

Many people said she wouldn’t make it in business, and that she should give up on her dream. Yet, Debbi Fields ignored the hurtful comments. And with her ‘recipe’ and her ‘dream,’ she persevered. Today, Mrs. Field’s Cookies, a premier cookie brand, has more than 650 retail bakeries in the United States and more than 80 international locations in 11 different countries.

Is there is something you have given up on? Has God put a special dream in your heart?

Remember, “Life has two rules. The first rule is to never give up. The second rule is to remember the first rule.” Hence, if you knock on a door and nothing happens, you must knock again and again. Solomon says in Proverbs 24:16, “Though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.” Therefore, if you fall down, get back up and try once more.

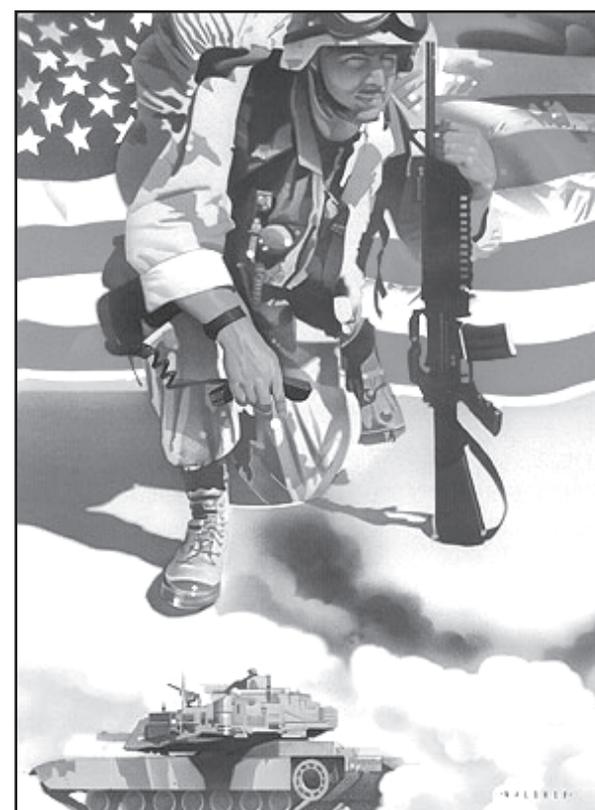
This is a significant time for you. Keep believing and moving forward in truth. New blessings are soon to come. God is about to do something extraordinary in your future. There’s nothing to fear. So, faithfully, do what you can; “ask, seek, knock,” (Matthew 7:7) and God will give you the opportunity to do more. It doesn’t matter where you start. Take what God has given to you and turn it into something great.

God’s plan for you is a plan for victory.

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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Online & Social Media Division

Military Child Intelligence Training 'Teaches' Guard Kids Science During April Vacation



Children participated in a uniform relay race just for the fun of it during Operation Military Child Intelligence Training. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Without realizing it, participants in the Operation Military Child Intelligence Training held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Middletown were learning about science through many fun activities. Mrs. Donna Rivera plays with inflatable basketball with National Guard children during the April school vacation program. What is learned playing basketball? Teamwork, gravity, energy and inertia. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



With hair flying, Josie Rawlinitis-Cheney jumps on a board trying to lift Jim Angelos from Inspire Works off the ground. Josie and other children were learning about fulcrums and leverage. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



The many faces of 'flubber' could be seen during the Operation Military Child Intelligence Training program last month as children learned about simple chemical reactions using water, glue, borax and food coloring to make flubber. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

Memorial Day Word Search

See how many words related to Memorial Day you can find in this word search from the list at the bottom. Words can be backward, forward, up, down, or diagonal. Circle each word you find, then cross it off the list.



- AMERICAN FLAG
- CEREMONIES
- CIVIL WAR
- COMMUNITY
- DECORATE GRAVES
- HALF-STAFF
- MILITARY
- PARADE
- POPPY FLOWERS
- REMEMBRANCE



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
By Appointment

103rd Airlift Wing
100 Nicholson Road
East Granby, CT 06026
(860) 292-2730
M*, T, W, TH, F
Rick Uliano, Donna Rivera

William A. O'Neill Armory
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105
(800) 858-2677
M, T, W, TH, F

Norwich Armory
38 Stott Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360
(800) 858-2677
By Appointment

103rd Air Control Squadron
206 Boston Post Road
Orange, CT 06447
(203) 795-2961
M*, F*

Kim Hoffman, Donna Rivera, Michelle McCarty,
SSG Melody Baber, Andrea Lathrop, Mitch Foreman,
Rita O'Donnell, Jessica Koehler, Megan Macsata,
Joshua Hamre, Linda Rolstone, Kim Dumas,
SSG John Cummings, SGT Shivers, Chris Rouleau,
Cindy Hould, Vicky Scully-Oakes, Ernie Lacore

Windsor Locks Readiness Center
85-300 Light Lane
Windsor Locks, CT 06096
(860) 292-4602
M, T, W, TH, F
Troy Walcott, Michael Cortes

New London Armory
249 Bayonet Street
New London, CT 06320
(800) 858-2677

Volunteers are always needed in each facility and for most events. Those wishing to help can contact the Connecticut National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center at **(800) 858-2677**.

Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center
90 Wooster Heights Road
Danbury, CT 06810
(203) 205-5050
M*, T, W, TH, F
Nancy Cummings

Camp Niantic
39 Smith Street
Niantic, CT 06357
(800) 858-2677
By Appointment

Family members or loved ones of a Service Member with questions, concerns, or in need of assistance should contact us immediately**. Please visit us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/CTNGFamilies.

**The Service Member and Family Support Center is NOT an emergency call center.

Support is available 24/7 by calling (800) 858-2677

*Centers are open part-time on a regular, weekly schedule. Please call ahead to confirm times or to make an appointment.