

Connecticut Guardian



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Gen. Odierno: New Army Guard Director Brings "Unparalleled" Experience to Role

TECH SGT. JASON M. MELTON
NEBRASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

WASHINGTON - Army Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general and sworn in as the 20th director of the Army National Guard in Washington, D.C. April 14.

Prior to that, Kadavy was special assistant to the vice chief of the National Guard Bureau, following his service as commander, Combined Joint Interagency Task Force, in Afghanistan.

Before his Afghanistan deployment, Kadavy served as the Army National Guard's deputy director, assisting the director in formulating, developing and coordinating all programs, policies and plans.

He previously served as Nebraska's adjutant general and director of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

"I can't think of a better way to train somebody and get them the experience to take over the job as director of the Army National Guard, representing the adjutants general, the governors, the Army, and to serve in support of 350,000 Army National Guardsmen," said Army Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, thanking Kadavy and his family for their dedication and service.

In his new position, Lt. Gen. Kadavy is responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all programs,

policies and plans affecting the Army National Guard. He succeeds Army Maj. Gen. Judd Lyons, who has served as acting director since his Jan. 18, 2014, appointment by Gen. Grass following the retirement of Army Lt. Gen. William E. Ingram Jr. Kadavy is the fourth three-star general to fill the position.

"Lt. Gen. Kadavy's experience is unparalleled," said Army Gen. Raymond Odierno, Army chief of staff.

assignment, Odierno said.

"I am very proud of the fact that he is going to run the Army National Guard," Odierno said. "I'm proud to be here to witness the promotion of Tim Kadavy to lieutenant general and director of the Army National Guard. I wish you nothing but the best of luck - and congratulations to you."

"It is a tremendous honor to have two members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff here for my ceremony," Kadavy said, thanking Generals Grass and Odierno.

"The strength of the nation is the Army, the strength of the Army is its Soldiers, and the strength of our Soldiers are our families," Kadavy said, quoting Odierno after receiving his third star.

Kadavy, who received his commission through the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1984, was sworn into his new position by Secretary of the Army John McHugh in a separate ceremony following his promotion.

"We can embrace the changes and work through these challenges," Kadavy said.

"We have done it before, and I know the Army National Guard is up

for that task again as we move forward in these challenging fiscal times. The Army National Guard has a proud legacy, and I'm honored to serve this exceptional organization - and I look forward to what we will achieve together in the future."



Army Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Kadavy, the director of the Army National Guard at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia., April 14, 2015, at his promotion ceremony. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michelle Gonzalez)

Assignments at the National Guard Bureau, in tactical units in the Army National Guard, as adjutant general of Nebraska and during three deployments in Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan give Kadavy the background and capability to understand all facets of his challenging new

Senior Leaders Corner: CTNG Essential Personnel Policy

MAJ. GEN. THADDEUS MARTIN
ADJUTANT GENERAL

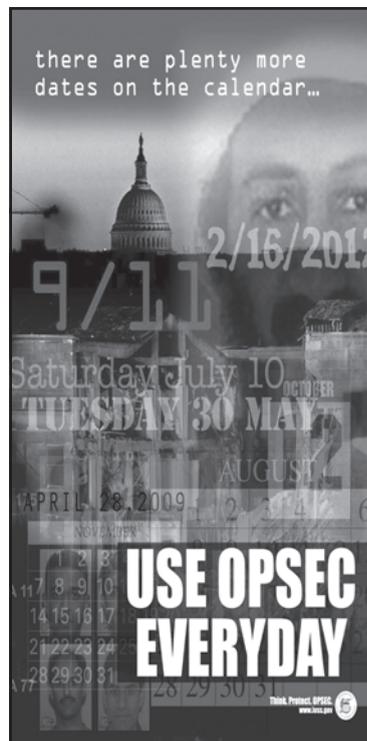
(The following is the text of TAG Policy Letter 28)

The Connecticut National Guard possesses significant capabilities and responsibilities for responding to natural and man-made emergencies. Our history is replete with instances that underscore the value of the National Guard during emergencies and severe weather events. Recent emergency response missions included route clearance of snow and debris, high water rescue, security, commodity distribution, power generation and fire rescue. NGCT's immediate response actions help save lives, prevent human suffering and mitigate property damage.

To ensure NGCT's readiness, all members of the NGCT are designated as essential personnel during emergencies and severe weather events. Dual Status Military Technicians, Active Guard and Reserve members, Active Duty Operational Support and drilling traditional Guardsmen must report for duty as scheduled/ordered unless otherwise specifically excused (example: granted leave or SUTA). As essential personnel, members must make every effort to safely report to their duty stations despite severe weather or emergency conditions. Non-Dual Status civilian technicians are not considered essential personnel under this policy.

In the unlikely event a specific NGCT facility is closed due to severe weather or emergency conditions, local broadcast media will announce the closure of that NGCT facility, similar to announcements of school or event closings. General announcements for private citizens not to report to work or of state facility closings do not pertain to NGCT facilities or personnel. To reiterate, all NGCT personnel (DST, AGR, ADOS and M-Day) must report as scheduled/ordered regardless of weather or emergency conditions unless specifically excused by their supervisor or command.

Direct questions pertaining to this essential personnel policy to the Human Resources Officer, Col. Steve Gilbert at (860) 613-7606 or steven.j.gilbert3.mil@mail.mil.



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If you move and want to continue receiving the *Connecticut Guardian*, you must change your address in one of the following ways:

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All others may contact the editor at debra.i.newton.mil@mail.mil or 860-524-4911.

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(Front Page American Flag photo by Buddy Altobello)

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The *Connecticut Guardian* is an authorized publication for and in the interest of, the personnel of the Connecticut National Guard, State Military Department, State Militia and their families. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the CTNG Hartford Public Affairs Office and is not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Army or the Department of the Air Force. The *Connecticut Guardian* is published monthly in accordance with AR 360-1 and is printed through the Government Printing Office.

Deadline for submissions is noon on May 19 for the June Issue and June 16 for the July Issue. Circulation: 7,800

Expanded Use-or-Lose Leave Law Set to Expire Soon

DoD News
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY

WASHINGTON - With the expiration of a law that allowed service members to carry up to 75 days of leave from one fiscal year to the next, troops should plan to carry no more than 60 days of leave into fiscal year 2016, defense officials recently announced.

Service members will automatically lose any accumulated ordinary leave in excess of 60 days on Oct. 1, 2015, officials said. Troops covered by special leave accrual rules may still carry up to 120 days from one fiscal year to the next, officials noted.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 extended the authority to carry over an additional 15 days of leave (total of 75 days) to Sept. 30, 2015.

Leave Carry-over Limit

Previous authority was set to expire Sept. 30, 2013, but DoD recommended a 2-year extension of the 75 day leave carry-over limit in 2013 to provide ample time for affected members to plan and use accumulated leave and to coincide with the reduction in combat posture in Afghanistan.

The fiscal year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act initially extended the 2008 temporary authorization for all service members to carryover an additional 15 days of leave because the high operations tempo resulted in less opportunity for members to use the leave they had earned.

The 75-day leave carry-over limit does not apply to members who qualify for Special Leave Accrual; they may carry over up to 120 days of leave.

Members may qualify for Special Leave Accrual if they:

- Served on active duty for a continuous period of at least 120 days in a hostile fire or imminent danger pay area;

- Were assigned to a designated deployable ship, mobile unit, or other similar prescribed duty as determined by the service secretary concerned; or
- Performed qualifying duties designated by the Secretary concerned.

Service members are encouraged to check their Leave and Earnings Statement and talk with their finance office to help understand their correct use-or-lose balance and to work with their commands to manage their leave balances throughout the rest of this fiscal year.

LES Projections

Although previous LES's did not account for the 75-day leave carryover expiration in projecting use-or-lose leave amounts, officials from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service say those LES projections have now been corrected for active component Army, Navy, and Air Force service members. They will appear on the April LES.

Members can access their April LES through the myPay system as of April 23, 2015. However, the projected use-or-lose balance will only take into account leave that was charged to members' accounts through April 22.

Any leave taken or posted to the members' account after that date will not be reflected. Reserve component members with projected use-or-lose leave, will be contacted individually by DFAS and given their use-or-lose balance.

Army Equipment Modernization Strategy

STAND-TO!

The *Army Equipment Modernization Strategy* describes how the Army will modernize equipment to Win in a Complex World. The Army must be equipped to protect the homeland, foster security globally, project power and win. This strategy seeks to simplify systems, maximize reliability and reduce logistical demands and life cycle costs. The Army will invest in and deliver future-force capabilities to maintain overmatch against increasingly capable and determined adversaries. Vital modernization efforts will be balanced with end strength and readiness to mitigate mid-term risk.

What is the Army doing?

The *Army Equipment Modernization Strategy* nests with the Army Operating Concept to enable leaders to focus resources to maintain strategic and operational flexibility. Equipment modernization allows for an agile and more expeditionary Army to provide globally responsive and regionally engaged forces demonstrating unambiguous resolve. The objectives are to *Enhance the Soldier for Broad Joint Mission Support, Enable Mission Command, and Remain Prepared for Joint Combined Arms Maneuver*. To achieve these objectives, the Army must adapt current equipment and use commercially available technologies in the near-term (2016-2020) to meet current operational needs. The Army must evolve to increase the expeditionary capabilities of the force and address challenges to overmatch in the mid-term (2021-2029). Finally, the Army must innovate by investment in science and technology for affordable solutions, which provide asymmetrical advantages for the long-term (2030-2045). To mitigate risk in the uncertain fiscal environment, the Army will sustain Science and Technology investments, leverage current fleets, build new only by exception and delay the next generation of platforms until they are affordable.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned for the future?

The Headquarters Department of the Army is committed to working hand in hand with Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to transform big ideas into lethal, reliable equipment in the hands of Soldiers. To accomplish these priorities and control life-cycle costs, the Army must synchronize the requirements, resourcing, acquisition and sustainment systems. The Army will assess promising technologies through experimentation of concepts, reduce equipment complexity and ensure the Soldiers and formations are equipped to win in a complex world.

Why is it important to the Army?

The Soldier and squad remain the centerpieces of the formations and the heart of this strategy. The Army must be equipped to win in a complex world across multiple mission sets, under widely varied conditions, in unforgiving geographies and against evolving threats.

Senator Blumenthal Visits Air Base

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal visits with Col. Frank Detorie at the Connecticut Air National Guard Base in East Granby April 11. While at the base, Blumenthal received a briefing on the 103rd Airlift Wing's mission and capabilities, took a tour of the base and met with several Connecticut Air Guardsmen at work and during their noon meal. (Photo by Senior Airman Emmanuel Santiago, 103 AW Public Affairs)



Welsh Describes Air Force of the Future

JIM GARAMONE
DoD NEWS, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In the future, the Air Force's core missions will probably not change, but the way they are carried out will, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III said in April.

Welsh, speaking to the Defense Writers Group, said the Air Force's missions include air and space superiority, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, rapid global mobility, global strike and command and control.

Those missions "are what the joint force requires to be successful," the general said.

Hot Jobs

New technologies, new methods and new domains will change the way Airmen do their jobs, Welsh said.

"The hot jobs will be probably be in the cyber domain

[and] they will be in remotely piloted aircraft," he said.

The remotely piloted aircraft career field is growing leaps and bounds, the general said. Airmen currently working in this field, he said, are figuring out what the technology can do and how it can be worked into today's and tomorrow's service.

"Many of them came in to do this, which is a change from 10 years ago," Welsh said. "They are really excited about the potential and what it brings."

These Airmen are working to figure how to work remotely piloted aircraft with manned aircraft, he said, and they are the ones figuring how microminiaturization technology can be used and what it will bring to the table.

Building on Air Force Traditions

But there will be more traditional jobs, too, Welsh said

with a smile.

"We're going to get the same kind of people who we've gotten for years," the general said. "They want to fly the F-22, the F-35, the X-wing fighter. Those people still want to come do this and we'll have options for them in the future."

Some of the systems the Air Force has in the current inventory will still be in use in 2035, but what is carried aboard these platforms will bring new capabilities to the service, the joint force and the nation, Welsh said.

"A lot of how the Air Force looks will depend on what the budget looks like and what the economy looks like," he said. "It could look a lot more robust, it could look a lot more modern, or it could look like it does today. The danger is that we settle for that. That won't be good for us."

The Hartford, ESGR Sign Statement of Support for Guard/Reserve

MS ALLISON JOANIS
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

HARTFORD, CT – The Hartford reaffirmed its commitment to support employees who belong to the National Guard and Reserve in a ceremony at the company's headquarters in Hartford on March 26.

Members of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and the Connecticut National Guard, attended the event in which Bob Rupp, executive vice president and chief risk officer at The Hartford signed a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve. He was joined by Tom Bullock, ESGR Chief of Employer Outreach.

"The ESGR Statement of Support program is the cornerstone of ESGR's efforts to gain and maintain employer support," said Bullock. "The intent of this program is to increase employer support by encouraging participating employers to act as advocates for employee participation in the military."

The Hartford has been a long time participant in the Statement of Support program and the company offers several programs and resources to its current and prospective military affiliated employees. Included in The Hartford's Employee Resource Group program is the "Military Community Network," which is comprised of employee volunteers who are dedicated to assisting military members and their families through mentoring, support and camaraderie.

"Hiring veterans and supporting the families of our employee service members is a priority for The Hartford," said Rupp, who is also executive sponsor of The Hartford's Military Community Network Employee Resource Group. "Military Veterans fully embody The Hartford's core values of teamwork, integrity, discipline, focus, diversity and winning spirit."

The ESGR Statement of Support upholds an employer's pledge to recognize, honor and support our country's service members and their families while encouraging opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists and Veterans.

"When some companies have reluctance or doubt, The Hartford sees [hiring service members] as a golden

opportunity," said Ted Graziani, Connecticut ESGR State Chairman, who attended the event with members of the Connecticut ESGR chapter. "Other companies should benchmark what The Hartford does."

In addition to the signing of the statement of support, two full time employees of The Hartford who are also members of the Connecticut Army National Guard and U.S. Navy Reserve, presented their supervisors with the Patriot Award. The award is given to supervisors who make exceptional efforts to support Citizen Warriors and their families.

Officer Candidate Charles Mayer, a member of the Connecticut Army National Guard, and an actuary for The Hartford, nominated his supervisor, Gregg Goddu.

"There is a great culture [at The Hartford], supporting service members who are committed to service to their state, country and The Hartford," said Mayer. "The management here shows an interest in my development as an Army Soldier as well as my development as an actuary."

Mayer moved to Connecticut after serving in the United States Marine Corps and has been an actuary with the Hartford and also a member of the CTARNG for three years. He is in training with the CTARNG Officer Candidate School and expects to receive his commission as an Army second Lieutenant with D Company, 1-102nd



Bob Rupp (left) executive vice president and chief risk officer at The Hartford signs the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

Statement of Support alongside Tom Bullock, ESGR Chief of Employer Outreach at a ceremony held on March 26 at The Hartford headquarters in Hartford, Connecticut. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis Connecticut National Guard Public Affairs Office)

Infantry Battalion in August 2015.

Since its inception in 1972, hundreds of thousands of employers have signed Statements of Support, pledging their support to Guard and Reserve employees. Companies participating in the program reaffirm their commitment on an annual basis.

The Connecticut National Guard has a New Website



The new website where you can find updated news and information about the Connecticut National Guard is now <http://ct.ng.mil> or <http://ct.ng.mil/Pages/default.aspx>. As of April 6, 2015, the old website link is no longer accessible. Please visit the new website for a digital version of the Connecticut Guardian, current job postings and contact information for offices of the CTNG. The new website will be updated frequently, so keep checking back for more useful news and information about the CTNG.

1-169th Aviation Gets Hero's Send-Off for Kosovo Mission



With family and friends in the bleachers behind them, members of the 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment stand in formation as they are honored during a send-off ceremony marking the beginning of their Kosovo deployment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment stand at ease while speeches are given during a send-off ceremony in their honor April 7 at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Windsor Locks, Connecticut. The unit is headed to Kosovo for about a year. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Several members of Connecticut's Congressional Delegation, Constitutional Officers and Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman were on hand to wish members of the 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment well during a send-off ceremony in their honor. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Owen Koehler, the 4-year-old son of Staff Sgt. Brian Koehler, joined his dad in formation and checks out Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman's necklace during a send-off ceremony honoring the 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Led by their commander, Lt. Col Jeffrey LaPierre, members of the 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment salute during the presentation of colors and playing of the National Anthem. The unit is deploying to Kosovo and was being honored during a send-off ceremony April 7 at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Windsor Locks, Connecticut. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

Can Yoga Make a Stronger Soldier?

STAFF SGT. PHILIP BENNETT
85TH TROOP COMMAND UPAR

Did you know that 8.7 percent of U.S adults or 20.4 million people practice yoga? That is a figure equal to five times the population of Connecticut.

On April 2 and April 9, 1st Sgt. Kellylynn Ksiazkowski conducted a yoga session for members of the 85th Troop Command and the 192nd Military Police Battalion at the Niantic Readiness Center, Niantic, Connecticut. She also conducted a class at the Hartford Armory on April 9 that included civilians as well as military personnel.

Ksiazkowski has been practicing yoga for three years and will be a certified yoga instructor in June. She has served full-time in the National Guard for 26 years, and is also the first AGR, female first sergeant in the state of Connecticut. She is proud to serve in the military and credits much of her success and accomplishments to her service.

"I am very proud of the organization and will be forever grateful for everything it has provided me," Ksiazkowski said.

"I wanted to take my personal practice to a higher level," Ksiazkowski said about her pursuit of instructor certification. "I want to have a deeper understanding of the philosophies of yoga, and to be able to share my skill with others, to encourage them to begin their own practice

and to open them up to the possibilities of change in their lives".

Ksiazkowski believes there are benefits to teaching yoga to Soldiers.

"Soldiers can experience healing, inspiration and possibility thru practicing yoga. Breathing exercises and simple poses can reduce stress and increase strength and balance. It can enhance focus and flexibility and is often used as a complement to medical treatment for those suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," Ksiazkowski said.

Soldier performance is an important area of focus in the military. Ksiazkowski believes that yoga provides the opportunity to find balance and stability in very busy and demanding military lives.

Yoga cultivates flexibility of body and mind allowing those who practice it to always feel present while on duty, and give more attention to their jobs and the needs of their Soldiers. She will continue to conduct yoga classes every Tuesday at the Hartford Armory and Thursdays at Camp Niantic. All are welcome to join.

Can yoga be of benefit to Soldiers? Helping build strength and mental fortitude, becoming more flexible of the body and soul, and working as a group to accomplish a common goal are all priorities that the military holds in high regard.



1st Sgt. Kellylynn Ksiazkowski explains the benefits of yoga. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Bennett, 85th Troop Command UPAR)



1st Sgt. Kellylynn Ksiazkowski assists a fellow Soldier with a difficult yoga pose during a class she conducted in Niantic, Connecticut. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Bennett, 85th Troop Command UPAR)

(Right) Kellylynn Ksiazkowski, first sergeant with Headquarters/Headquarters Detachment, 85th Troop Command, demonstrates one of the more challenging yoga poses. She offers yoga classes to National Guardsmen at the Niantic Readiness Center in Niantic, and at the William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Terry Mahon, 85th Troop Command)



(Below) Soldiers in the Connecticut Army National Guard perform a basic yoga pose during a class offered by 1st Sgt. Kellylynn Ksiazkowski. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Bennett, 85th Troop Command UPAR)



Soldier of the Year 'Didn't Want Any Regrets'

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCO

She returned from Advanced Individual Training in October 2014. She found out the day before the battalion boards she would be her unit's representative. She had one month to prepare for the State Best Warrior Competition.

It was all she needed.

Spc. Jessica Abu-Hijleh came out on top as the



With two broken toes and boots filled with blood, Spc. Jessica Abu-Hijleh finishes the 10-kilometer ruck march.

Connecticut Army National Guard Soldier of the Year, besting 10 other competitors.

a healthcare specialist with the 142nd Medical Company, Abu-Hijleh said it was all "good times."

When she arrived at her unit, she met up with Spc. Melissa Bilgen, who she had known through the Recruit Sustainment Program. Bilgen was on tap to compete in the State Best Warrior Competition, but thought Abu-Hijleh would make a better competitor. It took a while to convince leadership, but the day before the battalion's appearance board, they told her she was in and Bilgen would be her mentor.

"I wasn't worried about the board," said Abu-Hijleh. "I have always done well with boards." The key, she said, is confidence.

"You may not always be confident, but you have to come across as confident," she said.

An emergency room technician at Leahy Medical Center in Burlington, Massachusetts, she laughed when asked if she had enough time to prepare for the competition.

When she was selected to represent the battalion at the state competition, she got herself a personal trainer.

"I knew I could study on my own for the things that needed to be studied, but I needed someone to motivate me," she said of her choice. "I told him I needed to be as strong as I possibly could be within one month and we worked together."

She did a lot of leg work to prepare for the 10-kilometer ruck march and did a lot of rucking around her neighborhood.

"It was excruciating," she said of the ruck march. "I had two broken big toes. My boots were filled with blood. It was very painful. I was crying when I crossed the finish line. But I wasn't going to give up. You don't know what you are capable of until you do it."

As much as she hated the ruck, she enjoyed the camaraderie that developed among the competitors.

"It was nice to see that," she said. "The first day

everything seemed really intense, but then fellow competitors were rooting each other on. You know, we were all going through it and it sucked. We might as well be the light for each other."

As tough as the competition is under the best of conditions, snow fell on both days the competitors were outside. Thus the "suck" Abu-Hijleh spoke of. The snow created a tougher competition during the stress shoot, the ruck march and the land navigation events. In fact, the night land navigation was cancelled because of safety concerns.

But, Abu said she was prepared for tough.

"I had a good idea what I was going to," she said. "I couldn't just show up. I am very hard on myself. I wasn't going in to be second. I knew it would be challenging mentally and physically. I didn't want any regrets so I trained and studied hard. I didn't want to look back later and say what if I had just done this a little better?"

She said she is working hard preparing for the Regional Best Warrior Competition being held in Massachusetts in May.

"I will probably be more prepared for the ruck," she said. "My boots were not the right size, maybe a bit too small, and it caused a lot of trauma to my feet. I broke both my big toes."

She is working with her personal trainer again.

"I need to be as strong as I can possibly be," she said.

She is studying harder. She knows she will not be able to learn or memorize everything in the study guide, but wants to see everything in there at least twice, feeling it may be easier to recall it if she has at least seen it.

"I need to be more efficient with the board."

As much as she disliked the ruck, she is looking forward to the start of the ruck march at the regional competition. Word has it, it will start at the Lexington Concord Bridge where the National Guard got its start.

"I have a fondness for the heritage of the Guard. I will probably cry at the start of the ruck march."



Spc. Jessica Abu-Hijleh pumps out push-ups during the physical fitness test of the State Best Warrior Competition in March. Two days later, she was announced as the Soldier of the Year.



Spc. Jessica Abu-Hijleh gets her pace count before the land navigation portion of the State Best Warrior Competition. Winning the state competition, she now goes on to represent Connecticut at the regional event in May.

Civil Engineering Squadron Airman Earns Top Honors

SENIOR AIRMAN EMMANUEL SANTIAGO
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn. – Senior Airman Aaron LaPorte, assigned to the 103rd Civil Engineer Squadron, received the Airman of the Year award for the Civil Engineering Squadron, the Mission Support Group, and the Connecticut Air National Guard.

LaPorte, a member of the Flying Yankees for two years, earned these accolades as a result of hard work and dedication.

LaPorte grew up in Plainfield, Connecticut, where he attended Catholic school until the eighth grade. He then attended Lebanon High School where he played basketball and ran track. Not long after he graduated high school, he began to entertain the idea of joining the military.

“I didn’t really have expectations about the military before I joined because I never thought I would,” said LaPorte, “Then I was pushed in the right direction and I decided to go for it.”

According to LaPorte, one of his biggest influences is

his grandfather, a retired commander in the Australian Navy.

LaPorte has now been in Emergency Management for the 103rd Flying Yankees for two years.

His shining moment was when he took part in the Silver Flag Contingency exercise, an operation simulating a deployed location.

They arrived to an open field and constructed a working environment to include living accommodations and running water.

LaPorte is a junior at Eastern Connecticut State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in biology. He is also a substitute teacher at Lebanon High School and a basketball coach.

“I like to stay on top of things. I like to make sure I never fall behind in my civilian and military work,” said LaPorte.

LaPorte said that his focus is to continue to and take any opportunity to better himself. While grateful for the recognition, he doesn’t take all of the credit for himself. “It’s a reflection of everyone in my shop. It’s not just me getting the job done, it’s a team effort,” said LaPorte.



Senior Airman Aaron LaPorte

SAVE THE DATE

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission Board and Staff
Cordially invite you to the
9th Annual Tribute to Hispanic Veterans Ceremony

Scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, 2015
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm



Connecticut's Jose Pickard is pictured second to left of the Vice President and Celestino Cordova is second to the left of the President.

State Capitol's North Lobby

Come help us celebrate the accomplishments of all our Veterans and recognize the Presidential signing into law of the Congressional Gold Medal for Puerto Rico's Fighting 65th Infantry Regiment this past June 10, 2014.

Please send us your stories, your family members or friends who have or are currently serving in the Military so we may include them in our program to be honored. Email staff at lucy.hernandez@cga.ct.gov or contact her at 860-240-8330.

STORY SUBMISSION DEADLINE – Friday, May 8, 2015

RESERVE LA FECHA

La Junta de Directores y Empleados
de La Comisión de Asuntos Latinos y Puertorriqueños
Les invita cordialmente al
9o Ceremonia de Tributo al Veterano Hispano

Se llevará a cabo el miércoles 13 de mayo del 2015
De 5:30 pm a 7:30 pm



Connecticut's Jose Pickard 2o a la izquierda del Vice Presidente y Celestino Cordova 2o a la izquierda del Presidente.

El Primer Piso del Capitolio

Venga y ayúdenos a celebrar los acontecimientos de nuestros Veteranos y el recibimiento de la medalla de oro del Congreso, cual el Presidente de los Estados Unidos, firmó como ley para los 65 de Infantería de Puerto Rico este pasado 10 de junio del 2014.

Por favor envíenos sus cuentos, los de sus familiares quienes eran o son Veteranos o los de sus amistades que han estado en el Ejército o todavía están allí para rendirles honor este año. Pueden enviar un correo electrónico a lucy.hernandez@cga.ct.gov o se pueden comunicar con ella al 860-240-8330.

Necesitamos saber de ustedes no más tardar el viernes, 8 de mayo del 2015.

NCO of the Year: Knowing What to Expect Helpful

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCO

He laughs when asked how he was selected to represent his unit in the State Best Warrior Competition. “We were sitting in a unit meeting when the question



Staff Sgt. Andros X. Thomson III completes the 10-kilometer ruck march in the snow.



Staff Sgt. Andros X. Thomson III starts the second mile of his two-mile run during the physical fitness portion of the State Best Warrior Competition in March.

came up and everyone looked me,” said Staff Sgt. Andros X. Thomson III, D Company, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment. He had competed in 2008 and was the NCO of the Year runner-up. He also was a mentor in 2014.

This year, Thomson came out on top of a field of eight as the NCO of the Year.

“It is a big difference from 2008 to now,” he said. “The ruck march was held at Camp Niantic, everything then was disorganized, we qualified on the EST 2000. It is much more realistic now. I was using my skills and common sense. It was even more difficult now than it was then.”

Thomson said he had about two and a half months to prepare for the competition, but found training was somewhat limited due to the record-setting cold Connecticut experienced this past winter. He spent about one to one and a half hours a day in the gym and did martial arts training twice a week - all while working full time at the Army Aviation Support Facility and going to school four nights a week. He is studying American Studies at UConn.

Thomson said the appearance board and written exam were fairly easy for him.

“I manage the publications account at work and that helped. I am always looking something up for people, and I remember what I see. I have apps on my phone to look things up as well,” he said.

He said always looking things up for others helped him on the written test.

“It was really pretty easy,” he said. “It was multiple choice and I have an easier time recalling something if I have seen it before.”

Thomson said it takes being pretty steady across the board in all events to come out on top.

“Finishing second or third in every event is better than finishing first in some and low in others,” he said. “The competition is more than just physical strength.”

While he has competed before, Thomson said he wasn’t sure what to expect of the water survival event. As a Soldier in the aviation field, he has had to undergo water survival training before.

“It wasn’t easy,” he said of the events held at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy pool in New London, Connecticut.

“I didn’t go into anything thinking, ‘oh this going to suck,’ that’s not my mentality,” he said. He did say that the 10-kilometer ruck march was probably the hardest event because of the snow. Just as the competitors stepped off for the ruck, the snow started falling. If the route wasn’t already hard enough with gravel and ruts and hills, it became harder with snow on it.

Overall, Thomson found the competition itself and the competition between Soldiers to be pretty tough.

“It was challenging,” he said. “It was pretty close between a lot of us.”

He did say he lived up to his expectations of himself in the competition.

“I wish my ruck was faster, but it was pretty good considering the conditions,” he said.

Thomson will represent the Connecticut Army National Guard in the regional competition being held in Massachusetts in May, where he will compete against seven other NCOs for the regional title and the right to go to the national competition.



Staff Sgt. Andros X. Thomson III, D Company, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment, plots his points on a map before heading out on the land navigation course. Thomson finished first in the overall State Best Warrior Competition and will represent the Connecticut Army National Guard as NCO of the Year in the regional competition being hosted by the Massachusetts Army National Guard in May.

NCO of the Year is No Stranger to Pressure

MASTER SGT. ERIN McNAMARA
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn. – “There are so many opportunities with the Guard, you’ve just got to find them,” said Tech. Sgt. Darrel Hanrahan, an aerospace medical services craftsman with the 103rd Medical Group. “Figure out what you can do and learn from them as much as possible.”

The 2014 Connecticut Air National Guard Noncommissioned Officer of the Year says that this philosophy is responsible for the success he’s earned throughout his career. He also claims that it is the reason he joined the military about ten years ago.

“I’ve always been drawn to it and the sense of adventure. I figured it would be a good learning experience for me,” said Hanrahan.

The learning hasn’t ceased. Since his initial training qualified him as a National Registry Emergency Medical Technician, Hanrahan has continued to pursue his education in emergency medicine. He attended Capital Community College in Hartford, Connecticut, where he completed the Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic training program. His motivation is personal.

“I was always drawn to the fire service because of my family. My uncle was a chief and chaplain and I have pictures of me in fire trucks when I was four or five years old,” says Hanrahan.

How he ended up in emergency medicine, however, is a different story.

“I was in a pretty bad car wreck when I was eighteen years old. I ended up working at the hospital afterwards and became friends with a bunch of the doctors and nurses working in the ER and decided it would be an interesting career field,” Hanrahan said.

Now a full time firefighter and licensed paramedic for the city of East Hartford, Connecticut, Hanrahan claims that the balance between his experience working in a busy urban service and his military training makes him a better and more skilled provider.

“Coming here, you get to see some of the new stuff that’s up and coming [in emergency medicine] that hasn’t hit the civilian world yet.”

And because the scope of practice is broader for a military provider than for than a paramedic operating in his service area, Hanrahan says that his military training offers experience with more advanced techniques.

“There are certain things that the military lets you do that the civilian side doesn’t let you do yet. So I get to do a lot of hands on in both areas.”

Hanrahan knows the value of so much training and experience and he emphasizes that to his own troops.

“Take every chance you get. If someone says go here, go there, even if it doesn’t sound like it’s going to be a good time it’s still going to be a learning experience,” Hanrahan said. “The thing about the Guard is you’re family. You could be with people three days or a month and within those three days you’re friends with somebody you’ve never met before and learning new things from them.”

Hanrahan is excited to put all of that experience to work in new ways as the 103rd Airlift Wing completes its conversion to the C-130H airframe.

“With the C-130 we have more aircrew to take care of and I think there’s more of a chance of hands on medical ventures. We’re going to have more ability to deploy and operate with the C-130. We’re getting really excited to see where things are going to go.”

The NCO says that his peers would describe him as fun-loving, but serious and capable when it’s time to get



Tech. Sgt. Darrel Hanrahan

down to business. If his enthusiasm is contagious, the Flying Yankees can rest easy that when they need to call for a medic, their cry for help will be met with a swift response by a competent and passionate Airman.

DID YOU KNOW...

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19%

meet criteria for alcohol dependence.

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Senior NCO of the Year Takes Training Seriously

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS STEVEN TUCKER
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn. – Leadership is a vital building block in maintaining a strong force. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that the education and training needs of the Flying Yankees of the 103rd Airlift Wing will be in good hands with an individual who has proven to be a tremendous leader for her troops.

Master Sgt. Nicole Thomas recently won the Connecticut Air National Guard Outstanding Senior NCO of the Year award for her work as the superintendent of Nursing Services in the 103rd Medical Group. She says her experience in Nursing Services will benefit her as she transitions into her new role as the Superintendent of Force Development at the 103rd Force Support Squadron.

Thomas' leadership skills come from her 14-year career in the Guard, beginning as an apprentice in the medical group.

"You start off learning the basics. You get your EMT training and learn basic medical knowledge, and then as you move up, it's more supervisory," Thomas said.

"You get more of the bigger picture with each step you raise; you get the higher view," said Thomas about how her experience has made her gain a better understanding of the mission as a whole. Thomas also said there are aspects of her former position that directly correlate to force development.

"When our primary Unit Training Manager left, there was a vacancy," Thomas said. "So I became the additional duty UTM, and got a little more knowledge with the formal schools and helping to get our people in the med group trained."

The Medical Group also claimed the NCO of the Year and Junior Officer of the Year awards, nearly sweeping

the four different outstanding categories as a group. The SNCO of the Year says this can be attributed to the type of professional environment that her mentors have established.

"I think it's the leadership that's in place there now," said Thomas. "The mentorship that's in place there now has cultivated these individuals, and I think that's reflected."

Now she has the opportunity to take these valuable experiences and apply them to her wing-level position and other aspects of her life.

"I think you take that anywhere you go," she said. "It goes back to the mentors that I've had through my career, taking little pieces from each of them, and shaping myself. You will do that anywhere. The things that I've taken from some of these people, I may not necessarily apply on the military side. I may apply that on the civilian side as well. So it's not even necessarily my new role, it's just my life in general."

At the same time, Thomas says that there have already been great benefits in her new position with force development.

"It's been a fantastic opportunity to transition from the unit level to the wing level," Thomas said. "We see people from the start of their career - the student flighters coming in looking for their Basic Military Training and technical school dates - to the individuals who are coming back from their [advanced specialty training], and then we see them retire as they out-process from the base. So we kind of see everybody through their career span, and that's been pretty cool to see."

Having gone through many professional growth experiences herself, Thomas hopes to offer words of wisdom to newer Flying Yankees going through their professional development.



Master Sgt. Nicole Thomas

"While you may not as a brand new three-level see how your role impacts anything, it does," Thomas said. "Every single person on this base plays an important role in our mission. So take every experience here for what it's worth and understand not only what you're getting out of the experience, but what you're giving to the experience as well."

Connecticut Army National Guard Returns to Great Gull Island



Members of the Connecticut Army National Guard aviation community returned to Great Gull Island after a year to assist in bringing more lumber and supplies to the island that had been severely storm damaged. At just 17-acres end-to-end, Great Gull Island sits between Plum and Fishers Islands just seven miles from the Connecticut shore in the Long Island Sound. The island is among the last nesting grounds in the Western Hemisphere for common and roseate terns, pigeon-size sea birds that come north during the summer and spend their winters in South America. (Photos by Sgt. 1st Class William Ortiz, 1109th TASMG UPAR)

Junior Officer of the Year Knows How to Take Care of People

SENIOR AIRMAN SASHA FELICIANO
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE - East Granby, Conn. – Once a year, 103rd Airlift Wing members, friends and family gather to honor those who have distinguished themselves from their peers in the unit. Capt. Jessica Herndon was shocked and humbled when she learned she had been selected to receive the Connecticut Air National Guard Junior Officer of the Year award for 2014.

“Something like this award, it surprised me,” Herndon said after discovering she’d been selected. The captain spoke highly of her Airmen, saying “it’s due to them nominating me and basically my Airmen making me look good.”

As a high school graduate with a vague sense of direction for her future, Herndon knew one thing for sure. “I was looking for an opportunity where I could go to school, serve my country, things you always want to do, you want to serve a higher purpose,” she said “and the National Guard kind of put that all together.”

Herndon began her military career in the 103rd Communications Flight as a cyber transport specialist. Herndon originally planned to separate after her initial 6-year enlistment. She found her experiences in those years to be so rewarding that she decided to take another look at what the Air National Guard had to offer. “I had a really great time with Comm Group,” she said.

As a registered nurse for a community hospital and the Connecticut Department of Corrections, Herndon chose to take her military career in a similar direction. In

2011, she applied and was offered a commissioning opportunity with the 103rd Medical Group.

“Coming over from enlisted to officer... that’s nerve racking, period,” said Capt. Herndon. “But the Med Group was really welcoming.” Herndon performs health administrative services as the manager of all inspectable programs and the officer in charge for the group’s logistics section. Herndon and her two troops focus heavily on the logistics aspect of the job, which she enjoys.

She says that staying organized is critical to ordering medical equipment and supplies for the Medical Group. Their administrative efforts even contribute to the unit’s flying mission.

“We also supply first aid kits for the C-130 and make sure they have what they need,” Herndon said.

It’s clear that the members of the Medical Group hold Herndon in high regard, proven by her recent award. Herndon expressed similar sentiments when talking about her unit.

“We claimed top spots...I think we’re doing pretty well,” Herndon said with a smile in regards to her fellow award winners. She spoke of how her organization was, “fostering a nurturing environment to help you grow,” and how important she found it to emulate that same environment for her Airmen.

“Seeing everybody interact together...it motivates you...you just want to do the best you can to help them,” she said. It is clear that Herndon’s appreciation for her Airmen is sincere and deserved.

“They’re absolutely everything, if I need something or even if I kind of [give them something] last minute,”



Capt. Jessica Herndon

Herndon said, referring to her Airmen and their willingness to get the job done. She says she can rely on her Airmen to rise to any occasion, often responding to her with “Oh yeah, we’ll get it done. We’ll get it done.”



Honoring NCAA Champs UConn Women’s Basketball

The First and Second Company Governor’s Foot Guards, led by Maj. Christopher Cain and Maj. Richard Greenalch respectively, march in the Victory Parade held on April 12 honoring the University of Connecticut Women’s Basketball Team’s 10th NCAA tournament championship. (First Company Governor’s Foot Guard photo by Susan Gozzo Andrews, 2GFG)

Around Our Guard



Soldiers of the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group offload a United States Virgin Islands National Guard UH-72 (Lakota) helicopter from a C-17 at the TASMG facility in Groton, Connecticut April 13. The TASMG will be conducting required maintenance on two Lakotas over the next three months, according to Lt. Col. Mark Strout, TASMG Logistics Management Officer. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class William Ortiz, 1109th TASMG UPAR)



The Connecticut National Guard hosted Larry Babin, a military fellow working in Sen. Richard Blumenthal's Washington, D.C. office and Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Sean Connolly on a Civic Leader Orientation Flight March 31. The two received briefings on the status of the Connecticut Army and Air Guard and facilities, toured the Windsor Locks Readiness Center, 14th Civil Support Team facility, Camp Hartell, the Bradley Air National Guard Base, the 169th Regional Training Institute, Camp Niantic and the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group. They also took an aerial tour of the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Middletown and Stones Ranch Military Reservation in East Lyme. While on the ground at Camp Niantic, Soldiers of the Connecticut Army National Guard provided expert tours of static displays that included military vehicles and bridges, and had the opportunity to show off one of the state's military working dog teams. In the photo above, 1st Sgt. Joseph Burke gives a briefing on the static displays to the two visitors. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael McJunkins explains to members of the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce's 2015 Leadership Program maintenance operations at the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group April 9 in Groton, Connecticut. The Connecticut National Guard hosts a tour of southeastern Connecticut facilities annually to provide local community and business leaders insight into day-to-day operations. (Photo by Capt. Mike Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)



Lt. Col. Mark Tallo instructs a portion of the Liaison Officer Course April 11 at the William A. O'Neill Armory, Hartford, Connecticut. Twenty Soldiers of the Joint Force Headquarters completed the course enabling them to serve as LNOs during times of state emergencies. LNOs can be assigned to the State Emergency Operations Center, regional centers or military task forces and act as advisors to civilian agencies and as a bridge between the National Guard and civilian authorities. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



The family of Sgt. 1st Class John C. Rakoczy, and active duty Soldier stationed at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, watches Rakoczy's retirement ceremony via video teleconferencing April 10 in the computer lab of the William A. O'Neill Armory, Hartford Connecticut. Rakoczy's parents were not able to travel to Arizona for the ceremony, so he contacted Staff Sgt. Clinton Shivers in the Connecticut Service Member and Family Support Center for assistance. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

Connecticut Guardsmen Battle Elements, E



Sgt. Rashae Verner, Headquarters/ Headquarters Company, 192nd Military Police Battalion, plots points on a map during the Land Navigation portion of the State Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Command Sgt. Maj. "Snow" waits with open arms for the State Best Warrior competitors to come in from the Land Navigation event. Snow's appearance was a group effort among senior NCOs on the competition's staff. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Soldiers and NCOs competing for the title of Best Warrior step out into the snow as it starts falling. The snow made an already stressful event even more challenging as competitors dug deep inside themselves and finished the course. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



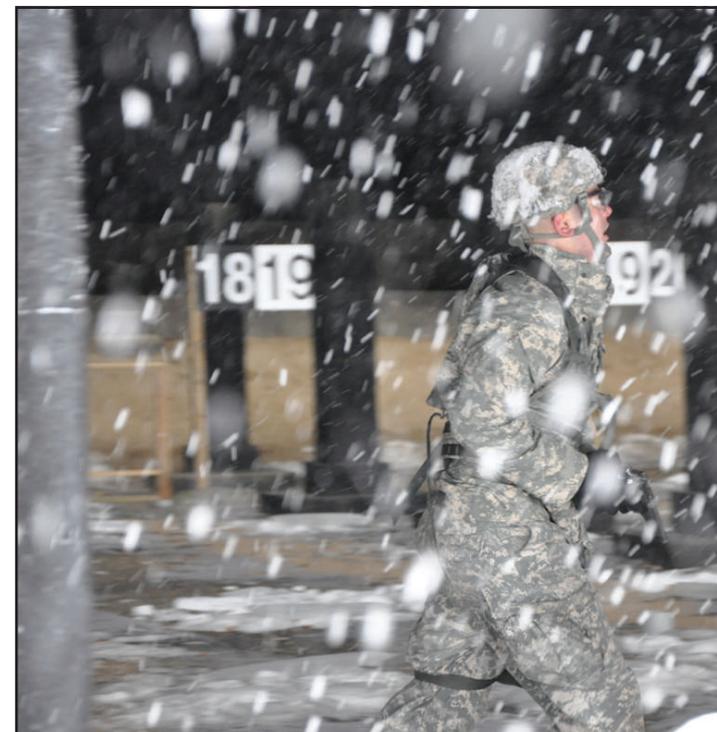
Staff Sgt. Kurtis Palmer, 14th Civil Support Team, shows the strain of completing the 10-kilometer ruck march while it snows as he crosses the finish line at Stones Ranch. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Spc. Ramiro Martinez, Headquarters/ Headquarters Company, 192nd Military Police Battalion, finishes the 10-kilometer ruck march first during the State Best Warrior Competition. Snow started falling just as competitors stepped off for this event. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Sgt. Victoria Tuttle, 248th Engineer Company, works to assemble several weapons whose parts were scattered in a box during the State Best Warrior Competition in March. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Spc. Raymond Wilson, 143rd Military Police Company, hustles through the snow during the shoot portion of the State Best Warrior Competition in March. The Soldier, NCO against NCO in several events over the course of the year's regional event is being hosted by the Massachusetts Army National Guard. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

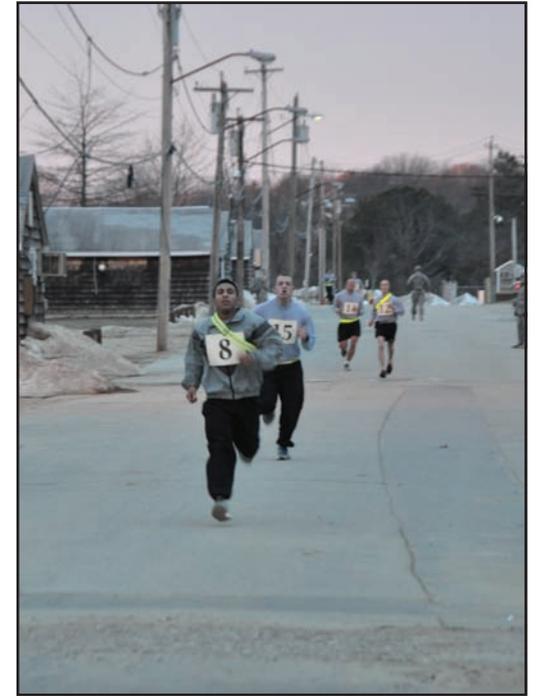
Each Other, Selves for Title of Best Warrior



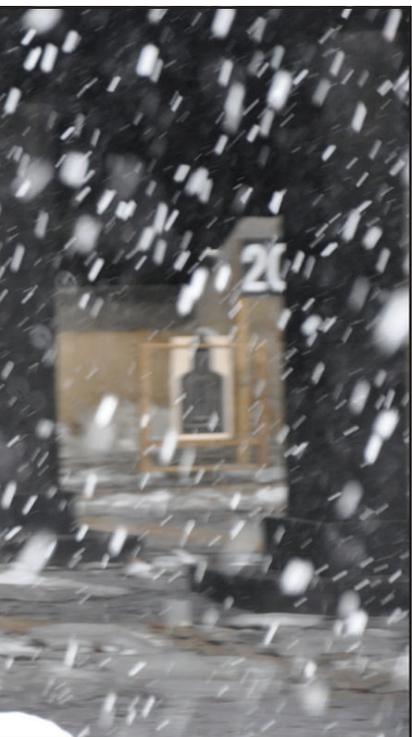
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t even more so, but the competitors
Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State



Sgt. Joe Colavito, 102nd Army Band, swims a lap of the pool at the United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut during the State Best Warrior Competition. Competitors had to complete one lap of the pool wearing a full uniform, to include boots, while keeping their weapon above water. They also had to jump into the water wearing a vest and drop the vest and weapon to the bottom of the pool before surfacing. The final water survival event involved walking blindfolded off a high meter board into the water. Colavito competed this year despite having broken his neck in a motorcycle accident two years ago. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



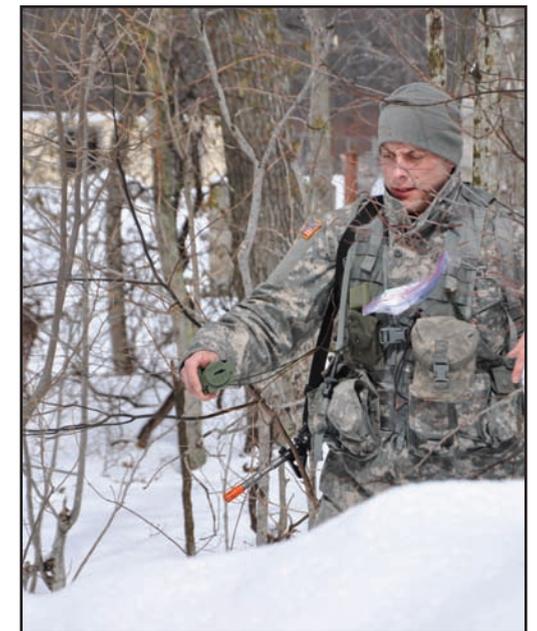
Spc. Ramiro Martinez, Headquarters/ Headquarters Company, 192nd Military Police Battalion, and Spc. Matthew Pilbro, Headquarters/Headquarters Company, 192nd Engineer Battalion, finish one-two in the two-mile run portion of the physical fitness test during the State Best Warrior Competition. In addition to physical events, competitors were also challenged mentally with an appearance board and written test. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



through the snowflakes and stress
e competition pits Soldier against
three days, with the goal being to
Best Warrior Competition in May. This
y National Guard. (Photo by Sgt. 1st



Sgt. Kristen Stuart, 141st Medical Company, takes aim during the stress shoot portion of the 2015 State Best Warrior Competition, held at various locations throughout the state March 19-22. Twenty-four Soldiers of the Connecticut Army National Guard battled each other and the elements while vying for the title of Soldier or NCO of the Year. Stuart was one of three females to compete this year and her mentor, Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Stanley, a previous winner himself, kept their unit posted through social media on how Stuart was doing. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)



Sgt. Joe Colavito, 102nd Army Band, heads out through snow and trees to find his points during the land navigation event of the State Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Public Affairs NCO)

Safety Razors Will Save You Money

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

My drill sergeant was visibly upset my third morning of basic training. He walked away from our formation to collect himself, as he had a number of times before, and then walked back to us and asked a question.

“Did you all shave with Snickers bars this morning?” he asked.

“No, Drill Sergeant,” we responded in unison.

He directed us to meet him in the barracks latrine, where he gave us an in-depth demonstration on how to properly shave. He lathered up his face with shaving cream in the mirror, and demonstrated his shaving technique to us. He was a good leader.

This was around the time that the double- and triple-blade razors were becoming popular, and some of the guys were using them. Our drill sergeant recommended that we look into purchasing these razors as well.

I followed that lead and forked over the money to purchase these fancy and well-marketed razors from the shoppette.

For 15 years, I have used the double, triple, quadruple and even quintuple bladed razors, and have paid the

exorbitant prices. I am embarrassed to theorize how much I have paid during my military career to shave.

However, I am happy to report that I now refuse to waste my savings on these fancy shaving products. I have found a new method, and by doing so, have saved much money, by switching to safety razors.

I couldn't be happier.

I am no longer shaving like my drill sergeant. I am now shaving like my Grandfather, and my Grandfather's drill sergeant.

Safety razors look intimidating. The blades are sold separately from the handle and must be placed onto it, and fastened in. There is no plastic however, and no package fonts or extravagant marketing commercials and advertisements to associate with them.

A pack of 100 blades for safety razors costs as little \$10 online. Each razor lasts approximately six shaves. Safety razor handles are available at various prices, starting at \$12, but they are a one-time purchase.

Do the math. You will save money.

I have never experienced a closer shave. I finally feel like I'm truly shaving my face, and not abusing my skin with some kind of brightly colored plastic contraption

drawn up in a corporate board meeting.

There are a handful of safety razor brands

available, and plenty of videos on the internet that give instructions on how to properly use them.

That's how I learned. The process is simple and extremely gratifying.

If you are interested in making this change, don't ask anyone who is young enough to be in the military for advice. Ask your grandfathers and their friends. Do some research and find a brand that will work for you.

I promise that the process of shaving will become enjoyable, and you will save money.

I've finally learned how to shave, drill sergeant!



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Resilience: "Skill of the Month"

State Resilience Coordinator
SGM James Sypher
james.a.sypher.mil@mail.mil

Just the Facts

What are "Mental Games" and how do I use them?

What is the skill?

Mental Games is a skill that compartmentalizes or takes your mind off of counterproductive thoughts so you can be more productive and focus on the task at hand.

3 Principles

- Mental Games must require your full attention
- Must be hard and fun
- Must be games or techniques you can do within a few minutes

1. Mental Games are designed to distract you or "turn the channel" away from counterproductive thoughts and emotions.

2. Mental Games require practice in order to derive the full benefit

The Games

Math games: Count back from 1,000 by 7s.
Alphabet games: Work your way through the alphabet, naming someone for each pair of initials.
Categories games: Name all the sports figures, war heroes, etc. you can in two minutes.
Army alphabet: Repeat it backwards.
Lyrics: Recite upbeat song lyrics.
Positive Imagery: Create a detailed positive image of a situation or memory that helps you to feel calm, positive, or confident.
***** What other mental games can you come up with??**

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CHIEF MASTER SGT.
EDWARD GOULD

Enlisted Update

Greetings and welcome to spring finally having sprung.

I appreciate the opportunity to reach out to Connecticut Guardsmen, of all ranks and duty statuses,

to share some of my thoughts and ideas. As I reflect on my first full year in the position of State Command Chief Master Sergeant, I look back on all the impressive Airmen and Soldiers I have met along the way.

Last May, I had the opportunity to attend the Reserve Component National Security Course held at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. During that class, I had the opportunity to work with senior noncommissioned officers from our sister services as well as officers from all service branches within the Reserve Component.

We met with representatives from the Reserve Officers Association and went to Capitol Hill to meet lawmakers and discuss policy with them.

I also traveled to Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center to attend the Second Annual Air National Guard Command Chief Huddle and to attend the Air National Guard Safety Summit.

Those of you that read my articles know the Safety Summit provided valuable inspiration for my June 2014 Guardian article and reminded us all, Air and Army National Guard alike, that the individual Soldier and Airman is our most valued asset. Remember to never "Let your Guard down."

The website and mobile app "Ready54" has many safety tips and helpful links for Airmen. The Command Chief huddle hosted Command Chiefs from all 54 states and territories.

We were all in attendance to discuss policy and implementation and to rededicate ourselves to the Airmen of the Air National Guard and the dual mission of the National Guard in general.

On May 16, I had the pleasure of attending the annual Armed Forces Day Luncheon and encourage all of you to do the same. The food at the Aqua Turf is always top notch and we get another opportunity to recognize and honor our best Soldiers and Airmen. This year's event is scheduled for Friday, May 15.

In June, I traveled to Sea Girt, New Jersey on one of the Connecticut Army National Guard's Chinook helicopters. The weather was perfect and the view out of the rear ramp was impressive.

Once in Sea Girt, I met with several Airmen of the

103rd Air Control Squadron and watched them execute their real world mission in a most impressive manner.

In August, I had the pleasure of participating, as a graduate, in the Community College of the Air Force graduation ceremony.

As many in the Air National Guard already know, the requirement for a CCAF associate's degree for promotion to E-8 and E-9, will be upon us in October.

I was proud to receive my degree and proud of the many Airmen of all ranks that I shared the stage with. An even greater source of pride was that my own daughter, Camden, a senior at Norwich University, was there to witness her father finally get his degree. Yes, she did have the opportunity to help me with the required math class.

Last August I attended my first, but certainly not my last, Enlisted Association of the National Guard national conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

I cannot say enough about this event and the great Soldiers and Airmen that participate at the state level in the National Guard Association of Connecticut's events and then come together at the EANGUS Conference each year.

This year's conference will be held in Indianapolis Indiana, August 9 -13.

Last October, the annual Senior NCO Dining In was, yet again, a successful event that brought together Senior NCOs from the Connecticut National Guard to socialize in an atmosphere that builds camaraderie and respect.

Also in attendance were representatives from Naval Submarine Base New London as well as Coast Guard Reserve Senior NCOs. I look forward to this year's event and hope to see every single Army National Guard and Air National Guard Senior NCO there.

In November 2014 I attended Air Force Smart Operations 21st Century, also known as AFSO21, training at the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont Air National Guard. This training is critical to saving money and man hours.

I could go on with more excellent events I attended as the Command Chief Master Sergeant of the Connecticut Air National Guard.

I share this with you because one or more of you reading this will someday be the Command Chief of the CTANG.

You too, will have these same types of experiences that will re-affirm the bright future of the National Guard, both Air and Army alike.

BECOME A LEADER AND
TECHNICAL EXPERT
AS A WARRANT OFFICER



TAKE THE CHALLENGE TODAY, CONTACT:

CW3 JOHN NERKOWSKI

WARRANT OFFICER STRENGTH MANAGER

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john.v.nerkowski.mil@mail.mil

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May 8 is Military Spouse Appreciation Day

Governor's Horse and Foot Guards

UConn Student Receives Foot Guard Scholarship

STAFF SGT. MARK BOUDREAU
1ST COMPANY GOVERNOR'S FOOT GUARD

HARTFORD, Conn. - Major Christopher Cain, Commandant of the First Company Governor's Foot Guard, has announced that Alyssa McDonagh, a University of Connecticut student in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources has been awarded a scholarship sponsored by the Foot Guard. Foot Guard scholarships go to an Animal Science pre-veterinary major and/or a Pathobiology and Veterinary Science pre-veterinary student. These scholarships are funded with proceeds from the annual First Company Governor's Foot Guard Athletic Association Dog Show and Obedience Trials, sponsored by the Foot Guard every February.

Alyssa McDonagh of Monroe, Connecticut, is a senior pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Pathobiology with a minor in Animal Science. A 2011 graduate of Masuk High School, she will graduate from UConn this May. She has been accepted to the University of Pennsylvania, Tufts University and Iowa State University. She is a New England Scholar for maintaining a GPA above 3.7 for the calendar year.

In high school, McDonagh spent her summers shadowing at a small animal hospital. While in college she worked in an externship with an equine veterinarian in Saratoga Springs, New York and also did research in UConn's Department of Pathobiology on porcine reproductive respiratory syndrome virus.

She finds veterinary medicine a very exciting field and is anxious to begin veterinary school as she is interested in working in public veterinary health and conducting research.

In addition to her scholastic activities, Alyssa has contributed to the UConn student newspaper since entering college and has been the weekly columnist of "The Dog Ear" and "The Traveling Husky." She also loves running and is currently training for her third half-marathon.

Cain and all members of the First Company, Governor's Foot Guard congratulated Alyssa on her outstanding scholastic achievements and on nominations to receive the Foot Guard scholarships.



First Company Governor's Foot Guard Pre-Veterinary Scholarship recipient Alyssa McDonagh (2nd from the right) with her parents Gary and Paula McDonagh and Capt. Roger Conley at the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources and Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture Scholar's Night banquet held on March 26 at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Boudreau, 1FG)

2nd Company GHG to Host 25th Annual Open House

2ND CO. GOVERNOR'S FOOT
GUARD RELEASE

NEWTOWN, Connecticut - For 25 years, the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard (2GHG) has held an Open House during the summer months. Originally for trooper's family and friends the Open House allowed 2GHG to show what their trooper's volunteered for, tour the facilities, show what the Guard was all about and to thank them for supporting us. Over the years, the Open House has grown more into a family focused community event, still showing who we are and what we do, but mostly thanking the citizens of the State of Connecticut and the Town of Newtown for their support.

The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard (2GHG) cordially invites all military personnel and the general public to its 25th annual Open House on Saturday, June 20.

Watch as 2GHG's Troopers perform a mounted military drill. Tour 2GHG's barn and greet our noble mounts, or don colonial attire and witness a Civil War camp re-enactment. Children and the young-at-heart will also be entertained with craft projects, face painting and games.

The Open House is free and will be held at 2GHG headquarters: 4 Wildlife Drive, Newtown, Connecticut from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. In the event of rain, the Open House will be held on June 21.

Our servicemen and women can participate a tour of 2GHG's facility by unit commander Maj. Gordon Johnson, who will recognize their selfless service.

"We look forward to sharing the rich traditions of the Horse Guard with the public," said Johnson. The Troop and its horses represent living history, and a link to Connecticut's storied past."

Chartered in 1808, The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard (2GHG) is one of the oldest active Cavalry units in the United States. An all-volunteer state militia unit, 2GHG serves the Governor and the State of Connecticut at the direction of the Connecticut Army National Guard.



The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard cordially invites all military personnel and the general public to its 25th annual Open House on Saturday, June 20, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 4 Wildlife Drive, Newtown. Children and the young-at-heart will be able to visit the horses as in this photo from a previous open house, witness a Civil War re-enactment and get their faces painted among other activities. (Photo courtesy Marleen Cafarelli)

Inside OCS: Lack of Experience Does Not Stifle Growth

OFFICER CANDIDATE GREG COCO
OCS CLASS 60

Often times throughout Officer Candidate School I have felt overwhelmed with the amount of information a candidate is supposed to retain.

As a direct to OCS enlistee, I have little experience in the Army National Guard. One way I have found to combat my lack of experience is to read about topics related to the Army and leadership.

Nothing can truly replace hands-on experience in the field, however. We must prepare for the moment when the knowledge we learn during training can not only save our own lives but the lives of fellow Soldiers.

Warfare has always served as a relevant element of our nation's history and there are a multitude of resources

available to read and learn from. The advice I received in OCS is to not only read topics related to the Army and leadership but to also focus on reading information directly related to your branch and what you enjoy reading.

The most recent book I read is, "Conversations with Major Dick Winters" by Col. (Ret) Cole C. Kingseed. After reading "Band of Brothers," I found myself wanting to learn more about Winters and the core values and knowledge he obtained throughout his military career and lifetime. The book goes into life lessons from Winters and what he thinks are positive attributes for leaders and friends - such as good character and courage. Winters refers to keeping a cool head in combat.

"To be good, you must first acquire a few brains and

common sense," Winters said. "Next, learn to feel and think with the head and not the heart. Men are so many machines, capable of doing so much, in a certain amount of time. Try and save as many as you can. At times that is difficult when you figure percentage killed and wounded as to how successful the attack was."

Obviously reading alone can never fully prepare a Soldier for the hardships of combat. However, reading books on leaders who have led Soldiers and who have been successful helps aspiring leaders, like myself, have a role model and a standard to uphold. It is important that we never stop training and trying to better ourselves, not just as Soldiers but as leaders because one day the lives of the Soldiers to your left and right might just depend on it.

OCS Class 60 Dining-Out Showcases Tradition, Candidates

OC MYKAL KUSLIS
OCS CLASS 60

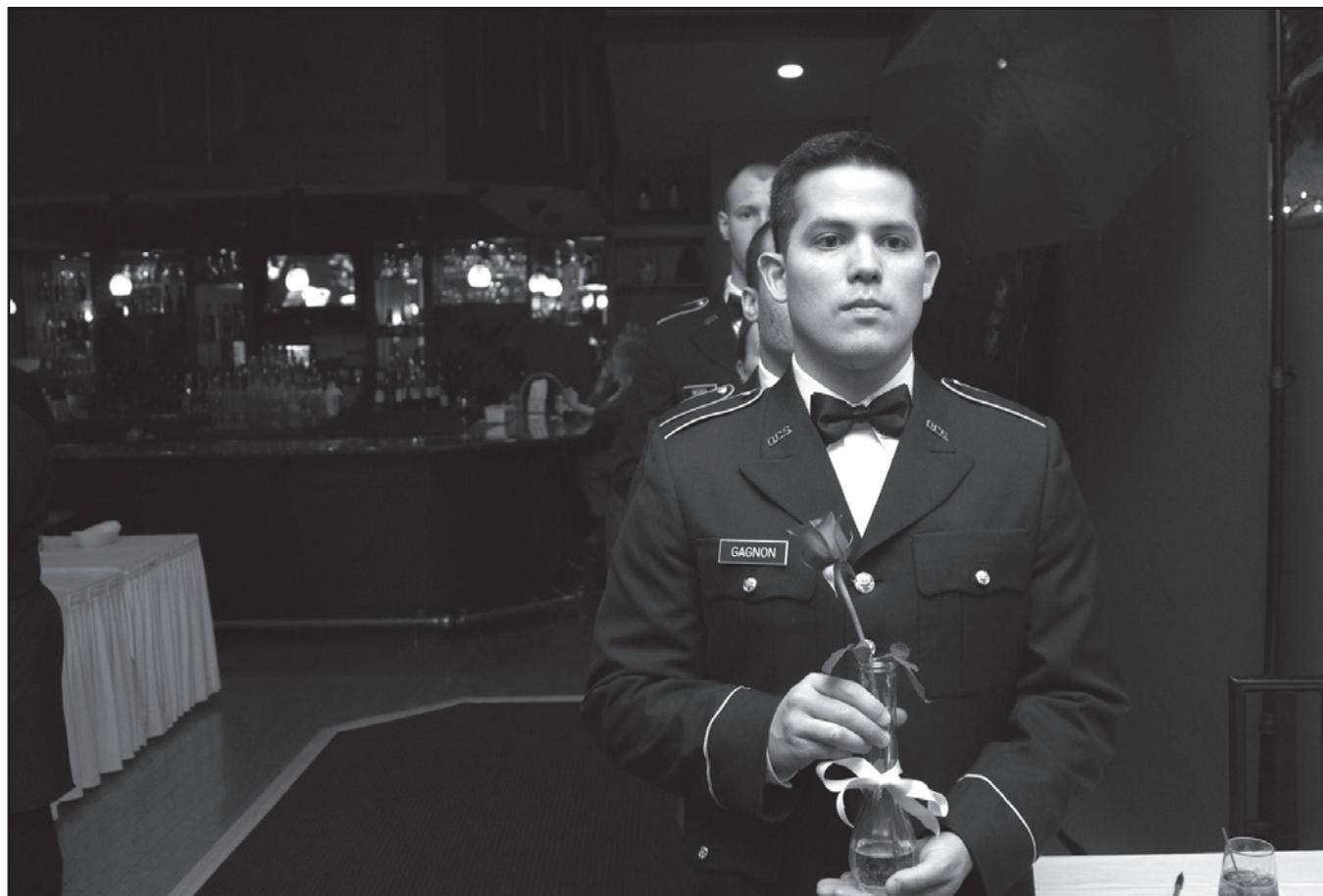
The 12 Connecticut and seven New York officer candidates of OCS Class 60 hosted the annual OCS Dining-Out March 28 at Juniper's Restaurant in Middlebury, Connecticut.

More than 110 military personnel and guests attended the event which included entertainment from the 102nd Army Band, a blessing from Chaplin Capt. Anthony Stephens and remarks from guest speaker, Col. (ret) Mark Yanaway of the Army Reserve. Yanaway is a Litchfield, Connecticut, resident and world history teacher at Wamogo Regional High School.

Other guests of honor included Lt. Col. Richard Leydon, the commander of the 1st Battalion, 169 Regional Training Institute and his wife, Kimberly; Brig. Gen. (CT-ret) Daniel McHale; Col. Ralph Hedenberg, Commander of the 169 Regional Training Institute and his wife, Laura; Chief of Staff Col. Michael Wiczorek, and his wife, Michele; Lt. Col. Michael Dodson and his wife, Linda; Lt. Col. Lesbia Nieves; Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Roy and his wife, Erika; and Mrs. Anne Yanaway.

Highlights of the evening included the Fallen Soldier and grog ceremonies, as well as skits performed by the officer candidates.

The event was a great opportunity for the Officer Candidates to meet individuals who have a great deal of experience and allow the candidates to discuss the duties of an officer from both the officer and NCO perspectives. OCS Class 60 has three drills remaining before traveling to Delaware for Phase III of their training in July.



The annual Officer Candidate School Dining-Out showcased tradition and the Class 60 candidates March 28.

Above, members of Officer Candidate Class 60, comprised of candidates from the Connecticut and New York Army National Guards, perform a Fallen Soldier Ceremony at the start of the formal portion of the evening.

Left, attendees spend the social hour sharing stories and laughs, imparting knowledge and meeting senior leaders. (Photos by Sgt. Josh Quint, 143rd MP Co. UPAR)



Education: Registered Apprenticeship - Unique Opportunities

TROY GIPPS
COORDINATOR, ARNG APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE, NGB

You have earned GI Bill benefits, now what?

For many Soldiers, college serves as a critical step toward the attainment of career goals, but it would be a mistake to say college is for everyone.

Education comes in many forms, and GI Bill legislation allows you to travel a variety of educational paths. If you want or need to work full-time and prefer to learn by doing, a registered apprenticeship training program might be the best choice.

RA is a combination of on-the-job training and related classroom instruction provided under the supervision of a journey-level craft person or trade professional in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation.

Upon completion of RA training programs, which generally last from two to five years, apprentices receive an industry issued, nationally recognized credential that certifies occupational proficiency.

Significant RA-sponsoring industries include construction, energy, health care, information and communications technology, manufacturing, and transportation and logistics.

Finding training programs is easier than you might think. The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship publishes a list of 1,100 officially

recognized occupations for which apprenticeships may be available and nearly 16,000 employers nationwide sponsor RA training programs.

Lists of employers and the programs they sponsor can be found on two primary websites:

<http://www.mynextmove.org/vets/> (search for jobs, then look for the RA logo), and to identify programs approved for GI Bill use, search the Internet for "Weams Institution Search."

<http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do>.

There are two ways to search the Weams website.

To identify a complete listing of approved apprenticeship training programs by state or territory, leave the "Institution Name" field blank, then click the "Program Type" drop down menu and choose "On-the-Job-Training/Apprenticeship." Then click on the preferred state or territory.

To identify approved programs by job title, enter the title, such as carpenter, in the "Institution Name" field. Then click the "Program Type" drop down menu and choose "On-the-Job-Training/Apprenticeship." Finally, on the map of the United States, choose the preferred state or territory; a list of employers sponsoring apprenticeship programs in that trade will appear.

GI Bill payments for RA training programs vary widely depending on the benefit used, the duration of the

program, and for those Soldiers using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the employer's location. For example, if you are eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill at the 100 percent entitlement rate, were employed full-time in a five-year RA training program with an employer located in Boston, Massachusetts, where the applicable monthly housing allowance is \$2,631.00, you would collect \$63,144.00 in Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, in addition to regular wages.

Soldiers eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve, Chapter 1606 program would collect approximately \$9,000 in benefit payments over this five-year training period. Counseling regarding benefit eligibility and specific payment rates is available through your state Education Services Office.

Learn a highly skilled occupation, collect your GI Bill benefits, and earn a full-time paycheck. Registered apprenticeship is a unique education and employment opportunity that is worth a closer look.

Maj. Derek J. Musgrave: Education Services Officer and GI Bill Manager.

860-524-4816 or derek.j.musgrave.mil@mail.mil

Sgt. 1st Class Ericka Thurman: Incentive Manager.

ericka.g.thurman.mil@mail.mil or 860-524-4820



Military Crisis Hotline
Tel: 1-800-273-8255
veteranscrisisline.net

Military One Source
militaryonesource.mil

SAMHSA Treatment Locator
findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Chaplain- CH David Nutt
Tel: 860-548-3240/803-7748
David.c.nutt.mil@mail.mil

Suicide Prevention Program Manager (SPPM)- Yania Padilla
Tel: 203-450-1826
Yania.y.padilla@accenturefederal.com

IT TAKES COURAGE AND STRENGTH TO ASK FOR HELP



If you think you or a friend may need help, do not hesitate to reach out to the Substance Abuse Program team.

We can connect you with community resources and treatment providers.

Dr Steven Langehough
Alcohol & Drug Control Officer (ADCO)
Accenture Federal Services
Tel: 475-238-2138
steven.o.langehough@accenturefederal.com

Jennifer Gonzalez-Smith
Prevention Coordinator (PC)
Accenture Federal Services
Tel: 860-549-2838
J.m.gonzalez-smith@accenturefederal.com



<http://acsap.army.mil/strongchoices>

Guard Your Health Launches FitText

GUARD YOUR HEALTH RELEASE

Guard Your Health, a health and wellness campaign out of the Army National Guard Chief Surgeon's Office, has launched FitText. FitText is a text messaging initiative centered on maximizing physical training (PT), preparing for the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), and supporting ongoing fitness among Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers and their families.

FitText aims to capture Soldiers' attention just in time for summer APFT-related activities and any personal interest in getting fit before the upcoming warm weather months. FitText will provide three to four text messages a week to help keep Soldiers' training on track and help them prepare for their next big milestone,

whether it is an upcoming APFT, basic training, or even their next drill weekend.

FitText will deliver actionable tips, inspiration, and reminders straight to Soldiers' mobile devices to help improve their APFT scores and overall fitness.

Content will focus on keeping fitness top-of-mind and making it easy for Soldiers to find and use available fitness resources. Text messages will link to actionable resources and information related to APFT preparation guides, physical

fitness training routines, exercise form and breathing techniques, and sleep and nutrition tips.

ARNG Soldiers, family members, and anyone looking to improve their overall fitness training can sign-up for FitTexts by texting "fit" to 703-997-6747. Standard text messaging rates apply. Learn more at GuardYourHealth.com/fit-text/.



Sign Up for FitText:
Text "fit" to 703-997-6747

FitText will help you stay on track and prepare you for your next big fitness milestone. Join now to get fitness tips, inspiration, and reminders delivered right to your mobile device.

Learn more at: www.guardyourhealth.com/fit-text
Subscribers will receive 3-4 text messages per week. Standard messaging rates apply.

Why Join?

Prepare for the APFT.



Train smarter, not harder.



Stay motivated, see results.



Legal: How to Drive with a Suspended License in Connecticut

CAPT. KYLE B. WILKINSON
CTARNG OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE

Prosecutor: “Okay, let’s see here, suspended license. You were in here last month, and we need this case resolved. Pay the fine before next month, and don’t drive illegally in the meantime!”

Joe: “But sir, I just finally got a job last week! And now I can’t drive a car. How am I supposed to come up with the money to pay the fine if I can’t even get to work?”

Individuals in this state face quite a dilemma when their license to drive is suspended. In Connecticut today, the everyday transportation needs of citizens are met by driving automobiles.

There are approximately 3 million licensed drivers and nearly 3 million registered vehicles in this state of around 3.5 million people according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012. The people

of this state drive to get to work, to get to school and to obtain the basic necessities of life such as food and medicine.

Driving is a legal privilege that may be revoked. Across Connecticut, people can lose their license to drive for many reasons listed specifically in the Connecticut General Statutes or for any cause deemed sufficient by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles with or without a hearing in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 14-111(a).

Common reasons drivers’ licenses get revoked include: driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, accumulating several motor vehicle violations and failing to pay renewal fees or fines.

Thankfully, Section 14-37a-2 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies provides individuals with suspended licenses the opportunity to obtain Special Operator’s Permits issued by the Department of Motor

Vehicles. Applications may be downloaded from the DMV website and mailed with the \$100 application fee to DMV, Driver Services Division, 60 State Street, Wethersfield, CT 06161. Applications typically take around 10 days to process according to the DMV website.

Work Permits and Education Permits are practical solutions for individuals with suspended licenses, providing the ability to get to work and school in order to meet basic needs.

While these permits are issued subject to restrictions and limitations contained in the DMV regulations, the permits generally allow individuals to drive between their home and their place of employment or school during specified times. Military members who face license suspension should be aware of and avail themselves of the offer.

Diversity: May is Asian Pacific Heritage Month

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 MICHAEL MOTTOLO
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LEADER, CONNECTICUT TRAINING CENTER

The “Asian-Pacific American” is a title that encompasses more than 50 ethnic groups, including Hawaiian natives and the Pacific Islanders.

These groups include Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans, Asian Indian Americans, Laotian Americans, Cambodian Americans, Hmong Americans, Thai Americans, Pakistani Americans, Guamanian Americans and Samoan Americans. The Asian-Pacific American Soldier has been involved in numerous wars and conflicts in the interest of the United States, spanning from the Civil War to the present theatre of operations.

An annual event of particular note in light of Asian Pacific Heritage Month is the Battle of Bataan. During World War II, at the Battle of Bataan, the American Soldiers and their Filipino counterparts of Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s United States Army Forces in the Far East held out for four months against the Imperial Japanese Army, while every other island and nation in the Pacific and Southeast Asia had fallen to Japan.

By March 1942, Japan controlled the entire Western Pacific region except the Philippines. The Battle of Bataan ended on April 9, 1942 when U.S. Gen. Edward P. King surrendered to Japanese Gen. Masaharu Homma. It was at that point that 12,000 Americans and 63,000 Filipinos became Prisoners of War. The events that unfolded ended up becoming one of the worst modern atrocities involving POWs, the Bataan Death March.

MacArthur’s plan was for his troops to hold their ground in place on the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island, and attack from the north once reinforcements and supplies had arrived via the U.S. Navy. However, the Navy’s capabilities were severely weakened due to

the events of Pearl Harbor.

In addition, Japan had blockaded the access routes, preventing resupply efforts from reaching U.S. troops. Nevertheless, troops fought back against the Japanese during numerous battles along both the Bataan defense line and its rugged peninsula. However, without any resupply the war fighting effort began to take its toll on the troops. Most of the men had lost as much as 30 percent of their body weight and could barely carry their weapons. As not only food, but medical supplies depleted, tropical diseases such as malaria and dysentery became widespread.

Finally, on April 3, Japan launched its fresh, final assault. The weakened U.S. contingent was no match for the Japanese Army. Instead of seeing his starving and diseased men slaughtered, Gen. King surrendered in place. The events of the next five days are what are now known as the Bataan Death March.

American and Filipino troops were gathered into groups of 100 and forced to march north for 65 miles on the one-way paved road that runs down the Bataan Peninsula. As the emaciated men were forced to march, any man who fell out, or stopped for any reason, was executed by the Japanese Army. Over the span of five days, it is estimated that the Japanese killed between 7,000 and 10,000 American and Filipino troops.

When prisoners arrived at Camp O’Donnell, they found horrendous living conditions, forced to occupy a former Philippine Army camp designed for 10,000. Instead, approximately 60,000 sickened and starving survivors were forced to occupy the camp.

There was no medical care, little food, running water or sanitation infrastructure in place. Prisoners were basically left to die, and began to do so at a rate of 400 per day. Conditions became so egregious that in July of 1942, Japan paroled the Filipino prisoners, and moved the Americans to Camp Cabanatuan on the Philippine Island

of Luzan.

By 1944, as U.S. forces drew closer to the Philippines, Japan decided to send the remaining U.S. prisoners to Japan and Manchuria to work as slave laborers in factories and coal mines. During the transport from Luzan to Japan, POWs were over packed in the hulls of unmarked Japanese cargo ships and forced to endure more horrible and unsanitary treatment as many died of suffocation and overheating. By the time Japan surrendered in 1945 and the U.S. Army was able to free the Bataan prisoners of war, it is estimated that nearly two-thirds of them had died while in Japanese captivity.

During the March/April time frame each year, the Army holds an annual Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range in White Sands, New Mexico. Units from all over the world, and across components, send teams to compete in the grueling 26.2-mile march across the New Mexico desert to honor our Soldiers of past that were forced to march and die as prisoners of war.

I have personally had the privilege of competing twice; once in the heavy division where participants wear full gear with a 40-pound ruck and once in the light division which is conducted in civilian running attire. The march is accompanied by a history seminar and survivor ceremonies where survivors of the original death march are present to be honored.

Survivors who have passed on are remembered, and will be remembered always. As testament to our military’s proud Asian-Pacific American heritage, the Bataan Memorial Death March continues to see a large turnout, especially from the Asian Pacific military community. The history of these Soldiers as well as all prisoners of war should never be forgotten. More information can be found at: <http://www.bataanmarch.com>

Sources:

www.bataanmarch.com

www.battlingbastardsbataan.com



National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT)



National Guard Association of Connecticut President Fran Evon gives his President's Report to members of NGACT during the business portion of the annual conference March 28. Despite a snow storm, nearly 150 NGACT members attended the annual conference, heard committee reports, recognized award and scholarship recipients, elected members to the executive board and heard from Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Congressman Joe Courtney, Connecticut Veterans Affairs Committee co-chairs Sen. Mae Flexer and Rep. Jack Hennessy, Connecticut Veterans Affairs Commissioner-select Sean Connelly and Connecticut's Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Thad Martin. (NGACT photo by Debbi Newton)

Brig. Gen. (Ret-CT) Daniel McHale is congratulated by Maj. Gen. Thad Martin upon being presented the Minuteman Award, NGACT's highest honor for his work with NGACT, the Connecticut National Guard and on behalf of Veterans throughout Connecticut. Also receiving awards from NGACT were: Spec. Stephanie Landry, 2014 Soldier of the year; Spec. Jessica Abu, 2015 Soldier of the Year; Sgt. Johnny Peralta, 2014 Army NCO of the Year; Staff Sgt. Andros Thomson, 2015 Army NCO of the Year; Airman 1st Class Aaron LaPorte, Airman of the Year; Tech. Sgt. Darrel Hanrahan, Air NCO of the Year; Master Sgt. Nicole Thomas, Air Senior NCO of the Year; Master Sgt. Felix Ortiz, Air First Sergeant of the Year; Capt. Jessica Herndon, Air Junior Officer of the Year; Capt. David Lord, NGACT Leadership Award; Staff Sgt. Michelle Saucier, CSM Anthony V. Savino Award; and Mrs. Laurie Casey, Environmental Services, Inc., Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Vicinus and Master Sgt. Jonathan Shepard, NGACT Meritorious Service Award. Presentations were made during the awards luncheon at the annual NGACT conference March 28 in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. (NGACT photo by Debbi Newton)



Connecticut's Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman addresses attendees of the NGACT Conference at the Rocky Hill Veterans Home and Hospital, Rocky Hill, Connecticut. (NGACT photo by Debbi Newton)



NGACT President Fran Evon (right) presents conference guest speaker Thomas Bothur with a plaque of appreciation. Bothur spoke about his experiences as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and is joined at the front of the room by other Vietnam Veterans in attendance at the conference held at the Rocky Hill Veterans Home and Hospital March 28. (NGACT photo by Debbi Newton)

Save the NGACT Date

May 20

NGACT Executive Board Meeting
NGACT Office, Hartford Armory
5:30 p.m. Open to All

June 17

NGACT Executive Board Meeting
NGACT Office, Hartford Armory
5:30 p.m. Open to All

July 15

NGACT Executive Board Meeting
NGACT Office, Hartford Armory
5:30 p.m. Open to All

Aug. 6

NGACT Retirees Picnic

Aug. 8-13

EANGUS Conference
Indianapolis, Indiana

Aug. 19

NGACT Executive Board Meeting
NGACT Office, Hartford Armory
5:30 p.m. Open to All

Sept. 10-13

NGAUS Conference
Nashville, Tennessee

Sept. 11

Annual NGACT Golf Tournament
Hawk's Landing Country Club, Southington

Plan - Prepare - Execute Training

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

This is the Part 13 of a 13-part series. The Unit Training Plan is the unit's over-arching plan to attain key collective task proficiency in the time allotted to train.

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

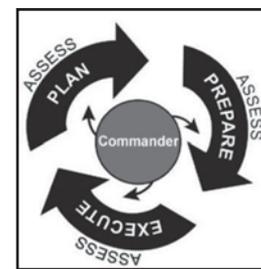
unit can influence these cycles early enough to get the resources needed to train. The following is a breakdown of major "T-Month" activities to use as a guide for units to follow in the development of training events. Keep in mind that each major training event would fall into the T-Month concept at different points in time on the training calendar.

Month T+1 Recover, conduct final after action reviews and assess. The final step is to assess the training just completed in terms of the collective and individual task proficiencies demonstrated or attained. Sound assessments facilitate later success. Evaluators and role-players provide their input to inform the commander's assessments. AAR and assess key aspects of the event. Begin with the Unit Training Plan, assess if the planning and preparation were sufficient, and determine if the administrative and tactical support were sufficient to best conduct the training. Ensure all the lessons learned are

recorded and preserved for retraining and future use.

The final AAR should take place as soon as possible following the event. Ideally, this is not the first and last AAR for an event. AARs are conducted as needed during the event. This ensures that events are still fresh in the minds of all the participants, capturing the data as accurately as possible. Use multiple recorders to ensure all lessons are captured.

Commanders assess and evaluate training. The commander should consider his own observations as well as observations, insights, and lessons from AARs and unit evaluations to inform both proficiency for the assigned mission and mission essential task assessments for unit status reporting.



Connecticut Military History - Knowlton's Rangers

BRIG. GEN. (CT-RET.) ROBERT CODY
HISTORICAL COLUMNIST

Having good intelligence is essential to conducting military operations. Gen. George Washington was keenly aware of this and established a special unit for gathering information at the outset of the War for Independence known as Knowlton's Rangers.

This was America's first elite, clandestine unit. The forerunner of today's Special Operations Forces.

Thomas Knowlton was born in Massachusetts, but his family moved to Ashford, Connecticut, when he was 8 years old. As was required at the time, he joined the local militia unit at the age of 16.

He served in the French and Indian War and in 1762 was a member of Israel Putnam's company that took part in the British invasion of Havana, Cuba. Only 20 of Putnam's 107-man company survived the campaign. Most deaths were attributed to tropical diseases. After the war, he returned to Ashford and served as a selectman.

When the "shot heard around the world" rang out on the Lexington Green, Knowlton was a captain and commander of the Ashford militia company. He marched his men to Boston and fought at the Battle of Breed's Hill with Col. Putnam's regiment, where he was promoted to major for valor.

He then served in the vicinity of New York City where he was in command of the 20th Continental Regiment. In August 1776, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and put in command of an "elite, handpicked, independent corps, under the direct command of Gen. Washington." The unit was called "Knowlton's Rangers." The entire unit numbered only about 130 men and Capt. Nathan Hale was one of Knowlton's company commanders.

On Sept. 16, 1776, Knowlton and his men were scouting the British positions near Harlem Heights when they engaged the enemy pursuing Washington's troops up

Manhattan Island. The Rangers fought as the British troops derisively played fox hunting calls on their bugles as they advanced.

Much of the battle took place near 120th Street between Broadway and Riverside Drive, just west of present-day Columbia University. Unfortunately, Lt. Col. Knowlton was mortally wounded in the Battle of Harlem Heights. Washington paid tribute to "the gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would have been an honor to any country, having fallen yesterday while gloriously fighting." Knowlton was buried with military honors in an unmarked grave at 143rd St. and St. Nicholas Ave.

A statue of Thomas Knowlton is on the grounds of the Connecticut State Capitol in Hartford. In 1995, the Military Intelligence Corps Association established the Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Knowlton Award, recognizing individuals who have contributed significantly to the promotion of Army Military Intelligence. A statue of Nathan Hale stands outside the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency in Langley, Virginia as well as inside the state capitol.

Brig. Gen. (CT-Ret.) Cody may be reached at rmcody@snet.net

Have the Courage to Help a Buddy

"One suicide is one too many."
Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

For assistance:

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

USAPHC U.S. Army Public Health Command (Protections)

Off the Bookshelf: The Hidden Hand

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

I lined up a dozen or so 120-millimeter mortar cans at our outpost in Afghanistan during the spring of 2007. I placed a wide piece of cardboard on top of them and sat down.

"Simon, put that book down and swab the mortar tube," said Staff Sgt. Dan Wimbish.

I hadn't even picked the book up but felt instantly disdainful. I didn't want to wait any longer to finish reading about the adventures of Capitola the Madcap. I had 50 pages to go, following an 18-hour reading binge. I read by flashlight the night before, and by early Afghanistan mountain sunlight during our throw-back Thursday stand-to that morning.

We had chickens during that time, and they ran around in the dirt. Local Afghani workers, helped us fill sandbags and looked curiously at our mortar systems, our chickens and at us. We had 2-week-old beards and were extremely dirty.

I sighed. I much preferred swabbing the mortar tubes to burning our refuse buckets with nothing but a torn t-shirt to protect my face from particles and black smoke.

I wanted to tell Staff Sgt. Wimbish about Capitola the Madcap, but we weren't exactly on the same communication page, and he never helped us prepare the chickens or pluck feathers, anyway.

Capitola is an orphan in E.D.E.N Southworth's 1888 masterpiece novel, "The Hidden Hand." Most people have never heard of Capitola, or Southworth, due to a staunch climate of political correctness that has overwhelmed the literary world since the mid-20th century.

"The Hidden Hand" takes place in the southern United States in the mid-19th century. Within its 500 pages are servants, slaves, stereotypical ethnic villains and cartoonish characterizations of an innumerable amount of humorous persons. Southworth weaves these character elements and multiple fascinating plot components together into a grand story that follows Capitola's journey from homeless orphan to fantastic hero with a warm new home and family.

The beauty of this novel is hard to explain. It is usually classified as a sensationalist work, but is far more witty and thought provoking than other novels of its era. It fit in perfectly with the

chickens, and the mountain sunsets, and the stream in the valley below our position. I'm romanticizing this deployment experience, but that's ok. Enough time has passed.

Southworth wrote more than 60 novels between 1849 and 1910, and was for a time one of the world's most popular authors. Her books are all penned in a literary style that holds no storytelling punches—one that does not censor itself with contemporary conventions.

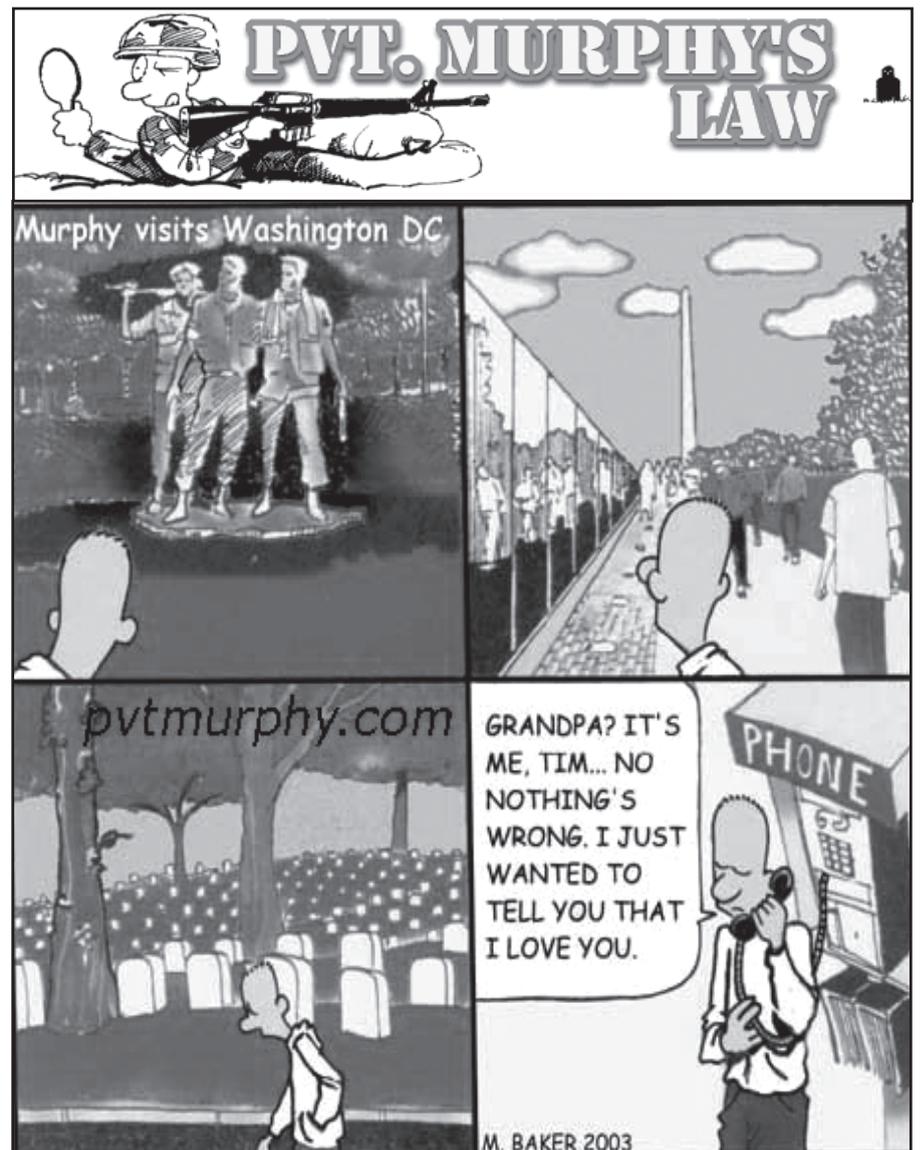
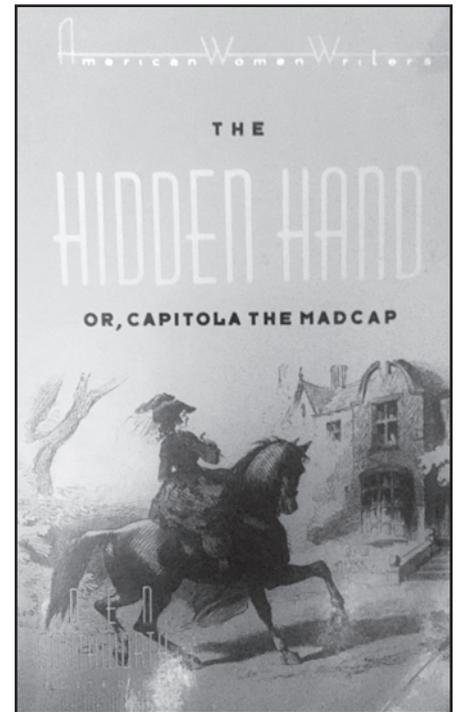
I hope that someone else in the world has read at least one of her novels on top of cardboard, on top of mortar cans. The pages of my copy of "The Hidden Hand," are still smeared with mortar tube residue. I remember the story and her prose clearly—as clear as chicken feathers, and Staff Sgt. Wimbish's sharp voice.

"Beside an old, rocky road, leading from the town of Staunton, out to the forest-crowned hills beyond, stood alone, a little gray stone cottage, in the midst of a garden enclosed by a low, moldering stone wall. A few gnarled and twisted fruit trees, long past bearing, stood around the house, that their leafless branches could not be said to shade. A little wooden gate, led up an old paved walk to the front door, on each side of which were large windows," Southworth wrote.

"Fire mission," shouted Staff Sgt. Wimbish—which meant smoky and hazy sunsets to read by, and many fewer mortar cans to read upon.

"One cause of this excess of joyful feeling must be from the contrast! Else it were dreadful to be so happy," Southworth wrote.

"Fire mission," he said again.



Connecticut National Guard HELPLINE

In an effort to support the needs of our service members and their families, the Connecticut National Guard now has a 24-hour HELPLINE.

If you or someone you know is struggling with the stressors of life, please contact us at
1-855-800-0120.

Your call will be answered by a behavioral health professional. You will receive information and referrals to community resources to support you and your family.

HELPLINE
1-855-800-0120

Retiree's Voice: TRICARE for Life and Medicare

SGT. 1ST CLASS (RET.) STEPHANIE CYR
RETIREE AFFAIRS COLUMNIST

Retirees: If you are turning 65 within the next two years, now is the time to consider TRICARE for Life and Medicare as viable options for healthcare.

The quarterly issue of "Army Echoes" featured a fact sheet on TRICARE for Life and Medicare focusing on all retired Soldiers, their families and surviving spouses, but not specifically for Guard Retirees.

TRICARE for Life is a Medicare-wraparound coverage for TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries who have both Medicare Part A and B.

When you turn 65 and are eligible for Medicare Parts A and B, you will automatically be eligible for TRICARE for Life.

You are eligible for premium-free Medicare Part A if you worked and paid Social Security taxes for at least 10 years or 40 quarters total. If you didn't work the minimum number of years you may still be eligible through your current, divorced or deceased spouse.

If you are already enrolled in Medicare, coverage will continue after you turn 65. If you are entitled to Medicare Part A, but do not have Part B, you will be automatically enrolled in Part B.

If you decide to delay your enrollment because of your current health plan coverage, you can sign up later for Part B during a special Medicare enrollment period that is within eight months following retirement or end of group health plan.

Please note that without Medicare Part B, you are ineligible for TRICARE. TRICARE for Life coverage begins on the first day you are enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B.

Your birth month determines when to sign up for Medicare. If you were born on the first day of the month, you are eligible for Medicare on the first day of the month before you turn 65.

You should visit your Social Security Administration (SSA) office, two to four months before the month you turn 65 to enroll.

If you are born after the first day of the month, you are eligible on the first day of the month in which you turn 65. TRICARE for Life coverage begins on the first day you have both Medicare Part A and B coverage. You should visit your local SSA office between one and three months before the month you turn 65.

Once you receive TRICARE for Life, your military ID card becomes your identification. The DOD benefits number is used with TRICARE.

When you receive medical services, your provider will file your claim with Medicare. After Medicare pays its portion, the claim is sent to TRICARE for Life.

TRICARE for Life pays the service provider directly for TRICARE covered services. You can get care from Medicare participating and non-participating, and opt-out providers. There are guidelines as to how and how much is paid to providers. It can get complicated and depending on the service provider, you may have out of

pocket costs.

It's important to know that Veterans Affairs providers cannot bill Medicare, and Medicare does not pay for VA services.

So if you are eligible for both VA and TRICARE for Life and use TFL for non-service connected care, you will have out of pocket expenses.

TRICARE for Life beneficiaries can seek care at military hospitals and clinics on a space-available basis. Medicare Part D is the Medicare prescription drug plan. If you have TRICARE, there is probably no benefit in purchasing Medicare Part D.

TRICARE for Life coverage is available worldwide. You can seek any provider you want. You will incur out of pocket expenses if you choose to get services from the VA or opt-out providers. They are not permitted to bill Medicare.

If you are collecting a military retirement and your spouse is over 65 and enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B, they are eligible or already enrolled in TRICARE for Life. Centered services such as dental are not covered by TRICARE for Life.

More detailed information is found at the Health Net Federal Services, TRICARE4U and North Region Health Net websites. On the TRICARE website, there are tools to help determine eligibility. You can update DEERS, find out what is covered, and enroll or purchase plans. Remember, TRICARE for Life is automatic if you are eligible.

Retirement Service Officer Notes: A Life Insurance Alternative

SGT. 1ST CLASS REBEKAH AVERY
RETIREMENT PROGRAM MANAGER

SSLI- State Sponsored Life Insurance –This is a program that provides group term life insurance exclusively for National Guard members and their dependents.

The program is derived from United States Public Law 93-289, May 24, 1974, and is available to all National Guard Soldiers who are in a drilling status.

The SSLI program provides \$1,000 of no cost coverage on all active members of the National Guard. This term program is also available to retirees if additional coverage is elected while you are an active member of the National Guard.

Here are a few details of the program as they apply to retirees: Protection continues until age 70; provides an emergency death benefit up to \$25,000 within 24-48 hours of notification; benefits remain the same and monthly premiums do not change when you retire or separate from the National Guard (premiums change at age 50); coverage varies on the desired option you choose and if you are a tobacco user or not.

For coverage availability and options, please visit the website: <http://ngact.org>.

There will be representation and information available regarding SSLI at the retirement briefings. It is important for you to keep your coverage paperwork on file.

To request duplicate copies of your SSLI certificate, please call SSLI at (800) 633-8333. Unit Leaders, contact Mike Casey @ 860-331-9328 to schedule a Unit Benefits Briefing, or email mcasey2011@comcast.net.

Upcoming Events:

· **66th Armed Forces Day Luncheon:** May 15. Cost \$30, held at the Aqua Turf Club, 556 Mulberry St., Southington, Connecticut; RSVP no later than May 5 - POC Sgt. 1st Class William Blake at william.d.blake14.mil@mail.mil

· **Monthly Retiree Breakfast:** Thursday, May 28, 8:30 a.m. at Charlie's Place, West Main Street, Niantic. Cost is \$15. POC- Frank Perry.

· **CT Chapter AUSA Charity Golf Tournament:** Friday, June 5, at Tower Ridge Country Club, 140 Nod Rd., Simsbury, Connecticut

· Join us in honoring our Vietnam Vets July 10-12 at the Connecticut Air National Guard and New England Air Museum. The three-day event features amazing vehicle and aircraft display, helicopter rides in the famous UD-ID "Huey" and a USO Concert, a complete, six aircraft rescue demonstration by the "The Sky Soldiers" each day, and much more. For more information contact Eileen Hurst at hursteim@ccsu.edu or (860) 832-2976

Point of Contact for Air National Guard

Retirees: Retirees from the Air National Guard can contact the full-time POC for Traditional Air-Guard Retirees, Master Sgt. Lisa Todaro at (860) 292-2573 or email lisa.todaro@ang.af.mil; or the part-time (drill weekend) POC, Master Sgt. Diana Nelson at (860) 292-2366 or email diana.nelson@ang.af.mil.

Often times, Air 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; HQ ARPC/DPTTR, Retirement Division, 18420 E. Silver Creek Ave., Bldg 390 MS68, Buckley AFB CO 80011

Point of Contact for Army National Guard

Retirees: Retirees from the Army National Guard can contact the Retirees Service Officer, Sgt. 1st Class Rebekah Avery (860) 524-4813 - e-mail ng.ct.ctarng.list.g1-rso@mail.mil

Guardian Address Changes: e-mail: ng.ct.ctarng.list.g1-rso@mail.mil to update address, make any corrections to name or rank, or to be removed from the Retiree Database.

THE 102D ARMY BAND



WANTS YOU

TO AUDITION!

The 102d Army Band is looking for experienced musicians between the ages of 17 and 35 to audition now!

IMMEDIATE openings for:

**French Horn • Clarinet • Guitar
Bass Guitar • Trombone • Saxophone**

All other band instruments will also be considered!
Get the chance to perform at Community and Guard events, honor ceremonies, concerts, sporting events and much more!

Contact a local recruiter or 102nd Army Band RNCO Staff Sgt. Tomasz Durnik
tomasz.d.durnik.mil@mail.mil or (860)375-1801.

Find us on FACEBOOK! [facebook.com/102dArmyBand](https://www.facebook.com/102dArmyBand)

The Connecticut National Guard needs you to help tell the Soldier's story.

The 130th Public Affairs Detachment is looking for qualified, motivated Soldiers interested in writing, photography, video production, or media relations.

For information on vacancies and requirements, please contact Sgt. 1st Class Jordan Werme
jordan.e.werme.mil@mail.mil or (203) 568-1730



Veterans Services and Where to Find Them

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the VA.

Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions, and certain benefits require service during wartime. If you are new to the VA, the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors booklet will help you get started.

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/

Health Care

VA's health care offers a variety of services,

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

Benefits & Services

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

Burial and Memorials

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

Veterans Benefits Fact Sheets

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

Connecticut National Guard Promotions Army

To Private 2

Lemieux, Erikka S.
McGorty, Bernard C.
Miyares, Alexeil E.
Taverney, Nicholas W.
Valcourt, Monfort J.
Sargent, Zakary R.
Rogers, Edgar D.
Torres, Chelsi C.
Amore, Dustin J.
Schweitzer, Erik C.
Larrea, Jose M.
Celestin, Steve
Harmon, Brent P.
Rivera, Quintana J.
Lopez, Laney
Melendezlopez, Michael
Chadbourne, Andrew J.
Figueroa, Alfredo C.
Bediako, Kelvin D.
Hilpertshauser, Lindsay

To Private First Class

Welch, Justyn T.
Chomicz, Amanda D.
Jones, Jasmin J.

Bavao, Ryan A.
Johnson, Janai A.
Shaw, Sashani S.
Jones, Ryan T.
Coger, Anton L.
Florian, Blaine J.
Cook, Austin S.
Rafuese, Jessie L.
Marchand, Zachary S.
Virella, Joshua An.
Crudo, Michael J.
Gordon, Joshua E.
Reynolds, Alex R.
Ocasio, Luigi A.
Labouliere, Emilie M.
Rhodes, Mikie J.
Lee, John S.
Strba, Eric S.
Lanteri, Daniel V.

To Specialist

Sharron, Tyler S.
Fermin, Conan
Loaeza, Andy L.
Bomova, Arti
Sepulveda, Felix J.
Stosonis, Steven M.

Clark, Joshua A.
Sepulveda, Joshua
Viveros, Katherine
Troiano, Carlo S.
Kee, Cassidy A.
Yoel, Jacob A.
Landry, Chad T.
Hobbs, Shawn P.

To Sergeant

Seaman, Katelyn A.
Molina, Mario A.
Richmond, Joseph M.
Ferreira, Victoria M.
Gobar, Jason C.
Munoz, Delmar
Bruno, Job
Peterson, Michael R.
Wernig, Kayla M.
Wilk, Steven E.
Luna, David J.
Riverarodriguez, Enrique
Howard, Ezekiel O.
White, Matthew S.
Rentz, Stephan P.

Air

To Airman

Lacoille, Mark N.

To Airman 1st Class

Arroyo, Sol M.

To Senior Airman

Krumenacker, Christopher
Zwick, Christopher M.
Vartanyan, Derenik E.
Shea, Patrick B.

To Staff Sergeant

Martin, Anthony C.
Bourbeau, Christopher
Mauro, Marissa L.
Miller, Tanzania J.

To Technical Sergeant

Selner, Alexander B.
Hudzin, Christopher J.

To Staff Sergeant

Hernandez, Alba G.
Marcue, Danielle N.
Beers, Michael L.
Vassell, Jonathan D.
Vassallo, Nicole J.
Barrera, Reinaldo
Ryken, Anthony .
Baezsierra, Edwin

To Sergeant First Class

Wasik, David M.
Werme, Jordan E.
Maynard, Ryan A.
Freeman, Theodore D. Jr.
Allen, Erik H.

To Master Sergeant

Walsh, Jeffrey N.

To 1st Lieutenant

Paille, Joshua A.
Eichelberg, Stephen E.

Coming Events

May

May 8

Military Spouse Appreciation Day

May 10

Mother's Day

May 11-15

Regional Best Warrior Competition

May 15

Armed Forces Day Luncheon

May 16

Armed Forces Day

May 19

June Guardian Deadline

May 20

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

May 25

Memorial Day

June

June 14

Flag Day

June 14

U.S. Army Birthday

June 16

July Guardian Deadline

June 17

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

June 21

Father's Day

July

July 4

Independence Day

July 15

NGACT Executive Board Meeting

July 21

August Guardian Deadline

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

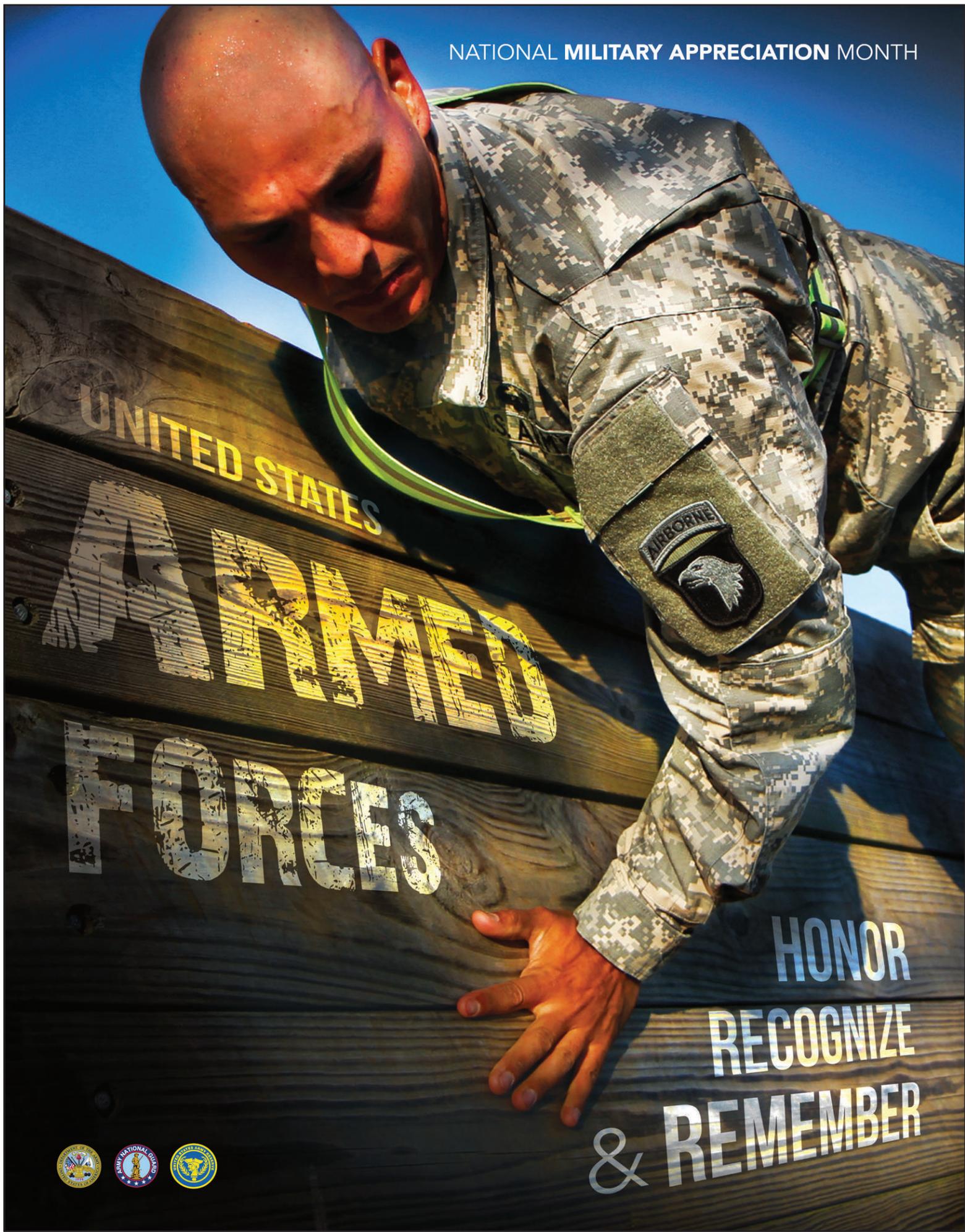
www.militaryonesource.com - 1-800-342-9647

National Suicide Hotline - 1-800-SUICIDE

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

**Deadline for the June Issue of
the Guardian is May 19**
**Deadline for the July Issue of the
Guardian is June 16**

NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH



HONOR
RECOGNIZE
& REMEMBER

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Connecticut FAMILY Guardian



VOL. 16 NO. 5

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

MAY 2015

Full House for Volunteer Appreciation Night

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

HARTFORD, CONN. — Chief Warrant Officer Two Christopher Baillargeon snapped his fingers to get the 102nd Band in sync before the group dove into Stevie Wonder's "Sir Duke."

Lincoln Tech Culinary Student, Alyssa Button watched the band from across the large dining room. She smiled, and some guests in attendance tapped their feet.

The Connecticut National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center held "An Evening of Volunteer Appreciation," April 16, at the Lincoln Culinary Institute. The event was held to honor the dozens of volunteers who dedicated their time and service during the past year to assisting at National Guard events and helping service members.

Joshua Hamre, CTNG Senior Family Readiness Support Assistant, said he was speechless over the high turnout of guests and invitees, and said they were close to needing additional chairs for the room.

Awards were presented to National Guard, family and civilian volunteers for their work with the 143rd RSG, 85th Troop Command, the Connecticut Air Guard, Connecticut Youth Council and numerous statewide events during the past year.

Col. Daniel Spineti, Col. Christopher

Egan, Maj. Mathew Wilkinson, Donna Rivera and Michelle McCarty, presented certificates of appreciation to the following volunteers:

Marisa Spineti, Kristina Lerette, Nicole Lerette, Wendy Lerette, Mark O'Donnell, Rita O'Donnell, Corey Tenguay, Christine Wiesner, Sharon Barnabei, Amanda Gonyea, Steve Gonyea, Sherilyn Patterson, Christine Tuttle, Jay Tuttle, Kerry Kennedy, Nora Powell, Janet Garson, Karen

Bernard, Harold Bernstein, Bob Gillanders, Cynthia Gillanders, Master Sgt. Peter Jones, Paul Massa, Peter Rivera, Jane Seitz, Tim Seitz, Shelly Varesio, Tristan Colafati, Mia Jones, Nina Jones, Bianca Spineti, Isabelle Spineti, Nina Spineti, Frank Alvarado, Rita Baryliski, Gray Espelin, Camille Ferreira, John Ferreira, Lionel Fongemie, Richard Gatewood, Martin Klukas, Chris Mackenzie, Lindsay Payne, Ken Payne, Alison Saccoccio, Mario Saccoccio, Dan Spineti and Mark Torres.

The certificates stated, "For your generous support of The Service Members And Families of the United States Armed Forces. Your contributions have given comfort to the Service Members and Families of Connecticut's Military Community."

An exceptional volunteer award was given to the family of Spencer Pratt. Pratt, an Army Veteran, and former treasurer for the CTNG Family Support Group, passed away in January. In addition to his many responsibilities,

Pratt raised thousands of dollars to benefit the families of the CTNG Foundation by selling and distributing the extremely popular yellow ribbon magnets displaying the phrase, "support our troops."

The Lincoln Tech Culinary Institute, located in Hartford, Connecticut, was recognized for its recent service to the CTNG. In addition to preparing the dinner and hosting the

event in their building, the school provided support during the Guard's recent Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and Operation Elf events. The group of student chefs and Director of Education, William Smith, accepted the award.

Smith said working with the Guard is a no-brainer, and that he gets too many student volunteers from the culinary program to use for military events. He said



Lincoln Tech Culinary Program Students prepared the catering for the evening event. Most of the students had also worked at the Breakfast with the Easter Bunny event, held in April. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)

Lincoln Tech has a number of military students who are prospering in their programs, and that all parties are thrilled that the relationship between the two institutions exists.

Kim Hoffman, CTNG Family Program director, said she couldn't thank the volunteers enough, and that in the 11 years since the CTNG Foundation was established, volunteers have been its key driving force.

The dining room table center pieces also served as desserts for guests. The specially designed cupcakes were crafted by the Lincoln Tech Culinary Program bakers, including Button. They were a hit and were all gone by the end of the event.

Button will soon be graduating from Lincoln Tech. Like her fellow graduates, she will begin an externship somewhere out of state. She said she hopes she can work at one more National Guard event before she leaves.

"I like seeing military members eat our food and smile," Button said.

The dozens of Guard members, volunteers and guests in attendance in the packed room smiled throughout the evening.

Hamre said this was the first CTNG event held in the facility, but that the Service Member and Family Support Center would assuredly be back.



The family of Spencer Pratt, who passed away in January, was awarded a certificate of appreciation on his behalf. Col. Daniel Spineti (right) presented the award to the family. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)



CATHERINE GALASSO

The Answer to Your Prayer is Closer Than You May Think

The sun was shining bright on the green grass and emerging blossoms and leaves, as I began tending to our garden. There, within the pale pink begonias, strikingly beautiful lavender impatiens and raspberry-colored petunias, I gently placed a lovely stepping stone. Engraved on it is an inscription that reads, "God Answers Prayers."

Do you have a desire that seems impossible to accomplish? Does a friend or someone in your family have a need? Is your circumstance appearing as though it cannot be overcome?

So, what can you do when you don't know what to do? Bring the situation to God in prayer.

However, during difficult times, it can be easy to get discouraged, stop praying, and give up on being available to God to be used in the most extraordinary ways. But, King David wrote, "The very day I call for help, the tide of battle turns. My enemies flee! This one thing I know: God is for me." (Psalm 56:9 TLB)

When people pray, God acts. For with prayer, nothing is impossible.

Years ago, I read a narrative about George Mueller's orphanage at Ashley Downs in England. There, circumstances appeared to be hopeless for the children. It was early morning. The children were hungry and waiting for breakfast. But the cabinets were empty. There wasn't any food and there was no money in the orphanage's account.

Yet, George Mueller was a man of extraordinary faith. And in the book, *Seven Guides to Effective Prayer*, it described how, in spite of his circumstances, Mueller prayed with the children, saying, "Dear Father, we thank Thee for what Thou art going to give us to eat."

Mueller gave himself earnestly to prayer and saw hope beyond his present challenge. He sincerely trusted God, as he boldly and confidently prayed.

Moreover, with his eyes of faith, Mueller believed in what he did not yet see and fully expected God's guidance, His deliverance and His divine care.

A little while later, there was a knock at the door. Mueller opened it to find the neighborhood baker. "Mr. Mueller," the baker said, "I could not sleep last night. Somehow, I felt you didn't have any bread for breakfast, and the Lord wanted me to send you some. So I got up at 2:00 a.m. and baked some fresh bread, and here it is."

The need was met. Mueller thanked the kind baker and acknowledged God for answering his petition.

Moments passed, and there was another knock at the door. Again, Mueller opened it, and he was greeted by the local milkman whose milk wagon had just broken down in front of the orphanage. So the milkman offered all his milk to the orphans.

Immediately, Mueller bowed his head and uttered, "Thank you, God."

In his lifetime, George Mueller cared for over 10,000 orphans. Mueller did not directly ask anyone for a contribution. He never took out a loan or went into debt to fund his orphanage. Instead, Mueller supported his orphanage exclusively on prayer. As the prayers and praises go up to God, the blessings come down. God

works in response to your prayers.

Maybe you are concerned about a situation. Pray, for God is saying: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in Me. (John 14:1)

It could be that you're frustrated and ready to quit. Pray, for God is saying: Wait for Me. Be strong, and let your heart take courage. (Psalm 27:14)

Possibly, you can't seem to get over something that happened long ago. Pray, for God is saying: Forget the past and look forward to what lies ahead. (Philippians 3:13). You may not know which way to turn. Pray, for God is saying: I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you and watch over you. (Psalm 32:8)

Perhaps, the report doesn't look good. Pray, for God is saying: I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal. (Jeremiah 30:17)

Or else, the dreams of your heart have not yet come to pass. Pray, for God is saying: I will direct your steps. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

There is nothing happening right now that God can't change for the better at a moment's notice. Your problem is not too big for God to handle. For God is not limited and has dozens of ways to bless you, to help you and to heal you. So trust in His faithfulness for the positive outcome. Pray with confidence; earnestly, boldly, and with faith. Give yourself over to prayer like never before. Then, continue to persevere and wait for the gracious Hand of God to move in your life.

Proverbs tells us: "Begin to weave and God will provide the thread."

In the Bible, it describes how King Nebuchadnezzar threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in a fiery furnace since they stood up for truth, did what was right and wouldn't bow down to an image of gold. On the surface, it appeared as their situation was hopeless. But they relied on God to give them strength and believed for Him to do the impossible.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king." (Daniel 3:16-17). God honored their faith, and they emerged from the furnace unharmed. Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar then set them free, and he declared the greatness of their God.

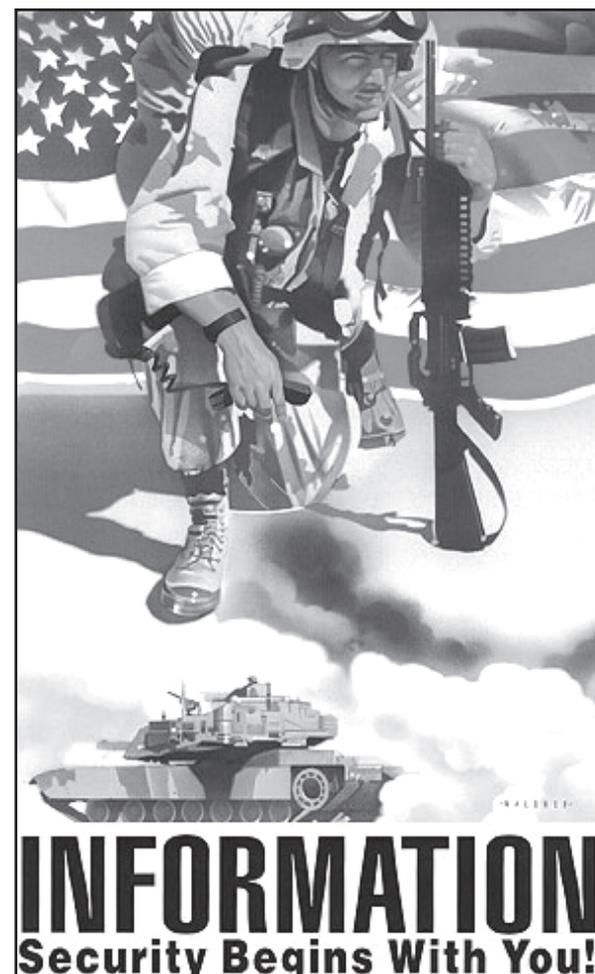
When was the last time you asked God to do something amazing? God has a great plan and purpose for your future. He is able to turn adverse circumstances around, and you'll come forth triumphantly.

Keep praying. Keep believing and expecting God to do extraordinary things.

The answer to your prayer is closer than you may think.

Catherine Galasso-Vigorito is a nationally-syndicated columnist and author from Connecticut who donates a monthly inspirational column to demonstrate her appreciation of U.S. service members and their families. The content is her own and does not express the official views of the U.S. Government or the Department of Defense. You may write to Ms. Galasso-Vigorito in care of Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06106-3795 or e-mail her at cgv@anewyouworldwide.com. Visit her website at www.anewyouworldwide.com.

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The Official U.S. Army YouTube

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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

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny!

Children line up on one side of the hall and parents on the other in anticipation of grabbing as many plastic eggs as possible. (Photo by Capt. Michael T. Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)



Connecticut National Guard families gather at the Windsor Locks Readiness Center, Windsor Locks, Connecticut April 4 for the annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny. (Photo by Capt. Michael T. Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)

Volunteers turn out every year to help serve breakfast to Connecticut National Guard families during the annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny. This year, students and staff from Lincoln Culinary Institute in Hartford also volunteered. (Photo by Capt. Michael T. Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)



All smiles, a young girl runs back to her dad after meeting the Easter Bunny during the Connecticut National Guard's annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny April 4 at the Windsor Locks Readiness Center, Windsor Locks Connecticut. This year's event drew about 300 Guard Soldiers, Airmen and family members and featured a pancake breakfast, Easter egg hunt, crafts and face painting among other activities. (Photo by Capt. Michael T. Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)

Memorial Day Word Scramble

Rearrange the letters in each word or phrase below to make a list of words related to Memorial Day.

1. CEREERNAMMB
_____2. AEADPR
_____3. LCVII RWA
_____4. FAIYLM GITSRGHAEN
_____5. EIAACMRN GLFA
_____6. PYPPO EWLSOFR
_____7. HFLA-FFATS
_____8. SEMTERIEEC
_____9. AIITYMLR
_____10. OMTMEOMEARC

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 Staff Directory

William A. O'Neill Armory - 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105 - Open Mon.-Fri.

State Family Program Director	Kimberly Hoffman	kimberly.j.hoffman.civ@mail.mil	(800) 858-2677
Lead Family Assistance Center Coordinator	Andrea Lathrop	andrea.e.lathrop.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4938
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Family Readiness Support Assistant	Wendy Hagen	wendy.m.hagen.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4920
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Personal Finance Consultant	Ernie Lacore	elacore@mflc.zeiders.com	(860) 372-6404

Windsor Locks Readiness Center - 85-300 Light Lane, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 - Open Mon.-Fri.

Family Assistance Center Specialist	Troy Walcott	troy.a.walcott.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4602
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Michael Cortes	michael.cortes1.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4601

Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center - 90 Wooster Heights Road, Danbury, CT 06810 - Open Mon.-Fri.

Family Assistance Center Specialist	Nancy Cummings	nancy.a.cummings.ctr@mail.mil	(203) 205-5050
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New London Armory - 249 Bayonet Street, New London, CT 06320 - Open Mon.-Fri.

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103rd Airlift Wing - 100 Nicholson Road, East Granby, CT 06026 - Open Mon.-Fri.

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ANG Yellow Ribbon Program Coordinator	Rick Uliano	richard.uliano.ctr@ang.af.mil	(860) 292-2730

103rd Air Control Squadron - 206 Boston Post Road, Orange, CT 06477 - Open Mon. & Fri. - (203) 795-2961

Niantic Readiness Center - 38 Smith Street, Niantic, CT 06072 - By Appointment - (800) 858-2677

Waterbury Armory - 64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06072 - By Appointment - (800) 858-2677

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