



GUARDIAN *connecticut*

VOL. 17 NO. 12

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

DECEMBER 2016

103rd Air Control Squadron Honored at Send Off Ceremony

STAFF SGT. JEREMY BOWCOCK
103RD AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Approximately 100 members of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Air Control Squadron were honored at a formal send off ceremony at the William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford, Connecticut, Tuesday, November 1.

The 103rd ACS will deploy in support of Operations Inherent Resolve and Resolute Support in the Middle East. This deployment marks the seventh time the ACS has been activated to support contingency operations since Sept. 11, 2001. Based in Orange, the unit is commanded by Lt. Col. John Sorgini of Boston, Massachusetts.

"Time and time again, the men and women of the 103rd Air Control Squadron have shown why they are the premier ACS in the United States Air Force," said Maj. Gen. Thad Martin, The Adjutant General and commander of the Connecticut National Guard. "These Airmen look forward to the opportunity to serve their state and country, and we look forward to celebrating their accomplishment upon their return."

For Tech. Sgt. Ryan Alexander and his wife, Tech. Sgt. Amanda Searle, this will be their third time they will be serving overseas together. The two met in the Guard and deployed together for the first time while dating, and then again as husband and wife.

"I feel very privileged I get to go with her. I know a

lot of people are leaving loved ones behind. I have a lot of pride being part of this unit. I hear a lot of times among the rest of the ACS community of the Air Force that we're the best, and I believe that," said Alexander.

The unit was formed as the 103rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, first organized in Hartford in September of 1946. It is the oldest unit of its type in the United States.

The squadron has deployed to nearly every corner of the world in support of military air operations. First activated for the Korean War in 1951, the unit also supported the Berlin Wall Crisis in 1961.

More recently, the unit has participated in every major air campaign of the last two decades, deploying members and equipment to Turkey, Colombia, Germany, Portugal, Denmark, Saudi Arabia, Italy, and Hungary before focusing efforts on Middle Eastern operations in support



Maj. Gen. Thad Martin, Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard speaks to nearly 100 members of the 103rd Air Control Squadron, CTANG at their formal send off ceremony at the William A. O'Neill Armory, Nov. 1. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremy Bowcock, 103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs)

of the Global War on Terrorism.

This sendoff is first of two for Connecticut Air National Guard personnel. Another contingent of approximately 300 103rd Airlift Wing Airmen are set to deploy to the Middle East over the next six months, marking the largest deployment of Connecticut National Guard troops since 2011.

In This Issue:



CTNG Honors Veterans in CT Parade
Page 5



103rd AW Hosts a Piece of History
Page 7



Three Generations of CTARNG Pilots
Page 14-15

Lt. Gov. and CTNG Kick Off 15th Operation E.L.F.

MAJ. MIKE PETERSEN
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

With local media gathered, Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman kicked off a press conference to launch the 15th annual Operation E.L.F. (Embracing Lonely Families) at the Hartford Armory, Nov. 3.

The program is designed to help ease stresses military families face resulting from the call to active duty.

“Let’s put smiles on their faces. Let’s help these families ease the burden and have a happy holiday season,” said Wyman.

Wyman was followed by Kim Hoffman, Director of the Connecticut National Guard’s Family Programs, who identified key items that not just support families during the holidays, but year round.

“We highlight E.L.F. during the holidays, but we want families to know we provide support 365 days a year,” said Hoffman. “We couldn’t do it out without the support of Lieutenant Governor Wyman and our incredibly generous donors.”

During the press conference, Hoffman pointed out that over \$10,000 in gift cards were distributed throughout the year. Gift cards from grocery/department stores, pharmacies and gas stations are among the services people are urged to donate, according to Hoffman.

The drive is also accepting new, unwrapped toys for boys and girls of all age groups. These toys will be distributed to the children of military families at the Operation E.L.F. holiday party, to be held Dec. 17 at the Hartford Armory.

Through Dec. 12, donations can be dropped off at four locations: the Hartford Armory, the Army Aviation Support Facility in Windsor Locks, the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Danbury and the New London Armory.

Within E.L.F. is the Adopt-A-Family program. Its goal

is to assist those families who are suffering extreme financial hardship as a result of their service member’s call to Active Duty, according to Hoffman.

Individuals or businesses may “adopt” a family and help them have a great holiday season. The name

of the family is never revealed to the adopting person or organization. Rather, a summary of the family’s demographics and wish list are provided. Gifts are delivered by that family’s case worker along with the name of the donor, if desired.

Currently, 100 Airmen of the Connecticut Air National Guard are deployed, with another 300 preparing to deploy in the near future.

For more information on Operation E.L.F., visit the Operation E.L.F. website: <https://ct.ng.mil/ELF>.

See Op ELF Page 4



Kim Hoffman, Director of the Connecticut National Guard Family Program, speaks at the 2016 Operation E.L.F. kick-off press conference alongside Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman (center) and Maj. Gen. Thad Martin (right), Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard at the William A. O’Neill Armory, Nov. 3. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

Changing Your Address

If you move and would like to continue receiving the *Connecticut Guardian*, please change your address by contacting the editor by phone or email at (860) 524-4858 or allison.l.joanis.civ@mail.mil.

To change your home of record, please see the following:
CTNG Retirees: Contact Sgt. 1st Class Ericka Thurman at ericka.g.thurman.mil@mail.mil or 860-524-4813.
Militia Members: Contact your chain of command or unit admin.

Current CTNG Members: Contact your chain of command or unit admin.

Any other questions about the Guardian, contact the editor directly.

Connecticut Guardian

360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795
 Phone: (860) 524-4858, DSN: 636-7857
 FAX: (860) 524-4902
 E-Mail: allison.l.joanis.civ@mail.mil

Captain-General
 Gov. Dannel P. Malloy

The Adjutant General
 Commanding General, CTNG
 Maj. Gen. Thaddeus J. Martin

Assistant Adjutant General - Army
 Col. Fran Evon

State Command Chief Warrant Officer
 Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark Marini

State Command Sergeant Major
 Command Sgt. Maj. John S. Carraghar

State Command Chief Master Sergeant
 Chief Master Sgt. Robert Gallant

State Public Affairs Officer
 Connecticut Guardian Managing Editor
 Maj. Michael T. Petersen

Connecticut Guardian Editor
 Ms. Allison L. Joanis

Contributors
 130th Public Affairs Det., CTARNG
 Maj. Jeff Heiland, 103rd AW/PAO
 103rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs
 103rd Air Control Squadron
 First Company Governors Horse Guard
 Second Company Governors Horse Guard
 First Company Governors Foot Guard
 Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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 December 13 for the January issue. Circulation: 7,800



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
 MILITARY DEPARTMENT
 WILLIAM A. O'NEILL ARMORY
 360 BROAD STREET
 HARTFORD, CT 06105

December 2016

To the Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut National Guard

The holiday season is once again upon us. Guard families across our state will celebrate with loved ones and hopefully pause to remember those currently deployed and their families.

As a member of the Connecticut National Guard family, you understand better than anyone the hard work and sacrifice that goes into protecting and preserving our freedom both at home and abroad. I extend my deepest and most sincere thanks for the service you provide and the sacrifice you and your family endure on our behalf.

Just recently, for the second time in 15 years, every Connecticut National Guard unit was home on American soil. This short period ended with the deployment of 100 Airmen who will not be home with their families for this year’s holidays. I ask that you keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

May your holidays be safe and filled with happiness, hope and peace for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely,



THADDEUS J. MARTIN
 Major General
 The Adjutant General

Giving Back to Those Who Have Given

Guardsmen Hold Veteran Holiday Drive for Second Year

Ms. ALLISON L. JOANIS
CTNG PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

In the spirit of giving during the holiday season, two members of the Connecticut Air National Guard set their sights on supporting Veterans who have given so much to our country.

In its second year in existence, Tech Sgt. Daniel DeFranco of the 103rd Airlift Wing and Master Sgt. Kristina Owren of the 103rd Force Support, organized a Veterans Christmas Drive to contribute needed items to local Veterans homes. Donations will go to the Veterans Home in Rocky Hill, Conn. and the Veterans Hospital in Leeds, Mass.

“As a current service member this was the greatest and most effective contribution I could come up with to give back to the people that came before me,” said DeFranco, who began the charity drive last year after hearing statistics on homeless Veterans in America. “[Veterans] were willing to give it all for us, if they become a number or a statistic in a news story, then we as a Nation have failed them.”

The drive in 2016 included DeFranco and two additional volunteers. They placed collection boxes in three locations and were able to collect \$1,500 in donations for the Veterans Hospital in Leeds. This year, with the help of Master Sgt. Owren, they decided to also give to Connecticut Veterans.

“Last year we had such a great turn out,” said Owren. “It warms my heart to know that my time and efforts are

helping those that may not be able to provide themselves the very simple life necessities.”

This year the charity has expanded, with 10 donation sites up and running, to include the Bradley Air National Guard Base in East Granby. DeFranco hopes to exceed last year’s total donations and is aiming for \$2,000 in goods for the Veterans in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

“We would like to continue to grow this program to help as many Veterans as possible,” said DeFranco, who in the process of making his charity a fully incorporated non-profit organization that will be able to issue receipts to individuals and companies for tax purposes. This process should be completed by February 2017, and DeFranco hopes that the tax incentive will encourage added support.

“They were willing to give it all for us and even if this drive doesn’t change their life at least it will give them some positive moments and remind them that we have not forgotten them.”

Here is how you can help:

The Rocky Hill Veterans Home is looking for twin size bedding sets as they just received 50 new beds for their program and the hospital in Leeds requires winter garments (hats, gloves and coats for both men and women in sizes M to XXL).

Other wish list items include:

Rocky Hill, Connecticut: Blankets, socks and underwear (all sizes, men and women), toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, shampoo and

conditioner, body wash/soap, deodorant, feminine products, lotions, digital alarm clock/radios, winter/work boots (size 7-13, men and women), winter coats (sizes M-XXL), larger sized women’s clothes (size XL and XXL), sweatshirts and pants (Hoodies: XL and up), watches, jeans (all sizes, men and women), slippers, new DVDs, new puzzle books (sudoku or crosswords), UConn gear (any), winter hats and glove sets.

Leeds, Massachusetts: Blankets, socks and underwear (all sizes men and women), toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, shampoo and conditioner, body wash/soap, deodorant, feminine products, lotions, digital alarm clock/radios, winter boots (size 8-12, men and women), winter coats (size M-XXL), Larger sized women’s clothes (sizes XL and XXL), winter hats and glove sets.

Donations are being accepted during business hours at the Bradley Air National Guard Base, at 100 Nicholson Road, East Granby, Connecticut. Prior to your drop please contact Master Sgt. Owren to coordinate delivery at 860-292-2572 or Kristina.M.Owren@mail.mil.

If you would like to know about alternative donation locations or if you would like to host a donation box at your institution or business, please contact Tech Sgt. Dan DeFranco at SgtD1@live.com.

Items will be accepted until Dec. 16 and will be delivered to the Rocky Hill and Leeds the following week. If you prefer that your donation go to a specific location, please mark it as such.

CTNG Helps Connecticut Honor Veterans

STAFF SGT. RICHARD WRIGLEY
JFHQ, CTNG, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut Army National Guard, joined a bevy of other organizations and individuals in marching in the Connecticut Veterans Parade held in downtown Hartford, Nov. 6.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark Marini, Command Chief Warrant Officer, Joint Force Headquarters, Connecticut Army National Guard, led the parade as Grand Marshal along with two others.

Both John (Jack) Casey Jr., former disbursing clerk third class, from Groton, Conn. and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Walter Hushak of Southington, Conn. served as Grand Marshals as well.

A Wreath-Laying Ceremony was held at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch prior to the start of the parade.

The parade kicked off at 12:30 p.m. and featured a moment of silence held at 1:30 p.m.

Those in the vicinity of the parade were also treated to a flyover by a C-130H, piloted and crewed by Connecticut Air National Guardsmen, as well as the tolling of the Downtown Hartford church bells.

The parade route was notably shorter than parades of years past. The route hugged the perimeter of Bushnell State Park, and ended at a Reviewing Stand where Governor Dannel Malloy along with the Grand Marshalls and other prominent people of Connecticut recognized those who marched in the parade.



Soldiers of Joint Force Headquarters, CTARNG, march through historic downtown Hartford, Nov. 6, at the Connecticut Veterans Parade. This year’s parade was recognized as one of the nation’s official Veterans Day Regional Sites, by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)



Above: Parade Marshal, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark S. Marini marches on the parade route through downtown Hartford, during the Connecticut Veterans Parade, Nov. 6. Marini has 42 years of military service with the CTARNG. (Photo courtesy of Joint Force Headquarters, CTARNG)



Right: A Connecticut Air National Guard C-130H flies above the Connecticut Veterans Parade during a moment of silence held to remember the servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice defending the United States. (Photo by Maj. Mike Petersen, State Public Affairs Office)

Operation E.L.F & Adopt-A-Family 2016

Quick Reference Guide

Operation E.L.F. seeks donations of new unwrapped toys for children of all ages, as well as grocery, department, pharmacy, and gas gift cards to be used throughout the holidays and beyond for families in need. Donations of fuel oil, snow removal, and grass cutting can also be made to the Connecticut National Guard Service Member and Family Support Center.

DONATIONS may be dropped off to the following armories or National Guard facilities through Friday December 12, 2016 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

New London Armory 249 Bayonet St. New London, CT 06320	Army Aviation Support Facility 85-300 Light Ln. Windsor Locks, CT 06906	Danbury AFRC 90 Wooster Heights Rd. Danbury, CT 06810	William A. O’Neill Armory 360 Broad St. Hartford, CT 06105
---	--	--	---

Adopt-A-Family seeks to assist those families who are suffering extreme financial hardships as a result of their service member’s call to Active Duty. Individuals or businesses may “adopt” a family to help them to have a great holiday season. A summary of the family’s demographics and needs will be provided to the person or organization while the family remains anonymous. For information about how you can adopt a family, or if you are a family in need, please call the number below.

OPERATION E.L.F. Hotline 1-800-858-2677

Visit Operation E.L.F. at <http://ct.ng.mil/ELF>
Like Operation E.L.F. on Facebook: [@ConnecticutOperationELF](https://www.facebook.com/ConnecticutOperationELF)

Financial donations may also be made through the Connecticut National Guard Foundation, Inc. mailed to:
Connecticut National Guard Foundation, Inc. 360 Broad Street, Hartford CT 06105

Decisions, Decisions: CTARNG Helps UConn Students and Cadets Choose Their Future

ALLISON L. JOANIS
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

An autumn day on any college campus is bustling with activity. Students and faculty move from class to class, study group to lunch.

Rarely does a student stumble upon an OH-58 Kiowa Warrior on a flatbed truck, a Military Working Dog or a Soldier challenging them to a push-up contest.

That was the reality for students passing through Fairfield Way at the UConn Campus in Storrs, Conn., thanks to the ROTC Branch and Career Day hosted by the Connecticut Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, Nov. 4.

The RRB provided several displays of ARNG equipment highlighting ten branches available to the cadets, complete with subject matter experts and several recruiting activities including a basketball shooting game and a punching bag game.

Career Day set out to introduce the students of UConn to the CTARNG and to explain and highlight benefits of becoming a member. Branch Day gave more than 100 ROTC Cadets from UConn and the University of New Haven the opportunity to learn about branch opportunities in the CTARNG.

"The most important thing is to get the message out," said Maj. Alan Gilman, commander of the CTARNG RRB. "To give students the opportunity to ask questions and to get real world examples of what it's like to be in the Connecticut Army National Guard."

Working with the UConn ROTC program on the event helped to mutually support both of our programs said Gilman. "We can provide numerous resources to make branch day more interactive for the cadets and in turn, it

gives us the opportunity to educate the general student population about the National Guard."

This was not a typical branch day according to Capt. Christopher Gibb, Commander, Detachment 2, Company C, 3-126th Aviation Regiment and also a graduate of the UConn ROTC program. "I wish we had this when I was choosing a branch," said Gibb. "Being here we are able to share our experiences and give the cadets a feel for what they can expect from each branch."

"The challenge we have is getting candidates exposed to the branches and opportunities they have available for their future before they have to make a choice," said Lt. Col. Tanya L. Wahlberg, Professor of Military Science and head of the UConn ROTC program. "Choosing a branch can be overwhelming. We want [the cadets] to think critically about what their future will hold and contemplate what suits them."

Armed with pens and notebooks, Cadets split into groups and rotated through ten static displays where they heard a short presentation about what each branch offered in the Connecticut Army National Guard, and first-hand experiences from Connecticut Guardsmen as well as the chance to ask questions.

"This allows us to open their eyes a little bit," said Capt. Eric Roy, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 192nd Engineer Battalion. "They won't get many opportunities to see anyone with experience in a career field before they make their choice,



Maj. Linda Cunha, and Capt. Shawn Pyer of the 118th Medical Battalion, CTARNG, talk to UConn students and ROTC Cadets about the Medical Services branch of the Connecticut Army National Guard at Career and Branch Day hosted by the CTARNG Recruiting and Retention Battalion at UConn in Storrs, Connecticut, Nov. 4. Career Day helped to highlight the benefits of the Guard to UConn Students and Branch Day gave ROTC Cadets the chance to learn about all CTARNG branches in depth as they begin to choose their career paths. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)



Spc. Mario SorianoMendoza (left), HHC 1-102nd Infantry Regt., CTARNG, and 1st Sgt. Dennis Lavallee, Det. 1, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, CTARNG, talk to UConn students in front of a static display of an OH-58 Kiowa Helicopter during Career Day at UConn in Storrs, Connecticut, Nov. 4. Recruiters and Members of the CTARNG took to the UConn campus to show students the highlights and benefits of becoming a member of the CTARNG. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

so we can be the people to provide that to them."

Military Intelligence was of particular interest to Cadet Tyler Martin, a senior in the UConn ROTC program and psychology major. "This event is really helping us to narrow down the exact branch we want to pursue as officers."

Martin also serves as a Simultaneous Membership Program Cadet, meaning he drills once a month with the CTARNG's 1-102nd Infantry Regiment. His unique perspective helps him to talk to his fellow students about the benefits of joining.

"Being in the Guard helps tremendously in school. It keeps you goal oriented, teaches you discipline and helps to keep you focused and on task, and at the end, I will graduate debt free," said Martin.

In addition to aviation, engineering and military intelligence, the event also highlighted the medical services, quartermaster, transportation, infantry, military police, chemical and logistics branches.

The event generated dozens of leads from the UConn community making the event an overall success, according to Gilman. "We plan to hold more events on college campuses like this one in the future. It's important for us to get out into the communities and into the schools to spread our message and to highlight all of the opportunities and benefits that the CTARNG has to offer."

For more information about joining the Army National Guard contact your local recruiter or call 1-860-266-2377.

The 103rd Airlift Wing Welcomes A Piece of Connecticut History

The Charter Oak Comes to Bradley

MAJ. D. ELLIOTTE DRAEGOR
103RD AIRLIFT WING, INSPECTOR GENERAL OFFICE

The 103rd Airlift Wing was formally presented with a piece of the Charter Oak by Mr. Richard Malley on behalf of the Connecticut Historical Society in a ceremony attended by Connecticut Air National Guard leadership, at Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Oct. 15.

Malley, the former registrar of the Connecticut Historical Society, worked with the base historian to arrange for the long-term loan of this historic artifact. Col. David Ure, 103rd Operations Group Commander, thanked him on behalf of the Wing and presented him with a Flying Yankee patch and coin.

The Charter Oak is currently on display in an exhibit case in Building 22 at Bradley Air National Guard Base.

Some Flying Yankees are unaware of the history of the Charter Oak, much less our connection to the famous tree and the role that it played in the history of our state. So what does the Charter Oak mean to us? What makes it more than just a tree?

The Charter Oak was an enormous white oak tree that grew on Wyllys Hill in Hartford, Connecticut for a thousand years. In 1687, the King of England attempted to reclaim and revoke Connecticut Colony's charter, which granted the people of Connecticut the freedom to govern themselves. On October 26th of that year, a member of Connecticut's colonial militia thwarted the



Col. David Ure (right), 103rd Operations Group Commander, and Maj. Elliott Draegor (left), Bradley Air National Guard Base Historian, accept a piece of the Charter Oak tree from Mr. Richard Malley, former registrar of the Connecticut Historical Society, at a ceremony at the Bradley Air National Guard Base in East Granby, Connecticut, Oct. 15. Draegor worked with Malley and the Connecticut Historical Society to arrange for a long-term loan of the artifact. The Charter Oak is on display in Building 22 of the Air Guard Base. (Photo courtesy of Maj. Elliott Draegor, 103rd IG, Base Historian)



A copy of the painting of the Charter Oak by Charles De Wolf is also on display with the Charter Oak artifact. The original painting can be seen in the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, Connecticut. (Photo courtesy of Maj. Elliott Draegor, 103rd Airlift Wing Inspector General Office, Bradley Air National Guard Base Historian)

king's plan by hiding the charter inside the tree that became known as the Charter Oak.

The tree became a symbol of American independence from Great Britain during the Revolutionary War, and when it blew down during a violent storm on August 21, 1856, its timber was collected and preserved in many historic artifacts, including the desk used by the Governor of Connecticut.

The name of the Connecticut militiaman who saved the colony's charter from destruction by hiding it in the Charter Oak was Capt. Joseph Wadsworth. We all know him, even if you've never heard his name: Captain Wadsworth is the original Flying Yankee, our

unit's oldest symbol. The patch depicts Wadsworth running to the Charter Oak with the colonial charter clutched in one hand.

When the 118th Observation Squadron was first assigned to Connecticut in 1923, they adopted the Flying Yankee as their official symbol. Capt. Wadsworth has been painted on planes, embroidered on patches, and accompanied members of the 118th and the 103rd on their missions around the world for more than ninety years.

If you do not have access to the Bradley Air National Guard Base and would like to view the Charter Oak exhibit, please contact the CTNG Public Affairs Office at 860-524-4858.

Camp Niantic An Affordable Waterfront Getaway



Reserve Rooms at the RTI or Bulding 32
Single, Full and Queen Bed Options
Private or Shared Bathrooms

Who's Eligible?

All current CTNG Soldiers and Airmen and their dependents
Active Duty Military and their dependents
DOD Employees
Retired Military
State Militia members
State Military Department Employees

Post MWR Facilities

PX Open Tuesday - Saturday
Kayaks, canoes, sailfish and other sporting equipment available
Waterfront Picnic Areas
Volleyball court
Beach Access
Fitness Centers

Local Attractions

Nearby State and Local Beaches
Numerous Shopping and Dining Options
Close to I-95

For Rate Information and Reservations
Contact the Billeting Office at (860) 691-4314

NGACT Award Nominations Being Accepted

ULRICK BRICE
NGACT AWARDS CHAIRMAN

Greetings to all Connecticut Army and Air National Guard Members, Family and Friends.

2017 is upon us, and I encourage you to nominate a deserving member for one of the National Guard Association of Connecticut awards listed below. Each winner will be recognized at the 2017 NGACT Annual Conference, held at the Farmington Marriott on February 18th, 2017.

Nomination forms are due January 12, 2017. Some awards require chain of command endorsements, so please don't wait until the last minute. Nomination forms are available on the NGACT website: www.ngact.org. Questions or concerns can be forwarded to Ulrick Brice at ulrickbrice@gmail.com.

NGACT Awards & Eligibility

The Minuteman Award: The highest honor bestowed on a member of the Association. It recognizes exceptional achievement, a patriotic act, highly distinguished service and/or an outstanding contribution to a military organization, community, the State, the Nation of National Guard Association of Connecticut. Posthumous awards may be made to the next of kin.

Eligibility: Member or former member of the military and NGACT

The NGACT Leadership Award: Recognizes a company grade officer who epitomizes the loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and

personal courage exemplified in the Officer's Creed.

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

The Command Sergeant Major Anthony V. Savino Award: Recognizes a noncommissioned officer who epitomizes the loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage exemplified in the NCO Creed.

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

The Meritorious Service Award: Bestowed on an individual, firm or organization for outstanding service to the Connecticut National Guard and/or NGACT.

Eligibility: Any individual, firm or organization; military or civilian.

The President's Corporate Member Award: Recognizes a corporate member that distinguishes itself through noteworthy contributions in furtherance of the purpose, goals and objectives of NGACT.

Eligibility: Current corporate member of NGACT.

The President's Retiree Award: Recognizes a retiree member who distinguishes themselves through noteworthy contributions in furtherance of the purpose, goals and objectives of NGACT.

Eligibility: Current member of NGACT.

SAVE THE DATE 2017 NGACT Conference and Military Ball

February 18, 2017
Sheraton Hartford South Hotel, Rocky Hill, Connecticut
\$60 per person
Official invite coming soon!

Questions? Contact:
Kendra Ross, Kendra.L.ross.mil@mail.mil or Shawn Pyer, shawn.m.pyer.mil@mail.mil

AROUND OUR GUARD



Col. Fran Evon (far left), Assistant Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard assists Maj. Alan Gilman (far right), Commander CTARNG Recruiting and Retention Battalion in cutting the ribbon at a new RRB storefront at 160 Market Street in Hartford, Connecticut, Nov. 10. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)



Members of the 1109th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group, Connecticut Army National Guard fire the M-4 rifle during their drill weekend at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, Oct. 29-30. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Maher, 1109th TASMG)



The 103rd Airlift Wing played host to the 2016 Officers' Dining In at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington, Conn., Nov. 3. Complete with the traditional ceremonial elements, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Harry "Bud" Wyatt spoke to a crowd of over 300 past and current Connecticut National Guard officers, stressing the important role the National Guard has played throughout the years. Maj. Doug Schierey, Deputy Commander of the 103rd Mission Support Group, pours the first cup after completion of the ceremonial Grog Bowl pour, while Maj. Timothy Olander, Commander of the 103rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, served in the role of Mr. Vice from behind the fortified position made popular by the 1-102nd Infantry Regiment – the 2015 hosts. (U.S. Army photos by Maj. Mike Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer)



Join Tomorrow's Battlefield as a Cyber Warrior

Enlisted, Warrant Officer & Officer Positions Available



For more information, contact:
CPT Ryan Miller
ryan.k.miller3.mil@mail.mil
860.524.4853

OPM Cyber Security Update

For Individuals Impacted by Both the Personnel Records and the Background Investigation Incidents.

U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Individuals who were impacted by both the personnel records and backgrounds investigations cyber incidents (approximately 3.6 million) will continue to receive credit monitoring and identity protection services through the current service provider for the background investigation records incident through 12/31/18.

All enrolled individuals will receive a communications through Winvale/CSID in the coming days, most likely via email.

The Government will mail notification letters with a 25-digit PIN code to the approximately 600,000 individuals only impacted by the personnel records incident. These letters will be mailed in the November to December 2016 timeframe.

Any individuals also impacted by the background investigations incident, including those who were also impacted by the personnel records incident, already received their notification letters with their 25-digit PIN code last year. If you or your colleagues need a copy of your notification letter, please reach out to the Verification Center via OPM's Cybersecurity Resource Center (<https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity>). A copy will be sent by U.S. Postal Service.

An impacted individual will need the 25-digit PIN code contained within his/her unique notification letter to enroll in credit and identity monitoring services.

Every impacted individual may access identity restoration or identity theft insurance services while the contract term is active.

For those who have initiated an identity restoration case or identity theft insurance claim on or before the 12/1/16 date, Winvale / CSID will process those cases and claims to completion. No open cases or claims will be transitioned to the new service provider.

FAQ: Coverage for dependent children who turned 18.

Question: My dependent child is now an adult and over 18. How does he/she enroll for services?

Answer: Your dependent child will need to sign up for his/her own coverage on or following his/her 18th birthday and can do so by calling the service provider at 800-750-3004 Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Because most minors may not have sufficient credit history to secure their own credit, they may not have credit authorization questions that they can answer to further verify their identity and access the credit monitoring portion of the product. If this is the case, please call the service provider and an agent can enroll him/her in the non-credit monitoring product. The service provider will provide identity restoration services regardless of whether the individual enrolls in the credit or non-credit monitoring services.

The 2017 Nomination Season Is Open

Nominate Your Employer for the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

[HTTP://WWW.FREEDOMAWARD.MIL](http://www.freedomaward.mil)

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their support of their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

Nominations must come from a Guard or Reserve member who is employed by the organization they are nominating, or from a family member.

The award was created to publicly recognize employers who provide exceptional support to their Guard and Reserve employees. It is the highest in a series of employer recognition awards given by the Department of Defense.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. This award recognizes employers who provide the most outstanding support for their Guard and Reserve employees and is presented annually by the Secretary of Defense.

Last Chance!
Nomination season closes at the end of December!
<http://www.freedomaward.mil/>



Health & Fitness

End of the 2016 CTNG Golf League Season

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 (RET.) JOHN GODBURN
RETIREE AFFAIRS COLUMNIST

After a hiatus of nearly five years, the Connecticut National Guard Golf League returned to a newly-renovated and vastly-improved Keney Park Golf Course in Hartford.

From the responses of league members, the city of Hartford has much to be proud of in the way the course has been restored and brought back to its old glory.

League play lasted 20 weeks and consisted of eight, two-man teams, competing each week in a round-robin match play format against the other teams. Points were awarded each week for individual winners as well as for the winning team. Points and league standings were maintained throughout the season, with winners being declared and recognized at the league's "end-of-season" outing on Sept. 22. Prizes were awarded to the top four teams.

As the season progressed, the competition became very tight, but it didn't start out that way. Season champs Doug Paley and Jim MacDonald lead for the entire season, building a commanding lead early in the season and running away from the rest of the field. By mid-August, their lead was rapidly shrinking, down to only three points entering the last week of league play. In fact, going into that last week, there were six teams in position to take any one of the top four spots.

As mentioned, the league held its end-of-season outing at Cedar Knob Golf Club in Somers, Connecticut. It began with lunch, followed by 18-holes of two-person scramble golf. The winning team for this day was Jim MacDonald and Brian Zamudio. Prizes were awarded to the top four teams as well as for the long drive and closest-to-the-pin contests.

The league has been invited back to Keney Park for the



Command Sgt. Maj. George Barrow, G-1 Sergeant Major, CTARNG, prepares to tee off during the Connecticut National Guard summer golf league. The golf league returned to Keney Park in Hartford in the summer of 2016 after a five year hiatus. (Photo courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 4 (Ret.) John Godburn)

2017 season, and is actively seeking weekly members as well as substitutes. This year the league had 16 weekly members, but the head professional at Keney Park told me that there is room for the league to grow to 20 weekly members next year. In March or April of 2017, I will send out registration forms to all interested, as well as this year's members. Please get the word out.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all of this year's members for an enjoyable season. I enjoyed managing the league and it was a pleasure to do so. But more importantly, I especially enjoyed seeing all of you each week – some of whom I had not seen for several years. I look forward to the start of the 2017 season and once again, enjoying everyone's company.

2016 Season Final Team Standings and Statistics

	TEAM	POINTS
1.	Doug Paley/Jim MacDonald	37
2.	John Godburn/Rich Lecuyer	32
3.	George Barrow/Chris Mackenzie	31.5
4.	Joe Chamberlain/George Brown	30.5
5.	Don Chiverton/Chris Nicholson	30
6.	Michael Petersen/Chris Evans	30
7.	Steve London/Kris Dziewaltowski	26.5
8.	Dan Morgan/Joe Sevigny	22.5

Birdie Leader (weekly golfers): Chris Evans with 8
Birdie Leader (subs): Chris Hawkins with 3
Par Leader (weekly golfers): Mike Petersen with 55
Par Leader (subs): Chris Hawkins with 22
Low Gross Scoring Average (weekly golfers): Mike Petersen at 41.46
Low Gross Scoring Average (subs): John Odell at 42.33
Low Net Scoring Average (weekly golfers): Chris Evans at 34.08
Low New Scoring Average (subs): Dan McHale at 35.00
Most Points Earned for the Season (weekly golfers): Jim MacDonald with 22
Most Points Earned for the Season (subs): Chris Hawkins with 9.75

Think you've got the game to take the 2017 CTNG crown?
Contact Mr. Godburn via email at cjgodburn@gmail.com for more information.

Governor's Horse and Foot Guards

Serving With Distinction 1GHG Honors Dedication

CPL. LOUISA KRAUSE
1GHG UPAR

When we look back on the many years of the First Company Governor's Horse Guard, there are many who have served with great dedication and honor.

This year was no exception.

After nearly 30 years of service to Connecticut's Horse Guard, Capt. Robert Mazzara was presented the Long Service Medal at an official ceremony held at the 1GHG in Avon, Oct. 13. No discussion of 1GHG would be complete without highlighting the countless contributions Mazzara has made during his lengthy tenure with the unit.

He has served his country, seeing action in Vietnam. While in uniform, he earned the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

As if his contributions weren't enough, Mazzara continued his selfless service by first enlisting and serving for nine years in 2GHG, before moving to his present unit in 1995. His passion for the herd and his equitation skills are legendary. Capt. Mazzara has always been a thoughtful, fair and compassionate leader, having

left retirement twice to return to the unit to serve as acting First Sergeant in times of need and today he still continues to serve the unit at drills and during recruit training. The unit will forever be indebted to all of his congeniality, contributions and dedicated service.

Two other members of the unit were also credited with honors on this evening: 1st Sgt. Edward Martinoli and Pfc. Julie Bailey, were named the Soldier and Trooper of the Year, respectively.

Martinoli, served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1973-1977 and in the Connecticut National Guard from 1984-2002. He retired as a Sgt. 1st Class Infantry Scout and ended his career at Camp Niantic, assigned to the Connecticut Military Academy as an NCOES instructor.

As a civilian, he worked as an aircraft electrician at Sikorsky Aircraft for six years. He recently retired at the rank of Sergeant after 20 years of service as a state

police officer. Because life had not been exciting enough, 1st Sgt. Martinoli later volunteered his services at the 2GHG in Newtown and has spent the last two and a half years as a volunteer recruit instructor at the 1GHG. He has devoted countless hours instructing on military bearing and marching, then became a recruit himself, and shortly after his Graduation was appointed the position of First Sergeant.

Pfc. Julie Bailey, 1GHG Trooper of the Year, has been a model trooper, serving both in the Riding Platoon and in Headquarters coordinating mess and supply. She is the mother of two boys, graduated from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania and currently is employed as an Account Administrator at HCC Surety Group. Her endless dedication, spirited and caring nature has made her an inspiration to all.

The 1GHG would also like to congratulate the members of Recruit Class 16-1 on graduating, Sept. 15. After 16 weeks of rigorous training in military bearing, equitation and horse care, Recruits Catriana Hersey, Jaelle Hersey and Lauren Gentil graduated into the unit as Privates. Their display of focus and hard work and the countless volunteer hours they invested helping at our various fund raising



Maj. Christopher Miller (right), 1GHG Commandant, presents Capt. Robert Mazzara of the First Company Governor's Horse Guard with the Long Service Medal after nearly 30 years of dedicated service to the Connecticut Horse Guards at a ceremony at the 1GHG facility in Avon, Oct. 13. (Photo courtesy of Cpl. Louisa Krause, 1GHG UPAR)



Maj. Christopher Miller (left), 1GHG Commandant, presents Pfc. Julie Bailey with the Trooper of the Year Award at a ceremony at the 1GHG facility in Avon, Connecticut, Oct. 13. (Photo courtesy of Cpl. Louisa Krause, 1GHG UPAR)



Maj. Christopher Miller (right), 1GHG Commandant, presents 1st Sgt. Edward Martinoli with the 1GHG Soldier of the Year Award at a ceremony in Avon, Connecticut, Oct. 13. (Photo courtesy of Cpl. Louisa Krause, 1GHG UPAR)

events to keep the 1GHG an on-going tradition in our community, were exemplary and make them worthy troopers of the 1GHG.

For more information on our next recruit training in the Spring of 2017, call (860) 673-3525.

Governor's Horse and Foot Guards

2GHG Hosts Second K-9 Challenge in Newtown CTNG's 928th Military Working Dog Team Takes Second Place

2ND LT. KEN FAY
2GHG UPAR

The grounds of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard saw a flurry of activity with police and military K-9's during the second annual Western CT Police K-9 Challenge and Car Show; hosted by the Newtown Kennel Club, the Friends of Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, and The Hometown Foundation, Inc. at the 2GHG facility in Newtown, Conn., October 8.

To the delight of the public, K-9 units competed in a judged contest that included an obstacle course, apprehension of suspects fleeing from a vehicle, tactical obedience, simulation drills and fastest dog.

K-9 Teams from Newtown, Monroe, New Britain, Ridgefield, Shelton, and Stamford Police Departments along with the 928th Military Police Working Dog Detachment of the Connecticut Army National Guard were among the top winners.

Winners were determined based on cumulative points earned for each event.

In addition to the competition, vehicle enthusiasts from across the northeast displayed their classic and exotic cars and motorcycles to help raise awareness and funds for Second Horse.

Best Overall K-9 Team Awards:

First Place: K-9 Bobi and his handler Officer David Dogali of the Stamford Police Department

Second Place: K-9 Balou and her handler Sgt. Christopher Rufini of the 928th Military Working Dog Det.

Third Place: K-9 Saint Michael and his handler Officer

Felicia Figol of the Newtown Police Department

The Stephen A. Ketchum "People's Choice" Award to honor the memory of Newtown Police Officer Stephen A. Ketchum went to K-9 Murphy of the Monroe Police Department.

For more information about the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, visit www.TheHorseGuard.org.

Left: Maj. James Marrinan (left), Commandant of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, presents Sgt. Christopher Rufini and K-9 Balou of the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment, Connecticut Army National Guard with the second place ribbon at the 2GHG K-9 Challenge at the 2GHG facility in Newtown, Connecticut, Oct. 8. This is the second year that the 2GHG hosted the Western CT Police K9 Challenge and Car Show with the Newtown Kennel Club (NKC), the Friends of Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, and The Hometown Foundation, Inc. A team from the 928th Military Working Dog Detachment also placed in last years competition. (Photo by Pfc. Jodi Fay, 2GHG)



Second Company Governor's Foot Guard Presents Soldier of the Year Award

The Second Company Governor's Foot Guard presented it's annual Soldier of the Year award to Sgt. John Garcia (right) at the Branford Army, Oct. 24. This award is earned for one's dedication to the unit, care for the Soldiers, attendance, job knowledge, and insistence on precision in all matters assigned. Sgt. Garcia is assigned to the

Rifle Company, where he is a mentor to his Soldiers. Currently he serves as acting Color Sergeant. Sgt. Garcia has been a member of the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard for eight years. The award was presented by Maj. Richard Greenalch, the 67th Commandant of the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard.

Learn More About the State Militia

1ST CO. GOVERNORS FOOT GUARD
<http://www.governorsfootguard.com/>
1ST CO. GOVERNORS HORSE GUARD
<http://www.ctfirsthorseguard.org/>

2ND CO. GOVERNORS FOOT GUARD
<http://www.footguard.org/>
2ND CO. GOVERNORS HORSE GUARD
<http://www.thehorseguard.org/>



Third Generation of Bowdy Pilots Takes Flight in Connecticut

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jay Bowdy (left), TASMG MTP Supervisor, and his daughter 1st Lt. Emily Bowdy, TASMG Platoon leader, prepare to take off in a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter, Sept. 12, 2016, from the TASMG facility in Groton, Connecticut. This was the father-daughter combo's first flight together since 1st Lt. Bowdy graduated from flight school, February 18, 2016 (Photo provided by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bowdy, TASMG, CTARNG)



STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Two Connecticut Army National Guard pilots took off from the Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group's ramp on board a CTARNG UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter on Sept. 12, 2016.

From their starting point in Groton, Conn., the duo practiced rolling takeoffs and landings, flew over much of the state's coastline and coasted over the small towns of Eastern Connecticut, its forests, ponds, and rivers, and even above the state's two casinos.

"I wanted to see what she's made of," Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jay Bowdy said with a smile, about his daughter, 1st Lt. Emily Bowdy. "And she did just fine."

1st Lt. Bowdy became the third generation of Bowdy pilots to serve in the CTARNG following her completion of the U.S. Army Aviation School's Initial Entry Rotary Wing Training (flight school) at Fort Rucker, Alabama, Feb. 18, 2016. Chief Bowdy is the current TASMG Maintenance Test Pilot Supervisor, and his father, (1st Lt. Bowdy's grandfather) Brig. Gen. James B. Bowdy, served as the first commander of the Aviation Classification and Repair Depot – the TASMG's former designation.

Although his choice to join the military had essentially been predetermined, Chief Bowdy said that accidentally crashing his father's car as a teenager cemented his decision.

"My dad said that I had to pay him back. How was I going to do that? So I signed up," he said. "It was an easy choice."

In 1982, Chief Bowdy enlisted and served as an Aircraft Armament/Missile Systems Repairer, and drilled out of the AVCRAD.

During his first drill weekend at Camp O'Neill, (the former name for Camp Niantic), Bowdy was met with a very familiar surprise. He said he'd never forget when his father touched down on the camp's parade field in a UH-1 Iroquois (Huey) helicopter. The elder Bowdy and his son, Pvt. Bowdy, flew back to Groton together.

Chief Bowdy said he always wanted to fly like his father. As an infant in 1964, he joined his dad at flight school in Fort Rucker. In 1989, he attended the same course, and in continuing his family's tradition, his children accompanied him.

"It's a small Army world," he said. "When Emily attended, she became our third generation Bowdy to graduate from there. And I was in the same class as the son of a man who was in my father's class. It's an even smaller world for pilots."

Chief Bowdy attested that the nuts and bolts of flying helicopters, the fundamentals, have not significantly shifted over the preceding decades.

"You still have to be left-handed," he said laughing.

"Practice moving your feet and arms at the same time in opposite directions. If you can do that, you'll be ok."

The mission of the 1109th AVCRAD/TASMG has also not changed substantially since its inception in 1979.

The TASMG currently serves as the maintenance



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jay Bowdy said his daughter, 1st Lt. Emily Bowdy, did just fine during their flight together, Sept. 12, 2016. 1st Lt. Bowdy's brother, James Benjamin Bowdy, also served in the military as a member the Connecticut Air National Guard 103rd Airlift Wing's Security Forces Squadron. (Photo provided by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bowdy, TASMG, CTARNG)

depot for 14 northeast state National Guard departments. In addition to their regional helicopter repair work, the unit's Soldiers also support the U.S. Foreign Military Sales Program and have recently traveled to Thailand, Panama, Taiwan and Mexico in support of that mission.

In August 2016, nearly 65 members of the TASMG returned from a successful deployment to the Middle East, providing aviation maintenance and port support for deployed forces. 1st Lt. Bowdy served as a platoon leader with the unit during their 2012-2013 deployment to the region.

She said, lightheartedly, that her mother had endured enough of their family's deployments and military trips. In addition to 1st Lt. and Chief Bowdy's military service, son, James Benjamin Bowdy served with the Connecticut Air National

Guard 103rd Airlift Wing in the Security Forces Squadron, and deployed with the unit in 2012 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The family's youngest sibling, Claire, promised her parents that she would not follow her family members' popular career choice. Chief Bowdy affirmed, "My wife said, three is enough."



(From L-R) Maj. Gen. John F. Freund, the thirty-sixth Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard, Lt. Col. James B. Bowdy, and Connecticut Governor Ella T. Grasso attend the dedication of the new CTARNG Transportation Aircraft Repair Shop, June 21, 1977. The 162nd TARS was reorganized and became the 1109th AVCRAD in 1979, with Lt. Col. Bowdy as its commander. (Photo provided by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bowdy, TASMG, CTARNG)

The Bowdys' military service extends back past three generations. Chief Bowdy's grandfather served during World War II, and a distant relative's 19th-century U.S. Army Cavalry sword is kept in Chief Bowdy's Groton office.

He said that long-retired members of the CTARNG sometimes still come to the TASMG gate and ask for



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jay Bowdy said his decision to join the military and become a pilot came easily. His father, Brig. Gen. James B. Bowdy, was the CTARNG AVCRAD's first commander. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)

his father. "They still remember him. We tell them that they can come and see me, but they really want to see my dad."

Brig. Gen. James B. Bowdy passed away in 1982.

1st Lt. Bowdy said she'd been surrounded by the military and helicopters as far back as she can remember.

tough," he said. "Helicopters can give you a challenge."

1st Lt. Bowdy said her graduation at Fort Rucker was surreal, and that the reality of becoming the third generation of Bowdy pilots to complete flight school became tangible when she saw her father at the ceremony.

"I never anticipated becoming a pilot. I couldn't see it happening," she said. "I didn't believe it until the very end."

Of course, 1st Lt. Bowdy has had someone with decades of experience in her corner.

"I didn't give her too many tips and pointers," Chief Bowdy said. "I didn't want her to inherit any of my bad habits. I told her to go to flight school and learn from them, and that we could go over mission details when she got back. I tried to tire her out," he said with a grin, "but like I said, when we flew together, she did great."

1st Lt. Bowdy said the weather on Sept. 12, 2016 was perfect for flying with her dad; cloudless, mild, and very little wind. She said her father teased her about her vehicle driving skills before their flight together and pretended to be hesitant about joining her in the cockpit.

"I never thought it would happen. I always wanted to fly like my father," she said. "I didn't think we would be able to do it while we both in uniform."

She said she'd never forget their time together that day. "It was really special. I don't know if I'll get married," she said laughing. "Flying together was like our daddy-daughter dance."

The 1109th's mission began in 1961 as the Fourth Echelon Maintenance Shop. It became the 162nd Transportation Aviation Repair Shop in 1962, and was reorganized into the 1109th AVCRAD, with Col. James B. Bowdy as its commander, in 1979.

"It was an easy transition to join," she said.

Her dad minimized her transition's difficulty. In 1998, he may have inspired more than just one future military pilot when he touched down a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter on the soccer field at Sacred Heart School in Groton, where his daughter attended.

"That was a proud moment for me," she said. Soon thereafter, she began taking fixed-wing flying lessons through a program run by the U.S. Coast Guard. She never looked back.

1st Lt. Bowdy said becoming a military pilot can be an extremely long process, and that it can be easy for people to lose their steam along the way. "You have to see it through and be committed," she said. "Try not to lose sight of your goal."

Chief Bowdy agreed with his daughter's assessment. "Flight school is one of the great military opportunities of a lifetime. You have to be dedicated. It can be

Branch Transfers Changing the Path of Your Army Career

CAPT. VERGIL DECKER, JUDGE ADVOCATE
831ST TRIAL DEFENSE TEAM

Choosing your Branch in the Army National Guard is an important decision whether you are just enlisting into the service or accepting a commission as an Officer or Warrant Officer. While your choice is significant, it does not have to be final.

Enlisted Soldiers can add Military Occupational Specialties throughout their time in service, which is considered career broadening, but Officers requesting a branch transfer is a permanent change, altering your career path for good. For this reason, the timing of a branch transfer is an important consideration.

Most Officer branch transfers occur at the company-grade level. Approval for a branch transfer is based on the needs of the Army and, if approved, allows for a meaningful career progression for the transferring Officer.

As a Captain, it was the right time for me to transfer.

In 2004, I joined the Connecticut Army National Guard. A year later I entered the University of Connecticut Recruit Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

Upon graduation from UConn in 2007, I received a Bachelor of Arts and a commission in the U.S. Army. I attended Infantry Officer Basic Course, where I became branch qualified as an Infantry Officer. Then I attended Ranger School, Basic Military Mountaineering and deployed with the Connecticut Army National Guard's 1-102nd Infantry Regiment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2010, when I came home from deployment, I studied for the Law School Admission Test, or LSAT, which I passed the following year.

In 2012, I started law school part time, and received a Juris Doctorate upon graduating from Western New England University School of Law three years later. Wanting to align my professional civilian and military occupations, I decided to learn more about branch transferring to the Judge Advocate General Corps.

From start to finish, the branch transfer process took me about a year. At the

outset, branch transfer requests must be forwarded through your chain of command. After I passed the bar exam, I wrote a letter to my Battalion Commander justifying my request to transfer from the Infantry to JAGC.

With the support from my chain of command, I needed to get my JAGC application packet together.

I began to compile the documents that I needed for my packet with the help from the specialty branch recruiting office and the CTARNG Judge Advocate General's office. This included my Officer Record Brief, my last five Officer Evaluation Reports, my DD214, letters of recommendation, and other items. I also needed to provide supporting documentation that I graduated law school and that I passed the bar exam.

Then the specialty branch recruiting office thoroughly reviewed my packet to ensure that it was complete, accurate and well-organized before we sent it to the JAGC Accessions Board at National Guard Bureau. The board only convenes a certain number of times per year and approves or denies applications on a case-by-case basis, so you need to make it count. Once the board is complete, individuals who make the selection list are offered a commission with the U.S. Army National Guard with assignment to the JAGC. Individuals who do not make the selection list may apply again the following year.

Thankfully, I made the selection list, but the process didn't end there.

I needed to schedule Judge Advocate Office Basic Course school dates, which consists of six weeks at direct commission course followed by 11 weeks of legal training at The Judge Advocate Legal Center and School in Charlottesville, Virginia.

All told, the process for branch transferring from infantry to JAGC was long, but rewarding. I look forward to finishing my military career in the CTARNG JAGC.

"Soldier first, lawyer always!"
If you are an Officer in the Connecticut Army National Guard and want to learn more about the branch transfer process, contact your chain of command.



Are You IT Savvy? The CTARNG has Warrant Positions Available

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 SUSAN CURTISS
WARRANT OFFICER STRENGTH MANAGER

Did you know that not all Warrant Officer military occupational specialties, or MOS, require a specific feeder MOS?

Although a variety of technical positions require experience in the enlisted MOS in which the applicant is applying, there are a few that do not. Rotary wing aviators (153A), network management technicians (255N), and information services technicians (255A) are exceptions to this rule and are open to all applicants regardless of enlisted MOS. Civilian experience in the IT field can be used to qualify interested candidates to become signal Warrant Officers.

The Connecticut Army National Guard is looking for qualified candidates to fill several Warrant Officer vacancies within the state. The career of an Army Warrant Officer is both challenging and rewarding, providing benefits that include world-class training and education, higher pay, faster promotion potential, extended career opportunities, challenging assignments, and influential leadership positions.

Of the three signal Warrant Officer MOSs, Information Services Technician (255A) Network Management Technician (255N), and Cyber Operations Technician (170A), Connecticut currently has

authorizations for 255As and 255Ns. The 255As are the Army's information systems and services technicians, establishing and maintaining cyberspace activities in order to plan, coordinate, direct, manage information systems, services and cyber security at every level in support of mission command.

The 255Ns are the Army's network transport technicians for voice, video, and data networks establishing and maintaining the transport layer environment throughout cyberspace on the DoD Information Network.

"Increased training and operational influence was the biggest reason I decided to become a warrant officer," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Curtiss, a 255A assigned to the Defense Cyber Operations Element. Curtiss pursued a career as a signal warrant officer because he wanted to influence positive change in his field.

"I wanted to make a difference in an organization that desperately needs it," said Curtiss. "As an enlisted (IT Specialist), there is very limited promotion potential in the CTARNG. Becoming a WO has opened up the promotion potential for me. This has proven to be a reward for hard work and commitment

See IT WARRANT Page 18

Enlisted Update Stay Fit and Focused: Celebrate Safely During the Holiday Season



COMMAND SGT. MAJ.
JOHN S. CARRAGHER

Welcome to December! I always feel December tends to sneak up on us.

It seems like it you're celebrating the Fourth of July and, before you know it, everyone is cooking turkey for Thanksgiving and looking forward to the holidays.

I wanted to take a minute of your time and talk about a couple of issues that are severely impacting our

Guardsmen and our unit readiness: substance abuse and physical fitness.

Substance abuse is the use of illegal narcotics or the abuse of alcohol. Army Regulation and the Adjutant General's policy states that the use of illegal narcotics, the abuse of alcohol, and the improper use of prescription drugs is incompatible with military service.

As Soldiers, we are subject to random testing for the abuse of drugs. In fiscal year 2016, over 100 of our Soldiers tested positive for the abuse of drugs. The vast majority of identified drug use was for marijuana. Many states have begun to legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes and several states have legalized the recreational use of marijuana, most recently Massachusetts. The use of marijuana remains illegal under federal law and remains inconsistent with military service, regardless of state law.

Decriminalization and increased social acceptance makes it tempting to abuse drugs. I urge every Soldier to carefully consider the consequences of the decisions you make. I would also urge you to carefully consider your surroundings. The advent of, "edibles" that have accompanied the decriminalization of marijuana

in many states can very quickly get you in trouble without you even knowing it. If you ingest marijuana, even unknowingly, and are tested, it will be considered an abuse of narcotics. The same is true for medical marijuana. If you test positive, there is no legitimate medical use for marijuana that is recognized by the Army.

If you find yourself falling into the trap that is addiction, reach out for help. There are services available to help you break the cycle of addiction, regardless of the substance.

The negative consequences of asking for help are almost non-existent; the consequences associated with a positive drug test will most likely be negative and much harder to overcome. Putting aside the military consequences for a moment, the personal consequences of substance abuse can end up catastrophic. It is a matter of life and death.

Alcohol abuse is harder to see coming, but just as devastating. It is very easy to move from the legal and socially acceptable use of alcohol to the abuse of alcohol. The result is the same, regardless of substance. The easiest clue to recognize is telling yourself, "I really have to drink less." A friend or co-worker saying something to you should also be a big red flag. Take action before you get physically or legally hurt.

The bottom line to substance abuse is to stop it before it takes over your life. Once you recognize there is a problem, take action! If you don't know what to do, find another Soldier or Airman and ask for help. I challenge every Soldier and Airman to know the options available to our people and where to go to get help. Leaders at every level should be able to point a junior enlisted member in the right direction!

Physical fitness and body composition continue to be a challenge for us as an organization. I realize that everyone has multiple demands on their time, whether it be work, school, family, or another demand.

Physical fitness deserves to become a priority. Again, forget about the military aspect, look at it from a life perspective. If you have an active, healthy, lifestyle, you will feel better and live longer. Our duty as Soldiers and Airmen is to be prepared to, "fight tonight," in defense of our country and in support of our fellow citizens.

Physical fitness and individual medical readiness are cornerstones of that duty. We have state-of-the-art fitness centers in the majority of our facilities across the state. If your unit location is not convenient for you to use regularly, look to another of our facilities. Get yourself into a routine and stick to it.

Until the track is covered by snow, you can find me most mornings at Newington High School before work. After the snow falls, you can find me at the Hartford Armory. If you need help getting yourself onto a program, ask. If self-motivation is a challenge, find a partner to help motivate you. Whatever it takes, get out there and do it- you will feel and perform better not only in your military duties but in your civilian life as well.

At some point during this holiday season, we will all reflect on the things that we are thankful for. I want to share a few things that I am thankful for:

- I am thankful for my family for teaching me right and wrong and for taking care of the home front, enabling me to be a Soldier.

- I am thankful for the men and women in uniform who gave that last full measure so that we may live free from tyranny and oppression.

- I am thankful for the leaders that came before me that had the patience and professionalism to show me what right looks like so that I might pass that on to another generation.

- I am thankful for the next generation that has chosen to take up the Profession of Arms so that our way of life is preserved.

- I am thankful for the opportunity to be a Soldier. My family and I wish you the very happiest of holidays and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

Quote of the Month:
"Leadership is intangible, and therefore no weapon ever designed can replace it."

- General of the Army Omar N. Bradley
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
12 February 1893 – 8 April 1981
CSM Carragher
Any Soldier, Any Issue, Any Time

CONNECTICUT

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

COMMISSIONING OPPORTUNITIES

44K - Pediatrician

47G - Dentist

48A - Aerospace Medicine Specialist

48R - Flight Surgeon

46Y3A - APRN Nurse

45G3 - OB/GYN Nurse

42G3 - Physician Assistant

14N3 - Intelligence Officer

Qualified candidates may email resumes/CVs to:

Senior Master Sgt. Aaron Hann aaron.f.hann.mil@mail.mil (860) 292-2331	Master Sgt. Christopher Grizzle christopher.h.grizzle.mil@mail.mil (860) 292-2758
--	---





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

OCS OPEN HOUSE
INFORMATION BRIEF
December 10, 2016 & January 28, 2016

Report Time: 9:00 a.m.
 9-11:00 a.m. RTI, Camp Niantic





Uniform: ACUs/OCPs with PC or Business Casual (Civilians Only)

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



Please RSVP through your chain of command and to:
Capt. David Lord - david.m.lord.mil@mail.mil
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Mottolo - michael.v.motollo.mil@mail.mil

IT WARRANT From Page 16

to the CTARNG as well as the warrant officer cohort.”

Warrant Officer Dewayne Woods, a 255N, said his motivation to become a signal warrant officer dated back to his time spent on active duty.

“My entire career has been a part of the Signal Corps,” said Woods. “It was the next logical step for me to become a warrant officer. My work experiences both in and out of the Army revolve around communication and technology. So for me to be relevant in any conversation regarding the state of IT in the military, I would have to attain the rank and influence of an officer, while remaining a technical expert in my field.”

Becoming a Warrant Officer has provided Curtiss with many opportunities that he would not have had otherwise as an enlisted Soldier. He traveled the country as a member of the DCO-E and trained with other states participating in cyber exercises and training events.

He directly contributed to the National Guard’s DCO-E mission and development by participating as both a trainee and trainer in the Cyber Shield and Cyber Yankee exercises. Curtiss has also attended world-class civilian training and achieved several IT certifications to include Certified Information Systems Security Professional, Certified Ethical Hacker, Global Information Assurance Certification and Cisco Certified Network Associate. Most of these opportunities were not available to him as an enlisted Soldier.

“The (Warrant Officer Basic Course) outline for the 255N series includes training on and for vendor specific

equipment,” said Woods. “It also requires us to attain and maintain industry relevant security certifications. We received training at the Cisco Net Academy at the CCNA level. CompTIA training for the CASP as well as other security and voice courses. Some of the certifications that can be achieved through required military education for 255N include: CCNA, CCNA Security, CCNP, CASP, CISSP, Project+, PMP and CCNA Voice.”

IT professionals should consider becoming signal warrant officers in order to benefit from all of the opportunities that these two signal warrants experienced. “Like most things, you get what you put into it. In every profession, there are people that excel at what they do and those that don’t,” said Curtiss. “If you want to be the best at what you do and also care deeply about what you do and how it affects the mission and the force, then becoming a signal warrant officer will give you an opportunity to do just that. It is a calling to those who want to make a difference, not just an opportunity to get promoted.”

Woods described the work of signal warrant officers as comparable to the work of industry level professionals, having the ability to be as technical as you like while influencing all levels of communications within the organization.

Pursuing a career as a Warrant Officer provides significant opportunities and benefits. The technical training and education combined with influential assignments will provide unparalleled career growth. Warrant Officers are a small, elite cohort that make up

only two percent of the Army and 15 percent of the officer corps. In addition to the experiences and assignments, warrant officers are able to perform their core duties for a longer period of time and extend their career paths. The pay and retirement benefits improve as well.

Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, describes Warrant Officers as, “highly specialized officers. They are self-aware, adaptive combat leaders, trainers, staff officers, and advisors. Warrant Officers are competent and confident warriors, innovative integrators of emerging technologies, dynamic teachers and developers of specialized teams of Soldiers.”

Interested candidates must be eligible for and meet the minimum qualifications of the warrant officer MOS they are applying for. The minimum prerequisites include:

- **Citizenship:** Must be a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization
- **GT Score:** 110 or higher
- **Education:** High School Diploma or GED completion
- **Security Clearance:** Valid final or interim secret security clearance
- **Leadership:** Must possess outstanding leadership traits
- **Specific MOS Requirements:** Must meet specific MOS requirements posted on nationalguard.com/warrantofficer or usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant

For more information and to discuss these opportunities contact Chief Warrant Officer 2 Susan Curtiss, Warrant Officer Strength Manager, at susan.w.curtiss.mil@mail.mil or (860) 461-4337.



WARRANT OFFICER

Use Your Military Experience in a Leadership Role as a Warrant Officer in the National Guard.

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD



TAKE THE CHALLENGE TODAY, CONTACT:

CW3 JOHN NERKOWSKI

WARRANT OFFICER STRENGTH MANAGER

203.410.0828

john.v.nerkowski.mil@mail.mil

Inside OCS

Looking to History For Leadership Lessons

OFFICER CANDIDATE ROBERT J. SWANOWICZ
OCS CLASS 62
1-169TH REGT RTI

Officer Candidates from Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and New Jersey returned to Camp Niantic for the first time since Phase I in July. New Jersey was attached to Connecticut and New York Class 62 while the rest of the states trained separately. For the tri-state area, this month’s training included a timed 9-mile road, testable instruction on offensive and defensive tactics, and constructing a sand table of Stones Ranch Military Reservation to be used up to and including the culminating Field Training Exercise in June.



Officer Candidate David Valli, OCS Class 62 conducts a tour of Fort Griswold in Groton, Connecticut while Candidates and Cadre explore the lower battery section of the fort overlooking the Thames River. (Photo by Maj. Alyssa Kelleher, 1-169 REGT RTI (OCS))

At the conclusion of September drill, Class 62 was assigned with conducting an analysis of a battle of their choosing by Platoon Trainer and history enthusiast, Sgt. 1st Class David Earle. Candidate David Valli, chose the Battle of Fort Griswold in Groton. On Sunday, all Candidates and Cadre in attendance traveled to the fort from Camp Niantic for a staff ride. Using elements of his own analysis, accompanied with the training received the day before, Valli gave the group a tour of the grounds while explaining the key elements of the battle that ensued there.

During the American Revolution, this strong point, along with Fort Trumbull on the opposite side of the Thames River, protected the port of New London, a critical supply depot for the Continental Army and

safe haven for Connecticut-sanctioned Privateers that attacked British vessels. Connecticut’s own Benedict Arnold, a native of nearby Norwich and one of the nation’s most notorious traitors, led the attacks in 1781 in an effort to lure George Washington away from Yorktown. Effective use of the terrain aided American defenses and hindered British avenues of approach; however, the British greatly outnumbered the Americans and the two forts were eventually seized. Although all the surrendering Americans were swiftly executed and the neighboring cities were razed, Washington did not take the bait. Yorktown proved to be a decisive victory for the Americans that would ultimately lead the British



Candidates of OCS Class 62 during a 9-mile ruck march during their September drill at Stones Ranch Military Reservation in East Lyme, Connecticut. (Photo by Maj. Alyssa Kelleher, 1-169 REGT RTI (OCS))

Government to negotiate an end to the conflict.

Although the battle resulted in a heinous defeat for the Americans, it was an excellent hands-on history lesson that hit close to home. I take an interest in American history, but it came as a surprise that I had never heard about this battle before. I imagined how different things might have been if Washington had decided to deviate from Yorktown to aid those in the forts.

It gave me a strong sense of understanding to the training we received this weekend that we can all put to use as future leaders.

R3SP - Resilience, Risk Reduction & Suicide Prevention

Buddy Check: Is Someone You Know At Risk For Suicide?

GUARDYOURHEALTH.COM

You and your battle buddies have been through a lot together.

You've sweat out drill weekends and responded to national disasters. Many of you have deployed together overseas. You've seen how your buddies react during times of intense stress.

Remembering their "normal" reaction to stressors can help you recognize when your friend's behavior just doesn't seem right.

Consider the following tips to help you identify serious changes in behavior and know when and how to reach out for help—whether your friend is next to you, on the phone, or online.

Suicide risk factors

Be on the lookout for any significant changes in a Soldier's family, personal, or job life. While the following risk factors do not mean someone is suicidal, they do increase the chances that someone may need help. Risk factors to look for may include:

- Relationship problems (loss of relationship, divorce)
- Significant loss (death, job, home)
- Legal trouble (current or pending actions)
- Serious health issues
- Social isolation, living alone
- Not being able to form or sustain meaningful relationships

Listen and be aware if your buddy mentions that they feel helpless, hopelessness, guilt, or that he or she just doesn't see a way out.

Suicide warning signs

Not all people at risk of suicide exhibit warning signs. But there are some signs that may indicate someone may be thinking about or planning a suicide. Seek professional help if your buddy is:

- Thinking about hurting or killing him/herself
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Increasing his/her alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family or friends
- Having unusual mood swings or acting out
- Engaging in risky behavior such as reckless driving or inappropriate sexual behaviors

Seek immediate help if a Soldier:

- Talks about suicide
- Has an obsession with death
- Gives away possessions or appears to be finalizing affairs

ACE—How You Can Help

Ask. You may have to flat-out ask a friend if he or she

is thinking about suicide. Asking shows you care and opens a door for him or her to vent. You may have to do this over the phone, if being there in person isn't an option. Use social media to get your friend on the phone if you see an alarming post.

When discussing such intense feelings, truly listen and avoid giving advice or arguing.

Care. Try to get your friend to seek immediate help from his/her doctor, mental health professional, chaplain, or nearest emergency room. If your friend is more comfortable speaking with someone on the phone, they can call 911 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) and press 1 for the Military Crisis Line.

The Lifeline is staffed 24/7 by people who understand what Soldiers have been through and the daily challenges your friend and you face. It's a confidential and free service.

Escort. If you think a friend is a suicide risk, you don't have to handle the situation alone. Many services and professionals stand ready to assist:

- The National Guard Bureau's Psychological Health Program provides support to help you through challenging issues, like how to talk with a friend about suicide. A Director of Psychological Health is someone you can talk to confidentially about your problems—big or small—in a safe, confidential environment. Search the drop down list on Guard Your Health.com to find a director in your state or territory for Unit Commanders and Chaplains in your area.

Make it a Holiday to Remember

Winter holidays bring opportunities for celebration with friends and family. They also bring added stress. And often, alcohol is more readily available.

Know your numbers. Follow the 0-1-2-3 guidelines for low-risk choices.

- 0** -No illegal drugs or non-prescribed medications
-No drinking if underage, pregnant or history of alcoholism
-Zero is always a low risk choice with alcohol
- 1** -One standard drink maximum per hour
- 2** -Two standard drink maximum per day if drinking regularly (spread apart by at least one hour)
- 3** -Three standard drink maximum per day if NOT drinking regularly i.e. special occasions like birthdays, holidays, celebrations, etc. (spread apart by at least one hour)

One standard drink =
0.6 oz. of pure alcohol:

- Beer 12 oz. 5% alcohol
- Wine 5 oz. 12% alcohol
- Spirits 1.5 oz. 40-50% alcohol

Decrease your risk for alcohol-related problems—follow these tips:

- Skip the party and suggest a change of scenery.** Suggest that your group do something that doesn't center around alcohol—go to the movies, dinner, a performance or a sporting event... or try doing an activity together like ice skating, games or something crafty!
- Eat before you go.** Food slows the absorption of alcohol, especially foods high in carbs and protein. Snack while drinking, but avoid salty foods. Alternate drinks with alcohol and drinks without to stay hydrated. Take non-alcoholic drinks with you if necessary.
- Bring a supportive friend.** Have a person with you who is observing low-risk guidelines and hold each other accountable. Also, have a designated driver who is not drinking alcohol at all.
- Make plans for after the party.** Give yourself an out at a specific time so you don't stay and drink too long. Get tickets to a show, or make plans to meet someone or pick up the kids a few hours after the party starts.
- Be a good host.** Have fun non-alcoholic drinks available. Cut off people who drink excessively, and stop serving all alcohol an hour before the party is scheduled to wrap up. Never serve alcohol to anyone under 21.

For more information, call Robin Tanguay (ADCO) or Shaneka Ashman (PC) at [860-549-2838/401-391-1189 Army Substance Abuse Program

If you need to act fast

Additional resources that can help when you fear a friend may hurt himself or herself:

- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255). Counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is available to anyone and all calls are confidential.
- Contact Vets4Warriors for free peer support. The support line (855-VET-TALK) is available 24/7 for National Guard Soldiers.
- Reach to Military OneSource for free non-medical counseling through their website or by calling 800-342-9647.

R3SP - Resilience, Risk Reduction & Suicide Prevention

Stress and the Holidays

MEAGAN MACGREGOR
SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM MANAGER, CTNG

With the holiday season in full swing, many people are feeling increased stress.

Even though the holidays may be considered a joyous time to spend with family and friends, the additional stress to finances, familial expectations, and time constraints can exacerbate underlying feelings of depression, anxiety, or loneliness.

However, the idea that there is an increase in suicides during the holiday season is a myth. There is no data to support this belief.

That being said, the increase in stress and risk factors could potentially lead to suicidal thoughts or behaviors is reason for all of us to take the time to reach out to our friends and loved ones and offer support and understanding if they are feeling additional stress.

If you are experiencing additional stress or feeling overwhelmed don't be afraid to ask for help. Take time to enjoy the holidays and if you do feel overwhelmed try to focus on smaller more manageable tasks.

Suicide Prevention Programs wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season with their families and loved ones.

If you or someone you know needs assistance please contact the Behavioral Health Care Line 24/7 and Holidays at 855-800-0120.

Resilience: "Skill of the Month"

CSM James A. Sypher
R3SP Program Manager
james.a.sypher.mil@mail.mil

MENTAL GAMES

How can Mental Games enhance my performance?

LEVEL UP!

What is the skill?
Mental Games changes the focus away from counterproductive thinking to enable greater concentration 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

MENTAL GAMES TO PLAY

- 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??

#BETHERE

LEARN ABOUT HELPING YOUR UNIT

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) | givethehour.org | guardyourhealth.com

Resilience Resources:

Outward Bound
www.outwardbound.org/veterans

Service Member and Family Support Center
1-800-858-2677

Connecticut Veteran Affairs
Newington: 860-666-6951
West Haven: 203-932-5711

Military One Source
www.militaryonesource.mil

Off the Bookshelf

with Staff Sgt. Simon

"I Miss You"

STAFF SGT. BENJAMIN SIMON
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

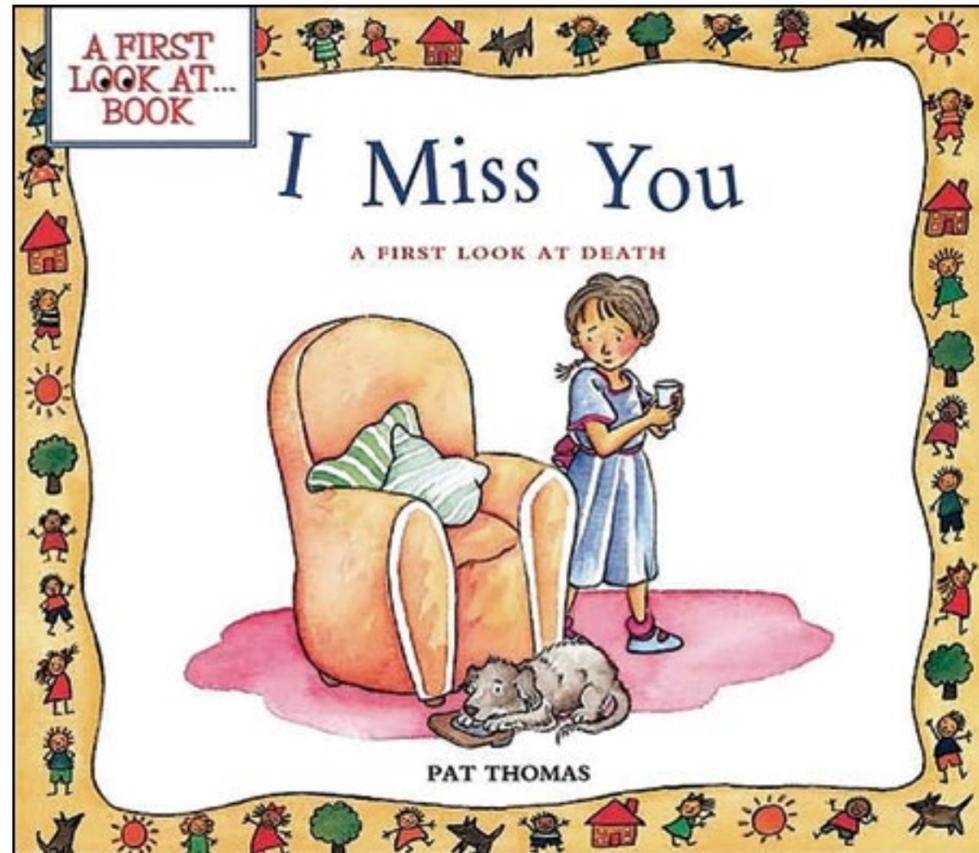
For many Service Members, Veterans and their families, this holiday season is more than just time off from work. Many have suffered the loss of their friends and loved ones in uniform.

The process of mourning a death can be long and complicated. There is often not enough time to mourn. For Service Members, being strong for others can be prioritized over focusing on one's own period of bereavement.

If you have a few moments during one of these cold and dark wintry afternoons, stop by your local public library and pick up a book called, "I Miss You." No one has to know. And it could actually be a helpful tool for processing losses.

Yes, this is a children's book. The pages are bright and colorful, and the language is simple and direct. The first pages of the text simply state, "Every day someone is born, and every day someone dies." The opening illustrations depict a child visiting a hospital and a cemetery.

Another Memorial Day will soon arrive. The portraits of 65 deceased Connecticut men and women service members are displayed on the Wall of Honor in the Capitol Concourse between the Legislative Office Building and the Capitol in Hartford. There are thousands of wallet-sized pictures of deceased American service members on a large American flag plaque on the first floor of the Hartford Armory. The Connecticut Trees of Honor Memorial, in Middletown, among numerous other memorial sites around the state, also honor the state's



deceased veterans.

There are countless present and local reminders about our military friends and family members that have passed away, but not many reminders about the importance of our taking on the mourning process.

A book like this can help get the ball rolling. It can be read in cars during work lunch breaks. It can be skimmed over at local bookstores. It can even be purchased under guise of being a gift for children, and read to them. The simple text and colorful images may in fact help catalyze the important emotional process that many of us have

not undergone since returning home from our overseas deployments.

Author, Pat Thomas writes, "Sometimes it helps if you think of the soul as single raindrop, joining a great big ocean."

It's trite, but there are dozens of books just like it. Its simple message can assist adults and children that want to mourn but don't know how to begin. Perhaps it's time to begin. Another Memorial Day will soon be here. It's okay to read books like this, and it's okay to say, "I Miss You."

Military History

Presidents Who Served in the U.S. Military

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

Everyone knows that our first President, George Washington, was the Commander in Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, but it may surprise many that 31 of the 44 men who have served as our president have also served in the military.

Before World War II, most presidents had served in the Army or militia. Since then, the majority who served were in the Navy.

General George Washington led troops during our eight-year fight for independence. He is also the only president to lead troops in battle when he rode out in front of 13,000 soldiers to put down the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania.

Andrew Jackson served in both the American Revolution and the War of 1812. His victory at the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815 would have won the war, if the peace treaty had not been signed a month earlier.

Ulysses S. Grant graduated from West Point and served in the Mexican War. He left the Army in 1854, but returned in 1861 when hostilities broke out with the Confederate States. He rose through the ranks to command the Union Army and accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse.

Theodore Roosevelt posthumously earned the Medal of Honor for his actions with the, "Rough Riders," at



the Battle of San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War. The medal was presented to his family 103 years later. James Buchanan is the only one to not serve as an officer. He was an enlisted man in the Pennsylvania Militia during the War of 1812, participating in the defense of Baltimore.

Twelve generals have been elected president, including a string of five consecutive men from 1865 to 1885:

Andrew Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur. Eisenhower was the last general to be elected to the nation's top office and the only one to reach five-star rank.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy served as a Lieutenant in the US Navy during WWII after being deemed ineligible for service by the U.S. Army due to an earlier back injury. Kennedy was medically discharged in 1944 after the Patrol Torpedo boat he commanded was sliced in half by a Japanese Destroyer. He earned the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for saving his crew and the Purple Heart for his injuries.

George H.W. Bush became a Naval Aviator at the age of 19. On September 2, 1944 his Avenger bomber was shot down over the Pacific Ocean. The only survivor of the three-man crew, Bush was rescued by a U.S. Navy submarine. The nation's most recent Veteran President was his son, George W. Bush, who served with the Texas Air National Guard.

Brig. Gen. Cody retired from the CTARNG in 2014 and currently teaches 7th grade Humanities in Stamford, Connecticut. Email him at rmcody@snet.net.

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD SAFETY FIRST

Consider Safety in all Seasons

Connecticut Army National Guard Safety Office
(860) 292-4597

Connecticut Air National Guard Safety Office
(860) 292-2776

Things to Keep in Your Car During Winter



CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

IS YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA SAFE?

- Check your Privacy Settings
- Don't post Personal Identifying Info
- Be selective who you connect with
- Watch for OPSEC violations
- Turn off Geotagging on your devices
- Post with common sense!

Be sure to check and adjust your settings!

Training Circulars for TY17 Are Now Available

Contact Your Chain of Command for More Information

Course	Course #	Action Officer	Start Date	End Date
Army Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) AGR	350-17-04.a	Ms. Robin Tanguay	11-Jan-17	11-Jan-17
Heartsaver AED Certification	350-17-18	Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Stanley	11-Jan-17	11-Jan-17
Unit Finance Course	350-17-34	Sgt. 1st Class Fabian Bennett	17-Jan-17	19-Jan-17
Food Operations Management Course	350-17-17	Sgt. 1st Class Jessica Torres	21-Jan-17	24-Jan-17
68W Sustainment Course	350-17-06	SSG Megan Authier	22-Jan-17	31-Jan-17
Unit Public Affairs Rep Training (UPAR)	350-17-09	Maj. Mike Petersen	28-Jan-17	29-Jan-17
Unit Marksmanship Training Course UMTC (Phase I)	350-17-19	Sgt. 1st Class Jonathon Cuebas-Marrero	28-Jan-17	29-Jan-17
EST_LMTS Operator	350-17-22	1st Sgt. Corey Lewis	28-Jan-17	29-Jan-17
IDS Training Class 01	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	7-Feb-17	7-Feb-17
IDS Training Class 05	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	8-Feb-17	8-Feb-17
IDS Training Class 09	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	9-Feb-17	9-Feb-17
Unit Movement Workshop	350-17-11	Master Sgt. Thomas Ahearn	11-Feb-17	12-Feb-17
IDS Training Class 02	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	14-Feb-17	14-Feb-17
IDS Training Class 06	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	15-Feb-17	15-Feb-17
IDS Training Class 10	350-17-35	Mr. Tom Colangelo	16-Feb-17	16-Feb-17
Unit Movement Workshop	350-17-11	Master Sgt. Thomas Ahearn	25-Feb-17	26-Feb-17
Unit Marksmanship Training Course UMTC (Phase II)	350-17-19	Sgt. 1st Class Jonathon Cuebas-Marrero	25-Feb-17	26-Feb-17
CPR Refresher Basic Life Support Level for 68W Personnel	350-17-10	Staff Sgt. Megan Authier	26-Feb-17	26-Feb-17
Environmental Officer Training	350-17-23	Mr. Robert Doliak	4-Mar-17	4-Mar-17
Army Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) AGR	350-17-04.a	Ms. Robin Tanguay	8-Mar-17	8-Mar-17
Liaison Officer Training (LNO) Course	350-17-20	Master Sgt. Jeff Colvin	8-Mar-17	9-Mar-17
Bus Driver Training Course	350-17-21	Master Sgt. Thomas Ahearn	13-Mar-17	17-Mar-17
VCOT Operator's Course	350-17-27	1st Sgt. Corey Lewis	13-Mar-17	17-Mar-17
Resilience Training Assistant (RTA)	350-17-16	Command Sgt. Maj. James Sypher	14-Mar-17	17-Mar-17
UPL Course	350-17-12	Staff Sgt. Joshua Prochnicki-Fitzgerald	18-Mar-17	19-Mar-17
Best Warrior Competition	350-17-14	Sgt. Maj. Michael Collins	23-Mar-17	26-Mar-17
ACE-SI	350-17-29	Ms. Meagan MacGregor	27-Mar-17	27-Mar-17
ASIST	350-17-08	Ms. Meagan MacGregor	28-Mar-17	29-Mar-17

Maj. Michael Jakubson - G3-FTB, Training Specialist - michael.p.jakubson.mil@mail.mil - Phone: 860-493-2774

Highlighted Courses:

Unit Finance Course: This training ensures that the unit Readiness Non-Commissioned Officer (RNCO) or designated individual are provided with the knowledge on how to increase soldiers' financial readiness and overall unit auditability. Training will emphasize regulations, reports, preventative and reconciliatory measures, and key supporting documents/entitlements. In addition, it will cover interconnected departments, applicable systems, schedules, inspections, submittal procedures and inquires. Full Time RNCOs or designated individuals responsible for payroll submittal at the Unit/Battalion/MACOM level are highly encouraged to attend. Multiple Classes; 25 Seat Max per class; See you unit training NCO for current availability.

68W Sustainment Course: The training is targeted toward Soldiers who were unable to conduct sustainment training with their units or elsewhere. This course will satisfy all MOS sustainment requirements to include: 48 hours of Continuing Education (CE), 24 hours of EMT refresher training, Basic Life Support (BLS) recertification and Table VIII validation. Duty Status: M-Day Soldiers - Pending Funds Availability/ADOS/AGR. January 22-31, 2017. 30 Seat Max; See you unit training NCO for current availability.

EST/LMTS Operator: This training opportunity provides training for soldiers to set-up, operate, reconfigure, troubleshoot and perform minor PMCS on the EST-2000, and the LMTS. This course is open to all members of the CTNG between the ranks of E5 and E6 who need or desire to learn to operate the EST-2000 firearms training system, and the LMTS. The selected Soldier must have the ability to instruct a class. Soldiers will be required to run the EST-2000. January 28-29, 2017. 12 Seat Max; See your unit training NCO for current availability.

UPDATE: NEW "FM 7-0: TRAIN TO WIN IN A COMPLEX WORLD" Published 05 October 2016. This is a must read for all Training NCO's, Platoon Sergeants, Platoon Leaders, First Sergeants, Company Commanders, Operations Officers and NCOs and Battalion Commanders. FM 7-0 and the FM 7-0 Overview Brief can be found on ATN; <https://atn.army.mil/>.

Equal Opportunity - Religious Holidays in December

MASTER SGT. CHARLES JOSEPH
1109TH TASMG EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR

With the holiday season upon us, it is important to remember that there are many different religions and each has its own traditions, customs, and celebrations. Some examples of these are Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. Do you know the history and meaning of each?

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ. Consequently, the Old English meaning for Christmas is Christ's Mass, celebrated every year on Dec. 25. Catholics, Protestants, and many other Christian based religions celebrate Christmas. Customary traditions vary around the world, however many celebrate by adorning homes with green, red, and sparkling decorations.

For Christians, Christmas is one of the most important holidays of the year.

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that starts and ends on different dates each year because it follows the Jewish calendar which is different from our American calendar. This year, Hanukkah starts at sunset Dec. 24 and ends on the nightfall of Jan. 1st.

This holiday commemorates the rededication of the

Holy Temple in Jerusalem and lasts for eight days and nights. Hanukkah is observed by the lighting of candles held by the menorah. One candle is lit each night until all the candles are burning brightly. The giving of small gifts, prayers, and food are customary traditions that go along with the lighting of the menorah. The last day of Hanukkah is known as Zot Hanukkah, "repent out of love for God."

Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday that is celebrated from Dec. 26th to Jan. 1st. The word Kwanzaa means, "first fruits of the harvest." Kwanzaa is celebrated with the lighting of candles in a candelabra which holds seven candles, each candle representing a principle of African philosophy. A Kwanzaa ceremony may include drumming and musical selections, a reading of the African Pledge and the Principles of Blackness, reflection on the Pan-African colors, a discussion of the African principle of the day or a chapter in African history, a candle-lighting ritual, artistic performance, and finally, a feast (karamu). The greeting for each day of Kwanzaa is, "Habari Gani?" (Swahili for, "How are you?")

The traditions and celebrations that we follow through



these holidays help to keep our religion alive. Religion is something that is deeply imbedded in our culture, it is something that families share and pass on to their children. It is our history and what makes us who we are. Having knowledge and respect for each other's religions, beliefs and holidays gives us a better understanding of our world and makes us better soldiers and Americans.

The Connecticut Guardian
ONLINE
<http://ct.ng.mil/guardian>



Now in full color!

THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD
OFFICIAL WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA

www.ct.ng.mil/
Official CT National Guard Website



facebook.com/connecticutnationalguard
The Official CT National Guard Fan Page



twitter.com/ctnationalguard
The Official CT National Guard Twitter



instagram.com/ctnationalguard
The Official CT National Guard Instagram



flickr.com/ctnationalguard
The Official CT National Guard Flickr



Connecticut National Guard Public Affairs Office
Social Media Submissions and Information
(860) 524-4858 ctngpublicaffairs@gmail.com

Retiree Voice *Will Social Security Disappear By 2033?*

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 (RET.) JOHN GODBURN
RETIREE AFFAIRS COLUMNIST

The latest report released by the Social Security trustees suggests that the Social Security trust funds, the funds from which benefits are paid, will be depleted by 2033.

According to the Social Security Administration, over 62.5 million individuals receive a benefit from Social Security, with nine out of ten people over the age of 65 receiving benefits. So if the Social Security trust funds do end up depleted, how will this affect those people currently collecting benefits and future generations?

Social Security will not disappear if the trust funds dry up: let me explain. There are two Social Security trust funds, those for Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) benefits and for Disability Insurance (DI). These two trust funds are special in that benefits can only be paid as long as the trust funds actually have assets to draw on to make payments. These funds cannot borrow in order to continue paying benefits when the dedicated taxes and trust fund reserves are not sufficient. Essentially, this means if the trust funds are exhausted, then benefits paid out cannot exceed payroll taxes collected.

The trust fund is currently about \$2.8 billion. Money for Social Security is received into the fund through payroll taxes, taxes on pension and disability benefits, interest earnings and a few other sources, and was intended to be self-sustaining by its creators. However as the country has undergone demographic and economic changes over the decades since the program's inception,

this has led to Social Security's instability.

For the past several years, monies collected for Social Security have not been sufficient to meet its obligations. Simply put, the outflow has exceeded the inflow.

The trust fund has been making up the difference. Some of the reasons given for the decline in income include lower birth rates, decreased mortality, higher incidents of disability, lower economic growth, a reduction in the size of the workforce and hours worked, and higher inflation and lower interest rates on the trust fund. Also, legislative changes, such as enhanced and new benefits, have placed additional strain on the system.

The last significant reforms Congress made to Social Security were in 1983, when Social Security was just months away from being unable to send out benefit checks due to a lack of funds. Amendments were made to the program to allow for the accumulation of money to pay the soon-to-be-retiring baby boomers, as well as an increase to payroll taxes. As a result of the higher tax withholdings, a surplus emerged. But even with these reforms, they have not been sufficient enough to maintain the program and keep it solvent in today's environment.

So what happens next? It's clear that Congress will have to address this shortfall and make some difficult but necessary changes to the program. But what if they don't? It's been estimated that if Congress does not enact reforms, benefits would have to be cut by as much as 23-25 percent just to maintain Social Security funds at current levels. And the financial strain on Social Security

will only increase as more and more people apply for and collect benefits.

As unwilling as Congress has been to enact reforms, at some point they must, and most special interest groups feel that they will. Some of the options being mentioned as possible reforms include increasing payroll tax percentages, raising the maximum annual earnings that are subject to payroll tax, making some changes to the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) formula, raising the eligibility age to receive full benefits, and going to a bi-annual COLA.

While none of these options are popular, to do nothing is even worse. As painful as changes will be for all concerned, in order for Social Security to survive and remain solvent, everyone must make some sacrifices. Contact your Senators and Congressman and let them know how you feel, and that letting the Social Security trust funds dissolve is not an option. The longer we delay in taking steps to strengthen the program, the more pain we all will feel once Congress finally does address the issue.

The information and facts presented in this article were taken from a number of sources to include: The Social Security Administration, the Heritage Foundation, Forbes, AARP and Military Officers Association of America. When it comes to financial planning, always do your own research and contact a professional wealth manager.

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD PROMOTIONS

ARMY

To Private 2

Tirado, David L.
Simons, Briana E.
Desgraves, Jean R.
Bernier, Jayde M.
Dewitt, Shannon E.
Coulombe, Christopher A.
Cintron, Josue B.
Hoar, Tyler L.
Petersdorff, Nicholas R.
Aponte, Alyssa A.
McMiller, Shaun N.
Grylka, Sebastian R.
Chamberlain, Joseph G.
Marini, Enrico Jr.
Brignolo, Daniel D.

Stewart, Kadiejah A.
Leonard, Steven D.
Warren, Oshane S.
Sanchez, Kelvin X.
Poole, Isabel J.
Souffrant, Jude
Gonzalez, Jasmine M.

To Private First Class

Agli, Anthony E.

To Sergeant

Porto, Richard P.Jr.
Colon, Martin P.
Guglielmo, Amanda F.
Cuadrado, Aaron J.
Johnston, Nicholas B.
Fenton, Michael J.

To Staff Sergeant

Jenkins, Charles E.
Kelly, Jennifer L.
Wilson, Phillip R.

To Sergeant First Class

Severance, Jonathan M.
Durnik, Tomasz D.
Odell, Matthew J.

Mayumbosepulveda, Juan
Flint, David M.

To Master Sergeant

Pucinski, Marc A.

To Sergeant Major

Smith, Jimmie D.
Fontenault, Robert A.

To Captain

Montes, Patrick J.
Russo, Matthew W.

AIR

To Airman

Townsend, Bryan C.
Major, Andrew M.

To Airman 1st Class

Lumpkin, Daysean L.

To Senior Airman

Weimann, Martin W.
Perez, Stephanie A.

To Staff Sergeant

Diaz, Alexis
Dunn, Cameron T.

Doyle, Daniel Z.
Holbrook, Jayson A.
Ward, Preston K.
Stratton, Robert L.
Keaveny, Ryan J.

Congratulations to All!



Promotions as of November 1, 2016

Coming Events & Holidays

December

December 7

Pearl Harbor Remembrance

December 13

January Guardian Deadline

December 17

Operation E.L.F Holiday Party

December 24

Hanukkah Begins

December 24

Christmas Eve

December 25

Christmas Day

December 31

New Year's Eve

January

January 1

New Year's Day

January 10

February Guardian Deadline

January 16

Martin Luther King Day

January 20

Inauguration Day

January 28-29

UPAR Training Course

February

February 2

Groundhog Day

February 8

March Guardian Deadline

February 12

President Lincoln's Birthday

February 14

Valentine's Day

February 20

President's Day

February 28

Mardi Gras - Shrove Tuesday

Retiree and Military Department Picnic Coming in August 2017



SAVE THE DATE August 24, 2017

Reconnect with old friends and coworkers!

The Connecticut National Guard and State Military Department will host a combined Picnic for Active, and Retired members of the CTNG, full-time Army and Air Technicians and State Military Department Employees in the summer of 2017.

Location: Camp Niantic, The Point
More information coming soon!



THE ONLY SERVICE THAT OFFERS

100% FREE COLLEGE TUITION

IMMEDIATELY UPON ENLISTMENT



CONNECTICUT
NATIONAL GUARD

CALL OR TEXT YOUR LOCAL RECRUITER
FOR MORE INFORMATION

860-817-1389

<http://www.nationalguard.com/ct>

WE'RE HIRING!

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Hartford, CT
Permit No. 803



connecticut family GUARDIAN

VOL. 17 NO. 12

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

DECEMBER 2016

CTNG Family Program Hosts First Parent Dinner Dance

WENDY HAGEN
CTNG FAMILY READINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANT

The Service Member and Family Support Center and the Child and Youth Program co-hosted the Connecticut National Guard's first Service Member and Child Dinner Dance in celebration of Military Family Appreciation month at the Southington Armory, Nov. 19.

The semi-formal event provided the opportunity for Service Members to wear their dress uniforms if they wished with their children decked out in their best dresses or shirts and ties.

Local groups also contributed to the event, providing food and entertainment. The Southington American Legion cooked a pasta dinner and donated a cake for dessert and the 102nd Army Jazz Band Combo and Staff Sgt. Jason Cruz, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 143rd CSSB, provided live music and DJ services to keep the dance floor moving with pop music favorites, dance games and group dances.

"I loved it. I came with my sister and parents," said

Kamdyn DeFranco, daughter of Tech Sgt. Dan DeFranco, 103rd Airlift Wing, Connecticut Air National Guard. "The service was great, the food was awesome and the music was fabulous! Hope to come back next year!"

A group of volunteers acted as servers, photographers and craft teachers at the several activities hosted at the event.

"I had a great time! It was a wonderful experience and well organized event," said Maj. Chris Strong, who brought his daughter, Alexis. "Thank you to the Family Program for once again making Family first and the best."

The evening wrapped up with a door prize drawing and a special father/daughter dance to Toby Keith's "Proud to be an American."

After a well-attended and well-received event, the staff of the Connecticut SMSFC and CYP plan to add the Parent, Child Dinner dance to their list of annual events.

See more event photos on the SMFRC Facebook Page, @CTNGFamilies.

Left: Sgt. Jessica Roman, Det 1, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, CTARNG and her daughter attended the first ever SMFSC and CYP Service Member and Child Dinner Dance at the Southington Armory, Nov. 19. (Photo courtesy of Harold Bernstein, CTNG SMFSC volunteer)



Kareen Belin, husband of Tech Sgt. Tazia Belin, 103rd Airlift Wing dances with his son at the first-ever SMFSC and CYP Service Member and Child Dinner Dance at the Southington Armory, Nov. 19. (Photo courtesy of Harold Bernstein, CTNG SMFSC volunteer)



Master Sgt. Daniel Taylor, 103rd Airlift Wing, CTANG, and his daughter enjoy a dance at the first-ever SMFSC and CYP Service Member and Child Dinner Dance at the Southington Armory, Nov. 19. (Photo courtesy of Harold Bernstein, CTNG SMFSC volunteer)



CATHERINE GALASSO-VIGORITO

You Are Special Just the Way You Are

In the entire world, there has never been another person like you. Created in 'God's own image' (Genesis 1:27), you are rare, precious, and 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' (Psalm 139:14). So, never underrate your great worth.

Or count yourself out. For, you're 'God's masterpiece,' (Ephesians 2:10) 'His treasured possession.' (Deuteronomy 14:2).

Years ago, author Max Lucado published a book entitled, "You Are Special."

It tells the story of Eli, who is a master woodcarver, and the land of wooden people that he constructed called Wemmicks.

The Wemmicks spent their days placing stickers on one another as a way of expressing how they felt. Those who were appreciated and had certain skills or attributes received yellow "stars." But those who were not appreciated and, perhaps, were different, would get grey "dots" stuck on them.

Yet, one wooden boy, Punchinello, never got any stars. He tried to gain others' approval. However, he kept missing out, as all he received were grey dots. And he had quite a number of them stuck on him. Looked down upon by others, Punchinello felt as though he were utterly worthless. After a while, he wore the grey stickers as though they were the truth and started to believe he was insignificant and of no value. Then, he became reclusive, living defeated, inferior, with no enthusiasm for life.

Maybe for years, you have felt ignored, undervalued and underappreciated.

Have you allowed someone's negative opinions or derogatory comments toward you to keep you down and discouraged?

Though, one afternoon, Punchinello met a wooden girl named Lucia. She had no stickers on her at all. And when people attempted to put stars or grey dots on her, they didn't stick. Lucia had absolutely no marks. Curiously, Punchinello questioned, "Why don't the grey dots stick to you?"

Lucia joyfully explained how she visited Eli every day. He was the master woodcarver who created them. Next, Lucia smiled broadly and suggested that Punchinello should visit Eli, as well. "Then nothing will stick to you

either," she said, cheerfully.

Punchinello took Lucia's advice. At first, he was afraid. Yet, Punchinello found the courage within himself to go to see Eli. Finally, in Eli's workshop, together, they sat comfortably and talked with one another.

As they were conversing, Eli looked affectionately at Punchinello and uttered, "You are special to me." There was complete silence for a moment.

Punchinello leaned closer to Eli. He couldn't believe what he had heard. And then with immediacy, Punchinello began pointing out to Eli his so-called flaws, mistakes and weaknesses.

Shaking his head, "No," Eli told Punchinello that he was 'indeed special,'

and 'he mattered greatly' to him. "I created you," Eli said in a whisper, "and I didn't make a mistake in my design."

It was a turning point in Punchinello's life. Hearing that 'he was special'

from Eli, his creator, made him forget all about his feelings of worthlessness. "The stickers only stick if you let them," Eli encouraged.

Punchinello left Eli that day with a new understanding. For Punchinello learned that you shouldn't automatically accept other people's unfavorable words and adverse assessments as facts. Then, miraculously, something happened. One of Punchinello's grey dots slid off him and it landed on the ground.

Daily, Punchinello visited Eli. Each time, Eli reminded Punchinello how much he cared. Eli spoke love, hope and encouragement to him. And Punchinello felt renewed. He began to regain confidence in himself and in his future.

And one by one, all of Punchinello's stickers fell off.

You could be in a situation right now that has caused you to devalue yourself. Yet, you belong to God. He loves you with an everlasting love, (Jeremiah 31:3) and thinks, 'You are special. just the way you are.'

Remember, God's plan for you is a plan for victory, so put your faith and trust in Him. No matter what has happened in the past or despite any shortcomings that you may think you have, God values and approves you. And He has put within your heart all that you need to lead a joyful, meaningful and successful life. In the Bible, it tells how God chose David, a faithful shepherd boy to become the leader of His people. God could have chosen someone more important, more educated, or with a better background. David was the most unlikely choice. But, God looks at the heart.

"The Lord does not look at the things people look at. The Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7).

Today, let the negative words that people have spoken about you go in one ear and out the other. Don't allow anyone to lessen your importance. And make the decision to not listen to the unconstructive, "I'm not good enough" voices that sometimes crowd your own mind. Brush off the stickers of fears, regrets and guilt, and let those negative labels slip right off of you.

Then, rise up and move forward.

Your life is full of possibilities. You have so much to offer, with a wealth of experiences to positively influence others in extraordinary new ways.

You're one-of-a-kind, and you are worthy of success and happiness. So, think bigger, be bolder and pursue the impossible. Be free to dream again. And not just dream; God wants you to see your dreams come true. For the stickers that God places on you say, "You're blessed," "You are strong," "You're gifted," "You are forgiven," "You're going to do great things," "Your time of success is coming," and "Your future is bright."

So wake up each morning and visualize yourself, "Vibrant," "healthy," "capable," "prevailing over challenges," and "achieving your goals." See yourself through God's eyes. Be proud of yourself. Have confidence in the incredible, talented, and giving person that God created.

There is a joyful, miraculous life in front of you. God is positioning you for new and amazing blessings. And nothing that anyone says against you will stick.

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 Connecticut National Guard, the U.S. Government or the Department of Defense. You may write to Ms. Galasso-Vigorito in care of the Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06106-3795 or e-mail her directly at cgv@anewyouworldwide.com. Visit her website at www.anewyouworldwide.com.

© Catherine Galasso, 2016

Military OneSource

Take Eight Small Steps to Jump Start Your Savings

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTOPHER ROULEAU
MILITARY ONESOURCE

Learning how to save money might be the smartest thing you ever do. It takes discipline, time and a commitment to financial planning to become a good "saver." You can easily score financial security — and peace of mind — for you and your family. Get started now with these eight small steps:

Examine your monthly cash flow to see just how much is coming in and going out. What does your housing payment look like? How much do you spend on car loans, household bills, and entertainment costs? Fingers crossed that you're making more than you spend.

Track your spending habits for one month on your smartphone or in a small notebook. \$80 a month on lattes? Who knew?

Write down your short-term financial goals. It's a good idea to start building an emergency savings account, reducing your debt or saving for a family vacation.

Write down your long-term financial goals. Home buying, saving for retirement and contributing to a college savings plan all apply. It's never too soon to start.

Prioritize and set savings goals for each item. If you need help, consult a personal financial manager on your installation or call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 to reach a financial counselor.

Check out Military Saves' countless resources and tools to help you create accurate figures.

Don't overthink it. Make saving automatic by using allotments or a scheduled bank transfer each month.

Save more by budgeting less on things like entertainment, eating on the go (those lattes again) or groceries (become a couponing champion or a master of the commissary).

Spoiler: with the help of your personal financial managers and Military OneSource financial counselors, you're going to need a bigger wallet.



<p>William A. O'Neill Armory 360 Broad St. RM 112 Hartford, CT 06105</p> <p>Service Member and Family Support Center (800) 858-2677 Fax: (860) 493-2795</p> <p>Child and Youth Program (860) 548-3254</p> <p>Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (860) 493-2796</p> <p>Military OneSource (800) 342-9647 (860) 502-5416</p> <p>Survivor Outreach Services (860) 548-3258</p> <p>Open Mon.-Fri.</p> <p>Windsor Locks Readiness Center 85-300 Light Ln. Windsor Locks, CT 06096 (860) 292-4602 Open Mon.-Fri.</p> <p>Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center 90 Wooster Heights Rd. Danbury, CT 06810 (203) 205-5050 Open Mon.-Fri.</p>	<p align="center">CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD <i>Family Assistance Center Locations</i></p> <p align="center">Family Assistance Centers are an information and referral hub for all Branches of Service</p> <p align="center">Our Programs Include:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Budget Counseling</td> <td>Community Support Options</td> <td>Financial Assistance and Relief</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family Communication</td> <td>Counseling Referrals</td> <td>Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal and Pay Information</td> <td>Outreach</td> <td>Family Readiness Groups (FRG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TRICARE Assistance</td> <td>Volunteer Opportunities</td> <td>DEERS & ID Card Assistance</td> </tr> </table> <p align="center">Support is available 24/7 by calling (800) 858-2677</p> <p align="center">*Centers are open part-time on a regular, weekly schedule. Please call ahead to confirm times or to make an appointment.</p>	Budget Counseling	Community Support Options	Financial Assistance and Relief	Family Communication	Counseling Referrals	Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)	Legal and Pay Information	Outreach	Family Readiness Groups (FRG)	TRICARE Assistance	Volunteer Opportunities	DEERS & ID Card Assistance	<p>New London Armory 249 Bayonet St. New London, CT 06320 (860) 772-1422 Open Mon.-Fri.</p> <p>103rd Airlift Wing 100 Nicholson Rd. East Granby, CT 06026 (800) 858-2677 Open Tues.-Fri.</p> <p>103rd Air Control Squadron 206 Boston Post Rd. Orange, CT 06447 (800) 858-2677 *By Appointment*</p> <p>Niantic Readiness Center 38 Smith St. Niantic, CT 06357 (800) 858-2677 *By Appointment*</p> <p>Norwich Armory 38 Stott Ave. Norwich, CT 06360 (800) 858-2677 *Wednesday or By Appointment*</p> <p>Waterbury Armory 64 Field St. Waterbury, CT 06702 (800) 858-2677 *By Appointment*</p>
Budget Counseling	Community Support Options	Financial Assistance and Relief												
Family Communication	Counseling Referrals	Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)												
Legal and Pay Information	Outreach	Family Readiness Groups (FRG)												
TRICARE Assistance	Volunteer Opportunities	DEERS & ID Card Assistance												

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD HELPLINE

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

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

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

FRG Perspectives

Importance of the FRG

MAJ. IAN FEYK
REAR DET. COMMANDER 1-169TH AVN

The 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment deployed to Kosovo in support of Stability Operations from April 2015 to April 2016. The unit had an extraordinarily successful mobilization and accomplished a tremendous amount in a short time.

While the Soldiers and leaders of the Battalion deserve significant credit for their accomplishments, the deployment began and ended here at home. The Family Readiness Group was a key to success for their mobilization and

successful return home.

The FRG is an essential tool that helps support Soldiers and their loved-ones. It fosters a sense of belonging to the unit and provides a venue for families to develop friendships and share information between the unit and the family members. As the Rear Detachment Commander, I relied heavily on the FRG to keep families informed, organize events, and maintain the high level of resiliency the Battalion and families rely on every day.

This professional group of volunteers are a top-notch force-multiplier and deserve our deepest gratitude.

Leader Lessons Learned

NORA POWELL
FRG LEADER, A Co 1-102ND INFANTRY REGIMENT

Being the Family Readiness Group Leader for Alpha Company, 1-102nd Infantry Battalion has been one of the most rewarding experiences I've had.

I remember raising my hand during a Family Day in a room full of unit family members, my son's commander and other leaders, most of which I'd never met. Honestly, I felt a little intimidated.

I was not from a military family. I never knew anyone personally in the military and I had no idea what I was stepping into. All I knew is that I was asked to volunteer and I wanted to do the best I could at that job. I quickly realized that the FRG is the most important link between the families and the unit.

I also quickly realized that I didn't even know what an FRG was.

I immediately began researching the roles and responsibilities of FRG members at the unit level. I was trained to be an FRG Leader, and even then, I still didn't know how important this job was. The next thing I knew, I was planning the unit's holiday party for Soldiers and their

families – many of whom I had never met before.

I wasn't sure where to start. But I went ahead and planned activities for the kids and a visit from Santa. It was a big success and the families loved it. I realized very quickly that being an FRG Leader was going to be a very important job. I understood that keeping the families together while the unit is home would only make it easier later when the unit is away.

I've learned a lot about being an FRG leader and the military since I started. I've met a lot of great people and made a lot of great friends. I realized that there are an enormous amount of resources for families and soldiers within the military. I realized I was going to be the person that helps get that information out to the families so that they can feel they have a place to go when they need support. If I was told how this experience would be so fulfilling, I would have signed up years ago.

Join your Soldier's FRG, you won't be sorry!

Want to Get Involved With Your FRG?

CONTACT

Linda Rolstone

Family Readiness Support Assistant
For Units: 85th Troop, MED DET, CTC, 1109th TASM-G, RTI
 Office: (860) 524-4963
 Cell: (860)-680-2209
 linda.b.rolstone.ctr@mail.mil

Wendy Hagen

Family Readiness Support Assistant
For Units: 143rd RSG, JFHQ, RRB, 103rd Airlift Wing
 Office: (860) 524-4920
 Cell: (860) 881-4677
 wendy.m.hagen.ctr@mail.mil

For additional assistance, call the Service Member & Family Support Center at 1-800-858-2677

Service Member & Family Support Center Staff Directory

William A. O'Neil Army: 160 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06101 - Fax: (860) 493-2793 - Open Monday-Friday			
Director, Service Member and Family Support Center	Kimberly Hoffman	kimberly.j.hoffman.civ@mail.mil	(860) 858-2677
Deputy Director	SSG Melody Baber	melody.cheyenne.c.baber.mil@mail.mil	(860) 548-3278 (desk)/(860) 883-2515 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Coordinator	Anne Reed	anne.a.reed.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4938 (desk)/(860) 883-6934 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Rita O'Donnell	lerita.m.odonnell.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 493-2797 (desk)/(860) 883-6949 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Jessica Koehler	jessica.w.koehler.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4969 (desk)/(860) 883-6940 (cell)
Family Readiness Support Assistant	Linda Rolstone	linda.b.rolstone.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4963 (desk)/(860) 680-2209 (cell)
Family Readiness Support Assistant	Wendy Hagen	wendy.m.hagen.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4920 (desk)/(860) 881-4677 (cell)
ARNG Yellow Ribbon Program Coordinator	SSG John Cummings	john.t.cummings.mil@mail.mil	(860) 493-2795 (desk)/(860) 535-5639 (cell)
Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator	Michelle McCarty	michelle.m.mccarty4.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3254 (desk)/(860) 883-6953 (cell)
Survivor Outreach Specialist	Megan O'Shaughnessy	megan.l.oshaughnessy.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3258 (desk)/(860) 394-8748 (cell)
Military OneSource Consultant	Chris Rouba	christopher.rouba@militaryonesource.com	(860) 502-5419 (cell)/(860) 493-2722 (desk)
State Support Chaplain	CHL (MAJ) David Nutt	david.c.nutt.mil@mail.mil	(860) 548-3249 (desk)/(860) 883-7748 (cell)
Transition Assistance Advisor	Jay Braca	jonathan.j.braca.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4908 (desk)/(860) 748-0037 (cell)
Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve	Sean Britell	sean.r.britell.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3295 (desk)
Connecticut Military Relief Fund	Russell Bonaccorso	russell.bonaccorso@ct.gov	(860) 524-4968 (desk)
Windsor Locks Readiness Center: 85-100 Light Lane, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 - Open Monday-Friday			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Joshua Hamre	joshua.j.hamre.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4602 (desk)/(860) 221-5836 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Jennifer Romillard	jennifer.m.romillard.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4601 (desk)/(860) 883-2704 (cell)
Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center: 90 Wooster Heights Road, Danbury, CT 06810 - Open Monday-Friday			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Nancy Cummings	nancy.a.cummings.ctr@mail.mil	(203) 205-5659 (desk)/(860) 883-2746 (cell)
New London Army: 249 Bayonet Street, New London, CT 06328 - Open Monday-Friday			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Vanessa Foster	vannessa.n.foster.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 772-1422 (desk)/(860) 883-2720 (cell)
103rd Airlift Wing: 100 Nicholson Road, East Granby, CT 06026 - Open Tuesday-Friday			
Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager	Currently Vacant		
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Joshua Hamre	joshua.j.hamre.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-2730 (desk)/(860) 221-5836 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Jennifer Romillard	jennifer.m.romillard.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-2730 (desk)/(860) 922-2746 (cell)
Norfolk Readiness Center: 31 Smith Street, Norfolk, CT 06357 - (800) 858-2677 - Open By Appointment			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Timothy Henney	timothy.j.henney.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 221-5540 (cell)
103rd Air Control Squadron: 204 Boston Post Road, Orange, CT 06477 - (800) 858-2677 - Open By Appointment			
Waterbury Army: 64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702 - (800) 858-2677 - Open By Appointment Norwich Army: 28 Saxt Avenue, Norwich, CT 06316 - (800) 858-2677 - Open Wednesday And By Appointment			