

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE 177th FIGHTER WING

THE CONTRAIL



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On the cover: U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Greg Mascaro poses for a picture at the South Pole, Antarctica. Mascaro, who is a New Jersey Air National Guardsman from the 177th Fighter Wing, is deployed there as Safety Manager for the 139th Air Expeditionary Group. (Courtesy Photo)



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Commander's Column



Jersey Devils,

I would ask you to please take a moment and reflect on those members of our Wing (and military), who are deployed at this time, to include their families. Your personal sacrifices, your family's sacrifices and commitments, and all of our soldiers, airmen, marines, and sailors sacrifices mean so much to this

nation. It is only appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the sacrifices of our military during this time of the year. You all have made a tremendous commitment to our State and Country, and your dedication is deeply appreciated. Thank you!

As you all are quite aware the past year has been very challenging, but each and every one of you rose to this challenge and were instrumental in the Wing's success. For that you should be very proud...I know I am very proud of all of you. As I have said time and time again, the Wing is only as strong as our Airmen! From my perspective, we have a Championship team here at the 177th FW, and it all starts with the individual. As we face the inevitable "new" challenges of 2014, it is reassuring to know that we have such a strong Wing made up of incredible Airmen. I look forward to another successful year conquering any and all future challenges the 177th FW may face. Go Jersey Devils!

*KERRY M. GENTRY
Colonel, NJANG
Wing Commander*

“we have a Championship team here at the 177th FW, and it all starts with the individual.”



DEEP

FREEZE

Story by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

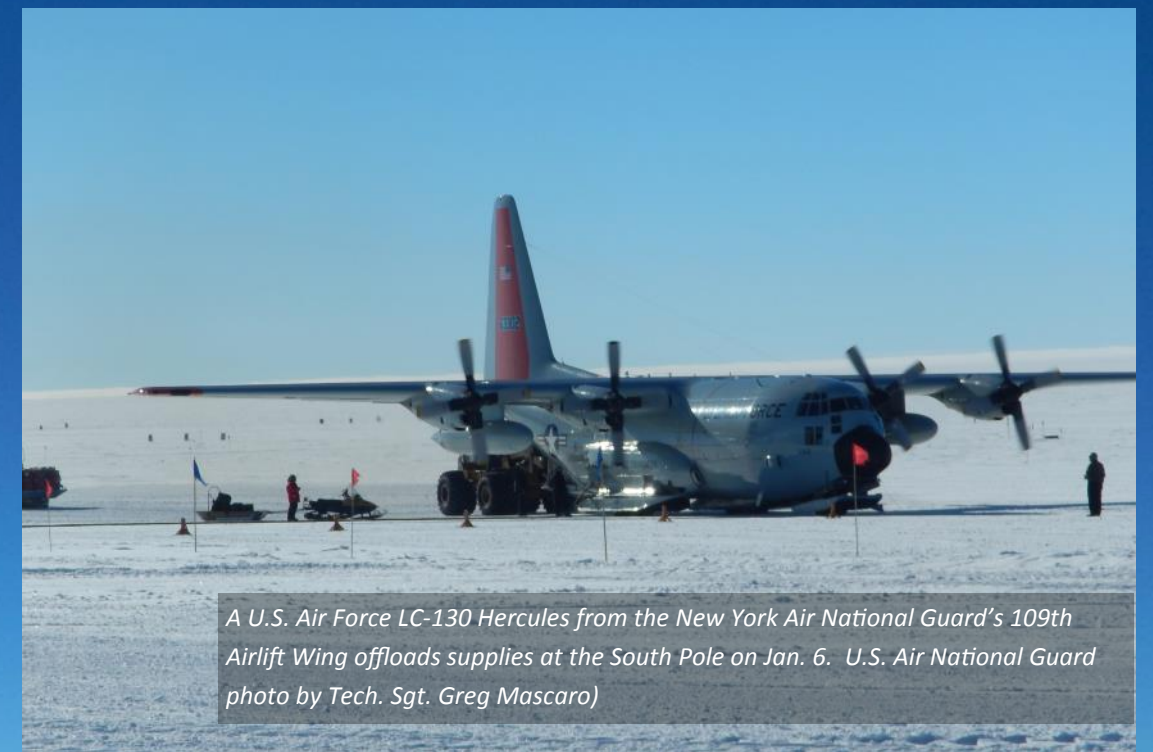
While we deal with inches of snow here in New Jersey courtesy of winter storm Hercules, the 177th's own Tech. Sgt. Greg Mascaro has been measuring snow in feet at the bottom of the world. Mascaro, a Safety manager who works at Warren Grove Gunnery Range, is currently deployed as part of Operation Deep Freeze, a joint mission that sees the LC-130's from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing transporting supplies to remote science outposts in Antarctica.

"The most challenging aspect is dealing with the weather," said Mascaro. "Warmer days pose a challenge for the ice runway. The slushy conditions make it very difficult for the planes to get airborne. Colder days with high winds also have a unique challenge here. Many times planes can't take off because of the whiteout conditions."

In addition to the tough weather conditions, Mascaro deals with the difficulty of resting. "Currently, it is austral summer so the sun never sets, which makes sleeping a challenge as well."

The 109th Air Wing's unique aircraft, the U.S. military's only planes equipped with skis, have been performing this mission at the South Pole since 1999.

"The Airmen of the 109th are a very talented group of people, from those who are repairing the planes to those who are landing on nothing but ocean ice," said Mascaro. "It has been a truly rewarding experience."



A U.S. Air Force LC-130 Hercules from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing offloads supplies at the South Pole on Jan. 6. U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Greg Mascaro)



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Greg Mascaro stands next to the Geographic South Pole, Antarctica, on Jan. 6, 2013. Mascaro is deployed as part of Operation Deep Freeze.



An LC-130 Hercules from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing transports cargo on Antarctica. Note the special skis that the aircraft uses for takeoff and landing. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Greg Mascaro)



AIRMEN SPREAD CHEER AT VETERANS HOME

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 108th Wing Public Affairs

The residents of the Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland were treated to the singing talents of nineteen 177th Fighter Wing Airmen Dec. 11.

Additionally, more than 70 fourth graders from the Seaview School in Linwood, N.J. were on hand to musically balance out the Airmen for the Annual Holiday "Songfest" at the Home.

This is the 13th year that the Wing has visited the Home.

As in years past, Airmen and fourth graders were issued holiday greeting cards, assigned to groups and sent out to spread cheer to the residents.

"It's an amazing thing that the students want to come here for our residents, and it means so much for the residents to see youth come out here, to know that they care about them," said Derick Glenn, a senior therapy program assistant at the Home. "They come in and they sing, they hand out cards; they actually go one-on-one and talk to them and it does something to the residents."

Congregating in cafeterias, day rooms, as well as serenading individuals in their rooms (those residents that are bedridden), the carolers passed out cards and candy canes, sang and chatted with the residents.

"You want to let these people know we still care about them. We want to thank them for the duty that they did. That without them we wouldn't be here," said Staff Sgt. Steven Ballinger, 177th Maintenance Squadron.

Prior to the Songfest, the Wing delivered items from the Home's Holiday Wish List. Each year, the Wing raises money from individual and organizational donations to purchase items on the list.

"We have a wish list for donations and deliver them with our visit and Seaview School brings things from their communities that are donated and it's great for the residents," said Senior Master Sgt. Tim Donovan, 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "You see it in their eyes. It's nice to see them smiling, bringing a nice thing to their day."



For the 13th year, airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, located at Egg Harbor Township, N.J., were joined by more than 70 fourth graders from the Seaview School in Linwood, N.J. for the Annual Holiday "Songfest" at the Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland, N.J., Dec. 11, 2013. Upon arrival, the 19 airmen and fourth graders were issued holiday greeting cards, assigned to groups and sent out to spread cheer among the residents. The carolers congregated in cafeterias, day rooms, as well as serenading individuals in their rooms.



Senior Master Sgt. Michael Monteith listens to a resident during the Annual Holiday "Songfest" at the Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland, N.J., Dec. 11, 2013.



Airman 1st Class Rachel Kovack was among the 19 Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing to volunteer for the Annual Holiday "Songfest" at the Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland, N.J., Dec. 11, 2013

JERSEY DEVIL LOAD CREWS COMPETE FOR TOP SPOT



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman James Mullen (right) from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing operates a jammer vehicle carrying a GBU-12 Paveway II while Master Sgt. Keith Williams (left) acts as a ground guide during day one of the annual load crew competition on Jan. 9 at Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J. Mullen and Williams are aircraft armament systems specialists assigned to the 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht)





U.S. Air Force Senior Airman James Mullen (left) from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing operates a jammer vehicle lifting a GBU-10 Paveway II while Master Sgt. Keith Williams (right) acts as a guide during day one of the annual load crew competition here on Jan. 9. Mullen and Williams are aircraft armament systems specialists assigned to the 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht)



Above: U.S. Air Force Senior Airman James Mullen from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing assembles fins on a GBU-12 Paveway II mounted on an F-16C Fighting Falcon during day one of the annual load crew competition here on Jan. 9. Below: U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Desmond Charles from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing unloads the computer control group from a GBU-12 Paveway II on Jan. 9. Charles is a weapons systems specialist from the 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht)





Left: U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Ryan Sosnoff from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing mounts a GBU-12 Paveway II on Jan. 10. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Shane Karp)

Above: U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Troy Kohler from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing prepares to mount a GBU-12 Paveway II onto an F-16C Fighting Falcon during day two of the annual load crew competition on Jan. 10. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Shane Karp)

Next Page: U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Dennis Donahue (left) and Airman 1st Class Desmond Charles (right) from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing offload computer control groups from GBU-12 Paveway IIs. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht)





PARA-DOCS

By Doc Savicky, 177th Fighter Wing Director of Psychological Health



Following the holidays I felt more exhausted than relaxed. I think I know why. It was due to stress. Stress is an interesting phenomenon. Some stress is good while other types cause damage. Some stress happens as a single event and others build up over time. Oftentimes, we tend focus on the bigger stressors—losses, job changes, accidents, etc.—

and lose sight of the fact that everyday pressures can build up. The build-up of pressure can often lead to problems in our lives.

I have learned over the years that even the strongest length of rope eventually loses its usefulness when repeatedly twisted. In the same vein, stress can have a twisting effect on our lives. When twisted too many times, the rope will begin to curl up into a knotted mess—knot upon knot. For us, the knots may show up as knots in our muscles, knots in our stomachs, pain in our shoulders, disrupted sleep, decreased appetite, or headaches. Sometimes the knots show up in our feelings and behavior as irritability, depression, self-doubt, or anxiety.

In order to relieve the knots that have wound themselves in my life, I knew that I could either unravel or unwind. Going back to the image of a knotted rope, I could cut the knots out of the rope. This would certainly relieve the stress and knots, but the rope would unravel and become useless. The same is true for stress “knots.”

Research has supported the fact that we could engage in activities that seem to alleviate stress; however, they really only cause us to unravel, making us ineffective. I think we all know what these activities might be, but it is good

to be reminded from time to time that the following tactics to resolve stress are not effective in the long-term:

Alcohol and Substance Abuse/Use – Brings only temporary relief and could lead to further stress rather than less

Withdrawing from Friendships/Relationships – Especially those relationships that are important to our daily life. Again, this could lead to more pain rather than less

Sinking into Work – Yes, it is a good thing to work and have a good work ethic. However, when we use our work to soothe stress, it can lead to an unbalanced life and more problems.

Another option for problems with the “knots” is to unwind. As is true with our rope analogy, when we take the time to carefully untwist the lines, working the knots out of the rope will retain its strength and usefulness. A rope unwound is much better off than a rope hastily unraveled. The same is true for us as people. If we take the time to unwind, we will maintain our strength. So, what are some other ways we can unwind?

I try to listen to my physical, emotional, and behavioral responses. That knot in my gut or shoulders is trying to tell me something? HELLO!! I need to listen to the people around me —perhaps their response is telling me something.

So I exercise on a regular basis at the Rowan University Rec Center. You see, endorphins can be Mother Nature’s stress reliever, not to mention it will be doing something good for the body. In fact I am now certified to teach the “*Insanity*” class and will start it next week!

I have started to eat right. We only get one Cadillac, we call our body. You cannot trade it in. So, healthy foods

lead to healthy bodies. Healthy bodies lead to fewer worries. Sometimes, I just take time off and pamper myself. Why not? If not, remember the knots often wind up in our muscles.

Also, I like to think or meditate on a constant basis. I use the App called “Lumosity”, to maintain an active mind keep it sharp. Others have told me that they read a novel, read a self-help book, read some non-fiction factual accounts events that interest you. I focus my mind on something positive and beneficial, then stressors in my life will be less likely to force their way back into the center of my thoughts. I don’t ignore important things, but I balance in my thoughts with action plans and play time.

If you would like more information about stress, its effects, and what you can do about it, contact me at 609-761-6871 or 609-289-6713. My e-mail is andrew.savicky.ctr@ang.af.mil for a confidential appointment in Building 229, next to the gym. Unwind, my friend!

Doc Savicky crosses the finish line at the annual FAA CFC Run/Walk fundraiser. (Photo by Mike Gross)



Around the Wing



SAMBORSKI PINS ON CHIEF



Senior Master Sgt. Diana Samborski from the 177th Logistics Readiness Squadron pins on the rank of Chief Master Sgt. by Lt. Col. James Fogarty (left) 177th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander and Col. Michael Love (right), 177th Mission Support Group commander. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley)

BUDDY THE ELF BRINGS JOY AT HOLIDAY PARTY



Buddy the Elf poses for a photo with Lt. Col. Wendy Cordrey and Senior Master Sgt. James McCloskey at the 177th Fighter Wing's annual Family Holiday Party on Dec. 8, 2013. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley)

FAA CFC FUNDRAISER



Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing along members of the FAA Tech Center participate in the annual FAA CFC Walk/Run Fundraiser on Nov. 20, 2013. (Photo by Mike Gross)

For more awards photos, check out the
177th Fighter Wing Facebook page!



FINAL PHOTO

LOAD 'ER UP



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Ryan Sosnoff from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing prepares to mount a GBU-12 Paveway II onto an F-16C Fighting Falcon during day two of the annual load crew competition on Jan. 10 at Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J. Sosnoff is an aircraft armament systems specialist assigned to the 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (U.S. Air National Guard photo illustration by Airman 1st Class Shane Karp)