



# GUARDOLIFE

AUGUST 2017

# GUARDLIFE

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## COVER: Fire power

Soldiers with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Infantry, provide fire superiority during an air assault raid during the eXportable Combat Training Capability exercise at Fort Pickett, Va., May 27, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Evan Lane/Released)

# TRAIN FOR THE FIGHT

By Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cuniff, The Adjutant General



In May, the New Jersey Army National Guard loaded more than 650 pieces of equipment onto rail cars for a journey across four states to launch the eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) exercise at Fort Pickett, Va.

It was a massive undertaking that involved our engineers reconstructing rail heads to ensure a just-in-time delivery for the Army Guard's largest field training

exercise since 2013.

The three-week exercise involved more than 2,500 Soldiers operating in austere conditions across 60-square miles. The command-and-control required orchestration among the leaders of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 42nd Regional Support Group, and Joint Force Headquarters. And because we train as we fight, many of the exercises took place under the cover of darkness.

The operation was a resounding success and every standard was met, or exceeded.

Every Soldier who participated in the XCTC did a great job and deserves our appreciation.

But that's not why I mention this.

I mention this because it is a reminder that exercises like XCTC are at the heart of what we do – train for the fight. It is why we joined.

Challenging, realistic training leads to readiness.

Over the next two years, the Army Force Generation Process calls for mobilizations for large portions of our Army Guard force for overseas contingency operations. The training they do today, ensures they are ready tomorrow.

This concept, of course, applies to our Air Guard units as well.

Right now, both the 108th Wing and the 177th Fighter Wing are putting their training to use in operations around the globe.

Refueling operations by the 108th Wing are



*Soldiers with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 114 Infantry Regiment, New Jersey Army National Guard, take part in an air assault raid during the eXportable Combat Training Capability at Ft. Pickett, Va., May 27, 2017. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Evan Lane/Released)*

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**I mention this because it is a reminder that exercises like XCTC are at the heart of what we do – train for the fight. It is why we joined.**

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making direct contributions to the fight against ISIS in the Middle East.

And the 177th Wing has Airmen participating in both overseas contingencies, as well as defending the homeland as part of Operation Noble Eagle.

We, the New Jersey National Guard, are as big a part of our nation's defense as we have ever been.

For that reason, training and readiness need to remain our top priority. People are counting on us.

# XCTC SUCCESS FOR 50TH

By Capt. Amelia Thatcher  
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The smells of pine oil cleaner and diesel exhaust wafted through the air as New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers prepared for their departure from Fort Pickett, Va., after successfully completing the three-week eXportable Combat Training Capability exercise.

"The best thing for me was the building clearing training, with the mobilization group," said Spc. Jauquante Hare, a mechanic in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 117th Combat Sustainment Support Brigade. "I learned a little bit of everything!"

"No, really, they had him doing everything!" Spc. Solomon Steeley, also from the HHC, piped up. "He was chauffeur, combat lifesaver, set-up, break-down, all of it!"

Soldiers of the 117th CSSB, some of whom are gearing up for a mobilization to Kuwait next year, made up much of the last group to wrap up the NJARNG's largest exercise since 2013.

"Last time we just had the (50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team)," explained Col. William Peace, chief of staff of the exercise. "This time we added the (42nd Regional Support Group) and Joint Forces Headquarters. With two major subordinate commands in the field, we had JFHQ operating as a division staff, which was a big step up from the last XCTC."

The noncommissioned officer in charge of operations, Sgt. Maj. Kevin Kirkpatrick, also noted an increase in night firing from the



**Top:** U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joseph Wolf, right, Delta Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, provides cover for team members as they hook-up a vehicle while under fire May 25, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Donnelly/Released) **Above:** U.S. Army Infantrymen with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 114 Infantry Regiment, take part in an air assault raid May 27, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Evan Lane/Released) **Right:** U.S. Army Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, engage with enemy forces May 31, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo Sgt. Jorge Morales/Released)

previous XCTC in 2013.

"We're supposed to attack things at night, and this is our opportunity to train for it," he said matter-of-factly.

Embedded trainers made all the difference for the 102nd Cavalry Regiment, according to one of their platoon sergeants.

"The lanes were reconnaissance-oriented," said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Burke, 2nd Platoon, A Troop. "We drill with the observer-controllers (OCs). They're master trainers and gunners."

Other cavalry scouts from B Troop chimed in as they took a break from testing their Long-Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System optic system.

"Scouts play a vital role in the reconnaissance of the battlefield, said Sgt. Jake Castello. "As a dismounted team leader reconnaissance plays a vital role to effectively move my team. Details are very

important. It's awesome to be able to be referred to as Ghosts and have amazing brothers beside me."

The renewed focus on night operations affects all elements, according to the acting logistics chief.

"More night training requires a more robust 24-hour logistics package," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Eget.

1st Lt. Ana Castillo lauded the improved connectivity as she rattled off a list of human resources functions she was able to administer as the transportation manager for the 42nd RSG.

"We needed the network to do our jobs," she said. "Accountability, awards, 15 promotions, 19 reenlistments, mail pickup, you name it. Just because we're out here at Pickett doesn't mean it stops."

Like Castillo and many other New Jersey Soldiers, Sgt. Denis DaSilva, a mechanic with the 143rd,



# ***“I do this for my troops; they are my family, friends, and blood.”***

**STAFF SGT. ANTHONY PISCOPO-BANN**



**Above:** U.S. Army Pvt. 1st Class Jovan Childers, route reconnaissance platoon, Bravo Company, 104th Brigade Engineer Battalion, goes on a dismounted patrol to check out a culvert during a route clearance mission May 25, 2017. **Below:** U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Emmanuel Bonilla, platoon sergeant, Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, provides care for a Soldier while calling in a medical evacuation May 23, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Spc. Samuel D. Keenan/Released)



had been in the field during the 2013 XCTC as well.

“A lot of stuff breaks out there,” he said while his fellow mechanics hosed down their muddy Light Medium Tactical Vehicle at the wash rack.

DaSilva added that he had been in a different unit last time around, and that the mission was different.

“But you get to do everything,” he said. “We help out the units and made a lot of vehicles mission-capable again.”

Eget noted that more than 100 transportation missions have been completed in the first two weeks of the exercise. He praised the improved tactics, techniques, and procedures practiced by all NJARNG Soldiers in general and the logistics units in particular.

“The leadership has moved around to see the different echelons of support, from field trains to theater-level support,” he said. “This has benefited the entire organization.”

From their distant position out in the field, seemingly a world away from Wi-Fi and indoor plumbing, the B Troop scouts agreed.

“It feels great to be challenged and pushed to your limits to see what you and your Soldiers are capable of accomplishing,” said 1st Lt. Colin Honeker.

“I do this for my troops; they are my family, friends, and blood,” said Staff Sgt. Anthony Piscopo-Bann.



**Above:** U.S. Army Spc. Divante Scott, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Infantry Regiment, grins during an air assault raid training mission here May 27, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Samuel D. Keenan/Released) **Below:** U.S. Army Spc. Paul Daniels, Delta Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion, performs a fireman carry of a simulated injured Soldier while Spc. Edgar Sepulveda, also with the 250th, provides cover May 25, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Donnelly/Released)



# ***50TH ON THE MOVE***



# Sixty-eight

Soldiers from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team loaded more than 170 tactical vehicles onto rail cars at the Morrisville Yard in Morrisville, Pa., May 2, 2017. A total of 700 vehicles and trailers are headed to Fort Pickett, Va., for the NJARNG's eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) exercise 17-01.

The scale of the undertaking isn't lost on Capt. Michael Sojka, Company Sustainment Cell, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters. Sojka is one of the planners for the movement operation.

"We're exercising our capabilities of railhead operations," said Sojka. "We're currently responsible for more than 700 pieces of military equipment via rail from Morrisville, Pa., to Fort Pickett, Va."

Driver teams, spotter teams, and

your spot, they get chained down."

Securing the vehicles onto the rail cars was no easy task. Soldiers used wrenches and hammers to work with huge chains, coaxing rusted metal to tighten down massive transport trucks.

"It's tough, but it's great," said Sgt. Jermaine Abraham with the 250th Brigade Engineer Battalion. "It's awesome to be a part of something so big."

An equipment movement of this scale has been a test of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's capabilities.

"Each day we come across a new challenge. We have not conducted an exercise like this in almost two decades," said Sojka. "You have a new generation of Soldiers. Many Soldiers that did not know our deployment capability. We're learning, this is almost like a confidence course."

Sojka looked at the entire movement as



*U.S. Army Spc. Kristina Rivera with the New Jersey Army National Guard's 250th Brigade Support Battalion secures a Humvee onto a rail car at the Morrisville Yard in Morrisville, Pa., May 2, 2017.*

**"It's awesome to be a part of something so big." SGT. JERMAINE ABRAHAM, 250TH BRIGADE ENGINEER BATTALION**

Soldiers performing securing operations received extensive training in railway operations and safety.

"I'm a driver, helping vehicles to get on rail cars," said Spc. Xavier Soto with the 3-112th Fires Battalion. "I didn't imagine it being this big. You forget how big the brigade is. There's a lot of moving parts in one big brigade. You see there's just hundreds and hundreds of vehicles."

Driving large vehicles onto rail cars isn't an everyday experience for a Soldier.

"It's different," said Soto. "You're going up, going down, it's like a roller coaster. You have a guide on every car, guiding you left and right, or speed up and slow down."

He went on to say that lack of space leaves no room for error. "Once you get to



one big football game.

"Growing up in high school and college team sports, the best analogies are that locker room or chalkboard talk. I explained to the troops this is like the combine, you're being assessed on what capabilities you are bringing to this team," said Sojka. "It's pairing up experienced Soldiers with new troops and bringing them up to speed. Right now this is the first quarter, loading gear. The second quarter is going to happen at Fort Pickett, that's the receiving, accounting, and dispersal of the material. The third quarter is after XCTC, the loadout at Fort Pickett, and the fourth quarter is unloading everything back here to Morrisville."

"It's a lot of work, but it's fun," said Sojka.

# ENGINEERS PAVE THE WAY



*The New Jersey Army National Guard's 104th Brigade Engineers Battalion - Horizontal Construction Platoon clears an unused section of the Morrisville Yard in Morrisville, Pa., March 30, 2017. The 104th cleared the area to prepare the grounds as a staging and loading area for the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's rail transport to Fort Pickett, Va., to participate in the ex- portable Combat Training Capability exercise. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young/Released)*

# Beyond the Horizon: Building friendships

**Story by Staff Sgt. Fredrick Varney  
131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

It was an exciting and fun-filled day for the children of Belize Rural Primary School, as Soldiers and Marines set aside their military duties April 12, 2017, to build friendships during a Beyond the Horizon 2017 community relations event.

The day's highlights included a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter static display and several different sporting activities such as cricket, soccer, and basketball.

"The kids really enjoyed seeing the helicopter and getting to touch all the buttons," said Sgt. James Bolek, a crew chief with A Company, 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion.

Bolek said the helicopter display gave the children the opportunity to learn about the aircraft and interact with U.S. military



**U.S. Army Capt. Andre Stevenson, an operations officer with the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, provides school children a tour of a Black Hawk helicopter during a community relations event at Double Head Cabbage, Belize, April 12, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Fredrick Varney/Released)**

personnel as well.

Marilyn Stephenson, Belize Rural Primary School Principal, said the students enjoyed meeting and spending time with Service members during the community relations event.

"I think the children were amazed when they heard the helicopter coming," said Stephenson. "I kept watching how excited they were when the helicopter was flying overhead, and then finally landed on the school grounds."

The school is located in the town of Double Head Cabbage, the site of a Beyond the Horizon construction project.

U.S. Southern Command, in cooperation with the Government of Belize, has coordinated the completion of five construction projects that include a new

emergency room and incinerator at Western Regional Hospital in Belmopan, medical clinics in Ledyville and Double Head Cabbage, and a new school building in St. Matthews. In addition, BTH will host free medical and dental services to communities across Belize.

Beyond the Horizon is a collaborative training exercise, which involves the Belize Defence Force and many Belizean organizations working side-by-side with U.S. military forces.

The exercise, which started on March 25, 2017, is scheduled to end the second week of June, 2017.

Adrienne M. Galanek, Chargé d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy in Belize, was in attendance for the community relations



**U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Paul Cimino, a unit standardization instructor with B Company, 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, lifts a student out of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Belize Rural Primary School April 12, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Fredrick Varney/Released)**

event to visit with military personnel and students at the school.

"I just want to say that the mission for Beyond the Horizon really exemplifies the mission of the United States here in Belize," said Galanek. "The cornerstone of any good partnership is people and Beyond the Horizon is really a partnership between the government, the people of the United States, and Belize."



**U.S. Army Sgt. James Bolek, a crew chief with A Company, 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, watches out the window of a UH-60 Black Hawk while landing April 27, 2017, at Price Baracks, Belize. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Joshua E. Powell/Released)**



# OVER WATER TRAINING

Photos by 1st Sgt. Douglas W. McNeil  
1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion



U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters with the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, perform over water training above the Great Blue Hole, Belize, May 5, 2017. The 1-150th provided aviation support for Beyond the Horizon 2017 - Belize including moving personnel to the work sites, as well as medical evacuation. Above right: U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class George Dudley, platoon sergeant with the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, signals the crew on another Black Hawk during the training flight. Below right: A U.S. Army Black Hawk flies over a beached cargo ship during the training mission.



# GOING FOR THE GOLD

Twenty-one Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst Airmen from the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve arrived at the Dough-boy track in the early morning darkness to be tested for the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, June 13.

A team of 108th Security Forces Squadron Airmen were certified by the German military to proctor the test.

“We were extremely proud and honored to be granted the opportunity to administer testing on the German Armed Forced Badge for Military Proficiency,” said Master Sgt. P.J. Coley, from the 108th Security Forces Squadron training office. “There’s loads of history with this badge, and the importance of celebrating our alliance with the German armed forces was a concept not lost on many volunteer Airmen throughout the Wing.”

To be awarded the badge, competi-



**U.S. Air Force Airmen from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 108th Wing perform the flex arm hang during the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency test at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 13, 2017. The test also included eleven 10-meter sprints, 1,000-meter run, 100-meter swim in uniform, marksmanship, and a 12-kilometer ruck march.**

tors are required to pass a physical fitness test, demonstrate

marksmanship skills, and finish up with a timed foot march. The



**U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Thomas Bacigalupo, 108th Security Forces Squadron, has water poured over him after successfully completing the 12-kilometer ruck march.**

run, face red and out of breath.

“That was tough,” said Roemelle. “This whole competition so far has been a real challenge.”

The swim proved to be the most trying obstacle, knocking out half the Airmen.

“The swim wasn’t

**Story and photos by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht  
108th Wing Public Affairs Office**

Bacigalupo, with the 108th Security Forces Squadron.

Bacigalupo felt that the hardest part of the day was dealing with the unexpected high temperatures, but that didn’t hold him back from earning the Gold Class Badge.

and abroad, establishing comradery through healthy competition, and strengthening bonds across multiple career fields are examples of excellence the 108th Wing fosters and motivates on a daily basis,” said Coley.

At the end of the



**U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Troche, 108th Security Forces Squadron, swims the 100-meter portion of the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency test.**

the hardest part for me, I knew it was going to be a challenge so I joined a gym with a pool a couple months before the event so I could train,” said Airman 1st Class Thomas

“Getting gold was an amazing feeling,” said Bacigalupo. “The best feeling was just being able to be lucky enough to be a part of the event.”

“Honoring service both domestic

event, 12 of the 21 participants earned the badge, including six Gold winners.



# FROM ONE DREAM, TO ANOTHER

By Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Woolley  
Joint Force Headquarters  
Public Affairs Office



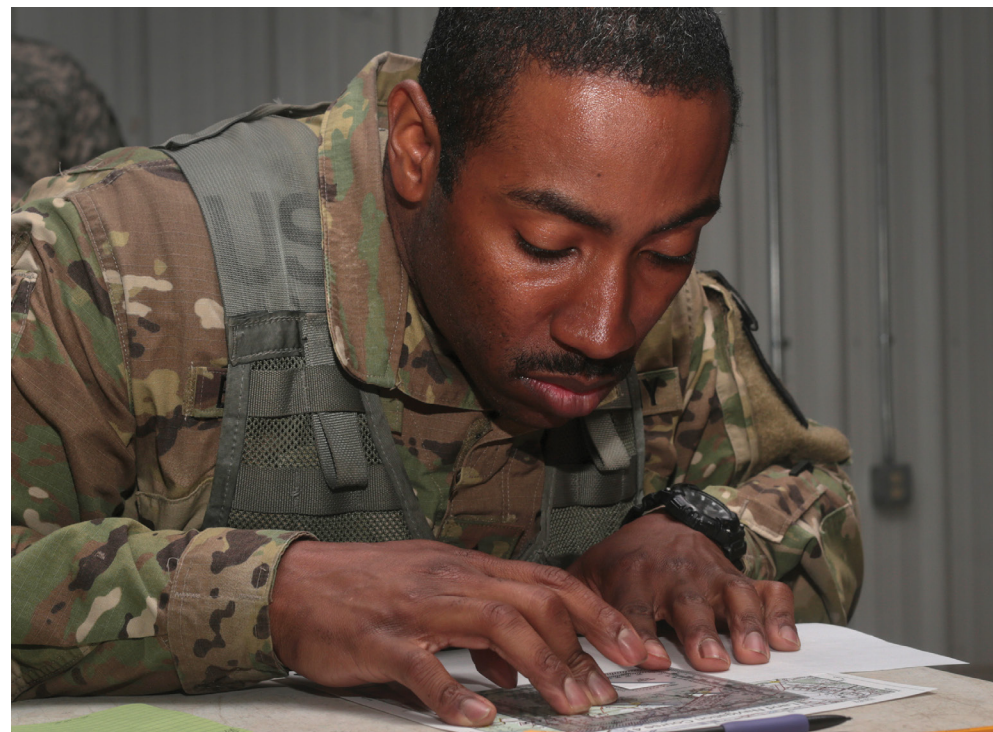
*U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Beachum, New Jersey Army National Guard, crosses the finish line of the two-mile run, placing first with a time of 12 minutes, 36 seconds, during the Army Physical Fitness Test at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., April 25, 2017. U.S. Army Spc. Joseph Garback, far right, finishes second in the run. (New Jersey National Guard photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released)*

Chasing a dream can be daunting. But chasing two at the same time?

That's where Sgt. Daniel Beachum recently found himself as he began training for the Army National Guard Best National Best Warrior competition, only to find out that he'd been accepted to the Newark Fire Fighter Academy and that the seat had could not wait.

He takes comfort in the fact that he will end up with the full-time job he's wanted forever – and he's still the New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier who in 2017 won both the state and Region 1 Best Warrior Competition, beating noncommissioned officers from seven other northeastern states.

The grueling three-day annual competition includes land navigation, a 12-mile



*U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Beachum prepares for the land navigation phase of the Army National Guard's Region 1 Best Warrior Competition on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., April 25, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*

"I dreamed about going to Best Warrior and representing New Jersey said," Beachum said. "But I've also dreamed about being a firefighter since I was a little kid."

So the 28-year-old Newark resident let go of Dream No. 1 and went with No. 2.

ruck march, a physical fitness test, day and night land navigation, a number of live fire "stress shooting" events and an appearance before a board of sergeant majors.

"I wouldn't trade one minute from either competition for anything," Beachum

***“I wouldn’t trade one minute from either competition for anything. The comradery was amazing. We were competing, but we were brothers. We are all warriors.” U.S. ARMY SGT. DANIEL BEACHUM***



***Above: U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Beachum heads for his first marker during the event's land navigation phase April 25, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released) Below: U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Beachum, center, with National Guard Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from the six New England states, New Jersey, and New York prepare to cross the Delaware River in a combat rubber raiding craft at Washington Crossing Historic Park, Pa., reenacting Gen. George Washington's crossing of the Delaware April 26, 2017. (New Jersey National Guard photo by Mark C. Olsen/Released)***



said. “The comradery was amazing. We were competing, but we were brothers. We are all warriors.”

So instead of joining Cpl. Joe Garback, who also won the state and regional competitions in the enlisted soldier category in representing New Jersey in the national competition at Camp Ripley, Minn., in July, Beachum will be preparing to save lives in the state’s largest city.

Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, The Adjutant General, noted that it was rare for one state to sweep the NCO and enlisted portion of a regional Best Warrior competition.

“It’s a pretty big deal,” Cunniff said. “There are more than 36,000 Soldiers in our

region and to have our guys finish on top?”

Garback, who has made a bit of history himself by winning the Region 1 enlisted competition two years in a row, is now training furiously for his second try at the national title in a competition that will have a soldier representing each of the 54 states and territories. He wishes he could have trained alongside Beachum, but he understands.

“It’s tough, but he had something he couldn’t pass up,” Garback said.

For deciding to pass on one dream for another, Sgt. Beachum will soon also answer to Firefighter Beachum.



***U.S. Army Spc. Joseph Garback completes the M9 marksmanship phase of the Army National Guard's Region 1 Best Warrior Competition on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., April 25, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)***

# 177TH DEPLOYS TO KOREA

By Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Approximately 200 pilots, maintainers, and support personnel from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing located at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J., deployed to Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, in support of the U.S. Pacific Command Theater Security Package Feb. 2, 2017.

According to Headquarters Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs, "Movement of theater security packages into the region has been a routine and integral part of U.S. PACOM's force posture since March 2004. These packages demonstrate the continuing U.S. commitment to stability and security in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region."

Prior to the deployment, close to 100 palletized pieces of equipment and cargo, weighing approximately a third of a million pounds, were shipped to Osan to support the 119th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron's flying operations.

Airmen from various sections volunteered to help load the equipment, which was trucked to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., where it was flown to Osan.

"Our wing project officer and various unit leaders have worked well with the Osan team in preparation for our arrival," said Lt. Col. Matthew Crill, 119th commander.

Master Sgt. Richard Shelton, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 177th Egress Shop, offered some deployment advice.

"If you see something that needs to be done, do it, don't wait for someone else to step up and volunteer," said Shelton, a twenty year veteran at the 177th.

First time deployer Senior Airman Jordan Tavaréz, a munitions systems specialist, said he was looking forward to the deployment.

"It is amazing to see the Wing come together as one to make sure everything and everyone is prepared to accomplish the mission."



**Above:** U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing board an aircraft at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J., to Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, Feb. 2, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley/Released) **Below:** Two 177th F-16 Fighting Falcons taxi off of the runway at Osan Air Base, Feb. 9, 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Victor J. Caputo/Released)



# 177th wins competition



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bybee, left, guides U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Andrew Finnegan, both with the 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, as they prepare to move a GBU-12 Paveway II during the 51st Maintenance Group's quarterly weapons load crew competition at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, April 14, 2017. The Airmen, who are deployed to Osan from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing, beat the top weapons load crews from the 36th and 25th Aircraft Maintenance Units. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Victor J. Caputo/Released)

# Snap, Crackle, BOOM



Story by Mark C. Olsen, New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs Office

**F**irst you hear what sounds like the snap of a gun's hammer dry firing, followed by a loud whoosh, and finally, nine seconds, later a loud boom echoes across Range 59C.

Soldiers with New Jersey Army National Guard's 102nd Cavalry Squadron and the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 1-181st Infantry Regiment, both with the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, trained with the BGM-71 TOW 2B Aero at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 23-24, 2017.

TOW, which stands for Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided missile, was first used by the Army May 2, 1972, to destroy North Vietnamese tanks near An Loc. By the end of the month, TOW missiles had destroyed 24 tanks.

"These (TOWs) came from overseas and had to be fired before they expired, otherwise, they would have had to be demilled (demilitarized)," said Capt. Ryan Harty, plans officer, 1-102nd Cavalry.

During the two days of training, the Soldiers

*Above: A U.S. Army National Guard Soldier with the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team fires a tripod mounted BGM-71 TOW (Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided) 2B Aero missile during training at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 23, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young/Released) Below: A U.S. Army National Guard Soldier grins after firing a TOW missile. Bottom right: A TOW missile is fired from a HUMMWW at a tank target. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*



fired 107 missiles from both tripod-mounted launchers and Humvee-mounted systems. This was the second time the 102nd had fired TOWs with the 181st.

The system consists of the missile and the improved targeting acquisition system that enables the missile to acquire and lock on to a target. Unlike self-guided missiles, the gunner controls the missile using the targeting system, which directs and steers the missile to the target through wires spooled out while the missile is in flight. With a range of more than two and half miles, the TOW flies over the target and uses both laser and magnetic sensors to detect and

fire two downward-directed war-heads into the target.

The TOW missile system can also be mounted on Bradley Fighting Vehicles and Stryker armored vehicles, as well as the Marine Corps' Light Armored Vehicle-Anti-Tank Guided Missile Vehicle and the AH1W Cobra attack helicopter. With both day and night capabilities, it is a force multiplier for units facing armored threats or lacking aerial support.

The live fire exercise was a rare opportunity for the Soldiers to practice their skills setting up and firing the anti-tank system.

"It's not often they fire them and it's a real morale booster," said Harty.



# CrossTell 2017

Story by Airman 1st Class Cristina Allen  
177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Photos by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht  
New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs Office



Multiple Air National Guard units, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Civil Air Patrol participated in an Aerospace Control Alert CrossTell live-fly training exercise, May 23-25, 2017, at the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing.

# AIR DEFENSE EXERCISE HONES AIR-INTERCEPT SKILLS

The CrossTell exercise, which was held at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, was planned to provide alert facilities the opportunity to hone their communication and coordination procedures during a scenario simulating a temporary flight restriction.

***"We were able to execute three days' worth of flying with two 'Go's' per day...in a very important training exercise that supports (the) Operation Noble Eagle homeland defense mission."***

**BRIG. GEN. DANIEL J. ORCUTT, VICE COMMANDER, 1ST AIR FORCE**

"This is an amazing experience for us to get all members of the engagement team, from U.S. Secret Service to air defense sectors, to U.S. Coast guard, USAF (U.S. Air Force), to the Air National Guard, to talk about how we do things to optimize how we use the engagement chain for defense of the U.S.," said Col. Bradford Everman, commander, 177th Operations Group.

Exercise participants included Air National Guard units from New Jersey, South Carolina, and



***Previous page: A New Jersey Air National Guard F-16D Fighting Falcon with the 177th Fighter Wing takes off during the Aerospace Control Alert CrossTell live-fly training exercise at Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J., May 24, 2017. Above: 177th maintenance Airmen prepare an F-16D for a CrossTell mission May 24, 2017. Left: U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Sean Romero, an F-16 crew chief with the 177th Fighter Wing, prepares an F-16D for a flight May 23, 2017.***

Maryland, in addition to the Coast Guard and the Civil Air Patrol. All participants are required to provide safe and secure airspace whenever temporary flight restrictions are being enforced. Their primary mission objective is to safely escort violators out of restricted airspace.

Temporary flight restrictions are established by the Federal Aviation Administration and enforced by the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) during high-visibility national events such as the political nominating conventions, the Super

Bowl, the State of the Union address, as well as presidential travel.

"Cross Tell was a tremendous success," said Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Orcutt, vice commander, 1st Air Force. "We were able to execute three days' worth of flying with two 'Go's' per day...in a very important training exercise that supports (the) Operation Noble Eagle homeland defense mission."

Since Sept. 11, 2001, NORAD aircraft have conducted more than 1,800 intercepts of non-military aircraft under Operation Noble Eagle.

# CST trains with Picatinny firefighters

Story and photos by Mark C. Olsen  
New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs Office

*Strike Team members Sgt. Joe Bercovic, second from left, and Staff Sgt. Nicky Lam, center, both with the New Jersey National Guard's 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team, are decontaminated by Picatinny Arsenal firefighters during a joint training exercise at the New Jersey Homeland Defense Homeland Security Center March 23, 2017.*

Less than an hour and a half after arriving at Picatinny Arsenal, survey team members Staff Sgt. Nicky Lam and Sgt. Joe Bercovic entered a makeshift lab set up to make nerve gas.

Eleven members of the New Jersey National Guard's 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team were flown to the site using Black Hawk helicopters with the New Jersey Army National Guard's 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion as part of a training exercise Mar. 23, 2017.

It was the first time the CST participated in a joint training exercise with the Picatinny Arsenal Fire Department firefighters at the New Jersey Homeland Defense Homeland Security Center at Picatinny Arsenal. The Center is a mixture of buildings, stacked 40-

foot long Conex containers, and passenger train cars.

In any operation, the advance team has to be on site within 90 minutes of notification, while the main body will be on scene within three hours. With the use of the Black Hawks, the advance team was at Picatinny Arsenal 40 minutes after leaving their headquarters at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

All this underscores the CST's capability of being able to deploy at a moment's notice, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We normally support ICs (incident commanders) in an advise, assist, and assess mode on various WMD incidents," said Lt. Col. George T. Christenson, 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team commander.

CSTs support civil authorities

at natural or man-made disaster sites involving chemical, biological, radiological – think dirty bomb, and nuclear materials, by identifying CBRN agents or substances. In addition, they assess current and projected consequences and provide advice on response measures and assist with requests for additional support.

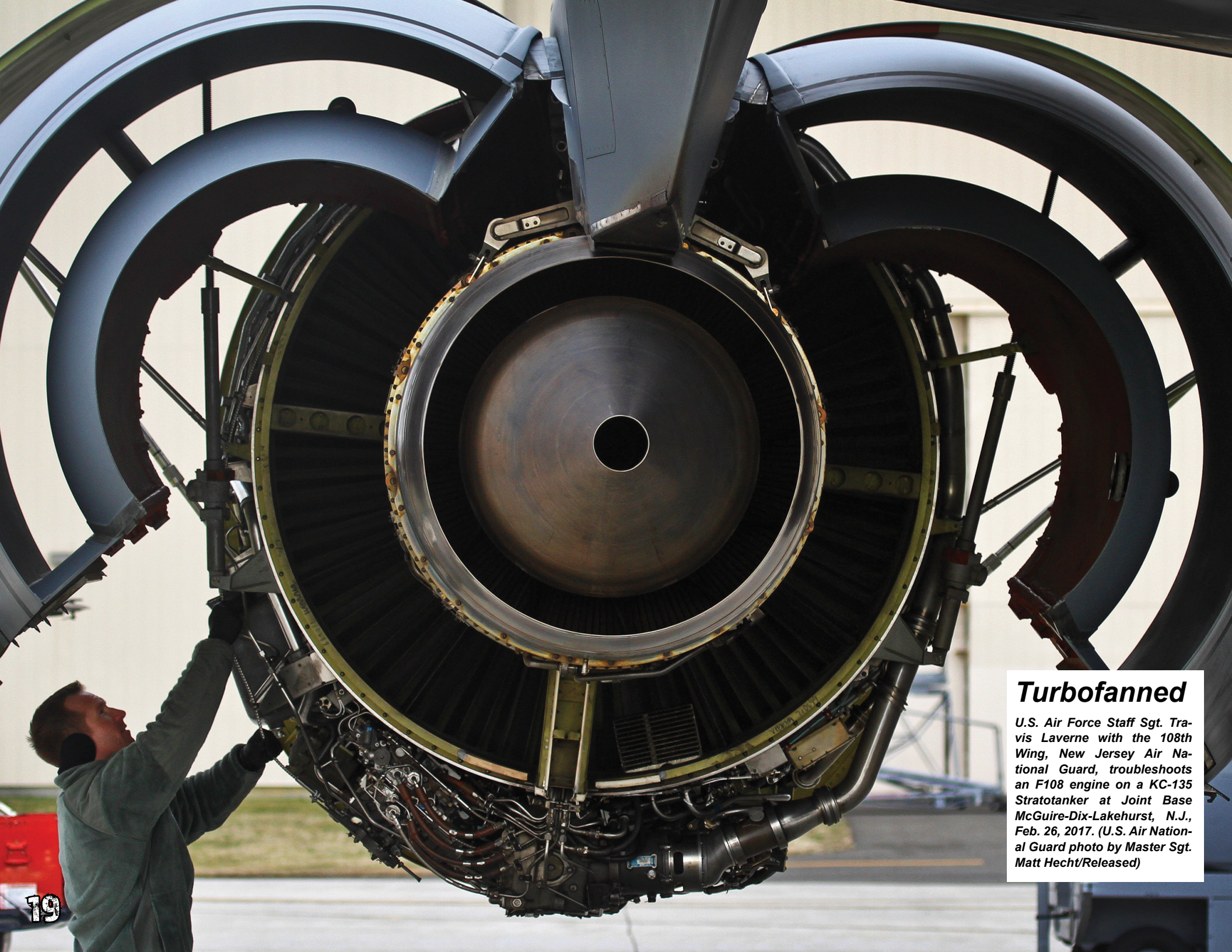
Basically, they help emergency personnel know what happened, what will happen and how to deal with it.

The 21st trains continuously throughout the year. This exercise was part of an ongoing assessment of the CST's interoperability capabilities with other state and federal agencies.

"It was a great opportunity to train with our federal partners, as well as keep our team up to speed on their training," said Christenson.



*Strike Team member Staff Sgt. Nicky Lam takes an evidence sample in a simulated lab set up to make nerve gas. This is the first time the CST participated in a joint training exercise with the Picatinny Arsenal Fire Department firefighters.*



## ***Turbofanned***

*U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Travis Laverne with the 108th Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, troubleshoots an F108 engine on a KC-135 Stratotanker at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Feb. 26, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*

# Jersey's "Best Warriors"


Story by Pfc. Derek Vasquez  
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Photos by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht  
New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs Office



*A New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier competes in a timed stress shoot during the 2017 New Jersey Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 28, 2017.*





"We're all warriors; we're all just trying to see who is the best warrior in New Jersey,"

Sgt. Daniel Beachum  
2-113th Infantry  
Battalion

With smoke practically still curling from the barrel of his 9 mm pistol, New Jersey Army National Guard Sgt. Daniel Beachum stepped off the marksmanship range and explained how he'd felt about downing all the targets.

"I felt like Bruce Willis," Beachum said with a wide grin.

The Die Hard feeling didn't go away.

The next day, Beachum was named Best Warrior in the noncommissioned officer category of the annual three-day competition that gathers the top NCOs and enlisted Soldiers

from across the New Jersey Army National Guard to determine who best embodies the warrior ethos.

Spc. Joe Garback won the enlisted category to claim his second straight New Jersey Best Warrior title. Both will compete in the Region I competition later this month against their counterparts from the six New England states and New York.

For more than 72 grueling, rain-drenched hours, Soldiers in the Best Warrior Competition demonstrated their Army aptitude conquering urban warfare simulations and board interviews as well as timed events to include a physical fitness test, a 12-mile ruck march and land navigation.

Sgt. Maj. Kevin Kirkpat-



"I'm just having fun."

Sgt. Michael Henri  
2-113th Infantry Battalion

*Left: U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Beachum, 2-113th Infantry, New Jersey Army National Guard, nears the end of the 12-mile ruck march at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., during the NJARNG's Best Warrior Competition Mar. 28, 2017. Beachum would go on to win the Best Warrior in the noncommissioned officer category. Above U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Henri, 2-113th Infantry, fires the M9 pistol during the pistol marksmanship portion of the Competition March 27, 2017.*

rick, who oversaw the competition, defined what it takes to be a Best Warrior:

"Somebody who can react well under stressful situations; someone who takes the time to figure out his craft would be the best Soldier."

The Soldiers worked hard to fit Kirkpatrick's definition. However, the competitors didn't just react well to the situations; they even enjoyed some of them.

"I'm just having fun," said Sgt. Michael Henri, infantryman with Charlie Company of the 2-113th Infantry Battalion. The 36-year-old Henri started the competition strong, running two miles at a sub-6 minute-mile pace.

Although Henri didn't win, he

said he relished the chance to represent his unit in the competition.

For Beachum, of Alpha Company, 2-113th Infantry Battalion, and Garback, with Bravo Company, 1-114th Infantry Battalion, the chance to represent their units will continue with the regional competition. Garback also won that competition last year.

Garback sees the Best Warrior Competition as more than a contest.

"Although we're all competing, everyone is still very close," he said.

Beachum agreed.

"We're all warriors; we're all just trying to see who is the best warrior in New Jersey," he said.

# SQUAD TACTICS



*U.S. Air Force Airmen from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 108th Security Forces Squadron practice squad tactics and danger crossing techniques at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., April 23, 2017. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)*

# TESTING THE DOMAINS OF PHYSICAL READINESS

For the past four months, newly enlisted National Guard Soldiers have been taking a new kind of physical fitness test.

It's called the Occupational Physical Fitness Test, or the OPAT.

Think of it as an ASVAB for the body.

Just as the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery tries to predict whether Soldiers have the right mental aptitude for certain military jobs, the OPAT does the same with the body.

physically demanding jobs.

Take the deadlift. Soldiers stand inside a hex-bar and begin a sequence of one-repetition lifts starting with 120 pounds and working up to 220 pounds.

Or the seated power throw. For that, Soldiers sit with their back against a wall and throw a 4.4 pound medicine ball as far as possible.

Then there is a standing long jump, still exactly as it was in high school gym class. The final exercise, the interval run,

then, they've run 43 shuttles.

The OPAT standards are for the same for male and female. Only Soldiers who achieve the highest rating are eligible for the jobs the Army considers the most physically demanding – all of the combat arms specialties and combat engineering. To achieve the highest rating, Soldiers need a minimum of a 160 pound deadlift, a ball throw of longer than 14-feet, 9-inches, a long jump greater than 5-feet, 3-inches and complete 43 shuttle runs in 10-minutes, 14-sec-

ly-demanding specialties will have to switch to less physically challenging specialties before shipping to Initial Entry Training. Soldiers who fail to meet the lowest standards won't ship to Initial Entry Training until they do.

According to Army Recruiting Command, the objective of the OPAT is to decrease the chances Soldiers getting injured at their Advanced Individual Training and the likelihood they can handle the physical challenges of their job once they reach a unit.

At a recent drill, many of the Soldiers who scored high enough to be eligible for all MOSs said they got ready by working hard at the gym.

Pvt. Aleasha Beauflis, a Stockton University student who wants to enroll in officer candidate

school after Initial Entry Training, said she went from failing the OPAT to reaching the highest level with a few months of heavy lifting and sprints.

"It was a very difficult test," she said. "But I've been working hard to build my endurance. I lift at least three days a week. It paid off."

onds – the equivalent of running a mile in less than six minutes.

The minimums needed for the specialties deemed the least physically demanding is a 120-pound deadlift, a ball throw of longer than 11-feet, 6-inches; a 3-feet, 11-inch long jump and 36 shuttle runs in 10:27.

Soldiers who fail to meet the standards for the most physical-

Cadre administering the OPAT to the members of the Recruit Sustainment Program at Sea Girt say the test measures strength, explosive power and endurance in ways the standard APFT cannot. And the four-exercise OPAT does so in a way that comes close to replicating some of the things Soldiers must be able to do to succeed in the Army's most

a timed shuttle run back and forth over a 20 yard course, with the time allowed for each leg becoming progressively shorter. Many Soldiers find it the biggest challenge because it begins with deceptive ease. The time allowed for the first few 20 yards can be covered at a jog. Soldiers who endure till the end need to cover the 20 yards at a full sprint. By



Story and photos by  
Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Woolley  
Joint Force Headquarters  
Public Affairs Office

# TACTICAL JOINT AND DRAGON-TRAINING

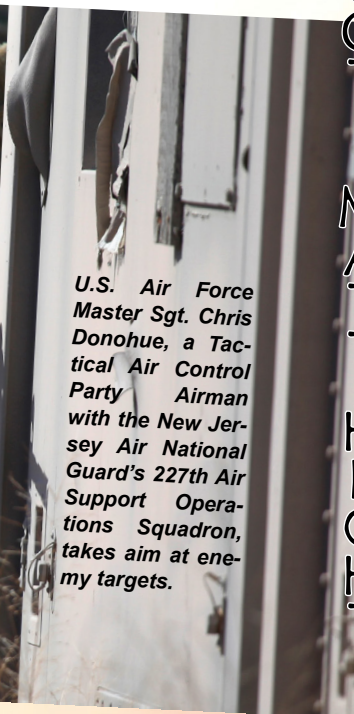
NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. MATTHEW HECHT



U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Kyle Frazee with the Air Force Research Laboratory communicates with an A-10 Thunderbolt II circling overhead during a Tactical Air Control Party Airmen and Explosive Ordnance Disposal exercise at Warren Grove Gunnery Range, N.J., March 8, 2017.



Above: U.S. Air Force Tactical Air Control Party Airmen and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians with the New Jersey Air National Guard hold a security position before attempting a door breach. Below: U.S. Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technicians plant charges to breach a door while Tactical Air Control Party Airmen set up security positions. Background photo: Screen capture from a video of the door being breached on a container.



U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Chris Donohue, a Tactical Air Control Party Airman with the New Jersey Air National Guard's 227th Air Support Operations Squadron, takes aim at enemy targets.



# AIRMEN HELP VETERANS



**Story by Airman 1st Class Cristina Allen, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office**  
**Photos by Mark C. Olsen, New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs Office**

Airmen from the New Jersey Air National Guard participated in a Stand Down event for homeless veterans on May 17, 2017, at the All Wars Memorial building in Atlantic City, N.J.

The event provided services to homeless veterans, including veterans affairs benefits, medical and mental health services, addiction counseling, welfare benefits, legal services, housing, employment, hair grooming, and clothing provisions.

"It's very heartwarming," said Tech. Sgt. William Laguer from the 108th Wing. "I'm very grateful for the opportunity to serve."

Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing and 108th Wing provided services to the event through medical care, directing individuals, protecting off-limit areas, and assisting with the clean-up.

"We realize the need to help our brothers and sisters," said Robert W. Looby, Department of New Jersey American Legion. "So just being able to help our fellow veterans with every facet like homelessness, education, business workshops, and job fairs is just the right thing to do."

The American Legion, Department of New Jersey, was the event's primary sponsor, but other service providers such as the city of Atlantic City, various veterans' service organizations, the American Red Cross, military personnel, local grammar schools, civic leaders and numerous other organizations all provided aid to veterans in need.



**Above left: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Justin Vidal, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, serves lunch to a homeless veteran during Stand Down 2017 at the All Wars Memorial Building in Atlantic City, N.J., May 17, 2017. Top right: Master Sgt. Mary M. Connelly, 177th Security Forces Squadron, carries food to be distributed to homeless veterans. Middle right: Tech. Sgt. David Dumlaio, 177th Fighter Wing, delivers a serving tray. Bottom right: Staff Sgt. Melissa A. Seel, 177th Medical Group, checks a homeless veteran's blood pressure.**

# Riding the slopes of freedom, sacrifice

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Crawford, 326th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**WAINWRIGHT, Canada** – Puffy white clouds drifted upon a gentle, but constant, wind in an otherwise clear, blue sky. Sunlight shined upon an open, grassy field, flanked by a thick forest and seemingly endless rows of military tents.

Chemical decontamination trucks belonging to the 50th Chemical Company with the New Jersey Army National Guard rolled to a halt following a joint decontamination exercise with Canadian and U.S. Soldiers at Camp Wainwright, Alberta.

An unlikely scene for a professional snowboarder, but there he was: Sgt. Michael Whitehead, a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist and former national snowboard competitor.

“I was also lucky enough to have a ski resort a mile away from my house,” recalled Whitehead, a native of Vernon, N.J. “One day I saw this guy on a wooden plank coming down the mountain, and my brother and I were like, ‘That’s so cool! What is that?’ Then I went out and bought one.”

Snowboarding was his first introduction to long hikes over rough terrain.

“We didn’t have much money – my parents couldn’t afford season passes or anything like that – so we would have to hike the mountain,” he said. “We would duct tape our gloves together and glue our boots together. It was like an art for me. I took out my aggression, happiness, sadness; any free time I had, I went. It was my escape. It was my freedom.”

As it turned out, Whitehead found snowboarding to be an art

that could take him across the country.

“I started doing local competitions, getting better and better, learning more from my peers,” Whitehead said. “I had a group of people and we started going place to place. We started in New Jersey, we went to New York, to Pennsylvania, then...to Vermont and New Hampshire. We started doing bigger competitions. I went to California, New Hampshire, Maine, Colorado... and then I started getting sponsorships. That’s where things started getting a little easier – newer, free equipment to represent them – and then I started going on the national level, and the more time and effort I put into it, the more I succeeded.”

But one day, Whitehead had an epiphany. After racing and ranking in competitions, he reflected on how he had been able to enjoy so many snow-covered slopes across the U.S. After years of racing slalom, half pipe, border cross, slope style, and big air, Whitehead put up his board and bowed out of the competitive arena.

“I embraced a moment of how lucky I am to have the freedom that I have,” Whitehead recalled. “I started thinking, ‘this freedom that I have is because so many men and women have sacrificed so much for this country.’ I felt it was my time to give back.”

That decision led him to sign a three-year contract with the New Jersey Army National Guard. Now in his ninth year of service, Whitehead wishes he had started sooner.

“It was probably the best



decision of my life,” Whitehead declared. “I get great satisfaction in trying to lead and educate. I’m blessed to realize that you’ve got to put your time in and do your part. I’m in for as long as I physically can take it.”

Spc. Dana Betts, a computer detection systems repair specialist with the 50th Chemical Company attests his efforts have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated.

“Everything I know about the DED line, the M12 decontamination apparatus I learned from Sgt. Whitehead,” said Betts, a physical therapy aid and kickboxing instructor in her civilian life. “He has a very good open door policy – I’ve been able to go straight to him and ask him questions, and I know he’s going to give me a very, very thorough explanation of what each thing is. He’s actually taken the time to teach me the jargon, the strategies, the SOPs, and it’s not easy teaching someone who’s not chem.”

Betts, who is training to become a CBRN specialist, once

felt overwhelmed by the idea of working a decontamination line. Now, she feels confident to fill any position at any stage of the line.

“Now, here, I’m like ‘Alright!’” exclaimed Betts, native of Cherry Hill, New Jersey. “‘What station do you want me at? Do you want me at the first one or the eighth one; I can do them and all the stations in between.’ I’ve learned so much in the past two weeks than I have in the past three years.”

Betts and Whitehead are just two of more than 650 U.S. Army Soldiers supporting Maple Resolve 17, the Canadian Army’s premiere brigade-level validation exercise running May 14-29 at Camp Wainwright. As part of the exercise, the U.S. Army is providing a wide array of combat and support elements. These include sustainment, psychological operations, public affairs, aviation and medical units.

“We’re working with the Canadian troops – we’re cross training them, they’re cross training us,” Whitehead said. “We’re collecting their knowledge and strategic ways to decontaminate personnel. We’re working side by side with them, and that’s really big for us. We’re all getting along great, and it’s an opportunity for us to educate each other for an actual, real live event – which hopefully never occurs!”

Readiness is the U.S. Army’s number one priority. Units participating in Maple Resolve 17 will sharpen individual skill sets while enhancing overall unit readiness.

“A training environment like this doesn’t come along very often,” Whitehead said. “We’re actually pushing for it so we can train more side by side, sleep in the same tents as the Canadians, learn more about their ways and they can learn more about our ways. In case of a horrible, catastrophic event, we’re all prepared for it.”

Training Soldiers to react to potential disaster fills Whitehead with pride, but he strives to give back outside the Army as well.

“I work with a lot of people, and I use my leadership abilities that I’ve learned from the military and implement them in my day to day job,” Whitehead explains. “I give back a lot of my time with big brothering... teaching them to be positive... I try to slowly, delicately introduce them to the structure and discipline that I’ve learned from the military.”

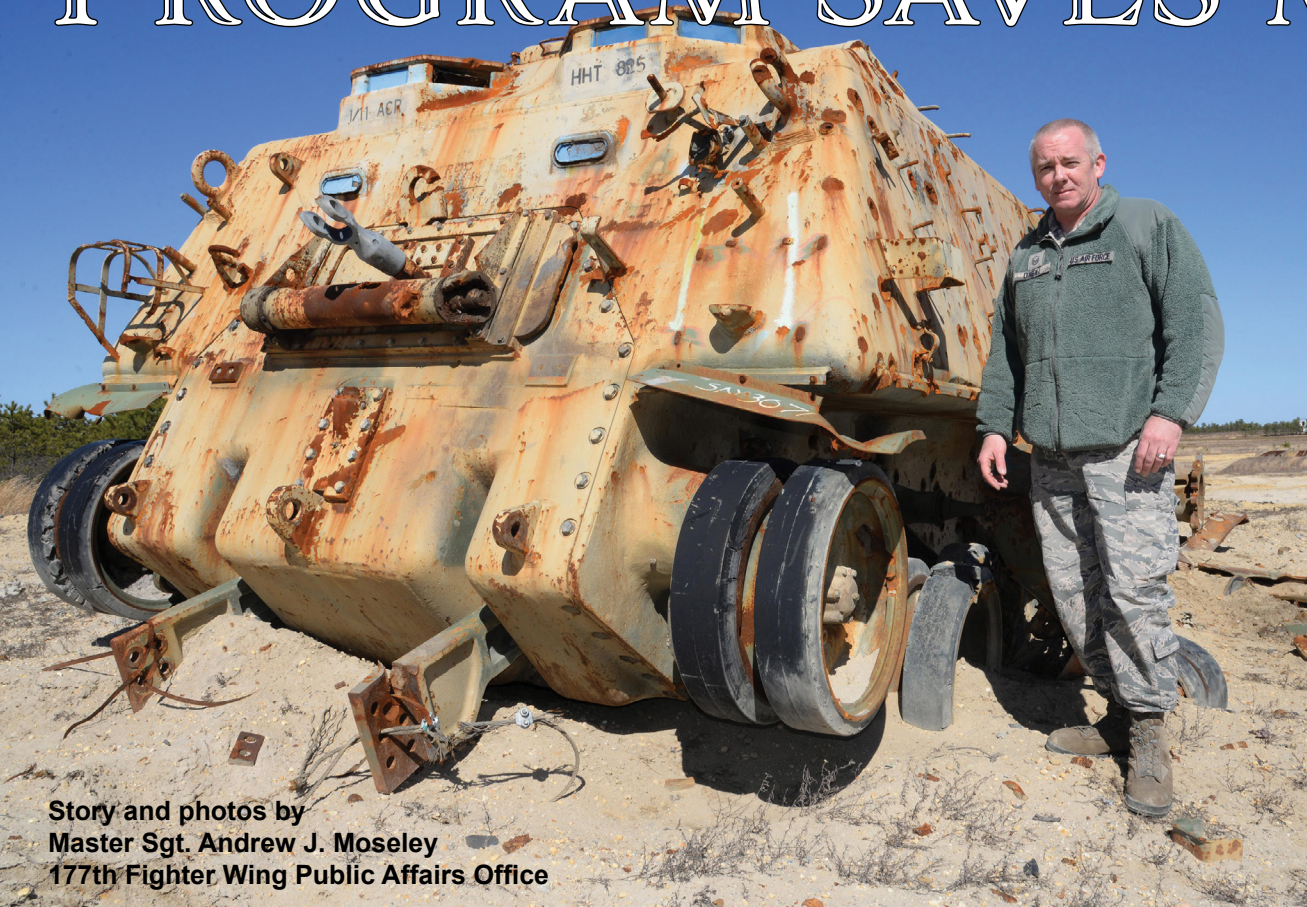
Whitehead still hits the slopes, though with less acrobatics and more focused on helping others.

“I try not to leave the ground anymore; I’m 35 now, so when I fall it hurts a lot more than when I was 12,” Whitehead said with a laugh. “I’m trying to spend as much time as I can with my niece and my nephew; they’re both into snowboarding as well. I have an eight-year-old nephew and a 13-year-old niece, and they’re both into snowboarding.”

Looking off toward the sky, a smile spread across his face.

“I’ve had a very amazing life,” he said. “Sometimes you’ve got to grow up and give back. We just have to make an effort – all of us – in everything that we do.”

# PROGRAM SAVES MILLIONS



**Story and photos by  
Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley  
177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office**

Targets on a bombing range exist to get blown up. So they don't last very long.

It's New Jersey Air National Guard Master Sgt. Bryan O'Neill's job to replace those targets to ensure the pilots who train in the skies over Warren Grove Gunnery Range get the most realistic training possible.

O'Neill figured out a way to do that that saves taxpayers money with every new target.

Through an agreement with the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency, the range is receiving demilitarized equipment to include trucks and armored vehicles. That means that taxpayers don't have to spend so much on replacing sheet metal targets designed

to look like the real thing. It also means tax dollars aren't needed to dispose of old military hardware.

The program is known as Disposition Services and it has allowed the government to rid itself of more than \$2.2 billion of outdated equipment during the past four years by shipping it to ranges like Warren Grove.

In the words of a Defense Logistics Agency official: "The use of these items for targets/training aids is a cost avoidance for both the taxpayer, DLA, and a unit like the Warren Grove Range, and a win for the warfighter."

During the last fiscal year, five Air



*Left: U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Bryan O'Neill, range section chief, Warren Grove Gunnery Range, stands beside a demilitarized M88A1 armored recovery vehicle Mar. 2, 2017. The M88 armored recovery vehicle was acquired from the Defense Logistics Agency. Above: Aerial view of M113A2 armored personnel carriers acquired from the Defense Logistics Agency through the Reutilization Transfer Donation program, are ready to become targets at the Warren Grove Gunnery Range Mar. 2, 2017. The eighteen vehicles resulting in a cost savings of almost \$3 million. Below: U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. R. Scott Williams, left, commander, Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, presents his commander's coin to Master Sgt. Bryan O'Neill at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J., Feb. 16, 2017. O'Neill was lauded for his accomplishments at the Warren Grove Bombing Range.*



National Guard units saved a combined total of more than \$28 million by requisitioning property through the DLA.

O'Neill is proud that the Jersey Devils are part of that cost savings.

"This is a great process," said O'Neill. "That's what's neat about working at the range; you get to be creative with building what you need to build to make it the most realistic training for these Airmen."

# ACTIVE SHOOTER



Soldiers with the 328th Military Police Company conduct an active shooter drill with Camden County Sheriff Department officers at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill, N.J., Feb. 4, 2017. The MPs learned how to react to a real-world Active Shooter in scenarios where they were armed and unarmed. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young/Released)

# AIRMAN SELECTED AS ANG'S TOP ATHLETE

By Tech. Sgt. Andrew Merlock, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

New Jersey Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Danielle Todman was selected by the Air National Guard as the Female Athlete of the Year.

Todman, a member of the 177th Fighter Wing Force Support Squadron, competes on the Air Force Track Team and is currently an alternate for the U.S. Olympic Bobsled team.

"I was humbled and shocked," Todman said. "I don't do this for notoriety, I do this to inspire others."

Todman enlisted in the Air Force in 2006 and during her six years of service, she competed with the United States Track Team and the United States Air Force Track Team. She enlisted with the 177th in 2013 and serves as a traditional Guardsman. In her personal life, she works as a personal trainer in addition to coaching the Newark Technical High School track team.



*Staff Sgt. Danielle Todman, right, 100th Air Refueling Wing, leads the way in the women's 800-meter event at the Headquarters Allied Air Force Track and Field Championships, Heusden-Zolder, Belgium, Sept. 7, 2011. Todman placed on the U.S. Air Force Track in Europe team, competing in the heptathlon, which is comprised of the 100-meter, 800-meter, long jump, high jump, shot put, javelin, and Swedish relay events. (Courtesy photo)*

"FAILURE IS NOT FATAL. IT'S A 'FIRST ATTEMPT IN LEARNING.' JUST BECAUSE YOU FAIL, YOU DID NOT FAIL AS A PERSON. YOU MUST ASK FOR HELP. YOU CAN'T GET ANY BETTER IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING WRONG."

"I help them recognize the why and how to get better," Todman explained about coaching.

"Earlier in life, I was at a point when I wanted to be better and didn't know how. I want to help people accomplish things they didn't think was possible."

Even after competing in track while attending Bishop George Ahr High School and Bucknell University, Todman continues to improve. For instance, in 2015, she was selected to represent the United States at the Military World Games 400-meter hurdles event, which she ran in 59.69 seconds. Her personal best in the same event while attending Bucknell was 62.29 seconds.

"Improvement is a platform," Todman explained. "My mom paved the way by serving as an inspiration to me. I also try to lead by example

the best I can as a supervisor, trainer, and coach."

Todman continues to lead and set the example for her fellow Airmen, especially in the area of the Air

Force Fitness Program. The program's goal is to motivate members to participate in a year-round physical conditioning program that emphasizes total fitness, to include proper aerobic conditioning, muscular fitness training, and healthy eating in order to maintain a higher level of readiness.

"Failure is not fatal," Todman said about Airmen struggling to meet fitness standards. "It's a 'First Attempt in Learning.' Just because you fail, you did not fail as a person. You must ask for help. You can't get any better if you don't know what you're doing wrong."



# CYBER WARRIORS WANTED

By Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Wooley  
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office

Do you have what it takes to fight and win on the battlefield of the future?

The New Jersey Army National Guard wants Soldiers with the passion, aptitude, and drive to join its first Cyber Protection Team.

The team will include enlisted, warrant, and officers. All will become part of the Army's newest branch – Cyber, which has been designated the 17-series career field and is considered a Combat Arms branch, according to U.S. Army Cyber Command.

Cyber Protection Team 173 will be a joint partnership be-

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***"It is an opportunity to become one of the elite few."***

**LT. COL. EDWARD K. DION**

**NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER (G6)**

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tween the New Jersey and New York. Fourteen team members will be from New Jersey and the unit will perform federal and state missions. All of the Soldiers on the team will train and operate on a traditional part-time basis. The New Jersey-New York team is one of 10 National Guard Cyber Protection Teams being stood up.

"It is an opportunity to become one of the elite few," said Lt. Col. Edward K. Dion, the New Jersey Army National Guard Chief Information Officer (G6). "Soldiers on this team will be on par with Cyber Warriors anywhere within the Department of Defense or the federal government."

Dion said that successful applicants may come from a variety of backgrounds and occupational specialties, but must share a passion and aptitude for the cyber/information technology field.

Other requirements to be considered for the Cyber Protection Team:

- Ability to obtain a top secret security clearance.
- U.S. citizen.
- Physically and mentally fit.

Current members of the New Jersey Army National Guard interested in competing for a position on the Cyber Protection Team may submit a resume to:

[ng.nj.njarng.mbx.cpt-applicants@mail.mil](mailto:ng.nj.njarng.mbx.cpt-applicants@mail.mil)

Include your military email address on the resume. All responses and future correspondence will be conducted using only the ".mil" system.

(U.S. Army graphic by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young/Released)



# DZ TRAINING ENHANCES PARTNERSHIP

Story by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht  
New Jersey National Guard  
Public Affairs Office

Photo by Mark C. Olsen  
New Jersey National Guard  
Public Affairs Office



The wavering hum of aircraft echoed through the chilly skies over Coyle Field in Barnegat Township, N.J., Feb. 10, 2017, as New Jersey Air National Guard (NJANG) Airmen learned the skills needed to be Drop Zone Safety Officers.

The Guardsmen were joined by active duty Airmen from the 621st Contingency Response Wing in a class taught by drop zone control instructor Master Sgt. Chris Coarse with the 166th Airlift Wing's Weapons and Tactics office, Delaware Air National Guard.

The training was divided into two parts; the first was classroom instruction at Warren Grove Range, followed by a practical exercise at Coyle Field, which featured air drops from 166th Airlift Wing C-130H Hercules.

Throughout the training Coarse stressed the importance of drop zone safety.

"Drop Zone Safety Officers ensure the DZ meets all

operational and safety requirements, and looks out for various hazards such as powerlines, trees, bodies of water, and personnel within the drop zone," said Coarse.

"We need to know what is going on in our DZ before, during, and after a drop."

Master Sgt. Christopher Donohue with the NJANG's 227th Air Support Operations Squadron made sure that a large contingent of Airmen from his section attended the training.

"This training is a fantastic opportunity to get our guys qualified to work drop zones, which is something we're doing more and more of lately," said Donohue. "The 166th Airlift Wing are great to work with. Right now we jump with them, and this is going to be another skill set that we can use to train with them at the drop zones here in N.J."

Master Sgt. Michael Mimler, Range Operations Manager at Warren Grove Range, added that the course was

another milestone for the New Jersey Guardsmen.

"We're adding the capability to do airborne and cargo drops at Warren Grove Range," said Mimler. "To add this kind of mission to our tool-set is only going to enhance the level of training opportunities for the variety of units that use the range."

Braving frigid temperatures, Airmen set up a raised angle marker, used anemometers to measure wind speed, and operated radios to contact circling aircraft above Coyle DZ.

During the first run, cheers were heard as a training parachute launched from the passing aircraft landed near the drop zone marker.

Coarse lauded the working relationship between the Delaware and New Jersey Air National Guard.

"The states working together is a force multiplier," said Coarse. "Using all of our resources, our forces can show their viability."

# UNCOMMON SENSE

**Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Ross Whitley  
108th Wing Public Affairs Office**

“Any red hat, well unless you’ve been here a while, then its pink,” said Tech. Sgt. William M. Lonzson, 108th Security Forces Squadron, referring to another combat arms instructor’s red hat that identifies them as instructors on the firing range.

“They [the red hat] used to be a lot harder to get,” said Staff Sgt. Stephen J. Lisi, combat arms instructor.

“Every time someone would go to the schoolhouse to be trained we would tell them, ‘Don’t forget to pick up so many red hats.’ And then give them a bunch of sizes for the guys [instructors] in the unit,” said Lisi.

“Now you can get them anywhere. Just...pick up a plain red hat and have combat arms embroidered on it,” said Lonzson.

While acquiring the hat is one thing, Lonzson stated that the training involved to earn it was very different.

To be an instructor, they must complete an eight-week training course in San Antonio for the initial 3-skill level. Once they return to their home unit they complete a career development course to receive their 5-skill level, and then they can complete a lead instructor evaluation.

During the evaluation, a new instructor has to teach the course to the lead combat arms training and maintenance instructor and then do it again with the noncommissioned officer in charge of combat arms.

The new course that security forces is teaching is more realistic for Airmen who will deploy, teaching a full range of fire including close combat drills where they practice transitioning between the M4 carbine to the M9 pistol seamlessly.

“I love it. It’s great out here, get outside getting people qualified,” said Senior Airman Raymond J. Buckno. “CATM instructors get to see everyone from the Wing.”



*Above: U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. William Lonzson, combat arms instructor, 108th Security Forces Squadron, hands a student a magazine for use in the Airmen’s next round of firing for deployment qualification at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Feb. 26, 2017. Bottom left: 108th Security Forces Squadron members pause, as the range safety officer ensures the range is safe, before reviewing the shooter’s targets.*



# NDI AIRMEN MAKE AIRCRAFT SAFE

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Matt Hecht, 108th Wing Public Affairs Office

Under the cover of darkness, Airmen from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 108th Wing nondestructive inspection (NDI) shop pour water and shine ultraviolet lights over magnetized aircraft parts, looking for imperfections or cracks with careful eyes. Finding something might mean saving an aircraft, and more importantly, saving lives.

"I love what I do," said Staff Sgt. Eric Suarez, NDI noncommissioned officer in charge.

NDI Airmen have a variety of technological techniques at their disposal, from fluorescent penetrant to magnetic particle and eddy current testing. Their shops look less like an Air Force office and more like a mad scientist's laboratory.

Suarez, with six years' experience in the military, feels that the different challenges make being in NDI exciting.

"You're always going to find something different every time," said Suarez. "No two inspections are ever the same, it keeps us on our toes."

While many maintenance jobs have a more linear process, NDI constantly requires Airmen to be challenged in how they approach a job.

"I enjoy the problem solving," said Senior Airman Ronald Anazco, who's been with the 108th Wing for eight months. "There's no one way to do something, sometimes we have to try different methods and think outside the box."

NDI Airmen do everything from scheduled inspections to special cases such as bird strikes.

"If someone suspects a crack we'll have to go out there and improvise, we have the technical orders that set our general parameters, but

*U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Ronald Anazco from the 108th Maintenance Squadron nondestructive inspection (NDI) shop looks over a KC-135 Stratotanker part during a training session at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., April 22, 2017. NDI airmen have a variety of technological techniques at their disposal, from fluorescent penetrant to magnetic particle and eddy current testing.*

when we get out there we have to determine the best way to inspect and figure out whether it's cracked or not," said Suarez.

For these NDI Airmen, their profession is more than just a job; it's a passion.

Honestly, for me, it's awesome," said Suarez. "I've been wanting to do this since I was a little kid. I come in here now knowing how I inspect and how I interpret defects can really make or break a situation. If I do it the wrong way, it can really impact lives."

Anazco reflected for a moment, and cited his early days in the Air Force as the roots to what NDI is all about.

"In the military, starting from basic training they instill in you (an) attention to detail, and one of the key things in our job is to be attentive to what we're doing," said Anazco. "If we give less than 100 percent, and slip up, it can cost us equipment, an aircraft, and lives."

Being in NDI has also given these Airmen a great appreciation for the complexity of the KC-135 Stratotankers they service.

"Next thing you know, there's a part coming into your shop that you've never seen before, and it can be such a small part, but it can have such a great importance to that aircraft," said Suarez. "There's a wow factor when you're inspecting major components of an aircraft that refuels others to keep them in the fight."

"It's a great feeling coming to work every day and enjoying it, and knowing I'm making a difference," said Suarez.



# BECOMING FIRST WITH “HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE”

Story and photo by Senior Airman Shane S. Karp, 177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

After taking the military oath of office, Morris became the first African-American female to serve as chaplain in the history of the 177th Fighter Wing.

“It was met with great humility and gratitude to know I am the first,” said Morris. “I will continue to make pathways for others to continue to pursue their goals, no matter their trials or difficulty.”

Morris said her path to the New Jersey Air National Guard was not an easy one, as many doors were closed for her along the way, and claims Dr. Maya Angelou as her role model and inspiration.

“She helps me relate that others have been there before me, and I am also able to look back and exude the strength I need to move forward,” said Morris. “She was very influential to me in my youth, as well as in my adult life.”

In attendance at the ceremony were several friends and family members, as well as Brig. Gen. Michael Cuniff, The Adjutant General; Brig. Gen. Kevin Keehn, Commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard, and Col. John DiDonna, Commander of the 177th Fighter Wing.

Morris began her career as an Airmen in September 1995 and has served at various locations including Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., with the Wyoming Air National Guard, as well as Masirah Island, Oman; Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base and Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait.

“Wyoming, Seymour Johnson, Al Salem, Oman, and everyone else’s loss, is the New Jersey Air National Guard’s gain,” said Cuniff.

Throughout the years, Morris says she has mentored many, and she aims to bring that experience to the Airmen here at the 177th.

“My goal is to be a great asset to our



chaplain team,” said Morris. “I want to serve our Airmen with transparency, offering spiritual service to help them to be the best Airmen they can be.”

**Brig. Gen. Michael Cuniff, left, the Adjutant General, administers the oath of enlistment to U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Anita Morris, a chaplain with the New Jersey Air National Guard’s 177th Fighter Wing, at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, Feb. 12, 2017.**

# Sky high reenlistment

Story by Capt. Amelia Thatcher  
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Photos by Sgt. Jorge Morales  
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Four Soldiers of the 102nd Cavalry Regiment, New Jersey Army National Guard, reenlisted aboard a CH-47 Chinook helicopter June 2, 2017, raising their right hands in between training events at Fort Pickett, Va.

With the big twin-rotor aircraft cruising at 3,200 feet over west-central Virginia, the reenlistees unbuckled themselves and stood up in the belly of the helicopter for the swearing-in and awards presentation.

Over the roar of the engines and blades, Sgt. 1st Class John Cosel and Spc. Patrick Callan of 1st Platoon, A Troop were sworn in by their platoon leader, 1st Lt. John Allen. 2nd Platoon leader 1st Lt. Jonathan Warren yelled the oath over the din of the helicopter to his platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Burke, and squadron commander Maj. Dennis Stiles stood with Sgt. Mark Fitzgerald of the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop. Cosel and Burke were also awarded Army Achievement Medals for their role in a live fire exercise.

After a half-dozen rounds of bro-hugs and a bevy of selfies, the Chinook banked around and headed back to-

ward Blackstone Army Airfield, returning the cavalrymen to solid ground and the few solid training days remaining in the Exportable Combat Training Capability exercise, which provides realistic training for National Guard brigade combat teams.

"That was cool," the reenlistees agreed solemnly – even though they'd had to shout their oaths at the top of their lungs in a losing competition with the Army's loudest helicopter.

For Fitzgerald, a registered nurse and noncommissioned officer in charge of the 102nd Squadron Aid Station, the reenlistment came on the heels of his section scoring well on an evaluation of how well they could handle a mass casualty training exercise.

"We kicked ass," he said.

Fitzgerald returned to Army life in 2010, joining the 102nd after a 20-year break in service, with 13 years of prior service on active duty.

"I missed it for some strange reason," he chortled. And now he has a few more years to enjoy it.



Spc. Patrick Callan, right, recites the reenlistment oath with 1st Lt. John Allen, both with the 1-102nd Cavalry Regiment, New Jersey Army National Guard, aboard a CH-47 Chinook helicopter over Fort Pickett, Va., June 2, 2017.



# Building esprit de corps

Story and photo by  
Master Sgt. Andrew J. Moseley  
177th Fighter Wing  
Public Affairs Office

**At most Air Force** bases there is a building called the engine test cell facility, or simply the Hush House.

These test cell facilities' are used to perform diagnostic, troubleshooting, and follow-on maintenance on engines mounted on a modular rail and cart system, as well as engine testing on aircraft.

Inside the facility, the engine is directed toward the exhaust tube. The tube serves two purposes: it directs the thrust out of the building while dampening the noise produced by the engine.

And each test cell facility has the same basic cookie cutter appearance.

Except for the one at the 177th Fighter Wing located at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base.

The 177th Propulsion Element Airmen wanted something more and decided to put in the time and effort to make their facility unique.

They got together, designed and painted a 177th unit banner incorporating the American flag and the Jersey Devil – the symbol of the 177th Fighter Wing – over the exhaust tube.

"I made the design and the stencils and taped out the lines for the flag graphics and the stars," said Staff Sgt. Timothy J. L. Hinlicky, 177th propulsion systems journeyman.

The painting was a collaboration between the full-time Airmen and traditional Guardsmen.

"The main thing is that it was a way to add your own personal pride in the unit, the state and the country," said Staff Sgt. Christopher G. Georgieff, 177th propulsion technician.



177th Propulsion Element Airmen, left-right, U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Robert F. Taylor Jr., Staff Sgts. Christopher G. Georgieff and Timothy J. L. Hinlicky, Senior Airman Casey McKenna, and Master Sgt. Andre L. Lazaro pose for a group photo in front of the morale painting they designed and created at the 177th Fighter Wing's engine test cell facility, at the Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, N.J., Jan. 31, 2017.

***"The main thing is that it was a way to add your own personal pride in the unit, the state and the country."***

**STAFF SGT. CHRISTOPHER G. GEORGIEFF, 177TH PROPULSION ELEMENT**



# PAST MEETS PRESENT

U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters with the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, fly over the Altun Ha Mayan ruins, located in Belize, May 5, 2017. The 1-150th provided aviation support for Beyond the Horizon 2017 - Belize including moving personnel to work sites, as well as medical evacuation. (U.S Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Douglas W. McNeil/Released)