

Senior Leaders 'Building readiness, lethality'

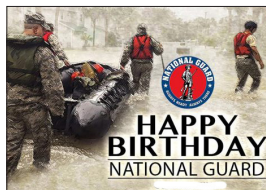


"The professionalism, caliber and attitude of our troops is the best I've seen in my career. It is humbling and uplifting to see their spirit for service to our nation..."

— Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel
Chief, National Guard Bureau
Nov. 25, 2018
Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait

On Point National Guard Birthday

The National Guard is the oldest military force in the Department of Defense and will celebrate its 382nd birthday on Dec. 13, 2018. The Guard traces its lineage to the Massachusetts militias that defended their



settlements and colony against attack. The National Guard has answered the nation's call since 1636 when the first militias in North America were organized into three permanent regiments: East, South and North Regiments. The 343,500-strong Army National Guard force remains a vital part of the Total Army. Currently, nearly 23,000 Soldiers are gathered overseas supporting Combatant Commands.

Blended Retirement System

The Blended Retirement System (BRS) blends the traditional legacy retirement pension with a defined contribution benefit into a Thrift Savings Plan. The BRS provides retirement savings benefits for the majority of service members, including those who serve fewer than 20 years.



Exercise Yama Sakura 75 begins in Japan



Lt. Gen. Gary J. Volesky (left), First Corps commanding general and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Lt. Gen. Masato Taura, Northern Army commanding general, depart the opening ceremony for exercise Yama Sakura 75 after delivering remarks and guidance to their troops at Camp Higashi - Chitose, Japan, Dec. 9, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Steve Segin)

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Dominique J. Shelton, TRANSCOM JPSE

Hundreds of U.S. Army and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) service members gathered Dec. 9, 2018 at Camp Higashi-Chitose, Hokkaido, Japan, to kick off the bilateral Japanese and U.S. opening ceremony for the Japan-based exercise Yama Sakura 75.

Yama Sakura 75 is the 37th iteration of the bilateral, command post exercise between the two nations. The U. S. Army's I Corps and the JGSDF's Northern Army used the exercise to enhance their combat readiness, as well as demonstrate U.S. support to security interests of allies within the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

"The Soldiers of America's First Corps are committed to our partnership, and this exercise

is an opportunity to learn, grow and build capacity in both of our organizations," said Lt. Gen. Gary J. Volesky, the commander of I Corps. "A critical objective for this exercise is strengthening the Japanese military alliance and building combined readiness across our formations."

During the ceremony, Volesky and JGSDF Lt. Gen. Masato Taura, Northern Army commanding general, spoke to the exercise participants about strengthening trust while enhancing their understanding of war fighting capabilities between both countries.

"As a combined joint task force, we have an opportunity to create deeper interoperability between our militaries through shared understanding," said Volesky. "Our commitment to each other is enduring, and I believe this will show throughout the exercise."

FORSCOM in the news

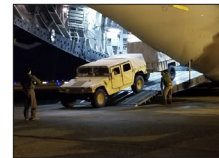
A Warrant Officer from First Army was recently recognized as **the top warrant officer in the FORSCOM Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award competition.**



Over 120 82nd Airborne Division field artillery Paratroopers **recently competed in the annual Best of the Best Competition** at Fort Bragg, N.C.



Soldiers from the 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command **recently participated in Operation Rainier War**, 62nd Airlift Wing's Rapid Mobility Exercise.



Soldiers assigned to 1st Cavalry Division and Georgian forces **recently conducted a multinational combined arms live fire event** in Vaziani Training Area, Georgia.



Leaders from the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives Command, recently **led the Bel Air Christmas Parade** in Bel Air, Md.



Meet your Army



Sgt. Zabi Abraham (center), an advisor with the 5th Battalion, 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade, interprets a conversation between Lt. Col. Zachary Miller (right), battalion commander, and an Afghan National Army officer near Kabul, Afghanistan, Sept. 16, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Sean Kimmons)

TOP SHOTS

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Right Soldiers assigned to 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Georgian Armed Forces, conducted a multi-national platoon live fire qualification in support of the Georgia Defense Readiness Program, Nov. 24-26, 2018, at Vaziani Training Area, Georgia. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Hannah Tarkelly)

Left 1st Lt. Dustin St. Arnaud (left) and Sgt. Garrett Foskitt, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, swim 300 meters with a nearly 150 pound poncho raft during the Best Sapper Competition, Fort Carson, Colo., Nov. 28, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Asa Bingham)



Above Soldiers assigned to 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, fire a single volley during a 21-Gun Salute to honor the passing of former U.S. President, George H.W. Bush, Dec. 6, 2018, at Fort Carson, Colo. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Matthew Rabahy)



Above An infantryman assigned to B Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, practices detonating an M33 Inert AP Mine, Nov. 19, 2018, at Fort Stewart, Ga. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jordyn Worshek)

Left Paratroopers from 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, conduct a training patrol alongside British paratroopers of 2PARA, 16 Air Assault Brigade, Nov. 27, 2018, in Kenya, Africa. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. John Lytle)



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