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CTARNG Firefighters, Cyber Specialists to Deploy

MAJ. MIKE PETERSEN
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

HARTFORD, Conn. – Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, Senator Richard Blumenthal, and Maj. Gen. Fran Evon, Adjutant General and Commander of the Connecticut National Guard, joined friends, family and Guardsmen in sending off Soldiers assigned to the 256th Engineer Detachment and Detachment 1, 146th Cyber Warfare Company as they prepare to deploy in the coming weeks.

They also witnessed a little history, as members of the Connecticut National Guard prepared to embark on the state's first-ever cyber deployment

Held at the Governor William A. O'Neill Armory, the official party was rounded out by Brig. Gen. Gerald McDonald, Assistant Adjutant General, and Command Sgt. Maj. John Carragher, the Senior Enlisted Leader of the Connecticut Army National Guard.

Attendees listened as Wyman and Blumenthal both spoke about how they much prefer welcome home ceremonies to sendoff ceremonies, then thanked the deployers for their service.

This will be the second visit to Romania in five years for the 256th Engineer Detachment. In 2014, the unit spent 29 days in country. This time around, they will be on ground much longer, supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel. Their mission: to provide airfield firefighting and emergency response services.

"We are all trained on how to handle any sort of [airport base firefighting] incident and then on the same

side, we also do structural firefighting," Spc. Stephen Bittel told Connecticut Public Radio in an interview after the ceremony. "We all come with a different skillset. A lot of us do firefighting on the civilian side as well."

For the deployers of the Cyber Warfare Company, this is new territory. Never has the Connecticut National Guard executed a cyber mission in this vein, and Capt. Tyler Sams is excited for the opportunity in front of him.

"The unit's going to be primarily focused on protecting and defending United States' critical infrastructure and key resources so we're going to help try to keep the lights on," Sams said in an interview.

Evon was quick to highlight the diversity of these missions.

"These two missions highlight the Guard's commitment to defending the nation no matter the location," Evon said in a press release. "Two highly-specialized units with two very different missions show what Connecticut Guardsmen and today's Citizen-Soldiers can bring to the table."



Members of the 256th Engineer Detachment are presented with a Connecticut flag by Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman during their formal send off ceremony at the William A. O'Neill Armory, Dec. 7. The members of the firefighting detachment will deploy to Romania where they will provide airfield firefighting and emergency response services in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel. Not pictured, members of Detachment 1, 146th Cyber Warfare Company also received a flag as they prepare for their upcoming deployment defending United States' critical infrastructure. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

At the ceremony, Evon thanked family, friends and employers of Guardsmen, who also have to make a sacrifice while their Guardsman focuses on the mission ahead.

Both deployments are expected to last approximately a year.

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How to Stay Safe When A Power Outage Threatens

FEMA.GOV

The dangers of high winds and ice during winter storms make the threat of cold weather power outages a reality. Protect yourself and your loved ones by following these preparation and survival tips.

Prepare Now
Take an inventory now of the items you need that rely on electricity.

Talk to your medical provider about a power outage plan for medical devices powered by electricity and refrigerated medicines. Find out how long medication can be stored at higher temperatures and get specific guidance for any medications that are critical for life.

Plan for batteries and other alternatives to meet your needs when the power goes out.

Sign up for local alerts and warning systems. Monitor weather reports.

Install carbon monoxide detectors with battery backup in central locations on every level of your home.

Determine whether your home phone will work in a power outage and how long battery backup will last.

Review the supplies that are available in case of no power. Have flashlights with extra batteries for every household member. Have enough nonperishable food and water.

Use a thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer so that you can know the temperature when the power is restored.

Keep mobile phones and other electric equipment charged and gas tanks full.

Survive During
Keep freezers and refrigerators closed. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary. Monitor temperatures with a thermometer.
Use food supplies that do not require refrigeration.

Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators, camp stoves, or charcoal grills should always be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows. Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home.

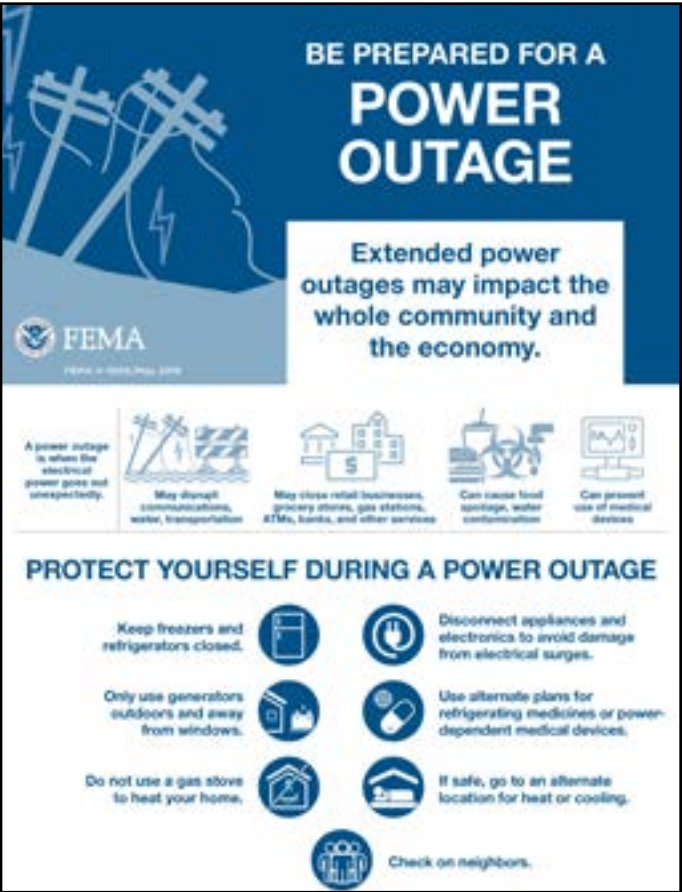
Check on your neighbors. Older adults and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures.

Go to a community location with power if heat or cold is extreme.

Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment, or electronics. Power may return with momentary “surges” or “spikes” that can cause damage.

Be Safe After
When in doubt, throw it out! Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more, or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

If the power is out for more than a day, discard any medication that should be refrigerated, unless the drug’s label says otherwise. If a life depends on the refrigerated drugs, consult a doctor or pharmacist and use medicine only until a new supply is available.



To learn more about preparing for a cold weather power outage, and to stay up-to-date on emergencies in your area, download the FEMA or the CT Prepares apps on your smartphone.

For more information about emergency preparedness, contact 1st Lt. Patrick Hevey, Emergency Management Program Coordinator, at 860-548-3221.

142nd Trains at Hartford Hospital

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon
JFHQ Public Affairs, CTARNG

HARTFORD, Conn. - The hi-tech medical training mannequins in the Hartford Hospital Center of Education, Simulation and Innovation can simulate countless injuries: bleeding, bruising, broken bones, choking, and some are even designed to simulate giving birth.

The CESI simulations were no match for the Soldiers of the Connecticut Army National Guard’s 142nd Medical Company of Naugatuck, who handled the multiple training scenario thrown their way with poise and confidence, Nov. 17 at Hartford Hospital.

The 142nd Medical Company, which consists mainly of doctors, nurses and emergency medical technicians, spent the entire day in the hospital’s training center. Although the 142nd had previously trained in CESI, for some of the Soldiers this was their first-time taking part in the program.

Spc. Ashley Guimond said her experience as a civilian nurse at Backus Hospital has helped her in her role as a Combat Medic Specialist. Guimond joined the CTARNG in 2016 after receiving her nursing degree from Three Rivers Community College in Norwich.

“Being a nurse has definitely made me a better medic,” she said. It’s a different scope of practice, and the CESI training has really helped me put both sides together.”

CESI first opened its doors to the public in 1999 as one of the region’s first medical simulation training facilities. It has since expanded from 900 square feet to 10,000 and has hosted countless training events for local, regional,



142nd Area Support Medical Company Combat Medics Spc. Elmer Cardenas (left) and Spc. Paolo Dinglasan practice administering intravenous fluids, Nov. 17 at the Hartford Hospital CESI. Cardenas said the CESI training was awesome and very useful to him as a Combat Medic. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)

national and international healthcare providers to include police, firefighters, emergency medical services and military personnel.

The center provides simulated training scenarios in almost every medical specialty, including battlefield injury simulation to mimic conditions military servicemembers may experience during activations.

The CESI Director of Operations, Stephen Donahue, said he is humbled to support the great work of the many military men and women who have trained at CESI. He said that it’s the job of the center’s staff to make sure that they are continuously adjusting and improving in order to meet the training needs of the many units that use the center.

“The 142nd did a great job today,” Donahue said. “They are a hardworking group. I’m so flattered working with military personnel. We’ll do our best to make sure that the training here continues to complement their duties.”

1st Lt. James Grindley, 142nd Treatment Platoon Leader, is one of the few Soldiers in his unit that does not have a medical background. He said he was especially inspired to take part in CESI training for the second time in his tenure with the 142nd.

“This is vital training for me as the [platoon leader], and important because it allows all of us to really see our essential tasks,” he said. “The resources here at CESI are incredible and we are lucky that the center is so close to home.”

The medical training mannequins at CESI can also talk (via speakers operated from a control room). During one of the training scenarios a mannequin simulating suffering from an allergic reaction revealed that it had eaten cookies that may or may not have contained peanuts. This was no shock to Sgt. Cory Fox who is employed as a civilian as an Emergency Medical Technician.

“We see everything as EMT’s,” he said, with a smile. “This training is good for us, because as Soldiers we have to be trained for everything as well.”



Spc. Lucas Risley, 142nd Area Support Medical Company Combat Medic, checks the vital signs of a SimMan 3G Mannequin patient Nov. 17 at the Hartford Hospital Center of Education, Simulation and Innovation. The 142nd trains annually at the CESI. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs)

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Remembering a Veteran's Service in "the Forgotten War"

TECH. SGT. TAMARA R. DABNEY
103RD AIRLIFT WING, PUBLIC AFFAIRS
CONNECTICUT AIR NATIONAL GUARD

WINDSOR LOCKS, Conn.-- Lost medals and rarely spoken memories of a war seldom mentioned—this is what inspired Bob Petrucci, Adjutant and Senior Vice Commander of American Legion Post 68, and his friend Dave Lallier, to honor 91-year-old Korean War veteran, Robert Rawlings.

In a ceremony held Nov. 27, 2018 at the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, Conn., family, friends, and fellow veterans joined together to bear witness as Rawlings was presented with the medals he earned during the Korean War.

This tribute, which came as a complete surprise to Rawlings, was the final step in a plan hatched by Lallier to replace Rawlings’ medals after learning they had been lost.

“This all came about with Dave Lallier, who happens to be Mr. Rawlings’ neighbor,” said Petrucci. “One day, Dave went to Mr. Rawlings and said he’d like to see his medals. Bob [Rawlings] said, he didn’t have them, he misplaced them, he can’t find them. It was coming very close to Bob’s birthday, so Dave went to [Bob’s] wife, Jean, and asked if she would mind if he contacted Senator Blumenthal to see if we could recover his medals. She said ‘no, go for it.’ So it was all done behind Bob’s back.”

According to family and friends, Rawlings rarely speaks about his military service. Rawlings enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1951, and in 1952, became a commissioned officer. Shortly after, he deployed to Korea as an F-86 pilot. Hearing these seldom-told stories from Rawlings about what it was like to fly in combat over the Korean peninsula inspired Lallier to take action. The first order of business was recovering the lost medals. Lallier contacted Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal who, in addition to replacing the lost medals, had them encased in a wooden shadow box and shipped to Mr. Rawlings’ home. However, replacing the medals was not enough for Lallier; he and Petrucci wanted the medals formally presented to Rawlings. The two men received their wish when the Commander of the 103rd Airlift Wing, Col. Stephen R. Gwinn, agreed to present the medals during a surprise ceremony. Thomas Saadi, Connecticut Veterans Affairs Commissioner, was also invited and would honor Rawlings during the ceremony by presenting him with the Commissioner’s Coin.

Unlike World War II and the Vietnam War, coverage of the Korean War was heavily censored. Five million soldiers and civilians, including 40,000 Americans, lost their lives during the four-year conflict; yet, memories of the war seem to have faded from the American psyche. Over the years, the Korean War became known as the “Forgotten War.”



A side-by-side photo collage of Korean War veteran Robert Rawlings standing next to a North American F-86 Sabre fighter jet in the 1950's (left) and over 60 years later (right), at the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, Conn., Nov. 27. Rawlings flew the F-86 in combat during the Korean War, and was honored for his service during a ceremony at the museum, during which the Commander of the 103rd Airlift Wing, Col. Stephen R. Gwinn, presented him with the medals that he earned during the war. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Tamara R. Dabney, 103rd Airlift Wing, Public Affairs, CTANG)

Petrucci, a proud Vietnam Era veteran of the United States Navy, saw the ceremony as a way to help a Korean War veteran get the recognition that he deserved.

“I’m very, very proud of being a veteran and just want to do anything I can to help out my fellow veterans,” said Petrucci. “We have to continue to recognize these Korean War vets and put on ceremonies such as this. We do so many for Vietnam War veterans and [Korean War veterans] are overshadowed. [They may] have been somewhat forgotten, but I remember.”

Col. Stephen R. Gwinn, a decorated C-130 pilot who flew in combat during the Global War on Terrorism, recalled a trip to Washington, D.C., in which the Korean War memorial overshadowed by other war memorials.

“I immediately think of the Korean War monument down in D.C.; the bronze soldiers walking through the fields,” said Gwinn. “It’s a unique monument and it’s kind of off to the side and not as shiny and out there like the Vietnam Memorial, the World War II Memorial, or even the World War I Memorial.”

In a single deployment to Korea, Rawlings flew a total of 92 combat sorties, which, according to Gwinn, is a remarkable feat considering the perilous circumstances of aerial combat during the Korean War.

“We think of today, in modern times, where we have air superiority over everybody,” said Gwinn. “Our pilots are more safe with more technology, more backup, more resources, whereas these guys were flying the newest technology at the time, which was not necessarily the safest technology, but they did it without question and without fear. Going up 92 times in one tour is absolutely amazing.”

Following the ceremony, Rawlings was escorted to a hangar where a North American F-86 Sabre was stored. As he ran his hand across the nose of the aircraft, memories of his time flying through the Korean skies came flooding back to him. Of the 92 combat sorties Rawlings flew, six of them were intercept missions, in which he faced with the dangerous prospect of engaging a Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15 Soviet fighter jet in a dogfight. His squadron held a record, possibly unbroken to date, for flying the most combat sorties in a 24-hour period; Bob flew five of these sorties himself. Guests from the ceremony, including Gwinn, listened as Rawlings reminisced about the capabilities of the F-86 and what it was like to fly the plane in combat.

“I almost felt like, when he was standing next to the F-86, that he could have gotten in, started it right up and flown it,” said Gwinn.

Today, major headlines concerning tensions between North and South Korea serve as a perpetual reminder that the war between these two countries never officially ended. The Korean Armistice Agreement currently in place only serves as a cease-fire between the military forces of the two Koreas, however, we be thankful for veterans like Robert Rawlings whose efforts ensured some semblance of hope exists for peace between North and South Korea one day.

“What we defended throughout the Cold War is making sure countries didn’t fall to regimes that didn’t adhere to democratic values,” said Gwinn. “What those men and women did in the Korean War secured that for the world, and that cannot be forgotten.”

Troops for Teachers Guides One Soldier from Battlefield to Classroom

MAJ. MIKE PETERSEN
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

For years, Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon wanted to be a teacher.

Simon certainly took the long way, but the Senior Pubic Affairs NCO assigned to the Connecticut Army National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters in Hartford has finally found himself in a classroom he can call his own, teaching 10th grade at Achievement First Hartford High School.

And he has Troops for Teachers to thank for the mentorship and guidance that helped steer him into a career field he always has a passion for.

“Troops for Teachers helped to provide me the mentorship and guidance I needed to stay motivated throughout this entire process,” Simon said. “Being able to speak to likeminded individuals who followed similar paths certainly helped me stay committed to one day becoming an educator.”

Simon, now 36, joined the military out of high school, beginning his career on Active Duty as a Veterinary Food Inspector Specialist stationed in Washington state. After just over two years on active duty, he decided to come back home to Connecticut and join the National



Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon, Senior Public Affairs NCO, assigned to the Connecticut Army National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters, while on deployment as a mortarman, assigned to the 1-102nd Infantry Regiment, Afghanistan, 2010. (Photo courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon)

Guard. During his transition brief, he learned about Troops for Teachers.

He took college classes while on Active Duty, and finished his Associates Degree at Three Rivers Community College in Norwich before earning his Bachelors at the University of Connecticut’s Avery Point Campus in Groton in 2008, and Masters of Fine Arts at Western Connecticut State University in 2011.

But military life came first, and his dreams of becoming an educator had to wait. While assigned to the 1-102nd Infantry Regiment

as an Indirect Fire Infantryman, he was twice deployed to Afghanistan – once in 2006, and then again in 2010.

“Those experiences certainly interrupted the flow of my personal educational progress, but a deployment is a sacrifice you are destined to make when you choose the military as a lifestyle,” Simon said.

But through it all, Simon kept in touch with Troops To Teachers advisors and personnel who were able to lead him to where he is today. Advisors, Simon says, who went through similar experiences.

“It was important to take advice from likeminded people,” Simon said.

After his second deployment, Simon served as a substitute teacher in elementary schools in southeastern Connecticut as a way to make a little extra money. He took an internship at UConn, serving as an Assistant Teacher at UConn Avery Point in the English Department. Meanwhile, he kept focused on his education. Simon started a second Master’s Program at Trinity College in 2011.

He also had the opportunity to work as an associate instructor at the Capitol Regional Education Council’s Polaris Center in East Hartford. Each classroom, according to Simon, had two teachers to help support the students’ needs.

“I got a lot of one-on-one time with those kids,” Simon said. “Working there really showed me how



Mr. Simon reviews an exploratory essay assignment with students in his 10th grade, pre-Advanced Placement Seminar class at Achievement First Hartford High School, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 4. Mr. Simon, also known as Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon, Senior Public Affairs NCO, assigned to the Connecticut Army National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters utilized the Connecticut State Department of Education, Troops To Teachers Program to guide him through the teacher certification process all while he maintained a full-time job and traditional status in the CTARNG. (Photo by Allison. L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

compassionate and caring you have to be to be an educator. If you don’t have that, then you’re going to be really challenged (as a teacher).”

He also worked in the public relations field, taking jobs as a press secretary for the House Republican Caucus at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford and then as a communications specialist for CTtransit (The state-owned public bus company).

It was during his time with CTtransit that he decided to hone in and focus on his teaching certification. Through Troops for Teachers, he learned about Connecticut’s Alternative Route to Certification, better known as ARC. While working with one of his mentors, he decided to apply.

“(ARC is) a fantastic program,” Simon said. “For just under a year, I spent every Friday night and all-day Saturdays, plus a six-week student teaching assignment working toward my certification,” he said.

“Coming back from the public relations field, student teaching was a difficult transition for me. I had to build relationships with kids in an extremely short time frame. Classroom management was tough. This was also the first time I had to really put lesson plans together, which meant a lot of late nights. It was hard to get into the swing of things,” he said.

Continued, see TROOPS TO TEACHERS on page 18

Yale ROTC Cadets Invite Flying Yankees to NCO Panel

1ST LT. JENNIFER PIERCE
103RD AIRLIFT WING
CONNECTICUT AIR NATIONAL GUARD

NEW HAVEN, Conn. - Members of the 103rd Airlift Wing participated in an Non Commissioned Officer panel for the Yale University Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets Nov. 15, 2018.

Air Force ROTC is a college program that prepares young men and women to become Air Force officers while earning their degree. Upon completion of the program and college graduation, cadets commission as second lieutenants in the United States Air Force.

Cadets enrolled in the ROTC program at Yale University wanted to hold an NCO panel as an interaction with the enlisted force to maximize their limited program time. NCOs from several different bases were invited to participate, including those from Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., Fort Meade, Md., and Bradley Air National Guard Base, Conn.

“We thought it was important to have the enlisted perspective because as a senior, I’m a bit anxious to commission and have to be a leader for them,” said Cadet Noah Cho, the guest speaker officer and liaison officer for the Yale ROTC program. “We always hear, ‘listen to the first Sergeant, ask the first sergeant,’ but we never actually get to talk to them. The enlisted [Airmen] in our office are administrative. Their role isn’t to mentor us, so having the opportunity to ask freely and be in open discussion with NCOs is really important.”

For many of the cadets, participating in ROTC is their first exposure to military life.

“I’m not from a military family,” Cho said, “so I don’t really know what I’m getting into, besides my training here. The thing that’s most daunting for me is having to lead people that range from a 17-year-old Airman to the senior master sergeant who’s been around for 20 years, but I look forward to getting advice from NCOs and SNCOs, and of course learning from them as well.”

Senior Master Sgt. Melissa Kelly, 103rd Force Support Squadron, was able to participate in the NCO panel. She has more than 18 years of service time and currently works in the Connecticut Air National Guard as the sustainment flight superintendent.

“It’s important to blend the education and knowledge the cadets have with the experiences that the senior NCOs



Non-commissioned officers from Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., Fort Meade, Md., and Bradley Air National Guard Base, Conn., were invited by the Yale University ROTC cadets to participate in an NCO panel in New Haven, Conn, Nov. 15. The Air Force active duty and Air National Guard NCOs provided their own perspectives and advice for these cadets who plan to commission into the United States Air Force upon college graduation. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jennifer Pierce, 103rd Airlift Wing, CTANG)

can bring to the table,” said Kelly. “These folks are going to have to come in and lead people and programs and while they may have the foundation, they don’t have the Air Force experience. The senior NCOs are those subject matter experts that help guide them.”

Kelly believed the NCO panel was a great benefit to the ROTC cadets.

“It was a really great opportunity for them to get real world answers,” she said. “I wish we had more time. I know that they are eager and some of them are commissioning in May. For them, I think they’re anxious about leading people and being the person to make decisions. I expect them to latch onto junior and senior NCOs to gain all the possible knowledge they can. That will help them get their bearings and figure out what their role within that squadron would be and build that mutual respect.”

One of the 103rd Airlift Wing maintenance superintendents had a similar sentiment.

“They were very engaging,” he said. “I wished we had more time with them. The most valuable thing I brought to them I hope was the story about one of the best officers I’ve worked with. She was a foreign entity who came into our shop and when she arrived, she didn’t come in like a bull in a china shop trying to change everything. She came in asking what can she could do to make all of our lives easier every day. She asked what things, what stumbling blocks, what hurdles we encounter every day and asked what she could do as an officer to get rid of those hurdles to make things easier. This was shockingly unlike her predecessor. I relayed this story and I hope they take that with them. It’s a great way to start a new job.”



Non-commissioned officers from Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., Fort Meade, Md., and Bradley Air National Guard Base, Conn., were invited by the Yale University ROTC cadets to participate in an NCO panel in New Haven, Conn, Nov. 15. The Air Force active duty and Air National Guard NCOs provided their own perspectives and advice for these cadets who plan to commission into the United States Air Force upon college graduation. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jennifer Pierce, 103rd Airlift Wing, CTANG)

Freedom Pens Connecticut Teachers, Students Continue Nationwide Project for Service Members

CAPT. MICHAEL VAUGHAN
85TH TROOP COMMAND
CONNECTICUT ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Last spring, members of the 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion received 20 handmade pens as part of the Freedom Pen Project. Wood workers across the country have been making these gifts to send to deployed service members for almost 15 years, and many of us have been lucky enough to get one.

The pens sent to the CSSB were made by Jonathan Arpaia and his students at East Hartford High School during woodshop class and in the after-school woodworking club he oversees.

“The kids really enjoyed making them,” Arpaia said. “It was a great project, and it felt good to give back to our military.”

Arpaia was inspired about hearing how his fellow

Technology Education Teacher, Kurt Dougan, was doing something similar at Simsbury High School. Mr. Dougan has been making pens and sending them to deployed soldiers since 2002. He estimates he has probably made over 4000 pens at this point.

In 2006, I received a pen while a member of the 1-102nd Infantry before having the pleasure of meeting Mr. Dougan. From that time, any unit with a tie to his community has received pens, both Active and National Guard. Certificates of Appreciation from various units can be found throughout Dougan’s Classroom.

On November 8th, I was invited to the third annual Freedom-Penathon, a 22-hour pen making event at Simsbury High School. As I arrived at SHS, I was reminded of the impact the Global War on Terror has had on this little town. The sign outside SHS identifies that part of Farms Village Road as Sgt. Felix M. DelGreco Memorial Highway.

In addition to DelGreco, the Simsbury community has also lost two alumni to PTSD related incidents, Matthew Melanson and Colin Mulhaul. The significance of this 22-hour event isn’t lost, as not only do the students make pens to give to veterans and service members, but they raise money and awareness for PTSD. The students collect pledges for how long they will work on pens through the night and day.

Over 100 students were signed up, and dozens more will drop in to support this project throughout the night running eight wood lathes non-stop. This year’s goal: 450 pens.

Dougan, the 2018 Simsbury Teacher of the Year, is a humble man who inspires others to give back to our veteran community without want of thanks or recognition for himself. He inspires other teachers to give to our community and students to service in various forms, to include several still serving the CTARNG with us.



An example of a handmade Freedom Pen. The Freedom Pen Project is an all volunteer effort that creates and presents custom, hand-crafted pens to American service members overseas. Learn more at <http://freedompens.org/>. (Photo by Capt. Michael Vaughan, 85th Troop Command, CTARNG)

If you are inspired, like Jon and I were, and would like to get involved in the Freedom Pens initiative, please contact me for more information at michael.a.vaughan.mil@mail.mil.



Kurt Dougan, a teacher at Simsbury, High School, makes a pen at a 22-hour Freedom-Penathon at Simsbury High School, Simsbury, Conn., Nov. 8. The Penathon contributed to the National Freedom Pen Project that creates and presents custom, hand-crafted pens to American service members overseas. Dougan has been making Freedom Pens since 2002. (Photo by Capt. Michael Vaughan, 85th Troop Command, CTARNG)



Two East Hartford High School Students create a Freedom Pen on a wood lathe at a 22-hour Freedom-Penathon at Simsbury High School, Simsbury, Conn., Nov. 8. More than 100 students signed up to participate in the event to make pens and to raise money and awareness for Veterans and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. (Photo by Capt. Michael Vaughan, 85th Troop Command, CTARNG)

2018 Year in Review: Part One

Serving Our Community, Exploring Our History, Maintaining Our Readiness

MAJ. MIKE PETERSEN
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

The Connecticut National Guard once again remained Always Ready and Always There in 2018. From groundbreaking and ribbon cutting ceremonies, to multiple deployments, to a change in leadership that had not been seen for 13 years, there was a lot for the nearly 5,000-strong CTNG to be proud of.

Over the next two months, we are taking a look back at some of the highlights the last year brought us. In this edition, we are highlighting January through June. Next month, we'll tackle the second half of the year.

January

The first big event of the year did not take place in Connecticut—or the United States. On Jan. 15, the **143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion** played an integral role in **Allied Spirit VIII**—where they joined 4,000 other participants from a total of 10 nations in an effort to, “develop and enhance the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization and key partner interoperability and readiness,” according to Sgt. Danielle Leach, 143rd CSSB Unit Public Affairs Representative.

Meanwhile, in East Granby, the **103rd Airlift Wing** conducted an operational readiness exercise in an effort to develop full spectrum readiness. Airmen donned gear and equipment to combat a threat in a chemical environment, working towards building readiness in the event of a real-world Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Neurological and Explosive—or CBRNE—threat.

“Our basic mission is to launch C-130s,” said Col. Roy Walton, Vice Commander of the 103rd Airlift Wing. “We put in place a process to launch a C-130 with every piece of that puzzle being done by people wearing chem gear. This is to get people’s heads in the game that they have to be prepared to do this mission in chem gear.”

On Jan. 28, the **14th Civil Support Team** was called in support of a fire at the Willimantic Waste Paper Company. The fire at the 100,000-square foot facility, which holds more than 400 tons of paper and construction materials burned through the day and night as more than 200 firefighters from 14 companies worked to get the blaze under control. The 14th CST arrived to the scene after responding to a call by the Connecticut



103rd Airlift Wing Airmen participate in an operational readiness exercise Jan. 7, 2018, at Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Conn. This exercise prepared Airmen to work in real world CBRNE conditions. (Photo by Tech Sgt. Jeremy Bowcock, 103rd Airlift Wing, Public Affairs, CTANG)



A member of the 103rd Security Forces Squadron celebrates his homecoming with family and friends at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Conn., Feb. 1, 2018. More than 10 Airmen returned on Feb. 1 after a six-month deployment to Kuwait. Members of Security Forces were part of a larger mobilization of approximately 400 Connecticut Airmen who deployed to locations throughout Southwest Asia beginning in Feb. 2017. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jennifer Pierce, 103rd Airlift Wing, Public Affairs)



Staff Sgt. Orly Lozano, a Water Treatment Sergeant assigned to the 143rd CSSB, inspects a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle during preventive maintenance checks and service to ensure the vehicle is ready for movement to Germany in support of Allied Spirit VIII. The CSSB joined over 4,000 other participants from 10 different countries for the exercise in Hohenfels, Germany. (Photo by Sgt. Danielle Leach, 143rd CSSB UPAR)



The 1048th Medium Transportation Company stages vehicles at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, Oklahoma, March 9, 2018. The vehicles were loaded with hundreds of tons in munitions prior to departure for another Army munitions depot as part of Operation Patriot Bandoleer. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jordan Werme, 130th Public Affairs Detachment, Connecticut National Guard.)

Department of Energy to monitor, sample and analyze air quality to advise incident command on public safety recommendations and potential evacuation concerns.

February

The year’s shortest month began with a happy moment for members of the **103rd Security Forces Squadron**, as 10 of its members returned home after more than six months in Kuwait, Feb. 1. The returning Airmen, who were part of a 400-Airmen package that deployed through 2017-18, supported ongoing Expeditionary Combat Support operations that included security in its assigned area of operations

In February, the **Connecticut Air National Guard** was recognized regionally for its Fiscal Year 2017 excellence in Recruiting, taking home awards in eight major categories.

Connecticut’s wins included three individual victories: Senior Master Sgt. Aaron Hann for Recruiting & Retention Superintendent; Master Sgt. Liz Toth for Recruiting & Retention Manager; Tech Sgt. Raymond Ryan for Unit Career Advisor; and the team Patriot award.

“It really is an incredible accomplishment, and a testament to the hard work of the Connecticut Air National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention team,” Hann said. “This team has faced a lot of adversity, so to accomplish what they have accomplished is impressive. A lot of their work is behind the scenes, working nights, weekends and all sorts of hours, to provide both current and prospective Guardsmen with all of the information they need before making such a critical decision. I couldn’t be prouder.”

Many Guardsmen, both Army and

Air, took part in the **2018 National Guard Association of Connecticut** Conference & Ball, held in Rocky Hill for the second consecutive year. With more than 150 members in attendance, NGA board members provided updates, gave out awards, and provided Guard leadership the opportunity to speak.

The end of the month marked the start of **Exercise Arctic Eagle 2018 in Alaska**, and two CTNG units took part. The **1-102nd Infantry Regiment** and **14th CST** took part in the full-scale training exercise, focused extensively on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response.

“I was extremely impressed with the junior members of



Members of the 14th Civil Support Team, CTNG, conduct training operations at Exercise Arctic Eagle 2018 in Valdez, Alaska in February, 2018. The 14th CST joined several national, state and local agencies during the statewide exercise designed to provide opportunities for participants to conduct sustained operations in arctic conditions. (Photo courtesy of First Sgt. Zane Barber, 14th CST, CTNG)

the team on this exercise,” said Maj. Steve MacSweeney, 14th CST Operations Officer. “They outperformed the exercise every step of the way. We were operating out of rental vehicles in the darkness of the Arctic before sunrise, but their performance was never hindered by the conditions, effortlessly they rose to the challenge.”

March

Fostering relationships with other military branches based in the state of Connecticut is an important part of the CTNG’s ability to remain, “Always Ready, Always There.” The **14th Civil Support Team** took an opportunity to get to know their Coast Guard brethren a little better by hosting a capabilities tour and briefing for local Coast Guard personnel stationed right here in state, Mar. 9.

“The hospitality from our partners from the CST will pay dividends towards any future incident that calls us to work together,” said U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Jesse Diaz, Incident Management Division Chief for Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound. “For all threats and hazards teams, it’s key to meet before the incident - and that was the purpose of this visit.”

On the same day, the **1048th Medium Truck Company** was well underway with its Annual Training, participating in **Patriot BANDOLEER**. The Enfield-based unit travelled from its home station via M915A3 and A5 trucks with trailers to McAlester Army Ammunition Plant in Oklahoma, collecting containerized munitions and transported them to Letterkenny Army Depot in Pennsylvania.



Members of the Connecticut Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention team pose for a photo after claiming multiple victories during their regional competition. From left to right: Tech Sgt. Todd Wilkinson, Tech Sgt. Jacob Turcotte, Master Sgt. Liz Toth, Master Sgt. Christopher Grizzle, Tech Sgt. Marc Mojica. (Photo courtesy of Chief Master Sgt. Lisa Hanks, Military Personnel Management Officer, CTANG)

Continued, see 2018 on page 10

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More than 100 Connecticut Guardsmen participated in the mission, and moved loads totaling over 1 million pounds.

“Due to different constraints we are kind of limited to the Northeast in regards to our convoy planning and our driver sustainment,” said Capt. Henry Vargas, Commander of the 1048th MTC. “But this mission gives us the opportunity to provide our Soldiers, some experienced, some inexperienced, that drive time on our tractors and trailers that they’re just not going to receive anywhere else.”

From March 15-18, the **Connecticut Army National Guard** put its best and brightest on display during its annual **Best Warrior Competition**. After three and a half grueling days, **Spc. Morgan Doyle, 141st Medical**



A UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter (left) and a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter (right), land at East Haven Rifle Range, a Connecticut National Guard training facility, March 16, 2018. The helicopters dropped off competitors for the Connecticut Army National Guard's annual Best Warrior Competition. During the four-day competition, both Soldiers and Noncommissioned Officers competed in a number of events designed to test their skills, abilities, and their physical and mental fortitude. At the end of the contest the winners earned the titles of CTARNG NCO of the Year and the Soldier of the Year. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Richard Wrigley)



Members and equipment assigned to the 192nd Engineer Battalion, Connecticut Army National Guard, clear debris to help make roads passable for electrical crews and first responders in Brookfield, Conn., May 19, 2018. (Photo by Maj. George Duggan, Public Affairs Officer, 143rd Regional Support Group, CTARNG)

Company, and Sgt. Ryan Curry, 14th CST, were named Soldier and NCO of the Year, respectively.

On March 20, the Connecticut National Guard played host to **Gen. Joseph Lengyel, Chief of the National Guard Bureau**, and Guard leadership from a dozen states during a two-day conference held at the William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford.

April

On April 13, a legendary member of the Connecticut National Guard was immortalized on the big screen as, “**Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero**,” premiered in downtown New Haven. Stubby, the four-legged mascot of the 102nd Infantry Regiment during World War I, was a stray adopted by a member of the Regiment while conducting pre-deployment training in New Haven. Stubby is now enshrined at the Smithsonian, while a replica will soon be on display for all to see at the State Armory in Hartford.

On April 18, the **State Staff Judge Advocate** brought over 15 members of Connecticut’s legal community together for a Civic Leader Orientation Flight program. Men and women representing the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center, Yale Law School’s Veterans Legal Service Clinic, and

the Veterans’ and Military Affairs Section of the Connecticut Bar Association visited numerous locations in Windsor Locks and Niantic, exploring facilities, learning about the benefits of CTNG membership and talking with Guardsmen representing a number of different units and capabilities.

“The attendees were invited because they work for organizations that specialize in military



Sgt. Glendon Hall and Military Working Dog, Schurkje, from the 928th Military Police Detachment (MWD), CTARNG visit with Richard Lanni, director of the animated film, “Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero,” at the movie's Connecticut premiere at the Bow Tie Criterion Cinemas, New Haven, Conn., April 8, 2018. The film, released to the public on April 13, is based on the true story of Sgt. Stubby and his World War I experience with the 102nd Infantry Regiment. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin Simon, JFHQ Public Affairs, CTARNG)

and Veterans issues,” Col. Tim Tomcho, State Judge Advocate, Connecticut National Guard. “They all know what the National Guard is, but like many civilians, we hoped to provide them with a greater appreciation for what the National Guard does.”

The Guard wrapped up the month by once again supporting the **Drug Enforcement Agency’s National Prescription Drug Takeback Day** throughout the state, April 28.

For the 12th time in eight years, the Connecticut National Guard Counterdrug Task Force partnered with the DEA, Connecticut State Police and local police departments to support the nationwide endeavor. Providing eight Guardsmen and four vehicles, the Connecticut National Guard helped to weigh, box and transport a portion of the over 8,500 pounds of unwanted drugs collected.

May

Armed Forces Day has traditionally served as a chance for past and present members of the Connecticut National Guard to join their comrades-in-arms from

other branches to celebrate Connecticut’s military members at the **Armed Forces Day Luncheon**. And while the event kicked off without a hitch at Southington’s Aqua Turf Club on May 18, some members of the Air’s **103rd Civil Engineer Squadron** and Army’s **192nd Engineer Battalion** could not attend.

Thanks to powerful windstorms that wreaked havoc in the southwestern part of the state, May 15, Guardsmen were sent to assist first responders and electrical company crews in Bethany, Brookfield and New Fairfield over the weekend.

“A [EF1] tornado touched down in the town of Bethany, they called us up last night and we all responded,” said Master Sgt. Jim Mele, 103rd Civil Engineering Squadron. “We got a crew together of experienced chainsaw people, equipment operators, dump trucks, everything that you need to clear the roads and make the roads safe and the town safe for the people to pass through.”

During the Armed Forces Day Luncheon, one Engineer did make it: Sgt. 1st Class Tye Frazer, 192nd Engineer Battalion, was named the Connecticut Army National Guard’s Honor Person of the Year. Master Sgt. Crystal L. Reynolds, 103rd Security Forces Squadron, was the Air’s recipient. The luncheon had one of its most successful outings to date, as more than 940 guests attended the 69th edition of the luncheon. **Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Drushal, Chief of Transportation, U.S. Army**, served as the lunch’s keynote speaker.



Two of three HH-60M Black Hawk helicopters carrying Soldiers assigned to Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, take off for its overseas deployment to Southwest Asia, from the Windsor Locks Readiness Center, Windsor Locks, Conn., June 14, 2018. The 3-126th is the CTARNG's newest unit and this is their first overseas deployment. While overseas, the unit is responsible for providing aeromedical evacuation, extensive en-route critical care and medical support while moving patients. (Photo by Spc. Kaitlyn Q. Wallace, 130th Public Affairs Detachment)



Connecticut National Guard Soldiers load a vehicle with unwanted prescription drugs dropped off during National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in Norwich, Conn., April 28, 2018. This is the 12th time the CTNG has provided support to the Drug Enforcement Agency's Drug Take Back Day. The next Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for October 27, 2018. (Photo courtesy of the Connecticut National Guard Counter Drug Task Force)

Memorial Day is a special time to remember those lost in our nation’s wars, and the Connecticut National Guard was proud to support over 50 events during the holiday weekend. Guardsmen could be found marching in parades, providing color guard services or serving as guest speakers at the dozens of events put on by local community organizations all over the state.

June

Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks played host to another major ribbon cutting ceremony, as

the first-of-its-kind **Civil Support Team Ready Building** was officially opened for business, June 12.

Maj. Gen. Martin and Brig. Gen. Evon joined Governor Dannel P. Malloy, Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, local elected officials and representatives of various construction firms associated with the project to cut the ribbon on the 23,700-square foot facility.

On June 14, the Connecticut National Guard celebrated the **U.S. Army’s 243rd birthday** with a cake cutting ceremony at the William A. O’Neill Armory in Hartford, Connecticut. Halfway around the world, members of the 143rd CSSB were doing the same during their deployment to Poland.

That same day, one of the Connecticut National Guard’s newest units headed to mobilization station for its first-ever overseas deployment. Thirty members of the CTARNG’s **Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment** were treated to a formal send-off ceremony in May, but took off from the Windsor

Locks Readiness Center and headed for Texas for final training before heading east.

The detachment is currently deployed throughout Southwest Asia, providing aeromedical evacuation, extensive en-route critical care and medical support while moving patients aboard the HH-60M, a Black Hawk specifically outfitted for medical care.

Stay tuned for part two of our annual year in review. In February, Connecticut Guardian staff will compile the best moments from July through December 2018.



Members of Connecticut National Guard leadership cut the ribbon with Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman, Maj. Matthew Silver, Commander of the 14th CST and representatives of various construction firms associated with the project, at the official opening of the 14th Civil Support Team's new readiness facility at Camp Hartell, June 12, 2018. The opening of the custom facility marks the second ribbon cutting at Camp Hartell in less than three years and continues the revitalization of the installation. (Photo by Spc. Justin Stannard, 130th Public Affairs Detachment. Connecticut Army National Guard)



Looking Back on the 2GHH in 2018

2ND LT. MARION LYNOTT
2GHH UPAR

As the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard completed its final parade of the 2018 season at the Stamford UBS Parade, we want to look back on some of the highlights and accomplishments throughout the year.

First, a mention for how amazing the horses and troopers did at one of the most challenging parades the unit partakes in. Thousands lined the streets of Stamford to see giant helium balloons floating through town in the 25th annual Stamford Downtown Parade Spectacular, Nov. 18.

A bicycle stunt team, dance troupes, floats, 11 award-winning bands and, 14 colossal helium balloons were all part of the festivities alongside the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, marching almost a mile through Stamford Downtown streets.

As the 2018 season comes to an end, the Second Horse participated in eleven parades in various towns and cities around Connecticut including Danbury, North Haven, Brookfield, Norwalk, Southport, Newtown, Bridgeport, Prospect, and Stamford. The unit also had a very successful Annual Training week which included a day at Camp Harkness in Waterford where the troop gave residents of this wonderful facility a cavalry demonstration followed by supervised pony rides.

Successful events held on the grounds of the Second Horse included the Pony Rides for a Purpose, a fundraiser in honor of Jessica Rekos, the Annual Open House and mounted drill demonstrations, the Iron Horse 5K road and trail race, the Annual Western CT Police K-9 Challenge, the memorial service in honor of the unit's service during the First World War and the Battalion Review which was attended by all four Organized State Militia units.

Other events troop members attended throughout the year included: Power House Day, Armed Forces Day Luncheon, June Day in Boston (hosted by the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company),

the Adjutant General's change of command ceremony and Rochambeau Day. The troop also had members and horses participate in a benefit in honor of a former Marine by performing a mounted demonstration and holding a meet and greet at Fairfield University. Troop members also volunteered their time to lay wreaths as we remember our fallen U.S. veterans on National Wreaths across America Day.

2018 saw the retirement Maj. Steven deFriesse and 2nd Lt.

Lauren Chirgwin, two long-standing and highly respected unit members. The unit had five new members, Privates Steven Chapman, Edwin Fiallos, Simone Mason, Hannah Schneiderman and Alexander Tomassini joined the troop with their graduation from recruit training in June. The Second Horse also welcomed two new horses, Tommy and Drifter.

The Second Horse would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our troopers and their families for their dedication and selfless service throughout the year. Thank you to the members of the Friends of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard who work behind the scenes year round and to our supporters and people who have worked tirelessly to make our event successful. We look forward to an exceptional 2019.

Thanks also to Marleen Cafarelli, our volunteer photographer. Marleen is out there in all kinds of weather capturing the special moments and sharing them with the world!

To follow us on Social Media please like the Friends of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard FB page.



The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard demonstrate a mounted drill at Camp Harkness State Park, Waterford, Conn., in August 2018. Camp Harkness is designated for use by individuals with disabilities accompanied by their friends and families. Members of 2GHH as well as the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard Band participate in community outreach events there each year. (Photo courtesy of the Connecticut Military Department)

Join the Governor's Foot & Horse Guards

For more information:

1st Company Governor's Foot Guard
Hartford
(860) 500-1129
1GFG.CTMD@ct.gov

2nd Company Governor's Foot Guard
Danford
(860) 500-3356
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1st Company Governor's Horse Guard
Avon
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2nd Company Governor's Horse Guard
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Health & Fitness

Taking Your First ACFT: You Can Do It

SGT. 1ST CLASS RUSSELL THOMAS
88M INSTRUCTOR, MFT
2/106TH REGIMENT (RTI)
NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Let's roleplay this month: You are an average Soldier worried about taking the ACFT test, and I am an old Sergeant First Class who just took the test. Do not Worry! You can do it!

Do not think you have to max any event on your first attempt! The new Army Combat Fitness Test is an assessment tool, especially for your first test. Not only are you doing events that are completely different from previous test they all have a combat related purpose. No matter what Military Occupational Specialty you have, we as Soldiers share a collective chance of having to perform tactically. So go into your first test with the mindset of doing your

best at each event, unless you are training regularly. All the tests done sequentially and will have an effect on overall performance. There is plenty of rest between events, but the cumulative energy expenditure may creep up in the two-mile run. Do not Worry! You can do it!

The events were designed to mimic movements on a battlefield. A few Soldiers may be better at the first three events because they are more strength related, while others will be better at the last three events which are more aerobic in nature. The intent of this is a better assessment of a Soldier's overall physical ability. So, if you do not do well on one event, you may do better on another. Do not Worry! You can do it!

Do not think you can train just for the test (much like soldiers do for the Army Physical Fitness Test). This ACFT is an assessment of the overall fitness of our force. The Army has spent time to re-develop this test, so you need to spend some time re-developing your fitness level. Wherever you are in your physical ability currently; out of shape, in some sort of shape or really fit, this test will challenge you, however, it is doable! Your old Sergeant First Class here did it and survived. You will have to become more active and actually decide to put effort into maintaining your physical fitness level. You should be doing it anyway for your own health, but if you need a reason to get in shape, well then, the Army is giving it to you. You joined the Army for whatever reason, now it is time to perform to your best ability. You need to train with movements that are more functional, follow FM 7-22 PRT standards, actually get off your behinds, get away from excuses/distractions, and make time to



exercise! Do not Worry! You can do it!

The ACFT is here to stay, do not worry about age, gender, profile, alternate events, scoring or not passing just yet. It is only currently being trialed in its current form until October of 2020. Expect and accept that there are going to be adjustments to the final ACFT version. Big Army has a plan. It took six years to get this far with a new physical assessment test. A transition period that must occur even after ACFT is mainstream. Once full implementation happens, BIG Army will have a plan for all those, "what if" scenarios.

Stop looking for immediate answers just yet, this is a test period. All data compiled until Oct of 2020 must be evaluated until full development of the ACFT is completed. Do not Worry! You can do it!

Still not ready for Army Combat Fitness Test?

My Results for my first ACFT: (I did not really push myself for this first test and age doesn't matter but to prove anyone can do this test, I am 58 years-old).

- Maximum Deadlift (MDL) - 210 lbs = 76 pts**
- Standing Power Throw (SPT) - 10.4 = 83 pts**
- Hand-Release Push-up (HRP) - 36 = 76 pts**
- Sprint-Drag-Carry (SDC) - 2:06 = 73 pts**
- Leg Tuck (LTK) - 6 = 72 pts**
- Two-Mile Run (2MR) - 17:54 = 70 pt**
- Total Score = 450**

I could have gone heavier on MDL but wanted to save some energy. SPT is easiest/fun to perform. For the HRP, I normally do 60 or more regular pushups in 2 minutes, so expect some reduction, but again I did not push myself. SDC, I admit it is tough but so is life. LTK, I felt tired by this time, that is an excuse, but I have done 10 in my train-up for test. 2MR, usually between 16:00/17:00 dropped some time but I will say there was a ridiculous headwind the day of the test. Therefore, if this old Sergeant First Class can do it, anyone can!

Final Thoughts

Change the way you look at your health and fitness, make an effort to become more physically able to perform your basic military job. Get healthy, eat right, and exercise. Take the first ACFT as a diagnostic for yourself, to understand the events, to plan to become fit. Right now, the only person who can make the change in your fitness level is you. As a NCO, and leader I strive to use myself as an example of what you can do. The Army is telling all of us no matter age, gender, or MOS we need to be in better shape. Do not Worry! You can do it!

Learn more about the movements and requirements of the ACFT at <https://www.army.mil/acft/#overview>.

Sgt. 1st Class Russell Thomas is a Master Fitness Trainer with the 2/106th Regiment, (RTI), New York Army National Guard. The thoughts expressed in this column are based on his opinion and experience. Always do research and consult your doctor before undergoing any physical fitness regimen.

Operation E.L.F. Holiday Party Spreads Cheer to More Than 200

ALLISON L. JOANIS
STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

HARTFORD, Conn. – The drill shed floor of the Governor William A. O’Neill Armory was transformed into a holiday wonderland for the 17th annual Operation E.L.F. holiday party, December 15.

A crowd of approximately 200 Service Members and their families attended the event that included a light breakfast, arts and crafts activities and local holiday treats all staffed by more than 50 volunteers.

Operation E.L.F., which stands for Embracing Lonely Families was established in 2001 by the then – Lieutenant Governor M. Jodi Rell. The program is designed to support the families of Connecticut’s Service Members who are affected by deployments during the holiday season. This year, more than 350 Connecticut Guardsmen are within the deployment cycle, which includes the deployment as well as the six months before leaving and the six months after returning home.

“The stress that comes with having a loved one deployed is never easy for those back home,” said Maj. Gen. Fran Evon, Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard. “A Guardsman is able to focus on the



The drill shed floor of the Governor William A. O’Neill Armory is transformed into a holiday celebration for the 18th annual Operation E.L.F. holiday party on Dec. 15. Approximately 200 Guardsmen and their families attended the event where they participated in holiday activities, visited Santa Claus and received donated gifts. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)



A Connecticut military child selects a stuffed toy at the 2018 Operation E.L.F. holiday party at the William A. O’Neill Armory, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 15. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

mission overseas thanks to the efforts of their families, friends and the community. Operation E.L.F. aims to help those with a family member away from home for the holidays, and we are eternally grateful for everyone who takes part in this fantastic program.”

In addition to providing holiday cheer to CTNG families this year’s event also presented the opportunity to thank Lt. Gen. Nancy Wyman for her continued support of the program. Wyman has participated as a host of the Operation E.L.F since she took the office of Lieutenant Governor in 2011.

In honor of her support, she was appointed as an honorary member of the Armed Forces of the State of Connecticut, Connecticut Army National Guard, with the rank of Lieutenant General, and presented with the Connecticut Medal of Merit by Maj. Gen. Evon and the Minuteman Award from Kim Hoffman, Director of the Connecticut Service Member

and Family Support Center.

“I want to thank everyone across the state who raised funds, donated their time and spread awareness for our military families who have a loved one deployed during the holiday season.” Lt. Governor Wyman said in a press release about the event. “These military families are sacrificing so much in order to protect and serve our country and I am proud that Operation E.L.F. is there to support them. For the last eight years, I have had the honor of working with Operation E.L.F., and I want to give a special thanks to the wonderful team at the Connecticut National Guard for their hard work in organizing this important donation drive each and every year.

“They have assisted so many military families, and I encourage everyone to continue to support Operation E.L.F. and help those who have given so much to our state and our country.”

Following her remarks, Lt. Gov. Wyman introduced another important guest, Santa Claus. Children had the opportunity to visit with Father Christmas for a photo and to review the gifts they are hoping to find under their tree on Christmas morning.

Before their exit, each military child visited “Santa’s Workshop” for a parcel filled with gifts that had been generously donated by community members and local businesses.

Additional items collected during the Operation E.L.F drive such as gift cards and the donation of home services will be distributed to military families in need throughout the year.



Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman is appointed as an honorary member with the rank of Lieutenant General in the Connecticut Army National Guard in honor of her eight years of service to Connecticut’s military members. Wyman was also presented the Connecticut Medal of Merit and the Minuteman Award during a small presentation at the 2018 Operation E.L.F holiday party at the William A. O’Neill Armory, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 15. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)



Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman, center, with Connecticut National Guard leadership and the Connecticut Service Member and Family Support Center at the 2018 Operation E.L.F. holiday party at the Governor William A. O’Neill Armory, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 15. The staff of the SMFSC work tirelessly to organize and staff the Operation E.L.F Program with the support of Lt. Gov. Wyman and CTNG leadership. In addition, the holiday party was staffed by more than 50 local volunteers. (Photo by Maj. Mike Petersen, State Public Affairs Office)



A Connecticut military child tells Santa what he wants for Christmas at the 2018 Operation E.L.F. holiday party at the Governor William A. O’Neill Armory, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 15. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)



A Connecticut military child visits with Sonar, mascot for the Hartford Woldpack Hockey Team at the 2018 Operation E.L.F. holiday party at the William A. O’Neill Armory, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 15. (Photo by Allison L. Joanis, State Public Affairs Office)

STARBASE Students Compete at FIRST Lego League

MELISSA VANEK
DIRECTOR, STARBASE CONNECTICUT

As a part of DoD’s mission to support the study of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in the younger grades, where early decisions about interest and confidence are formed, STARBASE staff once again worked with students at Jumokey Academy Honors SMART in Hartford to compete in the FIRST Lego League Competition in November.

With many of last year’s eighth graders moving on to high school, so it was a year of rebuilding. This year’s team is made up of one eighth grader, three seventh graders and four sixth graders. Although it was a young team, there was a lot of heart and eagerness to complete the quick turn-around for the competition. With only 10 weeks and limited school time, it is always a race to complete all of the requirements.

The three requirements involve: a robotics challenge, where students program a robot to complete physical challenges on a board involving legos; a research project, where students develop a solution to a problem and present to judges; and a teamwork challenge, which is given to the students as a surprise the day of competition and they have to demonstrate the core values of FIRST.

The Robonators, chosen as a name by the team, worked hard throughout the season and developed a solution to social isolation of astronauts in space involving artificial



The Jumokey Academy Honors SMART team, the Robonators, present their project to the judges at the FIRST Lego Competition in November. Members of the Connecticut STARBASE staff worked with the students to participate in the competition that encourages problem solving, critical thinking and teamwork during STEM based challenges. (Photo by Melissa Vankek, Director, STARBASE Connecticut)

intelligence. The students worked with local experts in the artificial intelligence and psychology fields.

While the team did not move on to regional competition, we are very proud of the Robonators team at Jumokey and look forward to their return next year.

DoD STARBASE is a premier educational program,

sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. At STARBASE, students participate in challenging “hands-on, mind-on” activities in STEM; such as physics and chemistry experiments, engineering challenges and computer-aided design programming.

MENTORSHIP & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

STARBASE is looking for mentors and volunteers for the STARBASE 2.0 after school program in 2019. The classes will be held at three different schools in Hartford and will operate between 3:30 - 5:00 p.m on weekdays. Mentors can choose to attend classes two - four times per month in order to fit their schedule.

DoD STARBASE is a premier educational program, sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. At STARBASE, students participate in challenging “hands-on, mind-on” activities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM); such as physics and chemistry experiments, engineering challenges and computer-aided design (CAD) programming.

To volunteer, contact Melissa Vanek, Director of STARBASE Connecticut at (860) 292-4678 or mvanek@starbase-ct.com

Enlisted Update



COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SGT.
JOHN M. GASIOREK

Happy New Year, my fellow Connecticut National Guardsmen!

I hope this update finds you healthy, recharged from the holiday season and primed to start the new calendar year off with a bang. Literally.

Within the next week, we will be celebrating the inauguration of our new governor, commander and chief. We will also

be wishing our former governor well in his future endeavors, thanking him for his service as our commander and chief. I know we will be prepared for the challenge as we are the National Guard: Always Ready, Always There.

For the past year, the Connecticut Air National Guard has had a shortage of viable candidates for the position of First Sergeant. As someone with six years’ experience as a U.S. Air Force First Sergeant, I can say without question that it was one of the hardest but most rewarding jobs I ever had the privilege of working within our Air Force.

A career Security Forces member, I stepped out of my comfort zone to work for the Maintenance Group, deploy to Afghanistan within a total force environment and ultimately became a Wing First Sergeant. Each one of these assignments provided me with new challenges, a breadth of knowledge and ultimately provided me a clear understanding of most every mission set within our Air National Guard. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that prepared me in ways that I cannot accurately assess to this day. With this in mind, I don’t understand why we can’t fill this incredibly important position within the enlisted force. I believe it is one of the military’s best-kept secret.

Whenever I discuss the First Sergeant career field, there are two books which jump to the top of the list of books which embrace the relationship between the First Sergeant and their Commander. The first book was written in 2001 by the current Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. David L. Goldfien, titled, “Sharing Success, Owning Failure.” The second book, published in 2012, was written by Lt. Col. Jeffrey F. Smith titled, “Commanding an Air Force Squadron in the Twenty-First Century.” Both of the publications can be searched via the internet and downloaded for free in a PDF format.

As a First Sergeant I worked for over a dozen commanders during my six year tenure. I was

fortunate to work for a diverse group of leaders who taught me things I couldn’t have learned anywhere else. There were bumps in the road, however, if you’re not making mistakes, you are not growing and you are not challenging yourself to be a better leader.

The relationship between a Commander and First Sergeant is critical to the wellbeing of any unit. Air Force Instruction 36-

2113 states the First Sergeant is responsible for the health morale and welfare of the enlisted personnel assigned to a specific unit. You are also overall responsible for providing your Commander a mission ready force. Besides what is written on paper, there are the times where you can actually make a difference in a military person’s life mostly positive but sometimes negative. There are conversations that you will have behind closed doors that will never be repeated again outside your Commander’s office. A First Sergeant has to possess the utmost integrity, discipline and willingness to have difficult conversations with your Commander. These conversations are not about who is right or who is wrong but more of a mind meld on doing what is best for the unit and the mission. The First Sergeant has an immense responsibility. I make many comparisons to my days in the Security Forces career field. You cannot wear a Security Forces shield over your heart and enforce laws you break yourself. The First Sergeant diamond within the chevron is very much like a Security Forces shield.

As a First Sergeant you work with all sorts of agencies on and off the installation. Key leaders like the Staff Judge Advocate, Family Readiness, Director of Psychological Health and the Chaplain are usually at the top of your speed dial, as are the Medical Group and Finance. An easy way to think of a First Sergeant’s responsibility is you are there to take away all of life’s distractions a military member may be experiencing both on and off duty so that they can focus on executing the mission. A First Sergeant can make or break a unit from almost any angle. A First Sergeant is often considered one of the most important informal leaders in a unit.

Within the CTANG, the First Sergeant Council offers opportunities for eligible military members to shadow a



Chief Master Sgt. John Gasiorek, center, then as the 103rd Maintenance Squadron First Sergeant during a Maintenance Group Commander’s Call at the Bradley Air National Guard Base, East Granby, Conn. in 2011. Gasiorek served as the Maintenance Squadron First Sergeant from 2010 -2012 and the 103rd Airlift Wing First Sergeant from 2012-2015. (Photo courtesy of Chief Master Sgt. John Gasiorek, Command Chief Master Sergeant, Connecticut Air National Guard)

First Sergeant for a certain period of time in order to see what a typical day is like being a First Sergeant. There may be times where you may not be able to sit in on sensitive conversations but you will otherwise wish you were wearing sneakers instead of boots due to the amount of running you will be doing from one task to the next. If you are still interested after shadowing a First Sergeant and after a boarding process you may be eligible to become an additional duty First Sergeant. This is similar to a shadow program however you will be provided with more responsibility. As time away from your unit allows and after you receive your Commander’s endorsement, you will be able to attend First Sergeant Council meetings, and fill in on a temporary basis for a First Sergeant who may be away at school or deployed. Because we don’t have an abundance of First Sergeant’s, this program helps to ensure units are provided the support they need to function while their First Sergeant may be away. If and when you decide you would like to be a First Sergeant, full time the experience of being an additional duty First Sergeant will certainly prepare you for the First Sergeant Selection Board.

If you are interested in becoming a First Sergeant, additional duty First Sergeant or would like to shadow a First Sergeant please reach out to current First Sergeant, our Wing Command Chief, or myself for additional guidance. I promise you that you won’t regret the experience!

I would again like to thank you all for what you do daily ensuring the safety and security of our state and country! Your senior leadership, my family and I are extremely impressed!

Be Safe!

TROOPS TO TEACHERS from page 5

Simon said that the experiences he had student teaching reminded him of training exercises he’s taken part in while in the military

“Student teaching was a lot like (the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, La.),” Simon said with a laugh. “I went in the classroom every day with a plan and had to adjust, and sometimes start from scratch.”

Just like those training exercises, Simon adapted and learned from his experiences – adding more skills to his toolkit to help deal with the numerous variables that come with teaching.

“It’s impossible know how to deal with certain things until you actually are presented with the situation,” Simon said.

As he neared earning his certification, Simon began applying for full-time teaching positions, which led him to the Achievement First Network. He said the process was competitive, and that his natural instinct was to see if he had what it took to get selected.

Turns out: He did.
“I sent in an application, a recruiter got in touch with me and led me through the process,” he said.

Simon applied for a Literature position but was offered a position in Composition Writing. He accepted.

After many road blocks and detours, Simon now teaches four daily classes: three on pre-Advanced Placement Seminar (the finer points of argumentative writing, according to Simon) and a tutorial math class, where he has the opportunity to step outside his comfort zone and work with kids who benefit from extra support in mathematics.

“Teaching is definitely the hardest thing I have ever done in my entire life,” Simon said. And that’s coming from a guy who completed his first-ever 50-mile “ultra” marathon at the age of 36.

Throughout the entire process, Simon remained in contact with his Troops for Teachers mentors, and credits them for connecting him to the ARC program. He speaks highly of the program’s expertise and mentorship, but has one critical piece of advice for service members who may want to follow a similar path: prepare to work extremely hard.

“You have to be dedicated, and you have to have thick skin. There’s a lot of trial and error,” Simon said. “Composure is so important. You have to understand you’re working with kids. These aren’t NCOs and Privates who have gone through Basic Training. Every child has different sensibilities, different backgrounds, different learning styles and it’s on you as a teacher to mold yourself to meet their needs.”

“Kids need adults in their lives, and teachers can be that constant, positive presence,” he said. “If you think teaching is for you, contact Troops for Teachers, and get in touch with a military mentor that can help you through the process.”

Maybe one day, it will be Sgt. 1st Class Simon who responds.

Share your story with us for future publication in the Connecticut Guardian. Please contact Maj. Mike Petersen, State Public Affairs Officer at 860-524-4857, michael.t.petersen.mil@mail.mil.

WARRANT OFFICER

The Technical and Tactical Expert



CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

 lisa.a.chipman.mil@mail.mil
203-410-0828 

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

AGE- Between 18 and not more than 46 on the date of initial appointment
CITIZENSHIP- Must be a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization
MENTAL APTITUDE- 110 GT score or higher on ASVAB
SECURITY CLEARANCE- Must be able to obtain a secret security clearance
PHYSICAL- Must meet height and weight standards outlined in AR- 600-9
LEADERSHIP- Must possess outstanding leadership traits
PAY GRADE- Minimum required for most specialties is SGT (E-5)

Inside OCS

Class 64 Tests Mental Fortitude, Accountability

OFFICER CANDIDATE RUSSELL HAGIOS
OCS CLASS 64, 1-169 REGT (RTI)

After the first formation of drill, Class 64 began with an Officer Candidate Operations Order. Class leadership detailed how they’d meet the physical and mental challenges of the November drill. They arrived to drill prepared for a 12-mile foot march, combatives training and to learn about the importance of supply activities in the Army.

Once the OPORD was briefed by the Officer Candidate leadership, the OCs of Class 64 had to present to the OCS CADRE the status of planning for the dining-out. The key to a successful dining-out is organization and proper planning and Class 64 is actively looking for a location to host the event, a guest speaker, catering services and ways to fundraise to reduce the out of pocket expenses. Class 64 is planning to have their dining-out late spring of 2019.

Immediately before Class 64 was to begin their timed



12-mile tactical foot march; a requirement in order to become an officer, weather conditions made their original route unsafe. The class adapted to the changing conditions on the ground and stepped off on a new route. The foot march helped build their shoulders, traps, core, back, and hips muscles get stronger from, more importantly, it taught them mental fortitude as they pushed through their discomfort towards the finish line.

Once the 12-mile ruck march was completed, it was time to conduct personal hygiene and moved forward to our next task: the supply exam, another requirement in order to continue in the OCS program. Property accountability is the responsibility of every Soldier and most importantly a leader. During the supply class, OCs learned that supply officers are responsible for the supervision of supply storage, requisitioning, issuing, and the turn in process of supplies. After a lengthy class and some study time, the seven OCs from Class 64 passed the supply exam allowing them to continue with the OCS program.

Sunday morning, OCs were introduced to combatives. Some OCs had previous experience in combatives which made the class more interesting. Officer Candidates learned multiple ground fighting positions; from how to defend while in a non-dominant positions to being

able to transition from non-dominant to dominant position. At the end of the combatives class, each OC was able to apply what was learned during the class by grappling each other in a controlled environment. Officer Candidates were lined up by weight and were able to grapple each other for two minutes. At the end of the two minutes, one OC was able to recover while the other OC will grappled against the OC next in line. After several two-minute bouts, OCs had a better understanding of combatives.

After a long drill weekend filled with requirements to continue with the OCS program, OCs conducted barracks maintenance, cleaned their classroom and turn in all the supplies. Officer Candidates received their safety brief by the OCS Cadre prior to release.

Become an Officer in the Connecticut Army National Guard!

For information and requirements, contact your chain of command or
Maj. Corey Holmes,
RRB Officer Strength Manager
corey.r.holmes.mil@mail.mil

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

Leads to Enlistments Awards Program

Effective 01 Oct 18 - 30 Sept 19

1st Lead to Enlistment
Shaker Bottle & T-Shirt**

2nd Lead to Enlistment
Tactical Backpack**

3rd Lead to Enlistment
Fleece Jacket or Hoodie**

4th Lead to Enlistment*
AAM & Gerber Multi-Tool**

5th Lead to Enlistment*
ARCOM, Tactical Flashlight & "Honorary RRNCO" plaque**

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL RECRUITING AND RETENTION NCO FOR MORE INFO

Leads are subject to verification of enlistment. DAW states lead tracker SOP.
**photos are representations only, actual items are subject to availability and funding.
*Must be eligible to receive RAM or ARCOM. One award per person given at the end of the fiscal year based on number of enlistments.

"IT PAYS TO STAY"

FY-19 ARMY NATIONAL GUARD RETENTION PROGRAM

STAY GUARD

Re-Enlist/Extend for 2 Years
Receive a **\$4,000** Bonus and a waterbottle or hydration pack

Re-Enlist/Extend for 6 Years
Receive a **\$20,000** Bonus and a Gerber or tactical flashlight

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

CONTACT YOUR RETENTION NCO FOR MORE INFO

*photos are representations only, actual items and bonuses are subject to eligibility, funding and availability.

R3SP - Resilience, Risk Reduction & Suicide Prevention

ENERGY
MANAGEMENT

Resilience:
"Skill of the Month"

DELIBERATE BREATHING

"What is Deliberate Breathing?"

Recovery is essential for optimal performance.

- "Deliberate Breathing" is a self-regulation technique that includes physical, mental, and emotional components.
- We breathe most efficiently (i.e., we get the greatest quantity of oxygen into our blood) when we *breathe all the way into the bottom of our lungs* (imagine your belly expanding).
- Try **breathing rhythmically** (in/out with approx. 5-second cadence) while thinking **positive thoughts or images for 10-20 minutes a day** for maximum benefits.
- Try the Practical Exercise on the next page!*

What is the skill?

"Energy Management" involves effectively adjusting energy levels and restoring energy so you can thrive under pressure.

Bottom Line Up Front (B.L.U.F.)

- Energy Management helps to build Self-regulation.
- Energy levels impact your ability to perform in your professional and personal life.
- Energy Management allows you to be in control of your physical state, thoughts, and emotions in stressful situations.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Edition #50: January 2019

R3SP Program Manager:
alexander.m.long@gmail.com
(860) 524-4926

The Dangers of Spice

MEAGAN MACGREGOR
ALCOHOL & DRUG CONTROL OFFICER

Recently, multiple drug overdoses linked to synthetic marijuana (commonly referred to as Spice or K2) were reported in areas very close to home.

In August 2018, 71 people were reported to have overdosed on Spice in New Haven – three months after 49 people overdosed in New York City.

Members of the Connecticut National Guard are reminded that use of illegal substances, including marijuana and synthetic marijuana, is not compatible with service in the military. Service Members should remain aware of the substances they ingest and make all reasonable efforts to avoid accidental ingestion of illicit substances.

While these psychoactive chemical compounds are meant to mimic the psychoactive properties found in marijuana, consumers have no way of knowing which compounds they are ingesting.

The CDC warns that using Spice can lead to serious mental and physical issues including violent behaviors, suicidal thoughts, psychosis, and seizures.

Suicide Intervention Officer Spotlight

Sgt. 1st Class Maggie Stone
141st Medical Company

MEAGAN MACGREGOR
SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM MANAGER

Sgt. 1st Class Stone has been serving in the National Guard for 20 years. Currently she is assigned as the Unit Readiness NCO for the 141st Medical Company. Not only is she the company- and battalion-level SIO, she also serves as a Victim’s Advocate. After taking the ASIST course three years ago, Stone went on to become an ASIST Certified Trainer to help teach her fellow Soldier the suicide intervention skills that she strongly

believes in. Stone understands the need for every Soldier to create a support system to help them through stressful times in life. She knows she can always turn to her husband or sister to help her overcome obstacles.

“Don’t wait another minute, call someone. Call us, call your unit, call a friend, all your mom, or call the hotline. It doesn’t matter who you talk to just talk to someone about your struggles, You do not have to face them another minute alone. We are here, we care, and we want to help.”

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R3SP - Resilience, Risk Reduction & Suicide Prevention

National Drug and Alcohol Awareness Facts Week

MEAGAN MACGREGOR
SUICIDE PREVENTION
PROGRAM MANAGER

Each year, January 22-28 is observed as National Drug and Alcohol Awareness Facts Week. R3SP is committed to spreading awareness and education on drugs and alcohol, so here are some fun facts!

- 1). According to the Institute of Medicine’s study of the United States Military alcohol is the most abused substance by Service Members in every branch of the military.
- 2). The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence reports that young adults (ages 18-24) entering addiction treatment cite marijuana dependence more frequently than all other illicit drugs combined.
- 3). The FDA has not recognized or approved the marijuana plant as medicine.
- 4). The National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported in 2016 that over the past 12 months 11.8 drivers, aged 16 and older, drove under the influence of illegal drugs.
- 5). According to NCADD 17.6 million people in the United States alone struggle with alcohol abuse or dependence.
- 6). Use of illegal substances and misuse of alcohol and prescription medication are not compatible with military service. Soldiers must refrain from using illegal substances including misuse of prescription medication. Soldiers are also encouraged to be cognizant of their drinking habits.

Drugs and alcohol directly impact the mission readiness of the Connecticut Army National Guard. It is imperative that Soldiers educate themselves and their fellow Service Members on the dangers drugs and alcohol present. Soldiers are able to self-refer for alcohol or drug related issues at any time to their Chain of Command as well as the Army Substance Abuse

Program to receive services and minimize the negative impact a drug positive or alcohol related incident would have on their career. Now that you know these fun facts go share them with a Battle Buddy!

NATIONAL GUARD
ALWAYS READY ALWAYS THERE

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TEAM

CLIPPING FOR OUR OWN
AIR EXCELLENCE

CONNECTICUT
NATIONAL
GUARD
BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH
RESOURCES

CT Army National Guard
Behavioral Health Team
Contact Numbers:

860-883-2035
860-830-8991
860-655-0296
860-946-9810

Behavioral Health
Help Line:
855-800-0120

National Suicide Hotline:
800-273-8255
Press #1

CT Air National Guard
Director of Psychological Health
860-292-2561
860-519-8125

Emergency Mobile
Psychiatric Services: Dial 211

RESOURCES:

Military One Source: 800-342-9647

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

Employer Support of the Guard and
Reserves
860-548-3295

Education Services Officer
860-524-4816/4820

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator/
Sexual Harassment/Assault Response
and Prevention
860-548-3208

Transitional Assistance Advisor:
860-524-4908

Fulltime State Support Chaplain:
860-548-3240 (office) 860-803-7748 (cell)

Army Substance Abuse Program
Manager
860-946-9810
Alcohol and Drug Control Officer:
860-524-4962
Prevention Coordinator:
860-548-3291

Resiliency Program Manager
860-524-4962

VA Connecticut Healthcare System:
Newington: 860-666-8951
West Haven: 203-932-5711

Vet Centers:
Danbury: 203-790-4000
Norwich: 860-887-1755
Rocky Hill: 860-563-8800
Orange: 203-932-9899

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CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

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http://twitter.com/CTNationalGuard

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FLICKR

http://www.flickr.com/Photos/CTNationalGuard

Official Unit/ Leadership Pages

Maj. Gen. Fran Evon

Facebook - @CTNGTAG

Twitter - @CTNGTAG

State Command Sgt. Maj. John Carragher

Facebook - @CTCommandSgtMaj

CTARNG Recruiting Battalion

Facebook - @CTArmyGuard

Instagram - @CTArmyGuard

CTANG Recruiting Team

Facebook - @CTAirGuard

103rd Airlift Wing

Facebook - @103AW

102nd Army Band

Facebook - @102dArmyband

Facebook (Rock Band) - @RipChord102D

Instagram - @102d_army_band

Twitter - @102dArmyband

HNC, 169th Aviation Battalion

Facebook - @HNC169AWN

1-169th Regiment (RTI)

Facebook - @169REG

1109th TASMG

Facebook - @1109thTASMG

Joint Force Headquarters

Facebook - @CTJFHQ

CTATNG Recruit Sustainment Program

Facebook - @ConnecticutGuardRSP

CTNG Service Member and Family Support

Facebook - @CTNGFamilies

CT Employee Support of Guard and Reserve

Facebook - @CTESGR

Twitter - @CT_ESGR

Don't see your unit's page here? Make sure it is
registered with the CTNG PAO.

Want to start a public page for your unit? Call the
CTNG PAO for information.
860-524-4857

Off the Bookshelf

with Sgt. 1st Class Simon

The Collected Works of Sun Ra

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Simon
JFHQ Public Affairs, CTARNG

One of the twentieth century’s most industrious jazz composers and band leaders, Sun-Ra, released more than 100 albums in his lifetime and performed nationally and internationally for over five decades.

By the early 1990s, unfortunately, his popularity had waned. As a teenager, I remember paying just \$5 for a triple-disc collection of his albums at a music store in New London, Connecticut.

Listening to Sun Ra’s music was difficult. His moniker spoke volumes about the characteristics of his music, but without context or an adequate music vocabulary, I recall likening it to the sounds of numerous bands warming up simultaneously accompanied by random chants and strange yells in foreign and nonsensical languages.

I later learned that much of the Sun Ra music catalogue is referred to as avant-garde and free-jazz, and although I didn’t quite understand how to appreciate listening to it as a novice fan, I continued purchasing his albums for one reason. Sun Ra album liner notes were filled with esoteric and cosmology-themed poems and stream of consciousness vignettes, which accompanied his traditional lists of credits.

“Shadows of Tomorrow,” is my favorite Sun Ra poem, and perhaps the most publicly well-known. In addition to being part of the liner notes of his 1959 album, “Jazz in Silhouette,” it was also published in a 2005 collection of Sun Ra writings, “Collected Works, Immeasurable Equation.” Like many of his poems, “Shadows of Tomorrow” is about time, space, paradox and the absurdity of attempting to understand similarly abstract concepts.

During World War II, Sun Ra was drafted and worked in a civilian public service camp in Pennsylvania. He was assigned forestry work until completing his service obligation. According to Sun Ra, during this time period, he was contacted by entities from the planet Saturn, and was informed about being destined to communicate to

the world through his space-themed music. He heeded the advice. At the war’s end, Sun Ra moved to Chicago, where his music, band and unique niche gained immense popularity.

I’m extremely grateful that Sun Ra’s albums were available at a low price in the 1990s. His music is an essential staple for all jazz fans. His poetry, however, is a bit easier to digest and may have already outlasted its counterpart’s public palatability.

Many of Sun Ra’s albums (and the poems therein) are extremely hard to find. By locating and collecting his poetry, the editor of “Collected Works, Immeasurable Equation,” did a great service for the cosmos. Sun Ra’s work is best when accompanied by memories of unrequited teenage love, an appreciation for avant-garde artwork, and an immense imagination.

Request a book to be reviewed, or ask Sgt. 1st Class Simon a direct question by emailing him at basimon1234@gmail.com.

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Military History

What Happened to Chamberlain After Little Round Top?

Col. (Ret.) Richard Young, M.D.
Guest Historical Columnist

“FIX BAYONETS!” was the shout from Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain when his Soldiers had run out of ammunition.

Chamberlain, commander of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment, is best known for saving the Union line at the Battle of Little Round Top in July of 1863.

After the victory at Gettysburg, Chamberlain was promoted to Division Commander. In 1864, while leading a charge against the Confederate line at Petersburg, a lead projectile tore through Chamberlain’s hips, from right to left. Bleeding profusely, Chamberlain believed he was dying and asked for a pen to write his wife.

Commanding General U. S. Grant also judged the wound was mortal and promoted Chamberlain on the battlefield to Brigadier General. Fortunately, the Regimental Surgeon, Dr. Abner Shaw, operating without blood replacement or antibiotics,

Col. Joshua L. Chamberlain ordering “Fix Bayonets” when the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment had exhausted its ammunition. (“The Hero of Little Round Top,” Mort Kunstler)

saved Chamberlain’s life.

Why was Chamberlain shot? Because of the dense smoke created by black powder, Commanders stood next to the colors so their Soldiers would know when to hold

their positions and when to charge. This led to the death of many Commanders and color bearers.

Following his recuperation, Chamberlain was promoted to Brevet Major General by President Lincoln. At the Battle of Quaker Road, Chamberlain was shot once more. The bullet pierced his horse’s neck, then struck Chamberlain in the left chest. Amazingly, the lead slug was deflected by the framed photo of his wife and a Bible that he carried in his chest pocket, struck a rib, and exited his back.

Chamberlain lived to the age of 85 years and certainly lived a full life. He served as Governor of Maine, President of Bowdoin College, and received the Congressional Medal of Honor. One of the greatest accolades of this citizen-soldier, was his selection by General Grant to receive the surrender of General Robert E. Lee’s Infantry at Appomattox Courthouse.

All from a man with no formal military training.

Prior to assuming command of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Chamberlain was Professor of Foreign Languages at Bowdoin College.

Lineage and Honors: The Beginnings

Brig. Gen. (CT-Ret.) Robert Cody
Historical Columnist

This month begins a new series of articles on the Lineage and Honors of Connecticut National Guard units - past and present. The goal is to showcase the achievements of our Army and Air organizations while tracing the roots of our collective family tree.

In the 18th century, militia service was required of every townsman over the age of sixteen. Large towns were organized into companies of generally 64 men, led by a Captain. The militia units of small towns were called, “Trained Bands,” and were composed of 32 men and were led by a Lieutenant.

The militiaman who led smaller organizations held the rank of Sergeant. By 1774, this small colony had a population of 200,000 citizens, living in 76 townships.

After the fighting broke out at Lexington and Concord the following year, the Connecticut General Assembly met in a special session on April 26th. The next day they ordered six regiments of ten companies each be raised in the state to respond to the crisis. Connecticut's regiments of 1,000 men each were led by a general officer, with field grade officers leading companies. Regiments in other colonies were commanded by a colonel. All six of these regiments were adopted into the Continental Army on June 14th, 1775. The 1st, 4th and 5th Connecticut regiments retained their numbering and state designation for the remainder of the year, while the 2nd Connecticut Regiment became the 22nd

Continental Regiment, the 3rd Connecticut Regiment became the 20th Continental Regiment and the 6th Connecticut was redesignated the 10th Continental. These units saw extensive service in such campaigns as the Siege of Boston, Invasion of Canada, Hudson Highlands, Connecticut 1777, Trenton - Princeton and New York City.

On September 16, 1776 eight more regiments were raised in Connecticut. These new regiments were comprised of eight companies -- usually equally distributed between 3-4 counties of the state. These units typically served until the end of conflict and were returned to state control. The 1st Regiment became the 169th Infantry, the 2nd and 4th Regiments became the 102nd Infantry and the 3rd, 8th, 9th, 16th and 20th Regiments became the 192nd Field Artillery. A Pennsylvania unit, the 109th Field Artillery actually traces its lineage to a Connecticut organization -- the Westmoreland Independent Companies formed in 1776 near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania which was claimed by both states at the time.

It is estimated that 40,000 Connecticut men saw military service during the War for Independence. By 1776, half of General George Washington’s forces in New York were Connecticut soldiers. This small state provided eight of the Continental Army's eighty regiments.

When General Washington created America’s first military decoration, the Badge of Military Merit, it was

Broadside Soliciting Recruits for the Continental Army, ca. 1775 – Connecticut Historical Society.

only awarded to three men for their service the war. All three recipients of what would later become the Purple Heart medal were from Connecticut. Sergeants Elijah Campbell and William Brown were decorated for their bravery at Yorktown on April 23, 1783. On June 8 of that year, Sergeant Daniel Bissel was awarded the Badge of Military Merit for having spent the previous thirteen months as a private in a British regiment stationed in New York. Sergeant Bissel had “deserted” from Connecticut's Second Regiment and continuously sent reports back to Washington from behind British lines.

CTARNG Training Circulars

Course	Course #	Action Officer	Start Date	End Date
Basic Life Support Instructor (BLS-I)	350-17-46	Sgt. 1 st Class Megan Authier	5-Jan-19	6-Jan-19
Basic Life Support (BLS) Refresher for 68W Personnel	350-17-10	Sgt. 1 st Class Megan Authier	6-Jan-19	6-Jan-19
68W Sustainment Course	350-17-06	Sgt. 1 st Class Megan Authier	7-Jan-19	13-Jan-19
Unit Finance Course	350-17-34	Mr. Fabian S. Bennett	15-Jan-19	17-Jan-19
G-3 Fulltime Manning Training Course	350-17-56	Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Collins	21-Jan-19	25-Jan-19
Fitness Improvement Program	350-17-62	Capt. Ryan Michalak	22-Jan-19	1-Feb-19
Engagement Skills Trainer II (EST II)	350-17-22	Capt. Jimmy Locke	25-Jan-19	27-Jan-19
Unit Public Affairs Representative Training Course	350-17-09	Maj. Mike Petersen/ Ms. Allison Joanis	26-Jan-19	26-Jan-19
Field Maintenance Workshop	350-17-61	Master Sgt. William Gallucci	30-Jan-19	31-Jan-19
ASK CARE ESCORT- SUICIDE INTERVENTION (ACE-SI)	350-17-29	Mrs. Jennifer Visone	6-Feb-19	6-Feb-19
Field Maintenance Workshop	350-17-61	Master Sgt. William Gallucci	6-Feb-19	7-Feb-19
Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training Course (ASIST)	350-17-08	Mrs. Jennifer A. Visone	7-Feb-19	8-Feb-19
Unit Movement Workshop	350-17-55	Master Sgt. Thomas Ahearn	10-Feb-19	10-Feb-19
Casualty Notification/Assistance Officer Training (CNO/CAO)	350-17-05	Sgt. 1 st Class Michael J. Cardozo	19-Feb-19	20-Feb-19
Threat Tactics MTT	350-17-52	Maj. Justin Anderson	4-Mar-19	8-Mar-19
G4 Quarterly Supply Training/Meeting	350-17-44	Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey T. Colvin	28-Feb-19	28-Feb-19
Domestic Operations Assessment and Awareness Tools (DAART)	350-17-59	Master Sgt. Rhynhart / Maj. Lebejko	1-Mar-19	1-Mar-19
Unit Environmental Officer Training Course	350-17-23	Mr. Robert Dollak	2-Mar-19	2-Mar-19
Bus Driver Training Course (Train the Trainer Course)	350-17-21	Sgt. 1 st Class William Blake	11-Mar-19	15-Mar-19
Virtual Convoy Operations Trainer (VCOT)	350-17-27	Capt. Jimmy Locke	11-Mar-19	14-Mar-19
Resilience Training Assistant (RTA) Course	350-17-16	Capt. Alex Long	12-Mar-19	15-Mar-19

Course Spotlight:

CTNG's First-Ever Fitness Improvement Program

Beginning in late January, the Connecticut National Guard will kick off a Fitness Improvement Program, designed to provide Guardsmen the ability to develop a holistic wellness program that promotes positive lifestyle changes in the areas of include fitness, nutrition and resilience.

The first-of-its-kind program in Connecticut, which kicks off on Jan. 22 in Niantic, is part of the Guard's continuing efforts to build a ready, resilient force that embodies the National Guard's motto, "Always Ready. Always There." The program aims to provide a starting point that promotes a healthier lifestyle.

"There is so much more to fitness and wellness than working out until muscle failure," said Capt. Ryan Michalak, Fitness Improvement Program Coordinator and a middle school physical education teacher. "While proper technique when working out is vital, we also want to focus on nutritional needs, behavioral health and skills that our Guardsmen can take home with them."

The initial course will run through Feb. 1, with two-day follow-ups in late February, March and April. Guardsmen interested in attending the course are encouraged to contact their Readiness NCO or Chain of Command for more information.

"We are also actively seeking Master Fitness Trained Soldiers and support staff to help Connecticut Guardsmen achieve their best," Michalak said. "We encourage Guardsmen to contact their chain of command to find out more."

THE DA PHOTO PROCESS

Do You Need A DA PHOTO?

1

Must be SSG or above

And at least one of the following:

- No photo on file
- Current photo over 5 years old
- Promoted since last photo
- Received ARCOM or higher

REVIEW YOUR ERB/ORB

- Check records for accuracy
- Determine which awards you are authorized to wear for your photo
- DO NOT Wear awards not listed in your record
- ERB/ORB accuracy is an individual responsibility

PREPARE YOUR UNIFORM

Ensure your uniform is up to AR 670-1 standards *before* scheduling an appointment

- Uniform preparation is an individual responsibility
- Last minute cancellations due to incomplete uniforms waste valuable time. Be conservative of fellow Soldiers and only schedule an appointment once your uniform is 100% to standard
- Incomplete or inaccurate uniforms DO NOT justify a re-shoot. Your uniform must be complete and accurate before scheduling your appointment

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT IN VIOS

www.vios.army.mil

- Write down your appointment time & date. The automated e-mails **WILL NOT** contain your specific appointment details
- Only available time slots are shown. If your first choice is unavailable, choose another time

SHOW UP AT SCHEDULED TIME

Maj Maurice Rose
Armed Forces Reserve Center
375 Smith Street
Middletown, CT 06457
Room 322

- Be on time and fully dressed at the scheduled time
- Locker rooms available on the first floor if you wish to carry your uniform on a hanger

IMAGE MANIPULATION

DA photos **WILL NOT** be digitally altered. **DO NOT ASK**

- Per AR 600-30: Photographers will not alter the photograph, to include adding new rank, ribbons, stars or existing variations or omissions. Active measures must be taken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of all official DA photographs
- Per AR 600-30, the photo lab does not print or provide copies of the office photo. To ensure integrity of all official DA photos, a digital computer file, disk or copy **WILL NOT** be issued to the Soldier

How Does your photo get to your ERB/ORB?

From Lab → [Cloud Icon] → DAPMIS → Human Resources Command

Once approved in DAPMIS, your photo will automatically be routed to your ERB/ORB.

What to Wear for a DA Photo

- Must Wear Unit Crests (Enlisted)
- Wear RDI if affixed
- Wear only Unit Crests that PERMANENT and listed in your individual records
- Nameplate must be worn
- Wear ONE CSSB, if authorized
- NO Infantry cords or blue discs
- NO Green leadership tabs
- Only wear PERMANENT awards listed in your records
- Wear Marksmanship Badges
- Identification badges worn on left pocket, if authorized
- No headgear worn for DA photo

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: WWW.ARMY11.ARMY.MIL/DA/UNIFORM

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation Announces 2019 Scholarship Program

The Connecticut National Guard Foundation, Inc. announces the 2019 scholarship program. This year the Foundation will award a total of seven scholarships.

- Two \$4000.00 scholarships honoring SGT Felix Del Greco Jr.** will be awarded to a son or daughter of a member of the Connecticut ARMY National Guard. * Please note that a special application is required for the Del Greco scholarship which may be obtained from: <http://www.conncf.org>. No other application will be accepted.
- Five \$2,000.00 scholarships** will be awarded to Connecticut National Guard and Organized Militia members or their sons, daughters, or spouses and children of Connecticut National Guard Retirees. Application forms may be found at the Foundations website at <http://www.ctngfi.org>.

Additional Information

Complete application packets for the CTNGFI scholarships must be postmarked no later than **APRIL 15, 2019**. The selection committee will choose students based on achievement and citizenship. You must be enrolled in, or planning to enroll in a regionally or nationally accredited degree or technical program. Mail application form (CTNGFI Scholarship Only) and completed package to:
CTNG Foundation Inc. Attn: Scholarship Committee 360 Broad Street, Hartford Armory, Hartford, CT 06015

Please contact the foundation at (860) 241-1550 or e-mail ctngfi@sbcglobal.net for further details.



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Army & Air AGR positions available.
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Army & Air Technician,
Army & Air AGR positions available.
Title 10 opportunities available (CAC access).

For a full listing, visit
<http://ct.ng.mil/Careers/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT,
Maj. William Warner, AGR Tour Branch Manager,
(860) 613-7608, william.s.warner1.mil@mail.mil
Sgt. 1st Class Laura Hernandez, Senior HR Sergeant,
(860) 613-7617, laura.hernandez3.mil@mail.mil

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Retiree Voice

Tax News for Retirees

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

On January 1, 2018, the new Federal tax reform laws enacted in 2017 went into effect. 2019 will be the first year of filing under these new tax rules. Also, at the June 2017 Special Session of the Connecticut Legislature, changes were made to income tax exemptions for Social Security and pension income, which will go into effect this year. These changes in tax laws will affect retirees and those who considered “seniors” in the following ways.

There are new Federal rules that will benefit retirees and seniors. Of importance, are the higher standard deduction, lower income tax rates and expanded deduction for medical expenses. Some of the prior rules and deductions that helped retirees, did not change.

Many older taxpayers who do not carry a mortgage or have downsized their residence, often have fewer limited expenses to itemize. In past years, this group may have claimed the standard deduction because it benefited them more. The new tax law doubles the standard deduction, making taking the standard deduction beneficial to more retirees and seniors. The 2018 standard deduction is \$12,000 if you are single or use married filing separate status which is up from \$6,350 for 2017 taxes. For married couples filing jointly, the standard deduction is \$24,000, which is up from \$12,700. The additional standard deduction for tax filers over sixty-five remains in effect. Filers over age sixty-five can claim an extra \$1600 filling singly and joint filers an extra \$2600.

If retirees have enough deductible expense exceeding the higher standard deduction, they will be able to claim more of their qualified medical expenses than in the past. The new rules preserve the deductions for medical

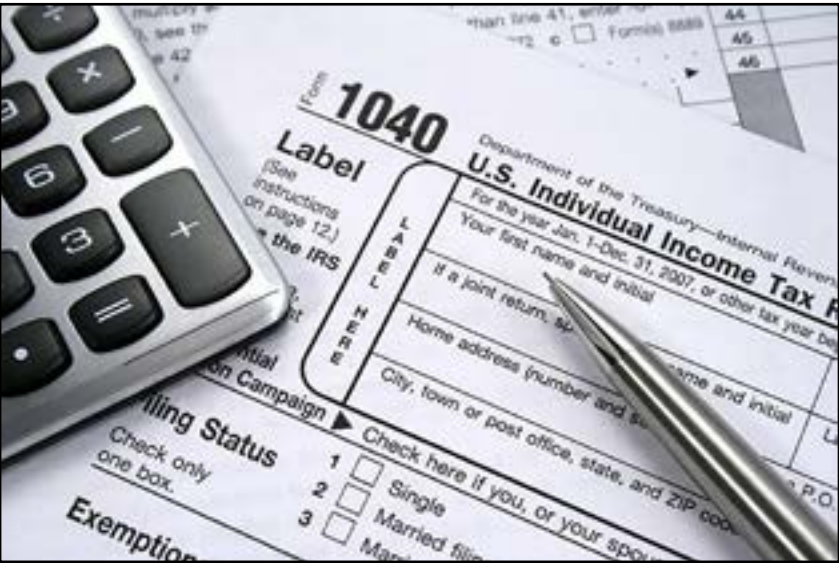
expenses and lowers the income threshold these expenses must exceed from 10 percent to 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income. The caveat is that unless Congress votes to extend this reduction, it will revert back to ten percent for 2019 tax fillings.

Social Security benefits, which are an important source of income for many retirees. A portion is taxable for many retirees. Under the new rules, most of the marginal income tax rates have been lowered. Here is an example.

The 15 percent tax rate dropped to 12 percent, and the 25 percent rate has dropped to 24 percent. Since more income will be included in a lower tax bracket, many seniors’ Social Security taxable income should be lower. Even though the new rules don’t change the calculation of Social Security income included in taxable income.

Retirees, age 70 1/2 or older, are required to take minimum withdrawals from the IRAs or retirement plans. The new rules don’t change the existing rules that allow an individual to use pretax dollars from an IRA to make a donation to a nonprofit, religious organization or other charity. There is an annual \$100,000 annual limit. This IRA charitable distribution was temporary and became permanent in the new tax law.

On the state level, there has been changes to the income tax exemptions for Social Security and pension income which will go into effect for the 2019 tax year. Connecticut is one of several states that base personal income taxes on the amount of income subject to federal



income tax. Connecticut subtracts specified income from the federal amount in computing Connecticut adjusted gross income. At the June 2017 Special Session, the state made increases to the income thresholds below which taxpayers may deduct Social Security income subject to federal income tax.

Beginning with the 2019 tax year, there will be a six-year phase-out of state income tax on pension and annuity income for taxpayers with federal adjusted gross incomes which fall below specific thresholds. The federal AGI thresholds are \$75,000 for single filers, married filing separately, and heads of households. The threshold for joint filers is \$100,000. Taxpayers with incomes below these thresholds may be able to deduct a portion of their pension and annuity income when they calculate their state adjustable gross income. In 2019 the percent exempt from income tax will be 14 percent and go up each year until it is 100 percent in 2025 and the phase-out will be complete.

CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

PROMOTIONS

ARMY

To Private 2

Boyle Brenna H.
Carden Dakota J.
Castillo Brianna
Eriksen Isaac D.
Gray Justin A.
Irizarry Jacob E.
Murphy Matthew J.
Rankin Steven P.
Shabazz Malik S.
Smith Ryan M.
That Mark R.
Thomas Jayden T.
Bezz Nathaniel S.
Green Tyrese B.
Hart Trojan W., II
Marcelin Mfe K.
Mazaik Andrew C.
Myers Sara M.
Rodriguez Hernandez J.
Villanueva Ivan
Wallis Justin T.

To Private First Class

Alexander Errol D., III
Araujo Dias M.
Bartha Juliana E.
Connell Michael W.
Davis Brianna J.
Denova Erick

To Specialist

Cartagena Eliezer
Joy Gilbert G.
Savino Olivia A.
Ansaldo Daniel J.
Ayala Angelica M.
Caban Joshua
Decosta Mathew J.
Fowler Joshua L.
Hamer William E.
Laureanoortiz Diego A.
Pietruszkiewicz Christina
Stewart Miguel F.
Tallis Zackary J.

To Senior Airman

Altamirano, Brian L.
Whelan, Joshua L.
Kyle P. Hilbert,
Tripler, Leonore E.
Fish, Nathan R.
Ybarra, Raymond G., Jr.

To Staff Sergeant

Westling, Conor J.
Beckford, Mariah A.

To Sergeant

Johnston Chase S.
Lloyd Robert N.
Mangual Kasandra M.
Rodriguezveras Luis G.
Swanson Kenneth H.
Wiese Natalia J.
Santosparedes Luis A.
Torres Angel M.
Barnes Cailin M.
Brown Jamar D.
Bullis Jordan R.
Mercadomirabal Yasell
Montano Gonzalez C.
Pierce David A., II
Rath Patrickk D.
Rivera Anthony F.
Samuels Cardell

To Sergeant Major

Andolena Michael P.
Celestin Steve
Cianci Samantha L.
Davidson Michael W.
Dupree Evan C.
Fulco Brandon R.
Ingalls Joshua M.
Knopf Aric D.
Montgomery Aundrya B.
Myers Terence T., Jr.
Nowak Joseph E.
Scarfi Andrew P.
Sholes Zachary L.
Vigo Stephen J.
Diaz Joshua E.
Kirby Zachary A.
Rivalalopez Guillermo
Sheldon Conrad T.
Vo Richard P
Wheway Andreanos J.

To Master Sergeant

Cuebasrmarrero Jonathan
Guarnieri Melissa A.
Henderson Gary L.
Mager Benjamin J.

To Captain

Ayala Reinaldo, Jr.
Depasquale Daniel J.
Kettle Jesse L.
Mackay Gregory P.
Rossi Victoria M.
Sams Tyler J.

To Major

Kissane Ryan C.
Marcella Matthew P.
Miller Christopher F.
Thomas Julia M.

ATR

To Senior Airman

Altamirano, Brian L.
Whelan, Joshua L.
Kyle P. Hilbert,
Tripler, Leonore E.
Fish, Nathan R.
Ybarra, Raymond G., Jr.

To Staff Sergeant

Westling, Conor J.
Beckford, Mariah A.

To Technical Sergeant

Meskill, Daniel J.
Clark, Edward J., Jr.
Smith, Jason T.
Leist, Kevin M.
Otero, Leopoldo
Arzu, Raymond
Beaudoin, Roger E.
Lester, Ryan M.

Congratulations to all!

Promotions as of December 1, 2018

Calendar

January
January 1
New Year’s Day
January 8
February Guardian Deadline
January 21
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February
February 2
Groundhog Day
February 5
March Guardian Deadline
February 5
Chinese New Year
February 14
Valentine’s Day
February 18
President’s Day

March
March 6
Ash Wednesday
March 5
April Guardian Deadline
March 8
International Women's Day
March 10
Daylight Savings Time begins
March 17
St. Patrick's Day
March 20
Spring Begins

Where to Find Veterans Services



Veterans of the United States Armed Forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions, and certain

benefits require service during wartime. If you are new to the VA, the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors booklet will help you get started.

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

Health Care

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

Benefits & Services

VA administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to veterans, their dependents, and survivors. Major benefits include compensation, pension, survivors’ benefits, rehabilitation and

employment assistance, education assistance, home loan guaranties, and life insurance coverage.

Burial and Memorials

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

Veterans Benefits Fact Sheets

<http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/factsheets/#BM1>

Contact CT VA at (860) 616-3600, <http://www.ct.gov/ctva>



CATHERINE GALASSO-VIGORITO

It's the Time of Even More

As winter came upon a small New England town, a compassionate young boy was outside in his backyard late one afternoon. There he found a little tan bird lying hurt near a large oak tree.

With kind, but concerned eyes and uneasiness in his voice, the boy called out to his father for help. The father came running toward the boy. And the two dropped down to their knees on the frozen ground next to the struggling, innocent bird.

The sky grew darker and, so, with gentle hands, the father lifted the little bird and carried it inside their home. They placed it on a soft blanket in a cardboard box. The boy turned to his father and asked, "What's wrong with the bird, dad?" Turning to his son, the father shook his head and uttered, "I'm not sure."

For the next hour, with a sweet, warm gaze, the boy watched the tiny bird. Standing back, soon, the father and son discovered that the bird had an injured wing and thus, was unable to fly.

Day by day, the family nursed the bird back to health. Wondrously, the bird recovered.

A small smile tugged at the boy's lips. And the father and son's faces lit up as they carefully brought the bird outside. They watched in awe at the bird's return to the sky as it flew higher and better than before.

Have you, like the little bird, felt hurt, broken and then lost your strength to persist forward?

Sometimes, our plans don't go the way we hope. Maybe, you have experienced ongoing disappointments, you're facing a difficulty or someone hurt you. Or you're in a low place or are experiencing the soul-wrenching pain of loneliness.

"Will I ever heal or mend?" you could ask yourself. For your joy, enthusiasm and zest for living seemed to

have vanished, and you think, "My best years are over."

But today, I am here to encourage you: You can rebuild your life and dream again. God is on your side. He has not forgotten you and nothing is beyond His ability to intervene. Let go of past hurts and stop thinking about all of the reasons why things are not going to work out for the future.

Today can be a turning point. You will heal. Your heart can mend. Victory will be yours. And you will be happy once more. God is going to bring forth new opportunities for you. His grace will override the pains of the past. God wants to revive your dreams. So receive the total restoration that God has in store and, like that little bird, you will emerge better than before.

Thus, get up and get moving on with your life. God has new, incredible blessings in your future, beyond your highest aspirations. So never condemn or undervalue yourself, or you can end up settling for less than God's best for you.

It's a new beginning. This is the time of 'even more.' And so:

* Look to God and be joyful again. God is directing your steps and breakthroughs are now being set into motion. So, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33).

* Persist to make your dreams come true again. Keep your optimism and enthusiasm going strong; you could be one day away from success. "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11).

* Be at peace and smile again. Pray with sincere expectation, for soon you'll experience God's blessing in an amazing, new way. "Do not worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done." (Philippians 4:6).

Don't let any wrong thoughts into your mind. When

unconstructive thoughts come into view, try this approach: Choose positive phrases to distract any negative beliefs. Build a new habit of thought by saying statements such as, "I'm strong," "God's plans for me are for good," "I will prevail," "Something amazing is on the verge of happening," "I have ever-increasing good health," "God has me in the palm of His hand," "Peace reigns in my heart," and "I am loved." Continue to acknowledge the good, and the good will increase.

So be calm. Hope on in prayer, faith and trust. And daily, ponder upon the good and expect positive results. For if you change your mind-set from negative to positive, the condition or difficulty you're facing will change, too.

Last week, I was driving on the highway to a business meeting. There was quite a bit of traffic. Then, I noticed that the car in front of me had a tire on the back of the vehicle with a tire cover on it. As I approached the car, I saw that the tire cover had some words on it that read, "One Life. Live it."


That's my message for you in the New Year: "One Life. Live it."

Accordingly, start each morning with prayer and ask God to open the way to letting His perfect will be done. It's the time of 'even more.' And God has great things in store. So believe in yourself and utilize the splendid gifts within you. And always count your many blessings.

Everyday listen to God's voice that says, God says you are "More than a conqueror." (Romans 8:38), you're "Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." (Ephesians 6:11). "You're fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14). You are "Blessed coming in and blessed going out." (Deuteronomy 28:6). And God says, "He hath not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:8).

The best days of our lives are right now! Let's live them!

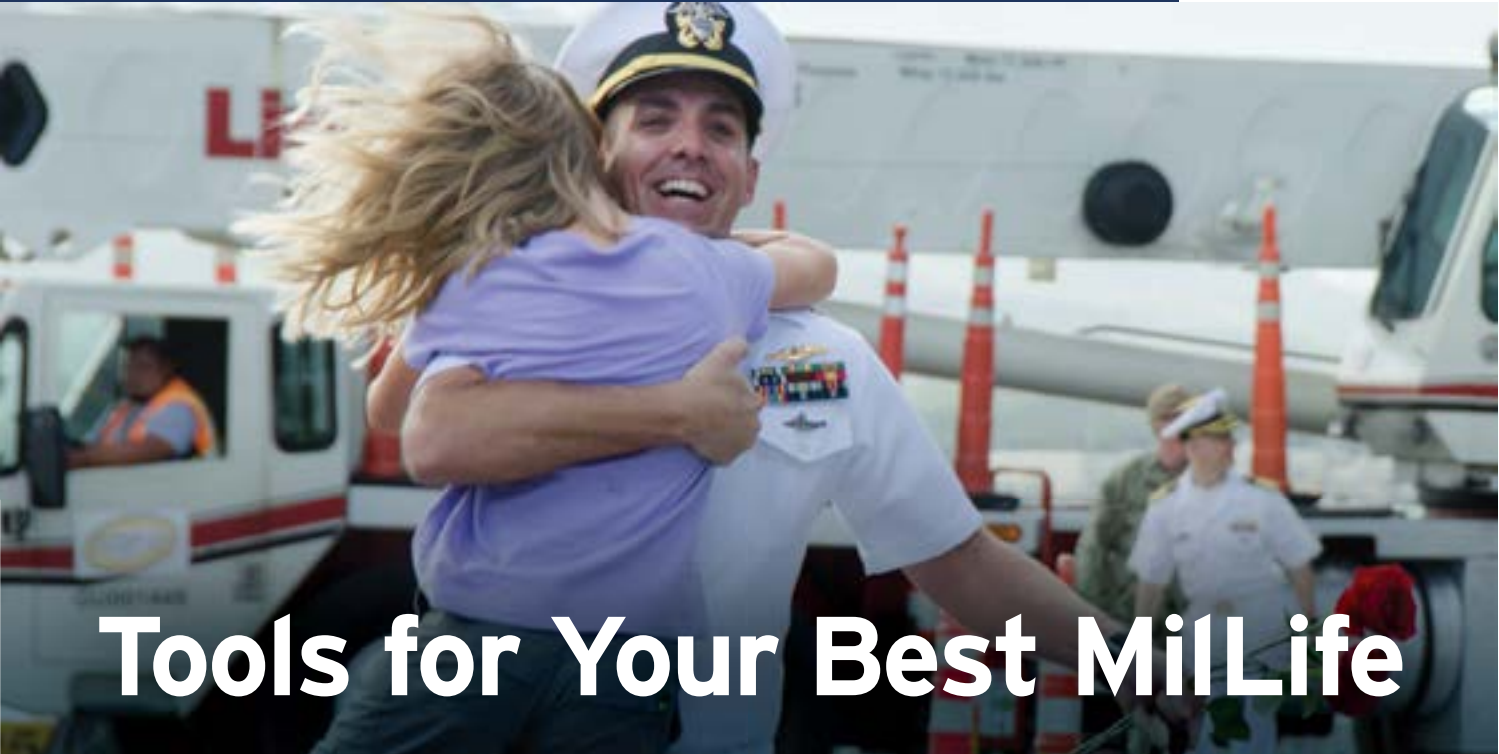
Catherine Galasso-Vigorito is a nationally-syndicated columnist and author from Connecticut who donates a monthly inspirational column to demonstrate her appreciation of U.S. Service Members and their families. The content is her own and does not express the official views of the Connecticut National Guard, the U.S. Government or the Department of Defense. You may write to Ms. Galasso-Vigorito in care of the Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06106-3795 or e-mail her directly at cgv@anewyouworldwide.com. Visit her website at www.anewyouworldwide.com. © Catherine Galasso, 2017



CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD HELPLINE

In an effort to support the needs of our service members and their families, the Connecticut National Guard has a 24-hour HELPLINE. Your call will be answered by a behavioral health professional. You will receive information and referrals to community resources to support you and your family.

HELPLINE - 1-855-800-0120



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Need financial or tax guidance? Want to talk about managing stress or family issues? What about a health and wellness coach?

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Military OneSource is a Department of Defense-funded program for service members and military families.

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www.MilitaryOneSource.mil | 800-342-9647



<p>William A. O'Neill Armory 360 Broad St. RM 112 Hartford, CT 06105</p> <p>Service Member and Family Support Center (800) 858-2677 Fax: (860) 493-2795</p> <p>Child and Youth Program (860) 548-3254</p> <p>Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (860) 493-2796</p> <p>Military OneSource (800) 342-9647 (860) 502-5416</p> <p>Survivor Outreach Services (860) 548-3258</p> <p>Open Mon.-Fri.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Family Assistance Center Locations</h3>  <p style="text-align: center;">Family Assistance Centers are an information and referral hub for all Branches of Service</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our Programs Include:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Budget Counseling</td> <td>Community Support Options</td> <td>Financial Assistance and Relief</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Family Communication</td> <td>Counseling Referrals</td> <td>Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal and Pay Information</td> <td>Outreach</td> <td>Family Readiness Groups (FRG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TRICARE Assistance</td> <td>Volunteer Opportunities</td> <td>DEERS & ID Card Assistance</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Support is available 24/7 by calling (800) 858-2677</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Centers are open part-time on a regular, weekly schedule. Please call ahead to confirm times or to make an appointment.</p>	Budget Counseling	Community Support Options	Financial Assistance and Relief	Family Communication	Counseling Referrals	Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)	Legal and Pay Information	Outreach	Family Readiness Groups (FRG)	TRICARE Assistance	Volunteer Opportunities	DEERS & ID Card Assistance	<p>New London Armory 249 Bayonet St. New London, CT 06320 (860) 772-1422 Open Mon.-Fri.</p> <p>103rd Airlift Wing 100 Nicholson Rd. East Granby, CT 06026 (860) 292-2730 Open Tues.-Fri.</p> <p>103rd Air Control Squadron 206 Boston Post Rd. Orange, CT 06447 (800) 858-2677 *By Appointment*</p> <p>Niantic Readiness Center 38 Smith St. Niantic, CT 06357 (860) 739-1637 Open Mon-Fri</p> <p>Windsor Locks Readiness Center 85-300 Light Ln. Windsor Locks, CT 06096 (860) 292-4602 Open Mon.-Fri.</p> <p>Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center 90 Wooster Heights Rd. Danbury, CT 06810 (203) 205-5050 Open Mon.-Fri.</p>
Budget Counseling	Community Support Options	Financial Assistance and Relief												
Family Communication	Counseling Referrals	Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)												
Legal and Pay Information	Outreach	Family Readiness Groups (FRG)												
TRICARE Assistance	Volunteer Opportunities	DEERS & ID Card Assistance												

Service Member & Family Support Center Staff Directory

<i>William A. O'Neill Armory: 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105 - Fax: (860) 493-2795 - Open Monday-Friday</i>			
Director, Service Member and Family Support Center	Kimberly Hoffman	kimberly.hoffman.civ@mail.mil	(800) 858-2677
Deputy Director	SNG Melody Baber	melodycheyenne.c.baber@mail.mil	(860) 548-3276 (desk); (860) 883-2615 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Coordinator	Andrea Lathrop	andrea.lathrop.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4938 (desk); (860) 883-6934 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Olga Castellanos	TBD	(860) 493-2797 (desk); (860) 883-6949 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Jason Perry	jason.perry.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4969 (desk); (860) 655-9288 (cell)
Family Readiness Support Assistant	Linda Rolstone	linda.rolstone.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4963 (desk); (860) 680-2209 (cell)
Family Readiness Support Assistant	Wendy Hagen	wendy.m.hagen.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4920 (desk); (860) 883-4677 (cell)
Family Readiness Support Assistant	Kelly Strba	kelly.a.strba.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3283 (desk); (860) 500-3813 (cell)
AIRNG Yellow Ribbon Program Coordinator	SPC Matt Yotka	matthew.t.yotka.mil@mail.mil	(860) 493-2796 (desk); (860) 500-3058 (cell)
Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator	Michelle McCarty	michelle.mccarty4.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3254 (desk); (860) 883-6953 (cell)
Survivor Outreach Specialist	Megan O'Shaughnessy	megan.o'shaughnessy.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3258 (desk); (860) 594-8748 (cell)
Military OneSource Consultant	Scott McLaughlin	scott.mclaughlin@militaryonesource.com	(860) 493-2722 (desk); (860) 502-5416 (cell)
Personal Financial Consultant	Reggie Harwell	phc.ctag@zaidlers.com	(203) 233-8790 (cell)
State Support Chaplain	CH (MAJ) David Nutt	david.nutt.mil@mail.mil	(860) 548-3240 (desk); (860) 883-7748 (cell)
Transition Assistance Advisor	Jay Braca	jonathan.j.braca.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 524-4908 (desk); (860) 748-6037 (cell)
Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve	Sean Britell	sean.r.britell.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 548-3295 (desk)
Connecticut Military Relief Fund	Russell Bonaccorso	russell.bonaccorso@ct.gov	(860) 524-4968 (desk)
Citizen Soldier For Life Career Readiness Counselor - Hartford	Dean Cornelio	dcornelio@afrc.com	(860) 524-4894 (desk)
Citizen Soldier For Life Career Readiness Counselor - New London	MBR Daniels	mdaniels@patriotcenterprivesle.com	(800) 858-2677
Citizen Soldier For Life Career Readiness Counselor - Middletown	VACANT	TBD	TBD
<i>Windsor Locks Readiness Center: 85-300 Light Lane, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 - Open Monday-Friday</i>			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Sean Carey	sean.c.carey.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4602 (desk); (860) 883-6949 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Lisa Middlebrook	lisa.a.middlebrook.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-4601 (desk); (860) 883-2704 (cell)
<i>Veterans' Memorial Armed Forces Reserve Center: 90 Wooster Heights Road, Danbury, CT 06810 - Open Monday-Friday</i>			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Nancy Cummings	nancy.a.cummings.ctr@mail.mil	(203) 205-5050 (desk); (860) 883-2746 (cell)
<i>New London Armory: 249 Bayonet Street, New London, CT 06320 - Open Monday-Friday</i>			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Michelle Pawell	TBD	(860) 772-1422 (desk); (860) 221-5540 (cell)
Personal Financial Consultant	TBD	phc3.ctag@zaidlers.com	(860) 287-7552 (cell)
<i>103rd Airlift Wing: 100 Nicholson Road, East Granby, CT 06026 - Open Tuesday-Friday</i>			
Airmen and Family Readiness Program Manager	Kasey Timberlake	kasey.b.timberlake.civ@mail.mil	(860) 292-2730 (desk); (860) 462-6379 (cell)
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Lisa Middlebrook	lisa.a.middlebrook.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-2595 (desk); (860) 883-2704 (cell)
Yellow Ribbon Support Specialist	Jennifer Gonzalez-Smith	jennifer.m.gonzalezsmith.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 292-2772 (desk); (860) 203-3107 (cell)
<i>Niantic Readiness Center: 38 Smith Street, Niantic, CT 06357 - (800) 858-2677 - Open Monday - Friday</i>			
Family Assistance Center Specialist	Jay Jannett	jay.s.jannett.ctr@mail.mil	(860) 739-1637 (desk); (860) 883-2720 (cell)