Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

V32 N1 CONTENTS

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



Cover Story: Governor Salutes Troops



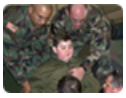
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The ceremony was held at the Lawrenceville Armory on Jan. 5. In addition to family members, friends and fellow Guard members; Governor Jon S. Corzine and other elected officials were there to say goodbye to the unit members.

FEATURED ARTICLES



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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

V32 N1 CONTENTS

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



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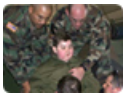
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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message »
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

TAG'S Message - Transformation and Future Missions

By Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General - New Jersey



Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth (left) watches as Governor Jon S. Corzine (center) and an aide prepare for the Inauguration. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

The last issue of Guardlife addressed how transformation would affect the individual Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard. In this issue, I think it's important to discuss how transformation will affect the organization overall, so that you understand the entire concept.

By definition the word Transformation means change. Change is not always welcome and is often resisted. You've heard clichés such as 'Change is Good' or you may have seen ad slogans that state 'We are changing for the better'. Many of New Jersey's Soldiers have lived through change before, with the deactivation of the 50th Armored Division. This was a difficult time in our history, but ultimately we came through the change and emerged into a stronger, better force.

I believe that the changes that the Army's transformation will bring to the Garden State will not weaken our structure, but instead we must work to right size the force, to strengthen the overall Guard.

To explain the changes in the most straightforward terms, the National Guard will continue to move from our former role as a Strategic Reserve to a more modern Operational Force. The Guard has evolved into a force that will be a full-partner with the Active Component and the Army Reserve. We will be organized and will deploy exactly as the Active Component does. Our units will be tasked-organized in such a way that we will be able to deploy more rapidly and we will be more self-sustaining. Transformation will bring a broader force structure and additional military occupational skills to the state. This will help us to be better equipped and trained to secure and defend New Jersey - which is the core competency of the National Guard. By design, the Guard has both a federal and a state mission. We are required to provide combat ready, mission capable forces across the entire spectrum of operations, if and when called upon by the President. What makes us unique is our state mission. We provide military support to civil authorities and we respond to state emergencies and natural disasters when ordered to do so by the Governor.

It's true that we will lose combat arms positions and equipment, but in turn we will increase our combat service and combat service support units, along with the equipment needed to support the new units and their missions. Ultimately we will be trading treads for wheels, as we lose the last of our armor assets. But we will gain additional transportation assets that will be more conducive to today's force structure and missions. Some of our current "tankers" will be given the opportunity to reclassify and become trained in skills such as engineering, water purification or military police.

Many of our field artillery Soldiers have already retrained as military police and served in the European Theater of Operations. They will have the opportunity to use these new skills in the MP companies or the Law and Order Detachment that are part of the transformation. In addition to being a much-needed skill in the Active Component and in the Southwest Asia area of operation, this skill will be an asset to the state and the Governor in terms of Homeland Security.

Upon completion of the transformation in FY08, New Jersey's homeland security assets will include highly trained personnel with military equipment suited for today's mission as well as future missions. These changes will further enhance our working relationship with the New Jersey State Police as well as other state and federal agencies. New Jersey is not alone in this change, as transformation will affect nearly three-quarters of the National Guard nationwide. The Guard will be more modular and better prepared to support the state and nation.

Although we lose armor, infantry, field artillery and signal skills, the new units and skills we adopt will help our team to grow professionally both in and out of uniform. They say 'Change is inevitable'. I believe it is necessary. In the ongoing Global War on Terrorism, the changes we experience today will make the state of New Jersey and its citizens safer and more secure for the future.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message »
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



From the Governor's Desk

Dear Guardsmen,



Governor Jon S. Corzine (center) poses with Sgt. Gerald Crispin (left) and Staff Sgt. Beth LaPoint (right) during a ceremony at the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

On behalf of the citizens of New Jersey let me first say thank you for your service and the sacrifices you've made throughout the course of your duty to protect us here at home.

My most important job is keeping the citizens of this state out of harm's way, and that would not be possible without the help of Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen like you. Whether our people need to be protected from terrorism, natural disaster or civil unrest the National Guard's preparedness to defend this state is second to none.

At times in order to protect our home we must face challenges that are far from home. Since September 11, 2001, more than 6,000 New Jersey Army and Air National Guard members have been deployed in the Global War on Terror. Many of you are in Iraq and Afghanistan right now, and some of you are mobilizing for deployment. As you leave our state's borders on your missions know that at home the state and the Guard will continue to meet the needs of your family and your civilian employer.

Additionally, we'll continue to work with Washington to ensure that the Guard is properly funded and that you are equipped to successfully complete your assigned mission.

Major General Rieth has assured me that you are some of the most prepared Guard members in the nation. He has faith in you, I have faith in you and the people of New Jersey have faith in you. You've made us all very proud. May God bless and protect you and our nation.

Sincerely,
Governor Jon S. Corzine

(c) 2006 NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1
TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message »
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

A Word From The Chief: The Little Books And Professionalism

By New Jersey Command Chief Master Sergeant Paul M. Gunning



Looking back over the past 30 months as your Command Chief Master Sergeant, I am somewhat amazed of you - our Airmen!

Your accomplishments are endless; you received outstanding and excellent on inspections, completed all missions flawlessly and safely, volunteered for AEF's and other deployments throughout the world, and helped other Americans during the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita relief efforts. You performed above and beyond even when no one was watching.

You have garnered numerous national awards and you represent the best of our Citizen-Airmen. I believe there are two books that have contributed to your becoming the Professional Airmen that you are in our great New Jersey Air National Guard.

The first is the Little Brown Book or Air Force Instruction 36-2618, The Enlisted Force Structure. This book defines our enlisted force structure, establishes enlisted leadership and development levels, specifies responsibilities of each rank, and establishes mandatory responsibilities for enlisted members. This little book is a must read for all enlisted Airmen as it is the enlisted force that defines us as Airmen, rather than merely technical specialists in a very large organization. Please see your First Sergeant if you do not have a copy.

Second is the Little Blue Book or the United States Air Force Core Values. This book explains our values of Integrity first, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do. The Core Values are much more than minimum standards. They remind us what it takes to get the mission completed and in a professional and safe manner. Retired Chief of Staff, General Ronald Fogleman states in the Little Blue Book, "The Air Force is not a social actions agency. It is not an employment agency..The Air Force exists to fight and win wars - that's our core expertise. It's what allows us to be called professionals. We're entrusted with the security of our nation. The tools of our trade are lethal, and we engage in operations that involve risk to human life and untold national treasures. Because of what we do our standards must be higher than those of society at large. The American public expects it of us and properly so. In the end, we earn the respect and trust of the American people because of the integrity we demonstrate." As Professional Airmen, we all must understand our Core Values, follow them, and encourage others to do the same.

Let me tell you about some of our great professional Airmen in the New Jersey Air Guard. These Airmen are leaders in their organizations and have been selected for state and national recognition based on leadership and performance, significant self improvement, and their base and community involvement. New Jersey's nominees for the Twelve Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 2005 were: Chief Master Sgt. Michael R. Francis from the 177th Security Forces Squadron, Staff Sgt. Francis A. Spence, 177th Logistics Readiness Squadron and Senior Airman Jeffrey A. Bock, from the 108th Security Forces Squadron. In addition, Senior Master Sgt. Paul J. Kasica from the 108th Civil Engineering Squadron is our Base Honor Guard Program nominee and Senior Master Sgt. Howard R. Dawson from the 177th Civil Engineering Squadron is our nominee for the ANG First Sergeant of the Year. Finally, we were just informed that Master Sgt. Michael J. Rakauckas of the 108th Security Forces Squadron has been selected as the ANG Security Forces Senior NCO of the Year. Congratulations to Master Sgt. Rakauckas and the rest of the nominees for their professional performance as Airmen serving in the New Jersey Air National Guard!

In closing, I want to thank all of the Professional Airmen serving our great state and nation and please thank your family and your employers for their support of you. Please take the time to refer to the Little Books on a regular basis as a reminder of the awesome responsibility which we all have as Airmen.

(c) 2006 NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye.. »
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

Units Say Goodbye to Loved Ones

Photos and story by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA



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(c) 2006 NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1
TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish »
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

UTES Soldiers Grant Wish

Photo and story by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA

When you wish upon a tank may not have the same ring as the Disney song about a star, but it rang true for one special New Jersey boy thanks in part to a special group of New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers.



Clockwise, Spc. Kenneth Harvey and Sergeants John Yaprem, Chris Walinski and Timothy Devoy help Timmy Pauxtis out of an M-1 Abrams tank.

Working in conjunction with the Make A Wish Foundation, Col. Charles Harvey, Joint Force Headquarters-New Jersey, and the Soldiers who work at the Unit Training Equipment Site (UTES) at Fort Dix, were able to fulfill the dream of a lifetime for young Timmy Pauxtis. In addition to giving him a ride in an M1 Abrams Battle Tank, the Soldiers had several other special treats in store for Timmy, most of which they provided on their own.

"When we heard about it, everybody got pumped up, and it just snowballed - Let's do this for him, let's do that for him," said Sgt. Tim Devoy. "Guys that came back from Iraq were taking their medals and throwing them into the pot, because we really wanted to do something nice."

"I had a couple of medals at home collecting dust, so I brought them in for him," added Sgt. Dave Petruzziello. "It really was a group effort. Everybody was involved."

After donning a combat vehicle crewman's helmet, Timmy was lowered into the tank and off they went down the tank trails that surround Fort Dix. Forty-five minutes later the tank returned and a beaming Timmy was hoisted into the waiting arms of his mother, who had nothing but thanks for the Soldiers at UTES.

"How do I begin to say thank you to everyone for making Timmy's dream come true," Susan Pauxtis wrote on Timmy's website. "I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart to Sergeant Ronald Ambrose and Colonel Harvey and everyone else involved in putting this special day together for Timmy."

And while Timmy may look up to the Soldiers as heroes, the Soldiers themselves have their own hero. "He's a trooper, he's a Soldier," said Devoy, noting that they were as determined as Timmy to make his wish come true. "If this was his wish, we wanted to make sure it was memorable for him. We hope he can come back - we want him back. He hung in there and he had a blast. That was our goal, and that was what we accomplished."

For more on the day's events, see excerpts from Timmy's mother, Susan's log, in the box below.

> *"Timmy was first presented with a "Certificate of Appreciation" in recognition of being promoted to Sergeant First Class. He also was presented with a plaque that said "From all the soldiers at U.T.E.S. Your courage through this time in your life is a credit to yourself and all the Soldiers who ever said "I can" and we know you will be victorious in all the battles throughout your life. We salute you". Timmy also received medals, pins, an Army jumpsuit, and a helmet autographed by all the Soldiers. He received a book from the Colonel about M1 Abrams tanks with pictures of the tanks in action.*
>
> *Much to our surprise and Timmy's delight [there] was a huge remote-controlled M1 Abrams tank. This tank is about 3 feet long and has a 12 volt rechargeable battery. This wonderful group of soldiers took it upon themselves to go out and buy this for Timmy. I would like to thank each and every one of you for doing this for Timmy. It was so generous and as of today, Timmy is having so much fun with it."*

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program »
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

The NJARNG Diversity Program

By Capt. Barbara Brown-Wilson, NJARNG/DP

In 2003, Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth envisioned a program that would work toward having a diverse force, both vertically and horizontally and reflective of the demographics of New Jersey.

By valuing ethnic and cultural differences as well as similarities, the NJARNG can better recruit, retain, mentor and promote members. However, the challenge before the NJARNG is capitalizing on the state's changing demographics. As a result of the TAG's vision, a State Diversity Program was created that focuses on all aspects of the Guard and fosters diversity, recruiting, retention, mentorship, promotion, resources, training and policies. The Diversity Program also calls for a Diversity Committee comprised of primarily enlisted representatives from each NJARNG unit. The committee, which meets quarterly and is responsible for implementing the program, serves as the eyes, ears and voices of Soldiers.

Future diversity initiatives include administering a Diversity Climate Survey and establishing a Diversity Webpage. The goal of the survey is to assess the current diversity climate. It will be imperative that all soldiers participate in the survey to gain an accurate assessment in order to effectively implement the Diversity Program.

The Diversity site is on New Jersey National Guard Knowledge Online under G1 Military Personnel. It will provide the latest information on the NJARNG Diversity Initiatives. Soldiers can access current diversity statistics, available diversity training, links, ARNG e-Mentoring information and other diversity resources. The Diversity site is located at https://gkoportal.ngb.army.mil/sites/NJNG/G1/Diversity/default.aspx. Users must have a valid GKO username and password to access the site.

A full-time State Diversity Officer has been appointed to oversee the State Diversity Program. If you would like additional information regarding the program and its initiatives, please contact Capt. Barbara Brown-Wilson at (609) 562-0799 or send an e-mail to barbara.g.brown@nj.ngb.army.mil.

Guard Plays Key Role in Inauguration

The New Jersey National Guard played an important role in the 2006 Governor's Inauguration by providing support at all the events. Support included a 19-gun salute, VIP escorts at the prayer service, inauguration ceremony and the Inaugural Ball; and aerial photography for security. The Guard was also responsible for delivering the official State Seal to the Secretary of State. The following indivuduals served as escorts at the Inauguration, pictured (l-r) Lt. Col. Angelo Capolupo, Master Sgt. Daniel Calderale, Col. Edward Slavin, Master Sgt. James McCloskey, Master Sgt. Michael Edmiston, Maj. Daniel Rutkowski, Lt. Col. Mark Preston and Lt. Col. Dennis Devery. Photo by Lt. Col. Roberta Niedt, NJDMAVA/PAO.



NJARNG Honors 2005 NCO Of The Year

Many of us meet the mark, but few go beyond. There's something to be said for the men and women who see past the standard and raise the benchmark.

That's what Staff Sgt. Harold Prickett did when he won the 2005 NJARNG Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. While this Soldier has won bragging rights for his unit, the 253rd Transportation Company, he takes it all in stride. "It's nice to be recognized for doing good work and being the best you can be," said Prickett playing off the Army motto. "For me it was a pat on the back for doing an excellent job. But it was all just part of the job."

While Prickett is modest about the award, other uniformed Guard members are not surprised by the honor. "Sgt. Prickett is top notch, he is one of the best," said Sgt. Samuel Caraballo. "I have known him for close to ten years…He always strives for the best whatever he does in and

out of uniform."

Prickett attributes his NCO of the Year nomination to the 253rd's deployment to Iraq from Feb. 2003 to April 2004, where his unit helped support the 548th Support Group, 10th Mountain Division and the 101st Airborne during the initial days of the Global War on Terrorism.

While there, Prickett stepped to the plate when asked, and took on the challenges as a manager dealing with the movement of the unit's vehicles.

"He will always be an asset to whatever organization he is working for - in or out of the military - now or in the future," observed Carabello.

Prickett was offered a fulltime job with his unit shortly after his 16-month deployment. After being nominated for the NCO of the Year, he found himself studying common task training manuals along with reading newspapers for current events in preperation for the competition. His senior NCOs gave him advice and support, something that Prickett would do for any Soldier going up for this award. "If a Soldier gets nominated for this, tell them to call me anytime and I will be happy to help them out to prepare."

"It was a neat experience," he said. "It was really cool to get the recognition in the state. I Love everyday of the Army. I love being in uniform.

Soldier of the Year

With only two years in the military, Spc. Eric Robert Symonds is already setting an example for his fellow Soldiers of New Jersey.

This is because this 21 year-old recruiter of the Recruiting and Retention Command at Port Murray was recently selected as the Soldier of the Year for the New Jersey Army National Guard for 2005.

"I was totally surprised when I was nominated, I had no idea," said Symonds.

Prior to Soldier of the Year, Symonds' accomplishments began when he was in Advanced Individual Training, as an armor crewman.

At that time he earned the Excellence in Armor award for graduating in the top five percent of his class of 180 Soldiers and was promoted to private first class.

When the Port Murray recruiter went on leave, Symonds was able to enlist two local high school students into the Army National Guard without formal recruiter training. He received an Army Achievement Medal for his efforts.

"What I like about this job, is the opportunity to help other people make positive changes in their life (by joining the Guard). I know the changes it made in my life, I know it will change theirs," said Symonds.

When he is not recruiting, Symonds likes to add to his military experience by studying or attending military schools. Three schools he recently graduated from are: Air Assault school, which he finished in November of 2004; the Recruiting school in March 2005; and, most recently, the Primary Leadership Development Course in August, where he graduated second out of a class of 117 Soldiers.

"Before joining, I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life and now that I am part of it, I realized that nothing is by chance, there is no luck, just hard work. This is what I am supposed to be doing. This is my chosen path," stated Symonds. "Now that I found it I don't want to stop, I'm always looking up, never looking back."From the day he began working at the recruiting office at Port Murray he continued to excel.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing's Change of Command »
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



Wing Holds Change of Command Ceremony

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA

The 177th Fighter Wing held a Change of Command ceremony on Feb. 5. At the ceremony Col. Randall S. King assumed command from Col. Brian L. Webster.

Prior to assuming command of the 177th, Col. King served as the wing's Vice Commander.

In his comments to the more than 600 honored guests and 177th members, Col. King spoke about the Wing's future under his leadership: "As for my vision for our wing, it's simply to be the unsurpassed leader in air sovereignty/ air defense in North America while providing superior expeditionary Airmen to support the successful prosecution of the Global War on Terrorism.



Maj. Gen. Eugene R. Chojnacki (left), Commander, New Jersey Air National Guard, passes the 177th Fighter Wing's Colors to Col. Randall S. King (center), the incoming Commander of the 177th located at Egg Harbor Township while outgoing Commander Col. Brian L. Webster (right) watches.

It is my goal to provide you with focused leadership so that you - our exceptional Citizen Airmen - can continue your outstanding service to our communities, state, and nation. Whether it is on a national scale involving contingency operations half way around the world, or rebuilding the hopes and dreams of American's devastated by natural disaster, you have always proven to be up to the challenge - the future will be no different. Regardless of the mission, your collective efforts have enabled the 177th Fighter Wing to do great things."



From Snow to Sand
Senior Airman Nicholas Cobian (second from left) and Master Sgt. Laverne Frazer (right), part of a 50-member advance party from the 177th Fighter Wing, board an aircraft for Iraq as part of an Air Expeditionary Force. Photo courtesy 177FW.



Firefighters Stand (Kneel) Ready
Firefighters from the 177th Fighter Wing (L-r) Senior Airmen Matthew C. Loughlin, Andrew M. Gerdeman, Wayne R. White II; Staff Sgt. Rex L. Rostron and Senior Airman Robert J. McCarty II pose for a photo while deployed in Iraq.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag »
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

Wing Leads In Silver Flag

Story by Staff Sgt. Barb Harbison, 108ARW/PA
photos by Master. Sgt. Louis Conzo, 108ARW/CES

Leading 150 Airmen from 16 bases and 13 states, the 108th Air Refueling Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron successfully completed a Silver Flag exercise at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., in January.



Staff Sgt. Kevin Sharp (left) and Senior Airman Quixion Johnson (right) measure for airfield lighting placement.

From the Golden State to the Garden State, Wisconsin to Florida and states in between, these men and women came together to become a team in less than one week. Lt. Col. Paul Novello, commander of the 108th CES, was the Camp Commander during the exercise, whose 40 Airmen melded effectively with Airmen from active duty, Reserves and Guard to perform their duties.

"We teach you stuff we hope you never have to use," intoned Chief Master Sgt. Joe Wright, Site Chief, Detachment 1, 823rd RED HORSE Squadron, Tyndall AFB, during the incoming briefing.

The week-long exercise provides contingency training free from home station constraints according to Wright. All equipment such as tents, vehicles and tools needed for the exercise are pre-positioned and provided by the Air Force; the Airmen must bring their personal gear, sleeping bags and chemical gear.

The Airmen train on various tasks including: repairing flightline craters after explosions from unexploded bombs, the design and construction of a tent city, putting out fires, rescuing a pilot from a downed aircraft, finance, contracting, personnel and services.

For some Airmen coming to Silver Flag is a new adventure and for others like Staff Sgt. Joseph Starr, an electrician with the 108th CES, it was a repeat visit. Starr was down at Tyndall for his fourth Silver Flag exercise. "Most times everyone comes together well; we all work together to accomplish the common task," he said. "The benefits to Silver Flag are that the Airmen get a better grasp on the mission and can see the big picture on how the people and equipment come together to accomplish the mission," added Starr.



Senior Airman Madarrell P. McCullough works with other Silver Flag participants to erect an Alaskan Shelter.

Lt. Col. Novello said that CE's peacetime mission is to maintain the local base but their wartime mission is the preparation of a bare base for the receipt of forces and the maintenance and operation of the tent city and base recovery activities. "The training at Silver Flag is also hands-on, intensified training for what CE will do on the 108th's upcoming ORE and ORI."

He said that one of the challenges of leading Airmen from many different locations and components in this short time period was making sure that the right people are in the right positions.

"I have people who are the same rank and I must look at their experience and figure who would be best in the job," Novello stated.

He said that the best things about coming to Silver Flag was that they all got to do hands-on training without being encumbered with the day-to-day issues of home base. "Plus all the pieces of the CE puzzle are together and we have added finance, services, contracting and personnel, so it is quite a complete package, similar to if we would deploy," he said.

Master Sgt. Marie Reavis, 108th CES First Sgt. said that her biggest challenge at Silver Flag, as a first sergeant was to get out there and be visible to the people. "I have to reach out and touch the Airmen. Being physically available for people to see is very important." Reavis admitted to looking forward to the week's training. "It is critical for everyone to get this training. For all of us to get something out of the training and get it accomplished safely," she stated.



Members of the 108th Civil Engineering Squadron work with members of CE squadrons from across the United States positioning the mobile aircraft arresting system to ensure that it is positioned properly on the flightline.

Reavis's hopes came true when Novello spoke after the squadron returned to McGuire. "Silver Flag was better than my wildest dreams," he said with a big smile. During the portion where the Silver Flag cadre measured the visiting Airmen for their execution of tasks, Novello said they completed the metrics within the expected time frames. "The beddown was completed a half hour before expectations and the breakdown and redeployment was completed two hours ahead of time," he said. "These Airmen came together and worked effectively as one team," stated Novello. "The Silver Flag cadre stated that our bed-down briefing was one of the best they had seen to date."

During the training Novello stressed unity and safety and his emphasis worked as the entire group came away from the exercise with no one injured.

Two of the four "Outstanding Performers" recognized by the 823rd Red Horse cadre during this Silver Flag Exercise were from the 108th CES. They were Staff Sgt. Carlos Morales and Master Sgt. Marie Reavis.

"I am extremely proud of the job that the 108th CE did while at Silver Flag, and the way they have always performed," said Novello. "And I know they will continue to perform exceptionally."



Staff Sgt. Joe Landry, right, works with a Silver Flag team member on the fresh water supply system.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits »
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

RHC Prepares Recruits

By 1st Lt. Stephen J. Ianquinto, Jr., Recruiting and Retention Command



New Jersey Army National Guard members demonstrate Soldier skills. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

The mission of the Recruit Holding Company (RHC) is to accept, welcome, integrate and process qualified applicants and prior service soldiers into the New Jersey Army National Guard (NJARNG) family. We also prepare them for shipping to Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training.

All non-prior service recruits joining the NJARNG report to the 1st Platoon and remain with the Platoon until they ship to Basic Combat Training. The recruit training is conducted under the guidance of the Soldier Empowerment And Readiness (SEAR) program, which consists of seven blocks of instruction designed to prepare new recruits for successful completion of basic training. The RHC is organized into three platoons. This structure helps the cadre focus on the individual Soldier's skill level.

The SEAR program breaks training into various phases. Non-prior service recruits receive instruction in topics ranging from Army values, combating peer pressure to final preparation for basic combat training.

During classroom breaks the recruits are turned over to drill sergeants from the Army Reserve for instruction in marching, military bearing and discipline. Physical training is also conducted by the drill sergeants. This allows the recruits to become familiar with the PT program prior to their arrival at basic combat training.

Soldiers who enlist for the Split Training Option (STO) are initially assigned to the 1st Platoon but report to 2nd Platoon upon completion of basic training. While in the 2nd Platoon the new Soldiers hone the skills they learned at basic training while awaiting their Advanced Individual Training (AIT). The 2nd Platoon provides more advanced instruction, as well as integration into the NJARNG by exposing STO soldiers to the units, equipment and missions of the NJARNG. Newly assigned prior service Soldiers awaiting seats for the warrior transition course receive additional duties and responsibilities. This program is designed to train prior service Soldiers in all Army military aspects, thus making the transition into New Jersey Army National Guard life as seamless as possible.

Prior service Soldiers, to include reserve component transfers and inter-state transfers, as well as Soldiers returning from AIT report to the 3rd Platoon. These Soldiers spend one drill weekend completing processing into the NJARNG. This includes completing administrative requirements to return the soldier from training and processing bonus entitlements. At the end of the weekend a "battle handoff" is conducted during which the new Soldier will meet representatives from his or her unit of assignment. If you are interested in joining the Traditional Drilling Guardsmen Cadre or need more information, contact Sgt. 1st Class John Quin at (609) 562-0743.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview »
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

Education Programs Overview

Click here for a guide on how to get the most out of your education benefits. (715KB PDF)



NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Education Programs Overview

New Jersey National Guard Tuition (Waiver) Program

- 31 Participating State Schools (see Eligible State School list below)
- Undergraduate/Graduate Tuition waived for NJNG members (Army or Air)
  - Must remain in good standing with your unit
  - MUST apply for financial aid annually (FAFSA) http://www.fafsa.ed.gov
  - NJDMAVA Form 621-2-R "Commander's Certification" every semester (unit issued)
  - Must comply with school policies, procedures and academic standards
  - New Jersey National Guard Tuition (Waiver) Program's list of 31 Eligible State Schools:

Atlantic Cape Community College	Middlesex County College	Rowan University
Bergen Community College	Montclair State University	Rutgers, The State Univ. of NJ
Brookdale Community College	County College of Morris	Salem Community College
Burlington County College	New Jersey City University *	Sussex County Community College
Camden County College	NJ Institute of Technology	The College of New Jersey **
Cumberland County College	Ocean County College	Thomas Edison State College
Essex County College	Passaic County Community College	Union County College
Gloucester County College	Ramapo College of NJ	Univ. of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ
Hudson County Community Col.	Raritan Valley Community College	Warren County Community College
Kean University	Richard Stockton College of NJ	William Paterson Univ. of NJ
Mercer County Community Col.	* Formerly Jersey City State College	** Formerly Trenton State

Each school has their own policies and procedures for administering the NJNGTP. You must find out which office is responsible for this program and meet with a representative from that office before you register. This will ensure that you follow the school's policy. For assistance, contact the Veterans Affairs Representative, the Financial Aid Office or the Registrar's Office. For internet hyperlinks go to:

http://www.state.nj.us/military/education/Colleges.htm

ARNG Federal Tuition Assistance

- Subject to the availability of funds from current FY06 budget
- Attending any accredited school not listed in the above list
- $250 per semester hour } Not to exceed 100% of tuition
- $166 per quarter hour } Up to $4,500 per soldier, per Fiscal Year
- May be used together with the MGIB-SR if enrolled as ½ time or more
- Applications available at: http://www.virtualarmory.com
  - Click on "Education" tab, "Online Applications" then "Application for Federal Tuition (You Need to be Logged In)"
- Additional information: http://www.nj.gov/military/education/TA.htm

Evaluation of Military Experience and Degree Planning

- Go to http://www.virtualarmory.com complete an Education Support Center (ESC) application for an educational assessment and degree plans
  - Click on "Education" tab, "Online Applications" then "Education Support Center"
- If you are unable to access the internet the ESC may be contacted at:
  - Toll Free 1-866-628-5999 or Fax 1-501-212-4928 or esc@ngpec.org

NJARNG Education Center, 3650 Saylors Pond Road, Ft. Dix, NJ 08640
1 (888) 859-0352 or (609) 562-0654 / 0714 / 0975 Fax: (609) 562-0201
http://www.nj.gov/military/education
Last update: 1 October 2005 FY 06

Montgomery GI Bill Overview

Montgomery GI Bill–Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) Chapter 1606

- Basic Eligibility Requirements
  - High School Diploma or equivalent (GED)
  - Completion of IADT (Basic Training AND MOS Training)
  - First Reserve Component 6 Year Contract or service obligation after 30 June 1985
- Benefits of the MGIB-SR: **(VA Hotline: 1-888-GI-BILL-1)**
  - Provides 36 full-time months of entitlement (at VA approved schools)
    - FY06 rates for Chapter 1606 are as follows:
      - Full-time (12+ college credits) $297 (Max 36 months)
      - ¾ Time (9-11 college credits) $222.75 (Max 48 months)
      - ½ Time (6-8 college credits) $148.50 (Max 72 months)
      - < ½ Time (< 6 college credits) $74.25 (Max 144 months)
  - Expires 14 years from the day of eligibility. Total entitlement = 36 x $297 = **$10,692**

MGIB–Reserve Educational Assistance Program Chapter 1607

- Basic Eligibility Requirements
  - National Guard and Reserve soldiers activated after September 11th, 2001
  - Period of activation must be 90 days or more on active duty (Title 10 orders)
  - Soldier must remain in the National Guard and be in good standing with their unit
- Benefits of the MGIB-REAP: **(VA Hotline: 1-888-GI-BILL-1)**
  - Provides 36 full-time months of entitlement (at VA approved schools)
    - Payment rates for Chapter 1607 are paid out on a percentage of the MGIB-AD Chapter 30 (3 Yr. rate), percentages and rates for FY06 are as follows:

90 days but less than one year	40%	$413.60
One year but less than two years	60%	$620.40
Two years or more	80%	$827.20

  - Expires when solider exhausts their benefit or leaves the Selected Reserve

Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty (MGIB-AD) Chapter 30

- Basic Eligibility Requirements
  - Active duty or AGR soldiers (Title 10 or 32) who have served 2 years or more
  - Character of discharge is "honorable"
  - Soldier paid enrollment fee of $1200
- Benefits of the MGIB-AD: **(VA Hotline: 1-888-GI-BILL-1)**
  - Provides 36 full-time months of entitlement (at VA approved schools)
  - FY06 Payment rates for Chapter 30 are based upon time served on AD, they are as follows:
    - Full-time (3 Yr. rate) $1034.00 (Max 36 months) For less than full-time rates go to:
    - Full-time (2 Yr. rate) $840.00 (Max 36 months) http://www.gibill.va.gov/education/rates.htm
  - Expires 10 years from the day of discharge or exhaustion of benefit

Montgomery GI Bill–Application Procedures

- Application Procedures
  - Soldiers applying for benefits for the first time must submit **VA Form 22-1990 "Application for VA Education Benefits"**
  - Soldiers who have applied for VA education benefits in the past must submit **VA Form 22-1995 "Request For Change of Program or Place of Training"**
    - Applications for ***Chapter 30 and 1607*** must be accompanied with supporting documents of qualifying service i.e. Discharge from Military Service (DD Form 214).
    - Applications for Chapter 1606 must submit a NCBE (Notice of Basic Eligibility) to the Certifying Official at a VA approved school
  - VA initial processing time is currently 2-3 months

For more information go to: http://www.gibill.va.gov

EDUCATION BENEFITS

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use »
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



News Guard Families Can Use

Compiled by the Guardlife Staff

Scholarships Available
Several scholarships are available to New Jersey National Guard members and their families. For more information, call or visit the following websites:

NJ Enlisted Association of the National Guard (609) 530-6977
National Guard Association of New Jersey (609) 530-6843 or
Col. Edward Slavin at (609) 562-0211

2006 Youth Camp
From Family Programs

The 2006 New Jersey National Guard Youth Camp will be held July 16-22 at the New Jersey National Guard Training Center, Sea Girt. Applications for campers, counselors and volunteers applications are available at Family Assistance Centers; by calling the Family Program Office at (609) 562-0668 or online at: www.nj.gov/military/familysupport/youth_camp.html

The one week resident camp is for children, grandchildren and legal dependents between the ages of 9-12, of active and retired New Jersey National Guardmembers. There is a fee of $100 per camper.

FRC Offers Grants
The State Family Readiness Council has established a Grant Program that will provide both Family and Business Grants to deserving New Jersey National Guard families impacted by deployment.

Business grants are up to $5,000 and family grants $2,500. Those interested should contact Family Assistance through the hotline at 1-888-859-0352.

More information is available by e-mail at help@njguardfamilies.com or through the Family Assistance Centers (FACs) or the Family Readiness Groups (FRGs).

Freedom Salutes And Welcome Home Ceremonies
April 1: Welcome Home and Freedom Salute, Headquarters and Headquarters Companies and B and C Companies, 250th Signal Battalion, 1 p.m., National Guard Armory in Westfield.

April 2: Welcome Home and Freedom Salute for the 150th General Support Aviation Battalion and the 642nd Division Aviation Support Battalion, 11 a.m., National Guard Armory in West Trenton.

June 3-4: Welcome Home and Freedom Salute for the 42nd Division Support Command, time and locations TBA.

Guardlife Subscriptions
If you know a retiree or would like to receive Guardlife send your name and full address to:

NJDMAVA
ATTN: PAO-BJH
101 Eggert Crossing Rd.
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2805

Or call Public Affairs at (609) 530-6942.

Note to all active Guardmembers: Guardlife gets your address from your unit records, so no special notification is required. If you fail to receive an issue, contact your unit to make sure they have your correct address, then send us an E-mail at pao@njdmava.state.nj.us and we will send you a copy.

Marriage Enrichment Seminars
Marriage Enrichment Seminars have been scheduled for 2006 at the East Windsor, Ramada Inn. Classes are limited to 26 couples and are open to all NJNG Soldiers and Airmen and their spouses. Soldiers and Airmen that have returned from deployment have first priority.

Seminar dates are: March 24-26, April 21-23, June 9-11 and Sept. 15-17. For registration forms or more information, call Marie Durling at Family Programs at (609) 562-0739.

(c) 2006 NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements »
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



Your Veterans Benefits and Entitlements

By Bill Devereaux, Director, Veterans Programs, NJDMAVA

Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom have caused a dramatic increase in the number of deployed reserve-component units, ultimately increasing the number of federal and N.J. state veterans.



New Jersey Army National Guardsmen learn about their benefits as veterans during the reconstitution process. Photo by Lt. Col. Roberta Niedt, NJDMAVA/PAO.

As veterans, you are entitled to many State and Federal benefits. These benefits are administered through the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NJDMAVA) and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

It is important for National Guard and Reserve Component members who have been mobilized, as well as their dependents, to take advantage of their entitlements.

The NJDMAVA operates 14 Veterans Service Offices (VSO) throughout the state (see list on page 24). VSO's are available to assist with understanding of entitlements, as well as filing claims.

Below is a summary of your benefits and entitlements you may be eligible for:

State Benefits

- Veterans Preference Status: for Civil Service and Other Employment Benefits.
- Home Ownership Benefits: includes NJ Property Tax Deduction of $250.
- Educational Benefits: State Approving Agency.
- Grants and Aids.
- Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve: assistance provided to ensure vets are given fair and equal consideration for jobs upon return from deployment.
- Transportation: available for medical and psychological care through county contractors.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Counseling: Member and dependents, individual and group counseling. (Many of the state benefits listed above can be applied for during Reconstitution).

Federal Benefits

- VA Healthcare: enrollment, to include prescriptions. Healthcare: two-years to enroll Dental: 90 days to enroll.
- Injury Claims: Line Of Duty and other injuries incurred while on Title 10 orders.
- Montgomery GI Bill Benefits.
- Home Loan Guarantee: Certificate of Eligibility.
- Vocational Rehabilitation as needed.

In summary, veterans should make an appointment at the nearest VSO to discuss their particular circumstances. As stated earlier, it is extremely important for our National Guard and Reserve Component members to take advantage of the benefits available to them and their families. Many entitlements are time sensitive.

Your DD-214

Your DD-214 is your most important military document. Almost all benefits require that you submit a copy of your DD-214. Never send away your original documents! Always submit a copy and keep your original. Call 888-8NJ-VETS for more information.

(c) 2006 NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program »
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



Guard-Recruiting Assistance Program

From Recruiting and Retention Command

To maintain today's readiness and strength requirements while preparing for tomorrow's challenges, the New Jersey Guard Recruiting Assistance Program promotes "strength from within" by recognizing and rewarding those who help the New Jersey Army National Guard (NJARNG) achieve its goals.

New Jersey Guard Recruiting Assistants can earn additional income assisting the NJARNG recruiting efforts by identifying well-qualified men and women for service. Recruiter Assistants (RAs) earn $2,000 for each new recruit who enlists and reports to Basic Training. The RA can also earn $2,000 for a prior service applicant who enlists into the NJARNG.

New Jersey Guard Recruiting Assistants are embedded in their respective communities and are uniquely positioned to identify potential Soldiers in the people they already know. It's the effective way to promote strength from within. It is also only a click away online. The Guard-Recruiting Assistance Program (GRAP) is a contracted program designed especially for traditional Guardmembers. Guardsmen who apply online at www.guardrecruitingassistant.com become eligible to serve as a part-time Recruiter Assistant (RA). The RA applicant will be verified and hired by a contractor, not the NJARNG.

Each RA will cultivate quality potential Soldiers from within their individual spheres of influence. Once a potential Soldier is identified and pre-qualified, the RA will facilitate a meeting engagement with their local NJARNG Recruiter.

The triad of the NJARNG Recruiter, RA and potential Soldier will then work closely to process the potential Soldier and move them towards accession. Upon enlistment the RA will receive an initial payment of $1,000. A second $1,000 payment will be given when a non-prior service applicant ships to Basic Training or when a prior service applicant has completed four months of drill.

Do the Math: You get **$2,000** for every person you recruit into the New Jersey Army National Guard. Don't let the Guard be New Jersey's best-kept secret.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1
TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing's Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
Supporting Task Force Phoenix »
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

New Jersey Supports Task Force Phoenix

By Sgt.Shawn Morris, 444th MPAD; photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDAMAVA/PA



Deploying Soldiers pose for a photo with N.J. Army National Guard leadership prior to departure for Camp Shelby, Miss.

War is messy business. People die, property is destroyed, and entire nations are thrown into upheaval.

But nations can be rebuilt, property can be repaired and the lives of future generations can be made better.

Ironically, Soldiers are often responsible for both the destruction and reconstruction that are part of modern warfare — Soldiers like the 16 New Jersey Army National Guard members who will join Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan later this month to help with rebuilding efforts in that war-torn country. "The mission of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix is to provide trainers and mentors to help the government of Afghanistan build a professional Afghan National Army (ANA)," according to the Task Force Web site.

This hand-picked team left New Jersey for Camp Shelby, Miss., where its members will train for several weeks before deploying for a one-year tour of duty to Afghanistan, where their real work will begin. "The Soldiers are motivated, our equipment is there and we're ready to go," said Col. Michael V. Shute, team leader. "We all want to get in-country and get started," added Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Flynn, senior NCO.

Shute, Flynn and their fellow team members are part of what's called an Embedded Training Team (ETT) and will live, train and coexist with the Afghan National Army, helping to mentor that army's soldiers while helping them plan, conduct and evaluate operations, according to a New Jersey Army National Guard fact sheet.

"ETTs live, train, and deploy on combat missions with their ANA counterparts on a daily basis," according to the Task Force Phoenix Web site. Sounds like a daunting task, but these 16 New Jersey National Guard Soldiers – who hold Military Occupation Specialties in the infantry, armor, artillery, signal, ordnance and medical branches – have decades of experience to share with Afghan soldiers.

"We've got a ton of experience. We're all mature guys," said Flynn. This maturity will not only allow the team members to bring years of military and civilian experience to their mission, but will also make them better able to remain calm and focused while the ANA goes through its inevitable growing pains, Flynn explained.

The value of civilian experience in such a mission might explain why the vast majority of Task Force Phoenix's 2,000 members are National Guard Soldiers from across the United States, with nearly 1,300 coming from the Florida Army National Guard's 53rd Infantry Brigade and other units.

"It is not just a military mission," explained Flynn. "We're looking to help these guys build a nation."
"That's probably the most rewarding part of it," added Sgt. 1st Class Ron Ambrose. "We're going to bring them the life that we have, which most Americans take for granted."

These Soldiers are certainly not taking their mission for granted, and seem to understand and appreciate the impact they can have on Afghanistan's future. "It's really a privilege for us," observed Flynn. "It's a good mission."

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds »
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information

Short Rounds

Minister Of Defense Visits



A Republic of Albania delegation visited New Jersey Jan. 30. Pictured (l-r) are Eduard Frangaj, Advisor to the Minister of Defense; Col. Viktor Isaku, Defense Attaché; Lublin Dilja, Albanian Charge d' Affairs, United Nations; Col. Charles Harvey, Joint Force Headquarters-New Jersey; Fatmir Mediu, Republic of Albania Minister of Defense; Maj. Gen. Eugene R. Chojnacki, Commander, New Jersey Air National Guard; Brig. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, Deputy Adjutant General; Mr. Petrit Karabina, Deputy Minister of Defense and State Chaplain Col. Alphonse Stephenson. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

First African American VC



On Feb. 5, Lt. Col. Anthony M. La Sure became the 177th Fighter Wing's new Vice Commander and also the first African-American to serve as second in command of a New Jersey Air National Guard unit. Prior to becoming Vice Commander, Lt. Col. La Sure was the 177th's Inspector General. Lt. Col. La Sure is a command pilot with more than 2,200 flying hours. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA.

OSACOM Deploys



Sgt. Fen Fenelon, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Nicholas J. Brady, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bret Berlinger, Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, and Chief Warrant Officers 4 Glenn E. Malin and Kevin J. Devery pose for a photo during a going away luncheon for Operation Support Aviation Command Jan. 26. The unit is deploying to Afghanistan. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

Can You See Me Now



Capt. Stephen McKenzie, 250th Brigade Support Battalion, tests out the night version of Fatal Vision goggles. This particular version of the goggles blurs vision, to simulate the effects of being drunk at night. The demonstration was part of the annual Army Safety Day conducted by the Army National Guard Safety Office and was held at the Joint Training and Training Development Center, Fort Dix on Jan. 28. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA.

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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1
TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions »
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



Army & Air Enlisted Promotions

(NJ Army National Guard)

To Master Sergeant (E-8):
Thomas W. Christiani
Minnie E. Hiller
William K. Korte
Robert L. Merz

To Sergeant First Class (E-7):
Steven S. Austin
John C. Bird
William D. Collier, III
Augustine J. Dashiell
Robert M. Hahn
David J. Jensen
John F. McTeague
Pedro J. Pena
Gerald Rodriguez
Schuyler B. Shelton

To Staff Sergeant (E-6):
Brian E. Akerstrom, Jr.
Gregory N. Barr
Joseph D. Calderone
Anthony L. Evans
Giovany R. Hernandez
Doreen A. Jones
Adam Khoudja
Daniel P. Leonard
Michael W. McElwain
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Guardlife
THE MAGAZINE OF THE NJ NATIONAL GUARD

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 1

TAG's Message
Governor's Message
Air Guard CMSgt Message
Units Say Good-Bye..
UTES Soldiers Grant Wish
Diversity Program
Wing Holds Change of Command
Wing Leads in Silver Flag
RHC Prepares Recruits
Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing »
Guardlife V32 N1 Information



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Education Programs Overview
News Guard Families Can Use
Vets Benefits and Entitlements
Recruiting Assistance Program
NJ Supports Task Force Phoenix
Short Rounds
Army/Air Enlisted Promotions
Last Round: VSO Listing
Guardlife V32 N1 Information »

General Information - Volume 32 Number 1



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Front Cover
Gubernatorial Promotion - Pfc. Samantha Nigro and a family member pose for a photo with Governor Jon S. Corzine following a farewell ceremony at the National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville on Jan. 5. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

Inside Cover
Inaugural Blast - Soldiers of Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 112th Field Artillery, located at the National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville announce that New Jersey has a new governor. Photo by Kryn Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA.

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