

SEPTEMBER 2016

GUARDIAN



GUARDLIFE

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COVER: Red Flag

Tech. Sgt. James Scott, foreground, a crew chief with the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing, works with other 177th Maintenance Squadron members to launch an F-16 Fighting Falcon during night operations during Red Flag 16-3, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., July 13, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Shane Karp/Released)

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GUARDLIFE is published using federal funds under provisions of AR 360-1 and AFI 35-101 by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs for all members of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard, their families, retirees and civilian employees. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force or the National Guard Bureau. Letters may be sent to: Guardlife, Public Affairs Office, P.O. Box 340, NJDMAVA, Trenton, NJ, 08625-0340. E-mail at: pao@dmava.nj.gov

Night moves



Staff Sgt. Christopher Raine, New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Security Forces Squadron, maneuvers through the military operations in urban terrain site at the New Jersey National Guard's Joint Training and Training Development Center, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 16, 2016. The red and blue lighting simulates a moonlit night as seen through night vision devices. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)

QUALIFYING



Soldiers from the 508th Military Police and 50th Chemical Company, New Jersey Army National Guard, perform marksmanship training at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 7, 2016. The Soldiers are qualifying for their upcoming role as part of the Homeland Response Force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Lauren Pitts/Released)

Wing brings 1,300 years of experience to Red Flag

Story and photos by
Senior Airman Shane S. Karp
177th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Airmen with the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing deployed to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., to participate in Red Flag 16-3, the Air Force's premier air-to-air combat exercise.

Red Flag is crucial to ensure readiness for less-experienced Airmen who haven't deployed. In this case, the 177th brought something else with them which cannot be taught: More than 1,300 years of cumulative experience shared between the 127 Airmen with the 177th Maintenance Group.

"With that amount of years of seasoning comes invaluable experience and knowledge, which ultimately amplifies our readiness and effectiveness," said Maj. Brian Cooper, 177th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander.

Cooper spent the first 10 years of his Air Force career on active duty, and describes the 177th as: "One of the best maintenance units in the total

Air Force, always ready to provide safe reliable aircraft for anything we are tasked to do."

The Red Flag tempo mimics combat operations; with more than 115 aircraft flying twice a day, both day and night.

This is also where that 1,300 years of experience makes a difference.

It starts with noncommissioned officers like Chief Master Sgt. Timothy S. Donovan, an aircraft systems superintendent with the 177th Fighter Wing with 39 years of maintenance experience.

"I have knowledge and experience based on my position and years on the job," Donovan said. "The key is to be approachable and look to help and assist when younger Airmen, or anyone else for that matter, are in need of advice, mentoring, or direction."

"Red Flag is very fast-paced, with several different things always needing to be done at the same time,"

said Airman 1st Class Kirsten Chervenak, a weapons loader. "The exercise helps us be prepared because things are always changing at the last minute. We're constantly alert and ready for anything here."



177th Fighter Wing at Red Flag 16-3. Above: Senior Airman Jerilyn Co, armament systems specialist, works with her team to load munitions onto an F-16 Fighting Falcon at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., July 20, 2016. Left: Master Sgt. Jamie Ludy, right, and Airman 1st Class Brandon DeBarth, both aircraft electricians, work inside an F-16 Fighting Falcon's cockpit July 13, 2016. Below: Crew chief Senior Airman Justin Lynch communicates with an F-16C Fighting Falcon during flight line operations July 10, 2016.



For the maintainers, there is very little, if any downtime, says Senior Airman Austin Sharpless, a crew chief with two years' experience with the 177th.

"As soon as the first set of jets take off, we're working on the second jet, making sure they will be good to go later in the day," Sharpless said. "That's what makes exercises like Red Flag so important to us."

"My experience seems to act like a guide for the younger Airmen and help ease some of their anxieties," said Master Sgt. Bradley X. Rivera-Reynoso, a weapons specialist with 16 years of experience, eight of which were on active duty and include three combat deployments.

That accumulated experience, coupled with exercises like Red Flag, ensures that the 177th is ready to complete any task, anytime and anywhere.



HISTORIC UNIT DONORS 50TH PATCH

Story and photos by Master Sgt. David Moore
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

The New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's newest Soldiers can trace their roots to the original Minutemen.



Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Alexander, left, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, places the patch on Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Civello, 1-181st Infantry Battalion, uniform.

New Jersey units that comprise the brigade, can also trace their roots to the Revolutionary War.

"If you look at our unit colors, we hold some of the same battle streamers," said Shrieks.

With the New Jersey unit now their higher headquarters, the Massachusetts Soldiers will wear the distinctive three-star patch of the 50th IBCT.

The Massachusetts infantrymen are part of a unit that formed Dec. 13, 1636, a force that ultimately became the Continental Army and later the militia that came to be known as the National Guard.

"We are very happy to have Soldiers who take pride in their unit history," Shrieks said. "With that pride, they can bring a newer approach at how training is viewed. We can learn from them and they can learn from us."

At a patch ceremony June 5, 2016, at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 1-181st Infantry Battalion officially became part of the Garden State's largest Guard unit. The 181st's reassignment to the Brigade comes as a result of the Army and Army National Guard realignments with the infantry brigades in the next training year.

Col. Christopher Shrieks, 50th IBCT commander, noted that the new unit adds to an already rich history, as many of the



Spec. Daniel Turner, of the 1-181st Infantry, displays his new 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, patch along with his former 26th Maneuver Enhance Brigade patch during a patch ceremony held at Doughboy Field, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 5, 2016.

MEMORIAL DAY 2016



Above: The daughter of Maj. Ben Robbins, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, places a flag on a headstone at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown, N.J., May 28, 2016. **Top right:** Two F-16 Fighting Falcons with the 177th Fighter Wing, fly overhead as members of the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery Joint Color Guard stand at attention as Ron Brooks sings the National Anthem during the annual State Memorial Day ceremony at the Cemetery. **Right:** New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers fire a volley salute at the conclusion of the annual State Memorial Day ceremony. The ceremony culminated with the presentation of memorial wreaths by representatives of veteran service organizations. The Cemetery, dedicated in 1986, is New Jersey's sole state-operated veterans' cemetery and is managed by the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)

THE FAMILY BUSINESS



Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen
New Jersey National
Guard Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Janet Medina punched her daughter in the chest.

It not as bad as it sounds. In the military, it is a time-honored tradition to punch on a person's rank when promoted. In this case, it was even more special because Janet's daughter, Justina Medina, was being promoted to staff sergeant.

Both Medinas are in the New Jersey Army National Guard.

It started when the Army changed the age individuals could enlist.

"I was 39 at the time," Janet said. "My husband always knew I wanted to do this. I thought about it for a month. She (Justina) was already processing and doing her paperwork, so I said 'Hold on, wait for me.'"

After basic came AIT. They both have the same military occupational specialty: Human resources specialist.

"We went to AIT together, she was my bunkmate," Justina said. "We shared homework too," Janet said.

After AIT, they were also in the same unit, the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

"We push each other to do great things" Staff Sgt. Justina Medina

That's not really unusual. In the New Jersey National Guard, like any other state's National Guard, brother and sisters, fathers and sons, cousins, etc., serving together is not that unusual.

However, what is uncommon is that Janet and Justina both joined the Guard at the same time: Sept. 22, 2007. New Jersey Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class John Medina, Janet's husband and Justina's father, was their recruiter.

"We went to basic training and AIT (advanced individual training) together," Justina said.

At basic training they were in the same company, but different platoons.

"Her bunk was literally upstairs from mine," Justina said.

It was at basic where they got their nicknames. Janet became Mama Medina and Justina became Baby Medina.

It was inevitable that their careers would take them in different directions. Janet was assigned to the Office of Personnel at Joint Force Headquarters, while Justina would stay with the 50th for six years before transferring to the 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion then the 102nd Cavalry.

The one thing that stays the same is how they motivate each other. "We push each other to do great things," Justina said.



CE rebuilds

CE and Albanian army renovate school and clinic

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

Previous page photos, left to right: Airman 1st Class Robert Obrien mounts corrugated steel mesh to a bathroom wall at a school near Vau i Dejës, Albania, July 11, 2016. Senior Airman Mark Perna measures lumber for pouring concrete steps at the school July 8, 2016. Senior Airman Laura Bello removes bathroom fixtures at a local medical clinic in Vau i Dejës, July 5, 2016. All three Airmen are with the 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard. This page: The Vau i Dejës school is ready for painting by the Squadron, July 6, 2016.

New Jersey Air National Guard civil engineers and Army Reserve civil affairs Soldiers teamed up with their Albanian army counterparts to renovate a school and medical clinic.

“This project is important to prepare them for worldwide deployments.”

CAPT. ANDREW MATEJEK, 177TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON



Left: Airmen 1st Class Nick Skibinski, left, and Derrick Donkor, both with the 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, prepare water supply line fittings at a local medical clinic in Vau i Dejës, July 5, 2016. Right: 1st Lt. Natalia Rojas, 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, paints a school wall during a humanitarian and civic assistance renovation project near Vau i Dejës, July 12, 2016. Below: Senior Master Sgt. Todd Butcher, 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, holds a level while soldiers with the 1st Infantry Battalion, Albanian Land Forces, shovel concrete into a base for a basketball pole at a local school near Vau i Dejës, July 13, 2016.



“Our engineers are working, practicing their skills,” said Capt. Andrew Matejek, 177th Civil Engineer Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard. “So they have the skills and knowledge to overcome challenges.”

The 177th civil engineers traveled to Albania by request of the National Guard Bureau, as New Jersey and Albania are paired under the National Guard’s State Partnership Program, and in coordination with the Office of Defense Cooperation.

The 177th’s deployment was the second phase of the demolition, construction, and renovation project begun by New York Air National Guard’s 107th Civil Engineer Squadron.

The projects included painting, plumbing, electrical, structural, concrete, ceramic tile, roofing, door and frame maintenance.

Changes from the original plans, building materials and rented equipment with non-U.S. standard specifications made finishing the projects on time difficult but not insurmountable.

“This project is important to prepare them for worldwide deployments,” Matejek said.

U.S. Army Reserve 1st Lt. John Sorich IV, 361st Civil Affairs Brigade, based at Kaiserslautern, Germany, served as the project liaison.

“We are all about building relationships. One year, two years from now, they’re going to remember those American Airmen that came out and worked with them,” Sorich said.

The improvements to the clinic will have a lasting effect.

“According to the mayor, the clinic was unusable, only



“It was a strong reminder of the cultural foundations of being an American and the responsibilities of helping others.”

DEBBIE THOMAS, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER

having running water during the times the city had the water turned on,” Matejek said. “We installed a 5,000 liter water tank so the facility could always have running water. It is a huge improvement and they’re going to have a much better facility to treat everyone.”

The challenges gave the unit many experiences to take with them to the next deployment.

“The lessons learned will go back to Guard Bureau for all Air National Guard units, to take with them to their next state partnership project,” Matejek said.

“The Albanian military has been instrumental in helping get this project completed on time,” Matejek said. “They helped with both the medical clinic and the school, and they housed us in their barracks. You can tell they’re proud of us being here and they’re proud to help us.”

Peace Corps volunteer Debbie Thomas summed up the Albanian-American collaboration: “It was a strong reminder of the cultural foundations of being an American and the responsibilities of helping others.”

150TH CHOSEN AVIATION UNIT OF THE YEAR

The Soldiers of 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion of the New Jersey Army National Guard were recently awarded the John J. Stanko Army National Guard Aviation Unit of the Year by the Army Aviation Association of America.

The Battalion earned the award for their accomplishments while deployed to Kosovo in 2015 in support of the Kosovo Force – a NATO-led international peacekeeping force that has been responsible for establishing a secure environment in Kosovo since 1999.

Lt. Col. Leon M. Lapoint said the key to the winning the competition is individual dedication to duty.

“I don’t want to stand over my people telling them every

*Story by
Staff Sgt. Sherwood T. Goodenough
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

*Photo illustration by
Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen
New Jersey National Guard*

from the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo.

Lapoint said that his Soldiers helped rebuild an orphanage and replaced the roof on a shelter for survivors of domestic violence.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Hicks said several Soldiers also volunteered to prepare local high school students to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language exam.

“They all want to come here to study,” Hicks said. “Teaching them English gives them a tremendous advantage when they apply to get into a U.S. college or university.”

In addition, the rear detachment had maintained its responsibilities to the State of New Jersey while also transitioning into their new unit home station at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

little thing to do,” Lapoint said. “We empowered our people to do their jobs and they ran with it.”

While deployed on the 19th KFOR rotation, the Battalion was tasked with being the command element for all U.S. Army aviation assets – airlift and medical evacuation – and several units of infantry for assorted NATO partners.

This mission allowed the unit to conduct ground and aerial missions, all of which resulted in success and brought many accolades from higher headquarters, their NATO partners, and the government of Kosovo.

In addition to the Battalion’s assigned duty, the Soldiers conducted numerous community service projects which ultimately led to the improvement of the local area outside of Camp Bondsteel, and recognition

Sgt. James Bolek, the Army Aviation Association of America Soldier of the Year, said the key to the Battalion’s success is the close knit nature of the unit.

“The most important part of winning was caring for your fellow Soldiers,” Bolek said. “You do it – not because it’s your job – but because they’re your family while you’re away. And if everybody’s morale is up, you can accomplish so much more than you can imagine.”

The late Col. John J. Stanko is known in Army aviation lore as the pivotal leader in the development of the Army National Guard aviation program. As an aviator, Stanko began his career during World War II in the Army Air Forces. He served as an Army aviator with the Pennsylvania National Guard and spearheaded the first National Guard aviation logistics element.



Pfcs. Matthew J. McCann, left, and Eric J. Ramos, both with the 328th Military Police Company, take down information prior to making a report while on patrol at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., June 20, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Donnelly/Released)

328th patrols the Point

By Sgt. Bill Addison
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Military Police officers from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 328th Military Police Company are working to keep the Cadets, Soldiers, staff and faculty of the United States Military Academy at West Point safe and secure.

The 42 Soldiers spent their annual training period from June 13-26 serving as the garrison's own military police force.

For many of the MPs, it's their first taste of what it takes to do real police work.

"We're shifting more toward the law enforcement side, which is one of the core MP functions," said 1st Lt. Justin Hunter, officer in charge of the MP mission. "They haven't had much chance to do this mission."

Hunter, a Cherry Hill Police officer, said that while some of his MPs do work as full time civilian police officers, many have had no police experience leading up to this mission.

"This mission is a perfect example of how we not only need to be doing this more, but that our Soldiers are really good at it."

1ST LT. JUSTIN HUNTER

OFFICER IN CHARGE, 328TH MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

He noted that the past fifteen years of military deployments have seen MPs serving in a variety of functions, anything from gate guards and quick reaction forces to detention operations and even infantry type functions. The one thing they haven't had much experience in has been police work.

"This mission is a perfect example of how we not only need to be doing this more, but that our Soldiers are really good at it," he said.

During their stay, the MPs will be conducting 24-hour garrison operations, patrolling the grounds, issuing vehicle and parking citations and even making arrests when needed.

"It's really nice to get to use our training and perform MP functions on a daily basis," said Pfc. Brett Fischer.

Fischer said that the unit spent the past year preparing for this mission, training with civilian law enforcement teams on everything from reacting to active shooter scenarios, emergency vehicle operations and the use of non-lethal weapons such as OC (Oleoresin Capsicum) Spray and Tasers.

"I'd never been sprayed with OC before," he said. "That was an experience; I'll never forget that."

Once at West Point, the MPs spent three days of on-the-job training with the garrison MP company.

Hunter noted that this mission has instilled a greater sense of confidence in his Soldiers that they can step up and conduct law enforcement missions when needed.

"The biggest thing for any law enforcement member to have is confidence," he said. "They know now, you're taught, you know what to do, we're going to back you up."

2015 ST

CST



EVALUATED

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht
New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs





Soldiers and Airmen from the 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team responded to the South Jersey Port Corporation in Camden, N.J. as part of a training proficiency evaluation May 24, 2016.

Every 18 months, the CST must be validated on common tasks, which include identifying threats, the decontamination process, and working with civilian authorities in a real world environment to ensure that the unit is ready in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threat.

“This exercise is testing the 21st CST’s ability to respond to a disaster or incident involving dangerous substances,” said Capt. Jarrett Feldman, with the New Jersey National Guard’s 57th Troop Command. “Today you’ll see them arrive, go to where the threat is, and detect the threat using mobile labs.”

Operating out of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., the 21st relies on timeliness, subject matter experts, and technology to accomplish the mission.

Every 18 months, the CST must be validated on common tasks, which include identifying threats, the decontamination process, and working with civilian authorities in a real world environment to ensure that the unit is ready in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threat.

“The work actually starts while they’re on the road,” said Feldman. “The team prepares calculations based on the limited information they receive, so there is a plan in motion when they arrive at the incident site.”

This was the first time the CST has worked with the South Jersey Port Corporation.

“This joint exercise with our marine terminal facilities helps us to satisfy federal regulations,” said Jay Jones, Deputy Executive Director and Facility Security Officer for the South Jersey Port Corporation.

“Working with the National Guard has been outstanding, and a learning experience,” said Jones.

The 21st is one of 10 CST teams established to rapidly deploy and assist a local incident commander in determining the nature and extent of an incident, to provide expert advice on weapons of mass destruction response, and to support the arrival of follow-on state and federal military units.



Opposite page, left photo: Sgt. Nick Lam, with the New Jersey Army National Guard’s Weapons of Mass Destruction 21st Civil Support Team, pulls detection gear through a “hot zone” during a training proficiency evaluation at the South Jersey Port Corporation in Camden, N.J., May 24, 2016. Right photo: Spc. Tricia Madrigal prepares detection gear for the Soldiers and Airmen to use when they enter the warehouse. This page, top photo: 21st CST members brief the overall mission. Photo above: Staff Sgt. William Camp Jr. listens to a briefing. Top right photo: Sgt. Joseph Bercovic uses detection gear on a door before entering a South Jersey Port Corporation warehouse. Middle right photo: Bercovic, left, and Lam, prepare to take samples in the warehouse. Bottom right photo: Lam, left, and Bercovic, move through the warehouse to gather more samples.



EOD BLOWS IT UP

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

Explosives Ordnance Disposal technicians with the 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, finished their annual EOD cleanup week at the Warren Grove Range with a bang, exploding previously dropped practice bombs April 29, 2016.

The 177th EOD team were joined for the week by 177th Civil Engineer Squadron and EOD technicians from the 87th Civil Engineer Squadron, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. During that time, they performed range clean-up and target painting, as well as target set-up in the simulated village.


The C-4 explosives are attached to BDU-50s, 500 pound concrete-filled practice bombs, connected by detonation cord and exploded, creating a rectangular shaped indentation, visually exposing the concrete filler inside.

"We have contractors that come in, take away the bombs and recycle them," said Tech. Sgt. Joseph Coates, 177th EOD Technician. "They want to be able to look at a bomb and be absolutely sure there are no explosives in it."

Active duty EOD personnel from McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst benefit from EOD Week at Warren Grove Range because they don't have their own range that they're responsible for clearing.

"It's actually a requirement for a skill level certification for new guys to get out and do a range clearing," said Master Sgt. Raymond Wayne, 177th Explosives Ordnance Disposal technician.

"The particular things that we do with the explosives and how we...expose the filler for the BDU-50s so they can be turned over and scrapped...the Range is the only place you can do that."



We have contractors that come in, take away the bombs and recycle them. They want to be able to look at a bomb and be absolutely sure there are no explosives in it.

TECH. SGT. JOSEPH COATES
EXPLOSIVES ORDNANCE DISPOSAL TECHNICIAN
177TH FIGHTER WING



Master Sgt. Raymond Wayne, right, 177th Fighter Wing Explosives Ordnance Disposal Technician, New Jersey Air National Guard, and Airman 1st Class Michael Glisan, EOD Technician, 87th Civil Engineering Squadron, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, discuss procedures for triple stacking C-4 explosives to render practice bombs safe for recycling at Warren Grove Range, N.J., April 29, 2016.

ALBANIAN INFANTRY TRAINS WITH CAVALRY



By Sgt. Bill Addison
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Approximately 20 leaders from Albania's 2nd Infantry Battalion learned just what it takes to keep the New Jersey's Army National Guard combat and deployment ready.

As a part of the state's ongoing State Partnership Program with Albania, Albanian Armed Forces officers and senior enlisted members will observe and train alongside the Soldiers of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron during their annual training at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.

"The 15-day event is designed to show the AAF leadership how U.S. and NATO forces develop company, platoon, and squad level leadership," said Master Sgt. Gary Davison, an Operations Non-Commissioned Officer at the New Jersey National Guard's Joint Operations Center. The training will further enhance their own capabilities to deploy with U.S. and NATO forces.

He noted that the instruction began at the most basic level – the individual Soldier. Before training with the Cavalry troops, the Albanian soldiers first needed familiarization and training on the M4 Carbine, the common weapon system used by U.S. and NATO forces. Albania will be transitioning to the M4 during the next few years, and the Albanian soldiers here will be the future trainers for the AAF.

"The training so far has been outstanding," said Davidson.

Davidson said he's been working with the State Partnership Program for six years, and in that time has seen the program grow exponentially from a purely military perspective to an all-inclusive partnership between the



Soldiers with the 102nd Cavalry Squadron, New Jersey Army National Guard, train soldiers with the 2nd Infantry Battalion, Albanian Army, on the M4 Carbine and the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 13, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Joseph Kennedy/Released)

"This program has really helped the Albanian Army strengthen their participation with their NATO partners"

**FLORETA FABER
ALBANIAN AMBASSADOR
TO THE
UNITED STATES**

State of New Jersey and the Country of Albania.

"We're not only partnering with their military personnel, the New Jersey State police have been working with their national police force and our civilian emergency managers have been helping them build their emergency management capabilities," he said. "It's been a true partnership across the board."

"This program has really helped the Albanian Army strengthen their participation with their NATO partners," said Floreta Faber, Albanian Ambassador to the United States. Faber visited the soldiers during an exercise at the Fort Dix ranges.

"This is really a great opportunity for Albania and the Albanian army to work with our U.S. partners," said Faber.

112th fields new counter-fire radar

By Sgt. Bill Addison
444th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The ability to detect incoming rocket, artillery, and mortar fire before impact can mean the difference between life and death on the battlefield.

Add in the capability to pinpoint and target where that attack originated, and you've gained the advantage needed to eliminate the threat.

That's exactly the ability the Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard's 3-112th Fires Battalion now have with the recent fielding of four AN/TPQ-50 lightweight counter mortar radar systems.

The early warning and counter targeting system is the military's latest upgrade to its arsenal of lightweight counter-mortar radar systems.

The new system provides continuous 360-degree battlefield surveillance coverage for mortars, artillery, and rockets with an effective range out to six miles and can be operated in a stand-alone vehicle-mounted configuration.

The Soldiers spent their annual training at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst training and testing the new system June 6-17, 2016.

"We're not teaching them how it works, we're just teaching them the differences between what they've used and what they have here," said Robert Hoover, a Net Fielder instructor for Product Manager Radars.

Hoover noted the system's biggest difference is the ability to mount it on a vehicle to quickly deploy and set it up anywhere the battalion needs it.

Still, the initial fielding requires the Soldiers to not only become familiar with new software, but also work through the thousands of pages of field manuals for the system.

He said the major advantages from other models were its smaller size, ease of use, mobility, and maintainability. In all, he said, a well-trained two-man team could be on location and set up the system in less than 10 minutes.

"The training has been excellent," said Chief War-

Spcs. Michael Mirkovic, left, and Allen Waldron, both with the 3-112th Fires Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, train on the AN/TPQ-50 lightweight counter mortar radar system at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., June 13, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Eric Bauza/Released)



rant Officer 2 Robert Hladik, 3-112th target acquisition platoon leader and counter-fire radar targeting officer.

According to Hladik, the new systems allow the battalion to assign their radar teams to other maneuver battalions within the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to provide maximum coverage and capability for the brigade.

He noted that in an ideal situation, each team would be

located within six miles of the unit and provide early warning when incoming mortar, rocket, or artillery fire has been fired at friendly troops.

"Once we detect that an enemy round was coming toward our forces, the information would be sent to the fires battalion headquarters, and we would be able to determine the best way to fire back," Hladik said.

A win-win for everybody

Story by Senior Airman Julia Santiago, 108th Wing Public Affairs

Personnel from the Air National Guard, U.S. Army Reserves, and Navy Reserves provided no cost medical, dental, optometry, and veterinary services to local citizens from July 15-24, 2016 at Homer Intermediate School in Homer, N.Y.

The medical professionals participated in the Innovative Readiness Training to gain hands on experience with the community and the other U.S. military branches.

“There were young kids who came in that were able to see for the first time,” said Capt. Saurin Patel, an optometrist with the 108th Medical Group. “They didn’t know what it was like to see that clearly.”

The second purpose of the event was to train personnel in an active environment. While many of the service members are full time medical workers, the IRT gave them a chance to step into leadership positions.

The IRT is an ongoing effort by the Department of Defense to provide real world training opportunities for service members and units to prepare them for their wartime missions while supporting the needs of America’s underserved communities.

“This is my first time working with the Air Force, Navy, Army Reserves, and volunteers,” said U.S. Army Capt. Michael Cruppenink, IRT Commander in Homer. “Working with all these people has made it a lot easier. Their opinions and ideas made the event go even smoother.”

The IRT serves two purposes. The first, to provide no-cost healthcare to the community. Anyone in the area was able to come for health screenings and advice from professionals. If needed, they received referrals and prescriptions.

“It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity,” said Linda Schoen, a worker from the health department. “I think it’s wonderful how it brought the community together. Someone would be a fool to pass up a chance like this.”

When members of the community came to the school, they were only asked for their name and any issues that were of concern.

There were stations throughout the school dedicated to many areas such as medical screenings, dental,

optometry, veterinary, and educational rooms on topics such as nutrition and diabetes.

Beside the hands on clinical work, the members are gaining experience with communicating and delegating between the services,” said Cruppenink.

Lt. Col. Mauricia Alo, a nurse practitioner with the 108th Medical Group, agreed.

“The joint experience is a very enlightening and exciting experience. This event has really brought the best out of each of the services. I feel very privileged to serve the community and next to other service members.”

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Lt. Col. Mauricia Alo
Nurse Practitioner
108th Medical Group

Photos bottom to top: Lt. Col. Mauricia Alo, 108th Medical Group, measures Ira Holl’s blood pressure at Homer Intermediate School, Homer, N.Y., July 19, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Santiago) Maj. Jessica Bramlette, left, a dentist assigned to the New Jersey Air National Guard’s 177th Medical Group, and Spc. Zhuhying Deng, a dental assistant with the U.S. Army Reserve’s 7234th Medical Support Unit work on a patient at Homer Intermediate School, July 20, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released) Capt. Saurin Patel, 108th Medical Group, checks Ira Holl’s eyes to see what prescription he will need at Homer Intermediate School, July 19, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Julia Santiago)

Gift of hope for hardscrabble town

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht
108th Wing Public Affairs

Rachel Miller, 30, holds up her scarred arm and anti-suicide tattoo, July 19, 2016. Miller has suffered for years from mental health issues, and had attempted suicide in the past. She and her boyfriend Matt Nichol are both on disability, and live in a small one bedroom apartment in Cortland, N.Y.



NOT ; YET

Corporate America abandoned this area years ago, closing factories and taking many of the jobs and healthcare options that came with them.

Now, nearly one in three people in this rural farming community near the New York Finger Lakes region are without jobs or access to a regular doctor. Many have been addicted to meth or heroin.

Some have lost hope.

“I’ll never be able to do physical labor. I would like to be able to work, and take care of myself, and be able to afford a better life for us.”

Matt Nichol



Matt Nichol, 38, shows scars from back surgery and the electroshock device used to reduce his back pain, July 19, 2016. Nichol has ruptured discs from years of farm work and hard labor.

After being identified as an underserved community, residents of Cortland and the surrounding areas were given the opportunity to visit service members at “Healthy Cortland,” an Innovative Readiness Training exercise at the intermediate school in neighboring Homer, where they could see a dentist, optometrist, and medical specialist, all at no cost. Those that owned cats or dogs could bring them in for spaying or neutering by military veterinarians. The Innovative Readiness Training team was made up of U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. Navy Reserve, and New Jersey Air National Guardsmen from the 108th and 177th Medical Groups.

“This is one of the reasons why I joined the military,” said U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Michael Cruppenink, the exercise commander at Cortland. “To go to different places to provide healthcare to people who don’t always have access to it.”

Matt Nichol, 38, and girlfriend Rachel

Miller, 30, both from Cortland, came out to take advantage of the services being provided. Nichol and Miller are both on disability, unable to work.

Miller suffers from Lupus, a disease in which the immune system becomes hyperactive and attacks healthy tissue.

“I get sores in my nose, all over my body, my lymph nodes swell, and my hair falls out,” said Miller. “Clumps of my hair fall out in the shower. My joints and muscles are affected, and I get tired easily.”

“I saw a therapist named Troy, he was absolutely amazing,” said Miller, who has suffered for years with mental illness. “He really listened to what I had to say, and really wanted to hear about my story, and actually lost track of time and didn’t want to take me away from everything else, he was the first gentleman I saw after medical. It was some of the best therapy I’ve ever had.”

Nichol and Miller rent a small, one bedroom apartment in Cortland, right next to a busy main road. To pass the time, they watch movies, and Miller draws as part of her therapy. They barely get by with disability and food stamps.

“I would like to be able to go back to work,” said Nichol, who has struggled with ruptured discs from years of working on a farm. “Do some kind of job. Having the injuries I have, I’ll never be able to do physical labor. I love working with my hands. That’s what I’ve done my whole life, and now I have to learn how to use my brain for a job. I would like to be able to work, and take care of myself, and be able to afford a better life for us.”

Nichol showed the electroshock device he wears, to help manage back pain.

“Severe chronic pain takes away your ability to concentrate, and things that used to be fun aren’t fun anymore, and that’s where the depression comes from. Everything you loved to do...it feels like it’s stolen from you,” said Nichol.

Both Nichol and Miller hoped to see the Department of Defense return to Cortland.

“This town is struggling majorly,” said Miller. “These kind of events give people hope.”

Nichol and Miller were very grateful for the care they received from the Healthy Cortland event, especially the new pairs of eyeglasses.

“We wouldn’t have been able to afford these glasses on our own,” said Nichol. “It makes a big difference, it’s a very special thing that we don’t take for granted.”



Rachel Miller, 30, left, and Matt Nichol, 38, look at a black and white print of a photo taken by Miller’s father, July 19, 2016.



CONNECTING

A 108th Wing KC-135 RStratotanker with the New Jersey Air National Guard, assigned to Joint Base McGuire Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., refuels a B-52H Stratofortress assigned to the 343rd Bomb Squadron May 24, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by photo by Staff Sgt. Ross A. Whitley/Released)





CST TRAINS ALBANIAN SOLDIERS

By Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht
New Jersey National Guard Public Affairs



New Jersey National Guardsmen from the 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team and twenty Albanian Soldiers from the Land Forces Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Battalion came together for CBRN training at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center, Westhampton, New Jersey, August 8-9, 2016.

The Albanian soldiers got a hands-on look at the actual detection gear they will be getting issued in the next year.

"This training has helped all the team members by giving a better picture how to face civil emergencies by using HAZMAT and CBRN

concepts," said Maj. Florenc Veliu, the CBRN commander. "We were familiarized with equipment, ways of communication with civil authorities and other actors that play a role during an emergency situation."

The training was a challenge for members of the Civil Support Team, who had to overcome language barriers. Luckily there were translators with the group who helped to relay messages between the teachers and students.

"Teaching always for me is a positive experience," said New Jersey Air National Guard Master Sgt. Arnold Young, one of the team's trainers. "It's been one of my passions, and to be able to pass on that

knowledge to individuals and see the joy they get from the training, is definitely a great feeling."

The Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center's sprawling complex of classrooms and training areas provided realistic scenarios for the Albanian students.

Civil Support Team Soldiers and Airmen led teams of students through rooms, teaching them how the devices read the air for various contaminants.

"It's definitely rewarding, and gives you a sense of pride," said New Jersey Army National Guardsman Staff Sgt. Christopher Maute. "To know that someone's coming to you for your knowledge, to make

Above and below: Sgt. Joseph Bercovik, center, 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, shows Albanian soldiers how to use chemical detection gear and personnel protective gear at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center, Westhampton, N.J., August 8, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released)





Above: Sgt. Joseph Bercovic, left, 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, shows detection gear to Albanian soldiers August 8, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released) Top right: 1st Sgt. Steven Katkics Jr., 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, second from left, 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, assists an Albanian soldier with his personal protective gear August 9, 2016. Right: Master Sgt. Arnold Young, center, 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, observes Albanian soldiers as they process a simulated casualty through the decontamination exercise August 9, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)



their career better or make their service towards their country better... it's one of those things I definitely take pride in."

The Albanian soldiers were grateful for the classes, and hope to see more visits to New Jersey in the future.

"Due to challenges we are facing in today's world, I believe that this training and other events, workshops, and familiarization visits will be a valuable contribution not only on the education side, but also on the practical side," said Veliu. "These training events are tools that help us to be developed, and also strengthen our relationship that our two militaries have."

The training was part of the State Partnership Program, which New Jersey and Albania have been connected through since 2001. The National Guard State Partnership Program is a U.S. Department of Defense program managed by the National Guard that links U.S. states with partner countries around the world for the purpose of supporting the security cooperation objectives of the geographic combatant commanders.

FIRE TRUCK BEGINS 3,700 MILE JOURNEY

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



Loadmasters with the 439th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, load a 1982 Mack 1250 GPM pumper fire truck onto a C-5B Galaxy August 12, 2016, at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst N.J., for a flight to Managua, Nicaragua.

"I want Airmen to see this and know that they can do this as well."

Master Sgt. Jorge A. Narvaez, 108th Security Forces Squadron

A New Jersey fire truck began a 3,700 mile journey to its new home in Managua, Nicaragua.

The 1982 Mack fire truck was loaded onto a 439th Airlift Wing C-5B Galaxy here Aug. 12, thanks to the combined efforts of Airmen from the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and active duty Air Force, as well as a host of government agencies.

It wasn't an easy task, and it took an individual to recognize a country's need for that fire truck and pursue it to make it a reality.

Master Sgt. Jorge A. Narvaez, a New Jersey Air National Guardsman with the 108th Security Forces Squadron, was responsible for getting that fire truck sent to Nicaragua.

Narvaez, who is originally from Nicaragua, came to the United States in 1981 and has served with the Princeton Police Department in New Jersey as a patrolman for 22 years. He joined the 108th Wing in October 1992. In 1999, he transferred to security forces, where he serves on the commander's support staff.

"I've always felt compelled to help; it fulfills me as a human being, trying to make a difference," Narvaez said.

In 2014, Narvaez traveled to Nicaragua. While he was there, he visited the headquarters of the *Bene merito Cuerpo de Bomberos*, a group of volunteer firefighters located in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

"I saw that they were in dire need of serviceable fire trucks and equipment," Narvaez said. "I offered to help and get them assistance in the United States. I explained to them that I couldn't make any promises, but that I would try to do my best."

Narvaez talked to Ray Wadsworth, the former fire chief of

Mercer Engine No. 3 in Princeton, New Jersey, and was able to get some coats, boots and hoses that had been slated for replacement. Like their counterparts in Nicaragua, the Princeton firefighters are also volunteers.

The Nicaraguan firefighters were grateful for the donated gear, but their need for a new truck remained. In 2015, an opportunity presented itself.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration informed Mercer Engine No. 3 members that they would have to replace two of their fire trucks. One of them, a 1982 Mack 1250 GPM pumper truck, could no longer be used because the open cab was considered a safety hazard.

"Mr. Wadsworth felt that one of the trucks could be donated," Narvaez said. "We began to work together and doing all that was required to get the truck from the city."

To get the ball rolling, Narvaez sent a letter to Robert Gregory, Princeton's director of emergency services, explaining how the retired truck could be put to good use in Latin America. Princeton officials responded by putting the truck up for a symbolic auction.

"They sold it to me for a dollar," Wadsworth said.

In addition to the truck, 13 sets of boots, six jackets, and 1,200 feet of 2 ½-inch hose were included.

"The truck is fully equipped; all it needs is for the tank to be filled with water," Wadsworth said.

Narvaez added, "I also took a video of the truck ... giving directions on how to operate it."

But one can't just donate a fire truck to another country. There's a process for it, and it involves the



Master Sgt. Jorge A. Narvaez, 108th Wing Security Forces, poses for a photo in front of a 1982 Mack 1250 GPM pumper fire truck at Mercer Engine No. 3 Fire Department, Princeton, N.J., July 13, 2016.

Denton Program.

The Denton Program, which is jointly administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of State and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, allows U.S. citizens and organizations to use space available on military cargo aircraft to transport humanitarian goods to countries in need.

Former U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Denton created the program as an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Since 1998, more than 5.6 million pounds of humanitarian supplies have been sent to more than 50 countries.

What followed was a flurry of

activity as Narvaez made contact with officials at the U.S. Embassy in Managua and Air Force officials who would arrange for the truck's 3,700-mile journey. The sign things were moving along came when he was put in touch with Chief Master Sgt. Juan Claudio of the 514th Air Mobility Wing at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, who went to Princeton to get the truck's measurements and provide guidance on getting it ready for flight.

The only thing left was the airlift certification letter.

It came on June 3.

The letter assigned the 439th Airlift Wing, an Air Force Reserve

unit based at Westover Air Reserve Base, Massachusetts, with airlifting the fire truck on one of their C-5 Galaxy aircraft.

On August 12, all the work by Narvaez and Claudio, along with others and their organizations, came together.

For Narvaez, there is one final takeaway from this.

"I want Airmen to see this and know that they can do this as well," Narvaez said. "There are many countries in the world that can use our help and there are always things you can do to help people."

TACP AT AC AIRSHOW

Photos by
Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen
New Jersey National Guard



Left: UH-60 Black Hawks with the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, fly Tactical Air Control Party Airmen with the 227th Air Support Operations Squadron, New Jersey Air National Guard, for a Special Purpose Insertion demonstration at the 2016 Atlantic City Airshow above the Atlantic City, N.J., boardwalk Aug. 17, 2016. Above: TACP Airmen practice hooking up to their fast rope. Below: TACP Airmen wave at air show spectators during the 2016 Atlantic City Airshow.



Age is just a number: KC-135 celebrates 60th anniversary

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht, 108th Wing Public Affairs

The 108th Wing is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the KC-135 Stratotanker August 31. The air refueling aircraft, which has been a steadfast part of the Air Force fleet, was first flown on August 31, 1956.

“It’s a great airplane,” said Lt. Col. Pete Desautelle, the 141st Air Refueling Squadron Commander.

“It was designed a long time ago, but it’s a fantastic performer, it’s a very strong airplane, and it continues to perform well for us.”

The 108th Wing has been flying the KC-135 for 25 years. Some Airmen equate it to owning a classic car. The last KC-135 was delivered to the Air Force in 1965.

“The airplane sitting on the ramp looks fast, and when you take that airplane, and you get it airborne, and you pitch up, eight to ten degrees, put it into a thirty degree bank, it’s just a

“The airplane was designed in the early 50’s, so that’s just after World War II. To me it demonstrates how strong and how wonderfully designed this airplane was.”

LT. COL. PETE DESAUTELLE
COMMANDER
141ST AIR REFUELING SQUADRON
108TH WING



majestic looking aircraft. There’s no other aircraft that has that profile, it’s just dynamic,” said Chief Master Sgt. Brian Kilpatrick, 141st Air Refueling Squadron Chief Boom Operator.

“We do notice the age of these airplanes, but we don’t let it deter us from going and accomplishing our mission,” Kilpatrick continued.

“From the crews to the maintenance folks, we all do our best to get the mission done, so ‘age is just a number’ as those of us that are fifty-year-olds or better like to think of it as, and the plane is very capable of doing its mission,” said Kilpatrick.

The KC-135 has the ability to carry passengers and cargo, while also being able to refuel aircraft. It can also transport patients for aeromedical evacuations.

“Refueling fighters in a combat zone is cool, but transporting patients from Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, back to Germany and then home is one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done,” said Kilpatrick. “The KC-135 is a very versatile aircraft.”

Even though the KC-135 Stratotanker is celebrating its 60th birthday, and is predicted to fly until it reaches 80, it has become a much-loved refueling workhorse for Air Mobility Command.

“My favorite thing about this airplane is its ability to fly long distances or loiter for a long time,” said Desautelle. “The airplane was designed in the early 50’s, so that’s just after World War II. I think the plans for this aircraft are that it’s going to fly for another twenty years.”

“To me it demonstrates how strong and how wonderfully designed this airplane was.”



Fly Raven, Fly



Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Schaefer, 254th Regiment (Combat Arms), New Jersey Army National Guard, launches a RQ-11B Raven small unmanned aircraft system at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., July 11, 2016. The Raven provides units with real-time reconnaissance and target information. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)