

GMG

Green Mountain Guard | Fall 2012



Western Accord 2012

From the Director of Joint Staff

Brigadier General Richard N. Harris Jr.,
Director of Joint Staff



The National Guard Association, One of Many Venues for Professional Development

The 134th National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) conference just ended in Reno, Nevada and as I reflect, I decided it was worth a quick overview on the conference. Though we have strong membership for the officers in Vermont, many are unable to attend the annual conference. There are several organizations that are voices for the National Guard in Washington, D.C., the Adjutant Generals Association of the U.S., NGAUS and The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S. (EANGUS). All promote our National Guard organization by advocating for mission, training, welfare, and professional development. NGAUS itself has roughly 45,000 members (military and civilian) and was established in 1878. One of the main objectives is to present a unified effort for our issues to both Congress and the Executive branch.

We had some great speakers to include General Welsh (Air Force Chief of Staff) and General Odierno (Army Chief of Staff). Both continued to stress the importance of the Guard as we move forward, the critical role we play in our nation, and that we need to work collaboratively in this budget constrained environment. With that stated there will need to be significant dialogue over the next few years with the active component and the above mentioned organizations will be crucial as we move forward. Of note, General Ham, AFRICOM commander, highlighted the significant benefit of the State Partnership Program in his area of

responsibility. This just reinforces what we already knew about the importance of our long standing relationship with Macedonia and the more recent relationship with Senegal.

Resolutions are a key component of the conference. There are many Joint, Air, and Army resolutions which are prioritized and worked through Congress to move the Guard forward. For example, there were roughly 70 Joint draft resolutions this year. These resolutions represent NGAUS priorities in areas such as benefits, equipment, domestic operations, and federal mission. Of course, not all can be addressed in a single year, but several are emphasized and addressed with Congress. Through the efforts of these organizations, our Chief of the National Guard has received a 4th star and is now a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In closing, your involvement in these types of organizations is a form of force development in itself. As you move up in rank, the relationships you build with other service component members and other states will broaden your guard experience and serve you and our National Guard well as we move forward together. I encourage you to visit the websites of the many professional organizations.



Cover: Staff. Sgt. Sarah Hart and Lt. Col. Stephen Fucini from the 158th Medical Group, provide dental care to a Gambian soldier in Thies, Senegal during Western Accord 2012.
(Photo by SSgt Sarah Mattison)

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IN & AROUND: VTARNG

RIGHT: U.S. Army Lt. Col. Monica Ploof, with the Vermont Army National Guard listens to the heartbeat of a Senegalese child at a medical clinic in Thiès, Senegal, July 12, 2012. (Photo by SSgt Sarah Mattison)



BELOW: A Soldier with A Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry qualifies on an M2408 mount on a HWWMV. (Photo by 1LT Jeffrey Rivard)



ABOVE: Soldiers with B Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry pose for a group photo in front of the Climb to Glory Mountain at Fort Drum. (Photo courtesy of B Troop 1-172nd)



LEFT: Soldiers with 101st Field Artillery Regiment fire a 105mm Howitzer during drill weekend. (Photo by PFC Roy Mercon)

IN & AROUND: VTANG



ABOVE: Fire Fighters with the Vermont Air National Guard train to hone their search and rescue skills in So. Burlington VT, June 3, 2012.
(Photo by SSgt Sarah Mattison)

RIGHT: SSgt Corey Burton instructs SSgt Paul Rodriguez and SrA Christopher Kreager of the 158th Figher Wing Community Basing Program on inspecting an F-16 aircraft at the Vermont Air National Guard base in So. Burlington VT, Sept. 14, 2012.
(Photo by TSgt Dan DiPietro)



ABOVE: SSgt Brian Ling makes adjustments between runs of testing a jet engine, Aug. 8, 2012.
(Photo by A1C Jon Alderman)



LEFT: SrA Takeria Matthews of the 158th Figher Wing, performs the Butterfly Dance at the JEA picnic at Ethan Allen Firing Range, Aug. 23 , 2012.
(Photo by TSgt Dan DiPietro)

Commander's Column

COL Andrew Harris,
Deputy Commander of the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain)



The Role of Readiness.....

As I write this column for the Green Mountain Guard, to be published at a later date, it is the 11th anniversary of Al-Qaeda's attack on the United States on September 11th, 2001. The day is a stark reminder, even 11 years hence, of the ongoing threat to American interests and American ideals around the world. As I write this column national newspapers and national newscasts are filled with stories about incursions onto the grounds of the American embassy in Cairo, and a deadly attack on the American consulate in Benghazi. As I write this column news is emerging that Chris Stevens, the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, and three other Americans were killed in a well-organized attack far from our shores.

These events serve to remind all of us in uniform that our role in defense of our country never abates. These assaults make clear our obligation as Soldiers and Airmen in the Vermont National Guard to maintain the highest levels of readiness possible, so that when called upon to respond to these or other threats the challenge can be met.

Readiness can mean many things, and can be measured in many ways. As individual Soldiers each of us is mindful of the need to maintain our level of physical fitness, and to ensure we have the necessary skills to perform our duties. As an organization we are mindful of the need to develop training

plans and allocate resources that support our collective mission. But readiness is not only about being fit to fight, or properly schooled. Readiness encompasses so much more. In the 86th IBCT (MTN) there has been a sustained and deliberate effort to ensure our Soldiers are ready. Our organization has conducted numerous Soldier Readiness events and dedicated many resources to keep preparedness levels high. Medical and dental reviews, personnel updates, financial counseling, security clearances, family support, and legal work all clear hurdles that make Soldier readiness possible.

The effort is paying off. From October of 2011 to September of 2012 more than 1,400 Soldiers went through various readiness events resulting in a marked increase in overall readiness. Time spent tackling requirements like these now allows for higher level training and skills acquisition later. Being 'administratively ready' paves the way for all the other components of readiness that enables us, individually and collectively, to answer the call, and meet the challenge. As I write this column, our enemies are attacking our institutions and our ideals. Are you ready?

Leadership Column

COL Michael Morgan,
158th Mission Support Group Commander



Professional Organizations

I am penning this article while enroute back from the 134th National Guard Association of the United States (NAGUS) conference that was held in Reno, Nevada. We had 4 days of enlightening and lively discussion on many topics that deeply affect the Army and Air National Guard. We caucused and met in many forums to include, task force working groups, committees on resolutions for national policy/programs, company grade meetings and listened to an impressive set of high level, influential speakers. Just a short few weeks ago, the enlisted counterpart of NAGUS, the Enlisted Association of the United States (EANGUS) met, as a body, in Long Beach, California to do similar work.

As I mentioned, there were several high level speakers that touched on the road ahead for the military and how we MUST address one of our greatest threats to our country, the looming 16 trillion dollar federal deficit. One of these speakers was General Mark Welsh, the newly minted Chief of Staff of the Air Force. He first and foremost, eloquently spoke to the critical and unprecedented piece that the National Guard brings to the fight. He said that the recent run of cuts that were imposed upon the Air National Guard could and should have been better orchestrated and worked out as a team. General Welsh said we must address future cuts and re-alignments as a team. If we do not, we will fail by working too much as individuals. The draconian cuts that the Air Guard was asked to take were considered untenable and the Guard flexed its political muscle to mitigate these cuts. Many programs and dollars were re-instated, as a result, but the 10,000 elephant

in the room is still looming – the 16 trillion dollar debt. For DOD, add in the fact that Congress has said we will take a 478 billion cut over the next 5 years and we are now in the middle of a perfect storm on how to manage the best fighting force in the world and do it with significantly fewer dollars.

Many of us would argue that the National Guard is THE best and most affordable conduit for doing the defense of our nation at home and abroad and is done by heavily working with our active duty counterparts. But, to do this, we must modernize and properly equip and train our members. The major lobbyists for moving the Guard mission sets ahead are NAGUS and EANGUS. You will hear the comment of "professionals are members of their professional organizations" espoused from some of us. Never is that more true and important as it is today.

These organizations are voluntary and not required, but I urge you all to talk to someone that is involved with these organizations and get the how and why of their importance. And, if you choose to take the next step and get involved with the State level NGA and EANG organizations you can bring fresh perspective. And, finally, if you want to really hit the next level and make a huge difference, attend the national conference and see the organizations in action. If you are not a member of your respective organizations, I highly encourage you to strongly consider it.

MOUNT WASHINGTON, New Hampshire – Representing the Green Mountain Boys with pride, Soldiers with the Vermont Army National Guard hiked to the summit of Mount Washington to take part in a ceremony paying tribute to Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division that served during World War II, August 9.

While the hike to the top was accompanied by clear skies and a moderate temperature, once the Soldiers met at the top for the memorial ceremony, clouds and scattered rain enveloped them, as if to contribute to the somber tone of the occasion. Regardless of the weather, the ceremony continued, as it had for nearly 30 years.

"This is going to continue to be an annual event for a long time to come. I expect to be a part of it as long as I can make it up here," said Bob Linscott, the officiator of the event.

New to the ceremony was a reading of those service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the previous year. These names were not only those of the 10th Mountain Division, but those belonging to units who had representation at the event, including the 86th Infantry

Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) and the Army Mountain Warfare School. The main focus, however, were the surviving members of World War II.

"This year, there were four World War II vets in attendance", said Linscott. "Dick Calevert, Jeff John-Barton, Phil Twombly, and Carleton Miller, and their families made it here today."

A sad fact about these types of events that honor the surviving veterans of World War II is that so few are left. At last year's ceremony, the amount of surviving veterans was double.

"We came here today to honor the sacrifices and service of these men," said Maj. (Chaplain) Kurt Geib, 3-172nd Infantry, 86th IBCT (MTN). "The shame is that fewer of these men are able to attend as the years progress. At last year's ceremony, there were a lot more."

Members the Vermont National Guard plan on attending this ceremony annually. If you are interested in joining next year's hike and ceremony, contact your unit commander.

10TH Mountain Division Memorial Hike

Story & photo by Pfc. Roy Mercon, HHC, 86th IBCT

Updates

from the 15th CST

Story by Capt. Ian Hepburn, 15th CST

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt—The 15th Civil Support Team has been busy this August, participating in a major regional exercise, two specialized training courses, a collective training event, and a response mission to assist the 1st Civil Support Team in Massachusetts. The CST's mission is to assist civil authorities in the event of natural and man-made disasters, to include the deliberate use of weapons of mass destruction. It accomplishes this mission by working with local, state and federal agencies to identify dangerous agents, assess possible consequences, and advise and assist the authorities with consequence management. Preparation for this unique mission requires a lot of specialized training and a high operational tempo.

On August 1st, the CST was in the city of Exeter, Rhode Island, participating in Vigilant Guard 2012, a large full scale disaster response exercise that encompassed the National Guard as well as first response agencies from across the New England region. The exercise simulated the aftermath of a category 3 hurricane strike on RI to include flooding, collapsed structures, and large spills of hazardous materials. Over the course of 20 hours, the CST worked closely with the EPA to monitor air quality and take multiple environmental samples, which are critical tasks in the wake of any major disaster. They also conducted joint operations with local HazMat teams and other first responders, including simulated confined space rescues and technical decontamination missions. Although the exercise was over, the CST still had work to do.

At 1200 on August 2nd, just before their return to Vermont, the 15th CST was activated for an actual mission. The 1st CST, based in Wellesley, MA requested support from all of the New England CST's to conduct air monitoring and analysis of air samples after a fire at a manufacturing plant in eastern New York raised concerns about possible toxic fumes from burning Polychlorinated Byphenols, commonly known as PCB's. The 15th CST deployed 4 personnel and their Analytical Laboratory Suite vehicle to Stockbridge, Mass., where they conducted confirmatory analysis of air samples. Using skills and techniques that had been practiced less than 24 hours before; the CST analyzed multiple samples, confirming that no toxic chemicals were present.

On August 14th, the CST conducted their annual Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Clandestine Laboratory certification training.

This certification allows CST members to work with law enforcement agencies to conduct entries into actual or suspected narcotics labs. Civilian contractors from Training Edge LLC, a Michigan based company that trains law enforcement personnel across the U.S., were hired to set up a collective training event and classroom training session for this purpose.

The following week, the entire 15th CST conducted a convoy to Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island, NY. Once there, the CST took part in a 3 day advanced radiation course with the 13th CST from Rhode Island. Instructors from Brookhaven taught classes on a variety of radiation related topics, including possible response measures to radiological dispersal devices (aka 'dirty bombs') and improvised nuclear devices. The course culminated in an 8 hour joint exercise with the 13th CST to locate and identify radiation sources hidden in buildings and vehicles across a multi-acre training venue.

In addition to these unit-wide missions, select CST personnel participated in other training events and support missions. Two personnel deployed to Sturgis, South Dakota to assist the 82nd CST in their support to local and state authorities during the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. On August 30th, seven CST personnel attended the National Improvised Explosives Familiarization training held at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site; an all day explosives training event that included personnel from the Air Force EOD unit, Vermont State Police, and regional FBI representatives.

The 15th CST will remain busy for the rest of Training Year (TY) 2012 and into TY 2013 as it conducts monthly collective training lanes, as well as preparing for a major inspection in October and its biannual EXEVAL in February.



VERMONT GUARDSMEN

Graduate from Spanish Mountain Warfare School

Story by 1st. Lt. Jeffrey Rivard, 172nd PAD

JACA, Spain--Two Vermont Army National Guard soldiers recently became the first Americans to attend and graduate the Spanish Mountain Warfare School. The Spanish military invited the U.S. to send soldiers in an effort to increase cooperation between the United States military and the Spanish Military and to exchange knowledge in mountain warfare.

Sgt. 1st Class Duncan Domey, an instructor at the U.S. Army Mountain Warfare School, from Wilmont, NH and Sgt. Zechariah Burke a team leader for Blackjack Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry Regiment, from Bennington, VT, were both chosen to attend the 7 month course.

"Both soldiers were chosen based on their maturity, professionalism, and military mountaineering experience," said Major Justin Davis, the Army Mountain Warfare School commander.

The course started on January 10th and was structured in two main phases with Domey and Burke training alongside Spanish soldiers and enduring the extreme environment of the Pyrenees Mountain Range.

The Pyrenees Mountain Range divides France and Spain with Peaks reaching well over 11,000 feet in altitude and stretching 267 miles. The Atlantic Ocean pushes cool moist air through the western edge of the range dropping large amounts of snow during winter with the average temperature at 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

The first phase of the course is conducted during the winter where the culminating event is five days spent in the mountains. The soldiers learn to ski at an instructor level and carry one hundred pound ruck sacks, often while skiing. They do all this while braving the freezing climate.

The second phase or summer phase tests soldiers mentally and teaches them how to conduct rescue procedures by setting up different systems with ropes and pulleys. They learn basic self rescue and finish the course being able to conduct a high angle rescue where they are able to raise and lower a victim to safety in rugged terrain, using rope systems.

The Escuela Militar de Montaña y Operaciones Especiales or EMMOE, is known worldwide to hold high standards for its military mountaineering course.

Representatives of the EMMOE, the Military Mountain and Special Operations School, said "the training achieved a higher level of efficiency based on a rigorous evaluation system to verify each student's true level of preparation."



SGT Zechariah Burke with B Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry trains during the winter phase of the Spanish Military Mountaineering Course in Jaca, Spain.



SFC Duncan Domey (left) and SGT Zechariah Burke pose for a photo after graduation

Having successfully completed the course, Domey and Burke have earned the right to wear the Spanish Mountain Warfare Device.

"The Spanish Mountaineering Course was a good course and being able to leave the course at an instructor's level, will not only benefit my unit but also the military," said Burke.

The EMMOE has invited the Vermont Army National Guard to send more soldiers to the next course in 2013.

MACEDONIA

Vermont Army National Guard takes part in NATO training exercise

Story by Senior Airman Victoria Greenia, Photography by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison

MACEDONIA (6/28/12) - Soldiers with the Vermont Army National Guard's 124th Regional Training Institute and 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) joined a dozen other countries in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia recently for a two-week NATO training exercise designed to enhance interoperability between participating countries.

Named Cooperative Lancer and Longbow, the Vermont Army Guard Soldiers worked with fellow military men and women from more than a dozen NATO countries and NATO partner countries.

The exercise was set up as a small base camp with Soldiers from each participating country housed in barracks together. Tents provided classrooms for the first day of training, but for the following days training was moved outside for a more practical hands-on approach.

The Vermont instructors worked hard to help lay the foundation for a common ground among the troops. Sand tables were used for larger-scale operations, such as base defense, which was detailed out with miniature buildings, vehicles, and toy soldiers.

An instructor set up a series of events and then invited the soldiers of the other countries to show how they would approach the situation. Then he would show them how the U.S. military would approach it.

"The purpose wasn't to tell a foreign nation that their military tactics were wrong," said Army Capt. Gene Enriquez, who was involved in the planning of the exercise. "It was to show other possible ways to complete a military task. We learned too."



Spc. Ryan Fitzsimmons and Spc. Nicholas Campagna from the Vermont Army National Guard clear a room in a target house at the Krivolak Training Area, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, May 25, 2012. Soldiers participating in Exercise Cooperative Lancer had the opportunity to train from the classroom, to the sand tables and then incorporate that training out into the field.



1st Lt. Scott Mathewson provides After Action Reporting comments to American, Armenian, Belarusian and Macedonian soldiers at the Krivolak Training Area in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Soldiers had the opportunity to train together during Exercise Cooperative Lancer, improving capabilities and fostering international partnerships.

Army Staff Sgt. Vernon Edmonds, an instructor with the 124th RTI, said a crawl-walk-run system of training was used that started off slowly going through the tasks and then moving at a faster pace as students became more proficient. And he said he would draw on the experiences of those he was teaching to further emphasize certain points.

“Some countries have been in many conflicts over the years and our training wasn’t new,” he said. “But for everybody I teach, I assume they have no prior knowledge. If they are quick to learn or have obvious experience, I adjust my approach and speed.”

And many of those participating appreciated the role the Vermont Soldiers played in the exercise.

“The Vermont (Soldiers) have a high level of training and leadership,” said German army Col. Hans Reimer. “I see it in their skills, capabilities, appearance, instruction, and caring for the troops. They managed to integrate with the other troops and yet still direct. I can see they love their job and they make the U.S.A. National Guard shine.”

Reimer also said that if the idea of the exercise was to enhance interoperability between troops of different cultures and language, the success was also evident during off-duty time when impromptu volleyball or soccer games would take place. When the warm day cooled into night, the troops would often mingle at a nearby cantina and joke with each other while talking about the day’s training.

Spc. Gary Whitt, with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain), spent almost all his personal time at Cooperative Lancer making friends with the international soldiers. They would have coffee, talk about each other’s homelands, play games, and trade interesting items. He said the personal friendship aspect is something that teaches things beyond tactical skills.

“What you learn here goes beyond tactical knowledge,” he said. “You learn social skills that are invaluable for any deployment. In today’s joint army there’s people from all over the world. If you don’t have the personal skills to overcome language barriers, you’re putting the mission at risk. It’s essential to be able to find common ground, even if it’s mainly by pointing and using facial expressions.”

Enriquez agreed that missions like Cooperative Lancer boil down to the ability to form relationships and work with anyone the Soldiers are paired with. Knowing how to compromise and adapt in a multi-national military setting will make any mission a success.

“I would like to see events like this with even more people,” said Enriquez, adding he would like to see a battalion-sized element from the Vermont Army Guard involved in something like this. “How much more valuable is it to have a 100 of our lower enlisted be able to live with a 100 of the lower enlisted from Macedonia – to sleep in the same area, eat at the same tables and the same food, and hang out at the same place after work. We would impact each other from the ground up and form real relationships.”

And building relationships was the greater point of the exercise.

“When we train together in missions like Lancer, both sides win,” said Enriquez.



Armenian soldiers burst through a door while clearing a target house at Camp Stella, Krivolak Training Area.



1st Lt. Corey Ryder uses a sand table to instruct soldiers from both the Vermont Army National Guard and the Republic of Macedonia at Camp Stella, Krivolak Training Area..



U.S. soldiers from the Vermont Army National Guard prepare to clear a target house at the Krivolak Training Area.



American, Armenian, Belarusian and Macedonian soldiers pose for a group photo at Camp Stella, Krivolak Training Area.

Macedonian Military Order of Merit

Story by Capt. Chris Gookin



The Macedonian Military Order of Merit is the highest military award presented by the Macedonian government. It requires a special decree from their parliament and approval from the President.

Skopje, Macedonia (8/26/2012) – The week of August 16th saw Brig. Gen. Brian Carpenter, the Vermont Army National Guard’s Assistant Adjutant General, lead a team of senior Vermont National Guard Leaders to Macedonia to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia.

One of the highlights of the celebratory activities was the presentation of the Macedonian Military Order of Merit, which was presented to Brig. Gen. Carpenter by the President of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov. This medal is the highest military award presented by the Macedonian government. It requires a special decree from their parliament and approval from the President.

On the basis of Article 84, line 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the Vermont National Guard is awarded with the order of Military Merits for outstanding contribution to the successful maintenance and advancement of the relations and cooperation between the armed forces of the United States and the armed forces of the republic of Macedonia and their joint participation in international peacekeeping.

Two significant milestones in the relationship were Vermont’s participation in the Biannual Defense Consultation with their Macedonian counterparts and the platoon of Vermont Army National Guardsmen who participated with seventeen nations in a NATO sponsored exercise at Macedonia’s Krivolak Training Site.

“The Vermont National Guard was recognized for over 17 years of partnering with their Macedonian military peers. The Macedonian military has improved their capabilities and professionalism dramatically during this time period,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Pipes, State Partnership Director, Vermont.

The State Partnership Program has worked with Macedonia in areas ranging from NCO development to cyber defense. Macedonia also contributes an average of 150 soldiers each year to ISAF missions in Afghanistan.

“The SPP initiates, develops, and maintains relationships that would otherwise not be available to our armed forces and diplomats. All of the professional and personal relationships in the SPP are built on trust over the course of years. As Gen. Dempsey has noted, ‘you can’t surge trust,’ the Vermont National Guard is uniquely suited for this relationship.”



The President of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, presents Brig. Gen. Brian Carpenter, the Vermont Army National Guard’s Assistant Adjutant General with the Macedonian Military Order of Merit.



Private First Class Jennifer LaFountain, a dental assistant and Soldier assigned to Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) instructs Dr. Jeff Berkowitz, a dentist at Timber Lane Dental Associates on proper M-4 marksmanship Sunday, August 5.

BOSS LIFT

Story & photo by Pfc. Roy Meron, HHC, 86th IBCT

CAMP ETHAN ALLEN TRAINING SITE, JERICHO, Vt – During the unit’s two-week annual training, Soldiers with Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) showed their appreciation for their employers with a ‘boss lift’ at the Camp Ethan Allen Training Site (CEATS) on Sunday, August 5th.

The four employers shot M-4 rifles and were presented awards in an event sponsored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, or ESGR. The ‘lift’ was meant to show the work Soldiers perform while they are away from their jobs while presenting it in an interesting and entertaining way.

“A boss lift is one way of giving recognition to those employers that go the extra mile in supporting Soldiers that work for them,” said Spc. James Smith, a recruiting and retention specialist with HHC, 86th IBCT (MTN) and coordinator for the event. “It’s important to understand the care that these folks have for their Soldiers. They go above and beyond what is legally asked of them. Today’s event is an example of how we show our appreciation.”

The employers present at the event consider the continued support of their employees all in a days work.

“Supporting those who serve is an easy thing, and it’s the right thing to do,” said Joe Archovich of General Dynamics. “When you consider the sacrifices these men and women make to wear that uniform, doing things like holding their spot at work while they are deployed overseas is easy.”

After their shooting was over, the four employers were

presented with awards for their support. Dr. Jeff Berkowitz, a dentist at Timber Lane Dental Associates was presented with a Patriot Award, the highest award that can be given at such an event. Signed by the Secretary of Defense, the Patriot Award gives recognition for extremely outgoing support of an employee during their time in the military. Berkowitz was nominated for the award by Private First Class Jennifer LaFountain, who has worked with Berkowitz for eight years as his primary dental assistant.

“After I heard of Jen’s decision to join the guard, I helped get her ready in any way I could,” said Berkowitz. “Before she went to Basic Training, after our work was done for the day, together we would work out, doing push-ups down the stairs in the office. I bought myself running shoes so I could work with her running before she left.”

For the bosses, this was their first time using a semi-automatic assault rifle. On the range, the Soldiers would give patient instruction to the employers, creating an interesting ‘train the trainer’ scenario.

“I’ve shot guns before, but never anything like this,” said Berkowitz. “For my first time with the M-4, I feel I did pretty okay. Jen was very helpful in showing me the right way to do things. It was an interesting role-reversal of sorts, with her telling me what to do for a change.”

Though none of the employers present at the ‘boss lift’ were able to qualify with the M-4, all agreed it was a rewarding experience being able to see a small part of how their Soldiers live and work when they leave the office to drill with their unit.

YOU CAN'T SURGE TRUST

Green Mountain Boys Provide Medical Services

Story by Lt. Col. Daniel Pipes

Quoting a conversation focused on the State Partnership Program he had had with Gen. Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Carter Ham said, "We can surge troops and equipment, but you can't surge trust." Gen. Ham, Commander United States Africa Command, captured the essence of the State Partnership Program during a breakfast with the Vermont National Guard Director of the Joint Staff, Brig. Gen. Richard Harris in Dakar.

Vermont's team on this year's senior level visit to Senegal continued to build trust and relationships.

Brig. Gen. Harris travelled to Senegal in mid- July, accompanied by Command Sgt. Maj. Forest Glodgett, Capt. Patrick Enriquez, Capt. Chris Gookin, and Lt.Col. Daniel Pipes. Lt.Col. Carl Hausler, VTNG Bilateral Affairs officer in Dakar, set an ambitious program for the group, scheduling meetings with senior U.S. Embassy personnel and with the most senior Senegalese military leaders.

Highlights of the trip included meetings with the Senegalese Chief of Defense and Minister of Defense, attending the graduation and commissioning of their military academy, and visiting with our Air and Army medical personnel participating in Western Accord, a Marine Forces Africa mission held in Theis (pronounced Chess). As often happens on these trips, opportunities to engage arose unexpectedly and lent value to the mission.

Starting with a meeting at the US embassy in Dakar, the group ensured that Vermont goals for the state partnership program remain synchronized with the country team. Senior embassy personnel provided an excellent overview of embassy programs, personnel, and initiatives. The VTNG - Senegalese focus for FY13 will move forward in the areas of NCO development, range operations, women's integration, and potentially initiate a trilateral engagement between Senegalese and Macedonians.

The Senegalese and Macedonian military forces share some of the same strategic goals. The Vermont National Guard is working with the senior leaders of both nations to determine where the overlap is significant enough to merit bringing our two partners together for exchanges.

The graduation of the Senegalese military academy was a fascinating experience--one that blended traditions from African and French colonial times into a distinctly Senegalese ceremony.



U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Richard N. Harris Jr., Director of Joint Staff, Vermont National Guard, visits with medical staff and patients in Thiès, Senegal.

This is the most significant social event of the year for the Senegalese military, and was attended by all current and most retired flag officers from all branches of service, as well as flag officers from several other nations.

The trip was timed to coincide with Western Accord, a Marine Forces Africa Mission. The Vermont delegation visited a mixed team of Air and Army medical personnel twice during the exchange. The medical team provided medical and dental services to over 2,000 women and children in austere field conditions.

"This is part of how we remain relevant in the approaching post war era," said Harris. "Real world missions with our partner nations build trust and relationships. Taking our Green Mountain Boys out of their comfort zone and into areas where their skills are desperately needed is a win for everyone."

A chance encounter with French officers led to an invitation for Harris to attend Bastille Day celebrations at the French embassy in Dakar. Unexpected opportunities like this occur frequently during our exchanges. Flexibility is crucial, often leading to long days as new contacts engage the team and offer unplanned events.

Every day we heard unsolicited accolades from Senegalese military personnel about the professionalism and integrity of our Green Mountain Boys. The trust that we are building there is a slow roll, not a surge, and will continue to benefit all participants as our partnership develops in the coming years.

A Flight Back in Time

Mission to Help WWII POW Return to the Air

Story by 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard, 172nd PAD

BRUNSWICK, Maine—On October 1st 2012, 90 year old Leo Beaupre was given the chance to fly in a B-24 Bomber, "Witchcraft", for the first time in over sixty-eight years thanks to the kindness of Cpt. Zachariah Fike, who arranged the flight through the Collings Foundation.

Cpt. Fike, a Company Commander for Blackjack Troop, 1st Squadron, 172nd Cavalry Regiment; has recently been featured in several stories on CNN and NBC News Network's for his work returning lost Purple Hearts to the families of recipients. He has created a charitable organization called, Purple Hearts Reunited Incorporated. Using his own money; Fike finds and buys back Purple Hearts. He spends hours tracking down the families and later presents them with the medals in a special ceremony.

Fike first met Staff Sgt. Leo Beaupre several months ago while visiting a friend in Burlington, Vermont.

"I noticed an old Lincoln Town Car sitting in the driveway, but this was no normal car. It had a POW license plate", said Fike. "As I knocked on the door, I was greeted by a fellow named Leo. He invited me in, poured me a beer, and for the next two hours, shared one of the greatest war stories I've ever heard."

Staff Sgt. Leo Beaupre was stationed in northern Italy as a flight engineer and nose turret gunner aboard a B-24 Liberator, called "Stargrazer." Assigned to the 15th Air Force, 456th Bomber Group, 745th Bomber Squadron; Leo flew fourteen successful bombing missions. On the fifteenth mission he was in the left waist gunner's position due to one of the other crew members being injured. He and the rest of his crew were also flying in another B-24, due to maintenance problems with "Stargrazer", when they were hit by the gunfire from a German ME-109 Messerschmitt. "Red Dragon"; the plane they flew in that day, lost engine power forcing the crew to parachute out over Austria at an altitude somewhere between 15,000 and 18,000 feet.

As Leo slowly glided down toward the ground, another ME-109 flew by him several times trying to "steal the air" from his para-



Crew of the Stargrazer (Courtesy of Leo Beaupre)



Leo standing near the rear hatch of the B-24. The same hatch he had to parachute out of in 1944. (Photo by CPT Zac Fike)

chute, which would cause Leo to fall quickly to the earth. The plane was unsuccessful and Leo landed safely on the ground.

For four days, Leo evaded capture by German soldiers; running through and hiding out in the mountains of Austria. Once captured, He spent 13 months in a camp known as Stalag 17B, as a POW before being liberated by American Soldiers.

"Witchcraft" took off from Brunswick Naval Air Station and was joined during the hour and half long journey to Rutland, Vermont by a B-17 Bomber, "Nine O Nine" and a TP-51C Mustang, "Betty Jane".

Leo sat on the flight deck of the aircraft in an original seat, not unlike the one he had sat in on the flight in 1944. He was accompanied by Fike and Leo's daughter, Deb Allen.

When asked about seeing Leo on board the aircraft Fike said, "This was such an amazing and humbling experience. Seeing Leo climb aboard the B-24 once again was one of the most inspirational days in my life."

"Leo is a true American hero, and I'm proud to call him a friend", said Fike. "These men sacrificed so much for our country, shall we never forget the ones who never returned."

When asked about his rekindled experience; Leo said, "This was really great. I'm very appreciative of what you have done for me [referring to Fike]. The sounds and smells brought me back [to 1944] and reminded me of the times I enjoyed flying on training missions."

Leo wasn't reminded of the day he bailed out of "Red Dragon" over Austria.

"I'm just fine with that", said Leo, with a smile on his face.



U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Gordon Davis, Amn. Ashley Shepardson and SSgt. Sarah Hart with the Vermont Air National Guard medical group prepare a Senegalese child to have a tooth removed, Thiès, Senegal, July 10, 2012.

Relief in Senegal

Green Mountain Boys Provide Humanitarian Aid
Story & Photography by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison



1. U.S. Navy HM3 Joseph Shields and U.S. Air Force 1LT Sara Burton remove sutures from a Senegalese patient.
2. Sgt. Ibrahim Seima, a nurse with the Senegalese Armed Forces passes out medical charting booklets to patients.
3. A Senegalese woman has her ears flushed out.
4. U.S. Air Force SrA Gabrielle Stevens listens to the heartbeat of a Senegalese woman.

Crowded outside the gate, hundreds of Senegalese men, women and children waited with the hopes of being treated by medical and dental personnel. Thirty-two members of the Vermont Army and Air National Guard traveled to Thies, Senegal to participate in a Humanitarian Civic Assistance project (HCA) as part of Western Accord 2012. For two weeks they had the opportunity to work alongside counterparts from Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and The Gambia to treat more than 1,800 local residents for various medical and dental ailments.

Western Accord is a multi-lateral training exercise that was sponsored by U.S. Africa Command and was lead by Marine Forces Africa. Participating in the exercise were the Marines, Guardsmen, and Reservists from across the United States. In addition to the HCA, this training exercise also included live-fire and combat marksmanship training, peace keeping operations, disaster response, and intelligence capacity building.

The military clinic consisted of four buildings surrounded by an 8-foot yellow cement wall with one gated entrance. It housed a make-shift pharmacy and lab, but also offered rooms for providers to evaluate and treat patients. Skin

infections, rashes, hypertension, diabetes, scabies, and malaria were among some of the medical conditions that were treated. One treatment room was set up primarily to deal with wound care only. Patients seen in this room typically had wounds that needed to be redressed, abscesses that needed lancing, ears that needed flushing, and lacerations that either needed suture placement or removal.

With all rooms in the clinic at capacity, there was not enough space to allow for dental staff and equipment to operate. A joint effort between the Marines, Army and Air resulted in a dental clinic being created out of a large tent powered by a generator. This enabled dental care to be provided to 388 patients with 788 teeth extracted.

Prevention was an important role for the Vermont mission. Senegalese children were instructed in impromptu classes on how to properly wash their hands as well as given demonstrations and instruction on how to brush their teeth. To bolster continuing good health, toothbrushes and multi-vitamins were given to the Senegalese. Over \$150,000 of medications and supplies were brought for the treatment of patients. Unused medications were donated to the clinic to be used in the future.

"I was surprised at how grateful people were after standing in line for four days in a row, fourteen hours a day in the hot sun, to finally be seen for twenty minutes by an American provider," said Senior Airman Gabrielle Stevens, a med-tech with the VTANG medical group. This was her first deployment as a full-time nursing student at Norwich University. Her excitement was evident by her enthusiasm.

Stevens had the opportunity of helping with triage, assisting in the pharmacy, as well as working with both a physician's assistant and a nurse practitioner. In the course of the week, she had many new opportunities that she would not have normally experienced.

"Not many nursing students or people in general can say that they spent part of their summer treating ill people in Africa. It was a great experience for me as a student and as a medic," she said.

"I especially remember a mother with four children, twin girls that were about two years old, a seven-year-old son, and a thirteen-year-old son," she said. "The father of the family had passed away from malaria only four days before the mother brought the children in and the way that she was caring for her children and keeping the family together was remarkable.

It was obvious that she had been raised tough and was truly a strong woman."

Vermont's collaboration with the Senegalese continues to build. The State of Vermont has had a partnership with Senegal through the State Partnership Program (SPP) since 2008.

The SPP is a Department of Defense security cooperation program which began in 1992 and is run by the National Guard. There are currently 64 global partnerships of which Vermont has two, Macedonia and Senegal. Building the capacity of partnership nations is one of the strategic goals that Vermont assists Senegal with.

"The SPP is a high profile program that Vermont actively participates in. Activities we have with Senegal build relationships which strengthen the program and ultimately, helps advance the safety and security of our nation," stated Colonel Michael Ricci, Commander of the 158th Medical Group, "I think this exercise was an all around success. We gave a real deployment experience to our young soldiers and airman, asked more of our senior enlisted and officers, and pulled together to make a difference in many lives."

NECESSITY: The Mother of Invention

Story by Capt. Christopher Gookin

Enhanced Speed Bag

CAMP ETHAN ALLEN TRAINING SITE, Jericho, Vt-- For years units have been conducting resupply operations while having to scrounge, beg or borrow the equipment needed to conduct speed ball or hasty resupply. Finally emerging technology and personal efforts have paid off for the Soldiers on the ground.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Bushway, an instructor at the Army Mountain Warfare School, experienced firsthand the issues surrounding hasty resupply, while serving as an embedded instructor assigned to the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) in 2011. Task Force Bronco, 3-25 ID (L); required resupply during a nine day operation in which the entire Divisions human remains pouch stock was used for resupply operations as the only expendable item available for this use.

“When the first ship came in and experienced a tail rotor strike, it shut down the LZ. From that point forward for nine days anything that came in was stuffed in a remains bag and pushed off a helicopter.” said Bushway.

The Army Mountain Warfare School consistently deploys an embedded instructor as part of the Asymmetric Warfare Group as part of an ongoing relationship that specifically identifies areas of concern that need to be addressed in mountain operations, training or doctrine. Many of the instructors and Staff have deployed to Afghanistan and or Iraq at least once, as well as travel to countries throughout the world to identify or recommend training programs in mountainous environments.

Maj. Justin Davis, Commander of the AMWS, said, “Mountain warfare is about problem solving in difficult situations. The Enhanced Speed Bag is another example of an effective, economical solution to a significant issue identified by the cadre at the Army Mountain Warfare School.”

Concerns with aerial resupply are not specifically linked to mountain warfare tactics, techniques, and procedures, Bushway and two Operational Advisors from the Asymmetrical Warfare Group, Sean Walker and Antek Skoniecki, identified a capability gap that needed to be addressed after seeing the value in efficient supply delivery to the Soldier.

“ When taking a step back and looking at the situation, it just struck us as, ‘there must be a better way’, and as always the one thing we needed the most just kept missing the mark and

we would have to ask for it again, the pure operational cost in dollars must have been enormous,” said Bushway.

Members of the AMWS and the U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, Logistics Research and Engineering Directorate and Natick Soldier Research, Development, and Engineering Center’s Aerial Delivery Engineering Support Team have joined efforts to begin the development of an Enhanced Speed Bag system. This system will serve as a dramatic improvement to the current practice of using “speed balls” for squad-level resupply in difficult and/or hostile terrain. They found that emergency resupply has been an issue that has come up multiple times over the years, but the emphasis is lost as each major command rotates its staff through deployment cycles, or as Soldiers do, they find ingenious ways around the problem.

“After we left the Kunar Valley, when we were on foot walking or during free time I had the idea in the back of my head to figure this out,” said Bushway.

“Resupply operations have been vastly improved by the logistics community over the years. However as the illustrations in the Field Manual depict, speed ball resupply has been pretty much left up to the units to figure out,” said Maj. John Guyette, Executive Officer at the Army Mountain Warfare School, “ by capturing the lessons learned, in this instance and working with the smart Program Executive Office staff who develop solutions for the services, it has brought us a complete package with demonstrated results that can only benefit the Soldier in the fight, and increase survivability on the ground and for the air crews.”

According to the U.S. Army Field Manual 3-21.8 The Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad, PARAGRAPH 6-47; An aerial sustainment with speed balls is a technique with preconfigured loads to resupply Infantry platoons in urban areas (Figure 6-4). Sustainment personnel prepackage supplies in aviation kit bags, duffle bags, or other suitable containers. Helicopters fly as close to the drop point as possible, reduce speed, drop supplies, and leave the area quickly. Supplies should be packaged in bubble wrap or other shock-absorbing material to minimize damage.

In designing the Enhanced Speed Bag, ARDEC and PEO-Soldier have included feedback from multiple agencies that has led to an all encompassing system. The ESB consists of a cargo bag, energy dissipation materials,

and a 100 foot length of rope with an installed tension break device. The ESB can deliver a 150lb -300 lb load at a controlled rate of descent, 22+/- feet per second.

The package includes a 100 foot rope allowing the pilot to make adjustments and lower a package that will maintain its rate of descent regardless of altitude until it reaches the 100 foot mark, at less than 100 feet the pilot needs just to increase height and the rope extrudes freely through the mechanism and rope free falls away. Once the package is configured, it’s as simple as lifting into the cargo space and clipping in a locking carabineer. The entire package is expendable, with the braking device designed to be returned and refitted for use.

The braking device can be used with the standard kit bag (variable) or with specially designed netting and packaging material. By making the packages manageable the crew chief can maneuver the loads systematically without having to lie on his back and kick them out to free fall with his feet. This initiative should improve our Soldiers operational capability, by being able to plan for supplies that arrive usable and in the pre packaged kits previously coordinated prior to departing the FOB/COP or on call as part of their unit’s emergency resupply SOP’s.

“ARDEC and the PEO-Soldier could use assistance from deployed Commands in requesting these items through Operational Needs Statement fielding,” said Guyette. Final testing and evaluation will be conducted this summer, and hopefully by the beginning of 2013 there will be a National Stock Number to support units in obtaining these Speed Bag delivery systems enabling units to work them into their operational needs.

“The AMWS is completing our efforts with PEO and NSDEC this summer, I am hopeful that deployed units will find value in the enhanced Speed Bag delivery system, and seek out the managers of this program at PEO and get this gear in the hands of the Soldiers that need it,” said Guyette.

Enhanced Speed Bag and ONS request information should be sent to Mr. Bob Forrester, COM 973-724-2042 bob.forrester@us.army.mil

Often Human Remains Pouches, kit bags, or duffle bags are used to facilitate speed ball resupply.

“The problem with the bags was; inconsistent loads, no Standard Operating Procedure for marking or bundling, too heavy even for two man carry ... etc. When they did land within the perimeter they often busted wide open scattering supplies, and the rest of the ones that didn’t make their mark ended up in the wrong hands,” said Bushway.

FAREWELL TO MAJ. GEN. DUBIE



Story by SrA Victoria Greenia, Photo by SSgt Sarah Mattison

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. - Aug. 3, Maj. Gen. Michael Dubie stepped down as Vermont as the adjutant general to serve as deputy commander of the United States Northern Command in Colorado. His successor, Gen Thomas Drew, took command of Vermont’s Army and Air Guards consisting of nearly 4,000 service members.

Dubie has led a distinguished career in the Vermont Air Guard since 1981, but he is most well-known for being the commander of the largest deployment Vermont has seen since World War II and for his proactive response to Tropical Storm Irene.

Drew, who has worked with Dubie for the past six years, spoke at a luncheon in Dubie’s honor, saying that the former adjutant general is leaving a legacy of strong integrity and honor. Although Drew acknowledges there will be changes, he said he will continue in the footsteps of his predecessor.

To Dubie, he said, “What you have accomplished and you are as a person will never be forgotten.”

Drew said what he has learned from Dubie is to make each person he works with feel special and part of a team. He said that how a command performs is directly related to the actions of its commander.

“If the commander is positive, enthusiastic regardless of what the mission is or how difficult the tasks are, that commander will be able to look you in the eye and make you feel good about what you are doing. When he shows he has confidence in you, you will be successful.”

In conclusion, Drew said of Dubie, “He was the best man I’ve ever worked for and the finest officer in the United States military.

Dubie spoke only briefly at the luncheon, but had a few things to say in turn about the new adjutant general. He said his heart is with the Vermont Guard, “But part of the reason I can say I’m done and walk out the door feeling good is because of Tom Drew.”

On Aug. 14, Dubie was promoted to lieutenant general and is expected to assume duties at NORTHCOM, Aug. 27. “I want to be a deputy at NORTHCOM as good as a deputy [General Drew was] to me,” Dubie said.



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1. Spc. Nathan Walrath from B Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry conducts a zone reconnaissance mission
2. Soldiers from A Troop, 1-172nd Cavalry listen to instructions before firing their M240B mounted on their HWWMV
3. E Co (FSC) 186th BSB-Field kitchen at Fort Drum, NY where meals were prepared for over 400 troops in rotating 12 hour shifts
4. Soldiers from D Co., 3-172nd ready their vehicles and weapons for qualification during a rain storm
5. 131st Engineering Company stages their vehicles and equipment for runway improvements at Fort Drum, NY
6. Sgt. Nathan McCullen observes a team of Sgt. Bryan Bentley and Spc. Shane Yuknis as they qualify on the MK19
7. Staff Sgt. Brian Irwin a medica from HHC, 3-172nd, qualifies on his M4 rifle

(photos courtesy of each troop)

VTANG AIRMAN DONATES PLATELETS

Story and photos by Senior Airman Victoria Greenia



states that platelet transfusions are necessary for some cancer victims because the disease can inhibit the body from producing or holding onto red blood cells, which carry oxygen throughout the body. People with this anemia may get dizzy often or have a hard time breathing – in addition to all the other complications that may come with having cancer.

Most times a donor will never know to whom his or her blood goes to, but Sanborn had the unique experience of personally being able to help out a community member. It was a 12-year-old girl with cancer, Sanborn said. “It takes commitment to go every three weeks for the platelet donation and be strapped in for a few hours each time. But knowing there was a little girl who matched my platelets and desperately needed them is motivation to keep me going back.”

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. — For more than 12 years Senior Master Sgt. Craig Sanborn from St. Albans, Vt., a vehicle maintenance superintendent at the 158th Fighter Wing, has routinely fought with Burlington traffic to go to the American Red Cross. Once there, both of his arms get stuck with IVs and then he sets back for the next two hours as his blood is siphoned into a cell-separating machine collects. His platelets are collected and the remaining plasma is returned back into Sanborn’s system.

Sanborn said he’s talked to people who have received platelet transfusions, although it’s unlikely it was his, and they are always appreciative of those who take time to donate. He says it’s a special part of his life to know he’s making a difference in someone else’s.

The kind of dedication Sanborn has comes from many people in his life who have touched him. His first encounter with the miracle of life-saving platelets was with a childhood friend who, some 40 years ago, got leukemia. The doctors gave her a prognosis of one year to live. After undergoing bone marrow transplants and platelet transfusions in those early years she is, thankfully, still around today.

Cementing his dedication to the donations, Sanborn’s father, who had struggled with cancer in the 80s, passed away from it just last year. “People do the Relay for Life or the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure to show their support for cancer victims and survivors,” Sanborn said. “Donating platelets is what I do. We all give in our own ways.”

It was after he had joined the Vermont Air National Guard that he became close to a fellow airman who inspired Sanborn to make a commitment to blood donations.

It’s easy to donate, a person just needs to get out and do it. Even going as often as he does, Sanborn said he doesn’t feel tired or unhealthy from giving. Every donation helps a person – someone’s mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother, or friend. To learn more about donating to the American Red Cross, visit their web page at www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

“Ray Little did platelet apheresis and said he had donated more than 55 gallons of blood and underwent two bone marrow transplants,” Sanborn said. Impressed by Little’s dedication, he decided that to get on a schedule for frequent donation. For the past four years he’s gone to the Red Cross every third Tuesday to give his platelets to those in need.

According to the American Red Cross’s Platelet Donation web page, a person can donate up to 24 times a year. A single donation, it says, can give up to three therapeutic doses to patients. The American Cancer Society’s website



Family Readiness

Mary Bullis,
Airman and Family Readiness Manager

The Vermont Air National Guard Key Volunteer Program is off to a strong start. This command directed program is a tool for unit leadership and provides a framework for stability and support. Key Volunteers act as liaisons between family members, organizational leaders and base agencies. They provide essential peer support during difficult times and unit level involvement to address issues affecting family members. Key Volunteers are there to inform, support and refer family members to the appropriate base agency often starting with the First Sergeant. They also serve as a voice of family members to leadership.

Senior leadership support is critical to this program's success. The program needs to be aggressively marketed; the importance of the position has to be emphasized to encourage utilization of the Key Volunteer. An effective Key Volunteer program will enhance the flow of information between leadership, base support activities and squadron spouses/significant others, parents, other family members and increase military family readiness and mission ready capabilities. Families need to be taken care of. They make so many sacrifices, and they need to know how appreciated and valued they are. Airmen and their families deserve to be given great support and this program provides a level of support right at the unit level.



Given that the 158th FW will be engaging in another deployment cycle soon, having a strong support system in place will be an important tool in making sure that support is there. Each squadron/flight has a command appointed Key Volunteer who has been trained in how to assist airmen and their families, not only during deployments and other times of separation, but all year around. These dedicated individuals work closely with the commander, first sergeants and the Airman and Family Readiness Office and are your key to obtaining the information and resources airmen and families need.

The 158th FW Key Volunteers:

Alysia Duncanson- Maintenance Group
Laura Caputo- Operations Group
Julie Marinello- Fighter Wing
Tasha Lehman- Civil Engineering
Holly McKnight-Security Forces
Rae Couillard- Force Support Flight & Communications Flight
Christine Farnham- Logistics Readiness Squadron
Karen O'Brien- Medical Squadron
Nancy Myles- Information Operations

Recruiting

TSgt Nicola Samoska,
Recruiter, 158TH Force Support Flight

Diversity Recruiting

My name is TSgt Samoska. I have been a production recruiter for the Vermont Air National guard for the past four and half years. I have also helped as a recruiting assistant for two years before that. Over the last six years, I have worked with many people with diverse backgrounds.

On a daily basis, I talk to numerous applicants which have opened my eyes to how diverse our local community actually is. This is an amazing opportunity for me to educate people with different cultures and backgrounds about the opportunities that the Air National Guard has to offer.

I work hard to bring diversity to our unit for many reasons. I feel it brings more talent, open mindedness, and culture to the workplace. This, in turn, broadens perspectives and allows new ideas to strengthen our work environments. If we acknowledge other's differences, we also find similarities, particularly when there are common goals to achieve.

I am proud to announce that this fiscal year, 40% of our accessions have been female to include Asian, Hispanic, and African American. This proves that minorities, in a particularly male dominated organization, are becoming more common within the Vermont Air National Guard. According to a recent national study, the number of women that join the military, jumped from 2% to 14% since 1973.

I truly feel that no matter what culture one comes from and regardless of one's background, people join the military for the same reasons. Whether it is because of job security, college costs, health care, or just to serve our country, we all join for a purpose.

Our goals, as a recruiting team, are to continue seeking out well qualified, motivated applicants who want to serve our country. I am confident, with the exposure our organization has, we are going to keep seeing minorities increase within our organization. By encouraging and supporting more diversity to team up with our unit, we will continue to foster new ideas and help everyone feel their backgrounds are assets. This will ultimately make us an even stronger organization.

Military Marksmanship:

An Historical Perspective

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Ralph Young, VTARNG

As the sound of bullet striking steel reverberated back to the firing point from six hundred meters downrange, the soldier turned and exclaimed, "Wow, Sarge, I never thought I could hit a target that far away!" It was then I knew my thirty years of military marksmanship experience had paid dividends.

During the summers of 2007-2009 I had the honor of training soldiers of the 86th IBCF during their annual training periods and preparation for deployment to Afghanistan. My primary focus was on range estimation and long range target engagements with the M16/M4 rifle. The instruction given began with the basic qualities and aspects of the individual weapon, as well as the fundamentals of marksmanship. The vast majority of soldiers had never been fully apprised of the capabilities of the M16/M4 rifle. Very few had ever had the opportunity to engage targets beyond the normal maximum infantry engagement distance of three hundred meters, and of those that had, it was commonly on a RETS Range with downrange feedback consisting only of hit or miss. My fellow expert instructors were able to get most soldiers to achieve fifty percent hits on man-sized targets out to six hundred meters. Most soldiers were incredibly impressed with their own, and their weapon's, capability after a short period of instruction. How was this achieved? Where did the knowledge required to instruct and train soldiers to perform at a higher standard than ever before, originate?

Proficiency in any skill requires fundamental instruction followed by repetitious practice, the intensity of which will be determined by the level that the individual wishes to attain. Those that have the desire to excel will be driven by the urge to achieve their maximum potential and to find out where they stand in relation to others of similar intentions. Only through competition will the individual learn their level of proficiency and find out what is possible. Through competition, practitioners of the event will push each other to the highest attainable results, forcing each participant to improve and innovate to continue advancement in the given skill. Any sport or venture which does not include a competitive aspect will languish in mediocrity. With no comparative standard with which to compare oneself, and no goal to be reached, there is no incentive for improvement, and no way to gauge progress.

Our nation has shown an unfortunate propensity to enter a state of comfortable denial between conflicts. Military budgets are reduced and training is allowed to wane. Marksmanship programs in particular are quickly scaled back. Those in control of purse strings see competitive marksmanship events as unnecessary expenditures. Many leaders, when seeing the enjoyment taken by the participants, view these events as a perk given to a small group of specialized soldiers. They don't realize the techniques being put into practice by these dedicated individuals will be utilized by the rank and file soldier, sailor, marine

and airman. The knowledge gained and passed around at these events spans generations of practitioners, to include active and retired military, as well as civilians. While most participants in the marksmanship realm have a keen interest in firearms and their capabilities, and in many cases would carry on without organized or funded support, the military should maintain a strong interest and confer strong backing to the endeavor. Having read extensively the accomplishments of marksmen of the early and middle 20th century, and the ability, only recently, of modern marksmen to match or exceed their feats, leads me to believe that there has been a generational loss of capability. Modern distractions, and the search for quick fixes and short cuts, have diminished the basic fundamental skills required for high level marksmanship. The American way of living an unhealthy lifestyle and taking a pill to counteract ill effects, is mirrored in allowing marksmanship fundamentals to languish, hoping that gadgetry and technology will overcome the deficiency. If all the money spent on simulators and accessories was spent on training time and ammunition, marksmanship skills, soldier proficiency and battlefield effectiveness would be greatly improved.

For the first decades of my military shooting career I was doing exactly what the untrained observer thinks today. Traveling around the country and the world, attending competitions and enjoying the sights, sounds and camaraderie, basking in the glory of trophies, medals, prizes, and the respect of fellow competitors. Little did I realize that as my teammates and I strove to be the best we could be, to learn from the best in order to surpass them, to follow in the footsteps of our mentors, we were learning valuable lessons to impart to other soldiers. At all competitions we were advised and encouraged to bring lessons learned back to the rank and file troops. As we participated year after year, enjoying the fruits of our labors, we may not have realized that our attempts at achieving our full potential would transfer easily to others. Obscure techniques and procedures learned at practice sessions and matches became a catalog of knowledge that would serve to teach others with less time, desire, or ability to absorb it. I have realized that the entire endeavor had nothing to do with the glory of individual or team triumph in competition. It had nothing to do with living the good life of being paid to do what we may love to do. The entire struggle to improve and achieve was all meant to learn vital skills and knowledge to pass on to those that need it most: the troops going into harm's way.

Competitive marksmanship, and those that participate in it, must be supported in both peacetime and wartime. Only through competition can the perishable skills of marksmanship be kept alive and improving. While millions are spent on a missile to kill one enemy combatant, far less need be spent to train all troops in the most basic and vital of skills. Marksmanship training is the least expensive battlefield force multiplier ever purchased.

Health & Safety

LTC Patricia D. Hammond,
VTANRNG Occupational Health Nurse

Everyone feels a little melancholy when the days are short, dark, and cold. For some people, seasonal change brings with it something more serious than the blues: seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a form of depression that can be debilitating.

Irritability

Anger and irritability are common symptoms of depression and SAD but are symptoms that are frequently overlooked. Research suggests that people with SAD are significantly more irritable than healthy individuals and may be more prone to anger than people with regular (non-seasonal) depression.

Increased appetite

Like depression in general, SAD can increase appetite in some people. In people with the disorder 65% report being hungrier during the colder, darker months. Though it can help you feel better temporarily, eating more during the winter coupled with a tendency toward hibernating inside can really pack on the pounds. Nearly 75% of people with SAD gain weight.

Difficulty concentrating

Depression can make you feel sad and alone and in addition to these feelings it may compromise how well your brain functions. The condition has been shown to affect a range of mental processes, including concentration, speaking ability, and memory.

Loss of interest in sex

It is not uncommon for SAD and non-seasonal depression to cause a decrease in libido.

Sleepiness and fatigue

People with SAD tend to feel the need to sleep more during the wintertime. In one study, published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Research in 1994, patients at a SAD clinic averaged about 7.5 hours of sleep in the summer, 8.5 hours in the spring and fall, and nearly 10 hours in the winter.

So you might assume that an increase in hours of sleep equals increased energy during the day. Unfortunately the opposite is true; other research has shown that people with SAD experience more insomnia and sleep disturbances, and are more prone to nodding off at work.

Sadness

SAD is a form of depression, and so some of the symptoms of depression may present themselves in individuals suffering from SAD.

Some of the most common symptoms of depression are feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and losing interest in activities (such as hunting, fishing, winter sports, etc.) that you normally find pleasurable.

If you experience these symptoms every day for at least two weeks you may be suffering from depression. If you feel this way only during the fall and winter, and if these symptoms disappear during the rest of the year, it may be a sign of SAD.

Some home remedies to help you with your seasonal affective disorder are:

- Make it a rule to spend more time in the light. (At least 30 minutes in the day)
- Get active and get your muscles moving! Exercise is a great mood lifter!
- Get away on vacation to some place sunny - Your health demands it!
- Do not drink or do drugs as this will only make you feel worse.
- Buy a light box to use for at home light therapy.
- Eat a healthy diet full of fresh food, and avoid junk and processed food.
- Get enough sleep.

If you can't get rid of it on your own, get help. Go to your doctor or a mental health professional. Do not let it take over your life.

Reference: GKO, Office of the Chief Surgeon, Occupational Health



TACTICAL INFORMATION OPERATIONS COURSE

Story by 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard, 172nd PAD

NORTHFIELD, Vt.—Two officers from the Macedonian Army attended a two week “Tactical Information Operations Course”, working with soldiers from the 3-124th Information Operations Battalion.

The Macedonians were sent to train as part of the Vermont National Guard's State Partnership Program. The Tactical Information Operation Course is an 11-day resident course which prepares service members to conduct tactical information operation planning, execution and assessment. The course addresses all IO elements and activities and the course focuses on synchronizing and coordinating Operational Security (OPSEC), Military Information Support Operations (MISO), Military Deception (MILDEC), Electronic Warfare (EW), Physical Destruction, Public Affairs (PA), and Civil Military Operations (CMO).

Course graduates and commanders report that skills learned in the course are critical to successes in full spectrum military missions. The key audience is any soldier from E-6 to O-4 that is involved in IO including: Information Operations sections; Fires and Effects Cells; IO Staff officers and NCO's; Commanders; Executive Officers; and Fire Support Officers.

Although this is their first time training in Vermont, it is not their first time attending a United States Army course. Capt. Chaslav Stojmanovski has attended the Airborne course at Fort Benning, Georgia. Capt. Toni Jovevski, a signal officer, has attended the Signal Captain Career Course at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

“I feel this course will be of great value to me and my country, being a public affairs officer in my brigade”, said Capt. Chaslav Stojmanovski.

“This is not part of my area of operation, but I saw some new aspect of dealing with this new kind of information operation that may put me at an advantage and make me of some good use”, said Capt. Toni Jovevski.

“They're very proficient and have got their processes down and they pick up on their products and requirements right away and run with it. They've actually been helpful keeping focus, because as we go the people that are not familiar with the IPB, the mission analysis, the processes and products; they can get flustered and lose focus on what they're doing. These guys have been really sharp about keeping things going, focusing on the right things and keeping them going in the right direction”, said Major Michael Papp, a senior instructor with the 3-124th IO Battalion.

Farewell

I'm not sure where the last 33 years, 8 months have gone, but it's time for me to hang up the uniform for the last time and say thank you to the men and women of the Vermont Army and Air National Guard for the outstanding support they have given me over the years.

Since 1987 when I became one of our Nations first State Public Affairs Officers and the opportunity to “create” the State Public Affairs Officer job in Vermont, I have stood witness to the tremendous unfolding of a “traditional” National Guard to the professional military organization that we are today. I have been honored to share your stories with the world. I take no credit for your outstanding work but I stand proud that the Green Mountain Boys reputation of excellence is known far beyond Vermont's borders and continents away from the comfort of the Green Mountain State. The Vermont Guard was once a mere footnote story on the news. We are now a premier news source in Vermont, a testimony to the outstanding work of the National Guard.

In retrospect, I've had the personal opportunity to work with our nation's news networks and reporters and personalities that many of our younger folks wouldn't recognize but they are legends in their business. They weren't for a second interested in me, they were interested in each and every one of you and the incredible story that you have to tell. The most important thing I've done, however, has been dealing with our incredible Soldiers and Airmen and their Families. I've been there as you prepare for deployment, and I've been there as you've returned from deployment. I most likely shook your hand as you stepped off the plane. My most powerful memories surround the times when we've mourned as a family at the loss of one of our fellow soldiers helping to shape the compassionate words spoken by our Adjutant General and providing news support to the families of our Fallen, assuring that the news media coverage is done with dignity and respect.

I have proudly watched the Air Guard and the Army Guard become one Vermont National Guard in true Green Mountain Boy Spirit. I have watched the Army Guard develop into the professional soldiers that they are, proud and focused on mission and, in the highest sense of the word.....Army Strong. I have watched the Air Guard become one of the premiere flying units in the United States Air Force and being the first Air National Guard unit in the nation to be considered for the preferred location for bed down of the F-35 Lighting.

As I bid you farewell I would like to say that from the Private and Airman Basic to the General Officer, we all have critical roles as Green Mountain Boys in our State and National missions. No one person can stand alone we must work as a team offering our own little piece of the mission. Find your place in this ever important mission and give it your all. Giving your all is what HOOAH is all about and it defines the true Green Mountain Boy Spirit. Grasp the moment and be proud, I certainly am and will always be proud of you. Forever a Green Mountain Boy.

Lt. Col Lloyd Goodrow





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Soldiers of the Scout/Sniper Platoon HHC 3-172 INF (MTN) and Pathfinder Company, 10th Mountain Division, offload from UH-60 helicopters flown by Charlie Company, 2-10 Aviation Brigade during a combined training exercise during AT 2012.
(photo by 1st Sgt. Todd Gagnon)