

WING

Tips

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COMMENTARY

HURRICANE SANDY HEALTH CONCERNS

By Lt. Col. Joseph E. Benson, Chief, Occupational Environmental Health Working Group

More than 210 New Jersey Air National Guard members were activated and deployed on missions for Hurricane Sandy Relief efforts.

All of those that were tasked received a medical briefing from public health or other 108th medical personnel concerning environmental risks and appropriate personal hygiene for deployment to evacuation shelters in conjunction with other joint state assistance organizations for Superstorm Sandy.

Site surveys were performed by a 108th Medical Group Airman and the initial verbal report was no significant immediate bio-environmental or public health situations identified on visual inspection. Had there been concerns based on initial findings, the bio and public health areas would have notified the on-scene commander at each location.

We know many of you are interested and concerned about potential exposure while assisting with Hurricane Sandy relief efforts.

The 108th Medical Group Deployment Availability Working Group and the Occupational Environmental Health Working Group met during the November unit training assembly to discuss and identify concerns from our Airmen regarding exposure to: molds, sewage waste water, tuberculosis (TB) and MERSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) infected wounds.

MERSA: One shelter evacuated citizen had an infected foot wound that required dressing changes and reported that

it was known to be infected with MERSA. Staphylococcus is a normal bacteria found on the skin or in the nose of many people (30 percent). Staph that is resistant to antibiotic treatment can be harmful to individuals with compromised immune systems and can be a major problem to hospitals if the bacteria become widespread throughout the institution. Prevention of acquiring and transmitting MERSA by deployed personnel involves adequate hand washing with soap and water as stressed during the pre-deployment medical brief and/or using chlorhexidine – hibiclens if working with known MERSA infections. No known MERSA infections have been identified in any of our members as a result of their tasking.

TB: NJANG members reported that they and many evacuees were coughing in the dusty environment. The following are symptoms of active TB: Weakness, weight loss, fever, night sweats, coughing, chest pain and coughing up blood. Individuals can spread the germs to people they spend time with in close proximity. The number of individuals with acute/active TB in: Monmouth county - 0, Union county - 4, and Middlesex county - 12. According to the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDH) there were NO cases of active TB evacuated to shelters in counties where NJANG personnel were deployed.

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Cover: Safety Always

Aircraft fuel systems journeyman Staff Sgt. Delonte A. Williams safety wires a compressor hose at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Dec. 8, 2012. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen)



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A Day in the life of a 108WG Command Post Controller

By Master Sgt. Julie A. Schechter, 108th Wing Command Post

For several good reasons, most people might not know what a command post controller contributes to the 108th Wing.

For one, we are carefully hidden behind closed doors, with windowless walls. We are out of sight and sound, except that which is piped in by cameras, radios, and computers. Ok, we dwell in a box. So, if you are endeavoring to be gawked at and admired, the command post (CP) is not a place for you.

Our role is to orchestrate the passing of information, sometimes under crucial time sensitive situations. We are a 24-hour operation for the 108th, but also the only after-hours point of contact for the day to day state mission, for both the Army and Air National Guard.

Despite our box-like nature, we serve as the “eyes and ears” to the Wing commander by being the hunter and gatherer of information that pertains to the multiple unit missions. The success of our missions often boils down to how well one Airman can handle responsibility, stress and situational awareness.

According to Wikipedia, “situational awareness is especially important in work domains where the information flow can be quite high and poor decisions may lead to serious consequences (e.g., piloting an airplane, functioning as a soldier, or treating critically ill or injured patients).”

So when CP controllers call and ask questions, it is to gather the most current information to pass to senior leadership, which will allow them to make informed decisions concerning a threat or situation that is possibly unfolding rapidly. This can range anywhere from a car accident, death, in-flight emergency, bomb threat, active shooter, severe weather, and pretty much anything else that happens to the base, service members or assets that impact our operations.

Command post controllers deal with multiple high demand stressors ranging from sustained actions over long periods of time and a busy chaotic environment to the criti-

cality of the situations. Prioritizing such things as; multiple phone calls, Emergency Action Messages, radio calls, giant voice announcements and various levels of classified information, all at once, takes multitasking and controller judgment. The decision making process is used to identify the most time sensitive information that can cause harm or have the greatest impact. Decision making is of paramount importance to this career field and cannot sufficiently be quantified on the job description. It is something that is cultivated through leadership and experience.

During the workday of a controller, responsibility is a constant. Due to our 24/7 nature, we act as a focal point for all types of information such as phone numbers, commanders locations, alerts, weather, status of the forces, mass notifications, daily flying, and base conditions to name a few.

Depending on the day, a CP controller can run anywhere from four to 14 checklists a day, make more than 200 phone calls, send multiple reports, decode numerous EAM's, and coordinate five to 10 sorties. We take three tests monthly; general knowledge, Air Force emergency actions, and U.S. Strategic Command emergency actions.

Our comprehension of these plans and actions are so critical that if one controller fails a test during a nuclear operational readiness inspection, the 108th Wing,

as a whole, can fail.

How successful we are depends on how well we understand the unit's mission, the responsibilities of each section, the impact a situation has, and how it all comes together within the big picture. We rely heavily on information from wing members, leadership, and higher headquarters to accomplish our tasks. It's a job that can be easily overlooked. Boxes often are. But they hold things together, and that has a great impact on our collective no-fail mission.

And thus our motto is: “Alert, Direct, and Report!” 



Master Sgt. Julie Schechter and Tech. Sgts. Mark Buffit and Yvette Hackett from the 108th Wing Command Post demonstrate the day to day tasks of a command post controller at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, Jan. 10, 2013. (Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Kellyann Novak)

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE 108TH

Fuels Airmen clean out tanker

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



Aircraft fuel systems supervisor Master Sgt. Eugene D. Fletcher lowers an exhaust tube in preparation for airing out a fuel bladder Dec. 8, 2012.

The sign in front of the maintenance hangar says it all: Open Fuel Tanks Unauthorized Personnel Keep Out.

The smell of Jet Propellant-8 (JP-8) is noticeable in the air. Exhaust tubes - long hoses hang down from hangar's ceiling. One is currently connected to a fuel bladder pumping air through it to dry it out before it is folded up and sent away for repair.

It's time to drain a KC-135R Stratotanker so the fuel cell bladders can be checked for leaks.

Aircraft fuel systems supervisor Master Sgt. Eugene D. Fletcher, along with aircraft fuel systems journeymen Staff Sgt. Delonte A. Williams and Senior Airman Herbert L. Grant are responsible for a broad range of fuel-related maintenance and repair functions, covering everything between the engine and the refueling boom.

"If it is connected or contains fuel, we keep it operating," said Fletcher.

Part of their job means climbing inside the fuel tanks. Wearing coveralls, special boots and forced air respirators; they have to scramble through tight spaces to reach locations in the aircraft wing that require maintenance. At day's end, they are often covered from head to toe in fuel.

It truly is a dirty job. So much so that the McConnell Air Force Base fuel systems Airmen were featured on an episode of the Discovery Channel's Dirty Jobs with Mike Rowe.

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JPFS44
EMED Co., Inc. - 1-800-442-3633

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For today's job, all three Airmen wear sweats, safety glasses and forehead lamps.

A KC-135R's fuel system is a highly integrated and interconnected network of fuel lines and fuel cells, containing 50 valves and 15 pumps to guide the fuel flow and pass tons of fuel in minutes for air refueling work.

While the maximum fuel load of a Stratotanker is 200,000 pounds, fortunately, for Fletcher, Williams and Grant, there are probably only a few hundred gallons at most left in the plane.

Unlike your car with its one tank, a KC-135R has many fuel tanks - tanks in the wings, tanks in the fuselage - you get the picture - and all of them need to be emptied.

Inside the tanks are fuel cell bladders, which are made of nylon fabric less than 1/16 of an inch thick. A bladder weighing 80 pounds will hold seven tons of fuel. In the wing tanks, the fuel is pumped directly into the wings, filling nearly the entire wing structure.

Once the tanks are drained, the bladders will be removed to check for leaks, but that is for another time. Today the aircraft needs to be empty of fuel.

That means maneuvering around a fuels bowser - a large wheeled fuel tank for the JP-8 - to various points under the plane, unscrewing panels, hooking up hoses and emptying the fuel into the bowser.

After Williams and Grant drain the port wing tank, the hangar reeks of fuel.



Staff Sgt. Delonte A. Williams, left, adjusts a funnel as Senior Airman Herbert L. Grant, both aircraft fuel systems journeymen, uses a cowbell to undo a screw prior to draining a fuel bladder.

Fuel systems Airmen advise on aircraft fuel systems removal, repair, and installation maintenance procedures and policies. They also diagnose fuel system and component malfunctions and recommend corrective actions.

In short, Fletcher, Williams and Grant's duties, like that of all aircraft maintainers will determine whether the KC-135R flies or sits on the flight line. 🇺🇸



Master Sgt. Eugene D. Fletcher, right, uses a fiber optic lighting cable to provide additional light as Staff Sgt. Delonte A. Williams, center, attaches a drain hose from a KC-135R Stratotanker to a fuels bowser while Senior Airman Herbert L. Grant adjusts the hose.

Air Force announces KC-46A candidate bases

From Air Force Public Affairs

The Air Force announced Altus Air Force Base, Okla. and McConnell AFB, Kan., as candidate bases for the KC-46A formal training unit (FTU) today.

Altus AFB, Fairchild AFB, Wash., Grand Forks AFB, N.D., and McConnell AFB, are candidate bases for the first active-duty led KC-46A main operating base (MOB 1).

Forbes Air Guard Station, Kan., Joint-Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., Pease Air Guard Station, N.H., Pittsburgh International Airport Air Guard Station, Pa., and Rickenbacker Air Guard Station, Ohio, are candidate bases for the first Air National Guard led KC-46A main operating base (MOB 2).

"The KC-46A will have enhanced refueling capacity and capabilities, improved efficiency, and increased capabilities for cargo and aeromedical evacuation as compared to the KC-135R, making it a vital component to maintaining our global reach for years to come," said Gen. Mark Welsh III, Air Force chief of staff.

The major commands will conduct detailed, on-the-ground site surveys of each candidate base. They will assess each location against operational and training requirements, potential impacts to existing missions, housing, infrastructure, and manpower. Additionally they will develop cost estimates to bed down the KC-46A for each candidate base.

Once the site surveys are completed, the results will be briefed to the secretary of the Air Force and chief of staff of the Air Force to select preferred and reasonable alternatives for the FTU and two operating locations. The Air Force plans to announce KC-46A preferred and reasonable alternatives and begin the Environmental Impact Analysis Process in spring 2013.

"Bringing the KC-46A online is an important step in recapitalizing a tanker fleet that has been a leader in air refueling for more than five decades," Welsh said.

"This new age aircraft will achieve better mission-capable rates with less maintenance downtime, improving our ability to respond with rapid, global capability to assist U.S., joint, allied and coalition forces and better support humanitarian missions."



Welsh went on to explain that the 179 planned KC-46A aircraft are just the first phase of a 3-phase effort to replace more than 400 KC-135 and 59 KC-10 aircraft. The first phase of tanker recapitalization will complete deliveries in fiscal 2028. He went on to emphasize the importance of continuing KC-135 modernization efforts.

"I want to stress that the KC-135 units not replaced with the KC-46A will continue to fly the KC-135R for the foreseeable future," Welsh said. "Throughout tanker recapitalization, the Air Force is committed to ensuring continued support of combatant commander requirements."

"We are committed to executing a deliberate, repeatable and standardized basing process," said Kathleen Ferguson, Air Force principal deputy assistant secretary for installations, environment and logistics. "In this process, the Air Force uses criteria-based analysis and military judgment in its decision making."

"We look forward to the next phase when preferred and reasonable alternatives are announced and our candidate base communities have an opportunity to participate by providing input for the environmental impact analysis," Ferguson added.

The KC-46A will provide improved capability, including boom and drogue refueling on the same sortie, worldwide navigation and communication, airlift capability on the entire main deck floor, receiver air refueling, improved force protection and survivability, and multi-point air refueling capability.

The FTU and MOB 1 will begin receiving aircraft in fiscal 2016. MOB 2 will receive aircraft in fiscal 2018. 

HOLIDAY CHEER - AIRMEN VISIT VINELAND HOME

Photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 108th Wing Public Affairs



Above photo: Left to right, Master Sgts. Steven Sabato, Elizabeth Stefanoni, Ferdinand Bautista and Tech. Sgt. Chris Goulden, right, were among the Airmen from the 108th Wing along with Master Sgt. Paul Thompson, second from right, Joint Force Headquarters, both located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and the 177th Fighter Wing at Egg Harbor Township, N.J., who were joined by fourth graders from the Seaview School in Linwood, N.J. for the Annual Holiday "Songfest" at the Vineland Veterans Memorial Home, Vineland N.J., Dec. 13, 2012. Photo right: A Vineland Veterans Memorial Home resident is given a card by knowledge operations management craftsman Senior Airman Aimee Figueroa. This is the 12th year the Wings have visited the Home. Upon arrival, the Airmen and fourth graders were issued candy canes and holiday



greeting cards, assigned to groups and sent out to spread cheer among the residents. The carolers congregated in cafeterias, day rooms, as well as serenading individuals in their rooms (those residents that are bed-ridden), as well as chatted with the residents. The Wings also provided gifts including toiletries, socks, sweat suits and other items based on the Home's wish list.



Holiday Airlift

Tech. Sgt. Debra L. Zygmunt, 108th Wing, joined Soldiers and Airmen of the New Jersey Counter Drug Task Force, New Jersey National Guard, in presenting gift cards to children from the Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children during a visit at George Walker Field near Somerset, N.J., Dec. 11, 2012. The children, most whom are between the ages of 13-17, are transitioning from an abusive environment or are between foster care. The group was airlifted on UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 1-150th Assault Helicopter Battalion. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen)

Safety and you, perfect together

By Senior Master Sgt. Jim Granato, 108th Wing Safety Office

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Senior Master Sgt. Jim Granato and I am the new 108th Wing Ground Safety Manager.

I and Master Sgt. Porfirio Diaz are working to ensure everyone remains safe and sound every day and will answer any questions that you have.



Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released

As we start a brand New Year, one cannot help but reflect on the past year and the near misses that we have had. I know I strive to do things better and to learn from my mistakes. My father used to say to me, "That accidents don't happen, they're caused." As I am much older now I realize how true this is.

Not only should we practice Operational Risk Management (ORM) at work, but also in our daily lives. This is as simple as; before you do something stop and think that if I do this, this could happen. That is the basic principal of ORM.

Safety should be number one at the top of your list every year. Consequently, January usually kicks off with some nasty weather. We should all check road conditions before venturing out onto the highways and secondary roads. Anyone who has driven in the winter on Long Swamp Road knows it can be quite a hair-raising experience. Therefore, make sure your cell phone is charged and that you have an

emergency driving kit, just in case.

If you are like me, I tell myself that I'm going to be in the best shape of my life this year. For those who have weight training and more cardio as a goal, please start off slow. I really don't want to see anyone walking around not being able to move their arms or even sit down, for that matter.

Last but not least, remember, some of us are not young any more. When shoveling snow from your sidewalks or driveways, Go easy! Back injuries and heart attacks can and will occur if you overdue it. Sometimes it's better in the long run to purchase a snow blower or have the kids from down the street do it.

I could go on and on, but I think you get the picture. So enjoy your family and friends during the year and please do it safely. 🇺🇸

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Kaplan University and the American Freedom Foundation have a scholarship opportunity for family members who are students or considering being students at Kaplan University.

One scholarship will be awarded that will cover the full cost of an online associate's or bachelor's degree program (tuition, fees, books, required materials and clinical fees, if any), as chosen by the award recipient.

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria: Be a dependent child under 24 years-old, or spouse of U.S. service personnel, or child or spouse of a deceased service member who died in the line of duty after Sept. 11, 2001.

For more information, please visit www.scholarshipamerica.org/aff/.

SANDY

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As such, the risk of infection for NJANG members is extremely low and routine testing for TB is not recommended at this time by the NJDH. However, if an individual has significant concerns or exhibits symptoms he/she should visit with a medical provider or obtain a TB skin test at the NJDH 90 – 120 days following the potential exposure.

Raw sewage waste water: Studies of individuals with chronic or prolonged exposure to sewage waste water did have more gastrointestinal illnesses than nonexposed individuals and had a slightly higher incidence of Hepatitis than control workers. However, the risk of disease from acute exposure to raw sewage wastes water followed by adequate washing with soap and water is reported to be insignificant or merely a potential risk.

Mold (*Stachybotrys Chartarum*): Molds are very common

in buildings and will grow anywhere indoors where there is adequate moisture. All molds produce spores that can cause hypersensitivity – allergic symptoms and a few molds (*Stachy*) can create mycotoxins that can produce significant hypersensitivity pneumonitis in susceptible individuals. People who are sensitive to molds may experience symptoms such as nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing or skin irritation when exposed to a mold environment. Symptoms will resolve when removed from the mold environment or when the moldy walls are thoroughly cleaned with soap and water.

Medical Disclaimer for concerned/symptomatic individuals: Recovering from a disaster is usually a gradual process. Communicable diseases that are most common in a post disaster environment include: Diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections. If symptoms persist or become serious /significant, a medical evaluation by your routine physician is recommended. 🇺🇸



FRONT AND CENTER: CHRISTINE BROOKS



Rank: *Technical Sergeant*
Time in service: *18 years*
Job in 108th: *Airplane Hydraulics, 108th Maintenance Squadron*
Civilian Job: *Probation officer*
Favorite food: *Rice and beans*
Favorite TV show: *NCIS*
Favorite music genre: *Eclectic*
Favorite sport: *Boxing*
What I do in my spare time: *I work out and stay in shape*
My hero is: *Myself*
Dream vacation: *African safari or Hawaii*
Dream car: *Jeep Wrangler*
Goals for the future: *Finish my master degree and pass this M50 Gas Mask fit test*
What I like most about the 108th: *I love my shop and the people I work with*
If I was commander for a day: *Have a big Wing party*



Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez/Released

108th Airmen reenlisted



Members of the 108th Wing stand for a group photo in the Wing headquarters after their reenlistment Dec. 8, 2012. From left to right: Staff Sgt. Frank Decandia, Staff Sgts. Robert Spiegel and Craig King, Master Sgt. Calvin Rozier, Staff Sgt. Edson Casanova and Maj. Warren Booth (Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Kellyann Novak/Released)

Wing's last Vietnam veteran retires safe and sound

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing Public Affairs Office

Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Hammell began his military career in September of 1969 at the young age of 17 by joining the U.S. Marine Corps. And he finished it as the last Vietnam veteran in the 108th Wing August of 2012.

He wanted to serve his country during the war conflict of that time, but he was too young to be sent to Vietnam, so instead he settled in Camp Pendleton, Calif., as an infantryman. Three years later, he was sent to Vietnam for six months and when his enlistment expired, he returned back home.

He stayed out for approximately two years but he missed the camaraderie of the military, said Joseph Hammell. So he reentered the military by joining the U.S. Army in 1974.

After being the honor graduate at his Advanced Individual Training school for truck drivers at Fort Dix, N.J., Hammell was offered an instructor position at the military school. And that's where he stayed for the next several years as he taught vehicle recovery and field expedience at Range 47.

"That was pretty much training on repairing trucks in the field when you had no tools or didn't have any parts," said Hammell, a Lindenwold, N.J. resident.

After once again getting out of the military in 1977, Hammell got married and raised his three sons and worked as a construction equipment mechanic. But he said he still missed the camaraderie. "I wish I had never gotten out," said Hammell.

But lucky for the 108th Wing that Hammell's desire to continue to serve brought him to the Air National Guard. As the first Gulf War was unfolding in 1990, Hammell joined the 170th Air Refueling Wing as a civil engineer and thus began his 20 plus years in the New Jersey Air National Guard. The 170th would later consolidate with the 108th Wing.

One of his great accomplishments was the conversion of warehouse space into the modern Homeland Security Center of Excellence at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' Lawrenceville complex right after 9/11. "I was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for that project," said Hammell.

Having all this experience in project management,



construction and civil engineering helped significantly once a position for a safety noncommissioned officer opened up at the 108th Wing's Safety Office, which is where Hammell spent the last four years of his military career.

"Joe was very committed to safety in the Wing while he was the Ground Safety Manager," said Lt. Col. Lawrence J. Klein, Global Mobility Readiness Squadron commander at the 108th Contingency Response Group. "He brought a vast amount of civilian, Army and civil engineer experience in construction and heavy equipment to the job and fully appreciated the importance of safety."

Klein was the Chief of Safety and worked at the Safety Office alongside Hammell for several years. "He was a key player in the many accomplishments of the Safety Office," said Klein.

Having accomplished everything he wanted out of his military career, Hammell hopes he left a lasting impression on the Airmen of the Wing.

"Not everyone can fly planes, you know," said Hammell. "But hopefully I made it a much safer place." 🇺🇸



Marriage retreat

Happy faces emphasize another successful 108th Wing Chaplain's Marriage Retreat at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick held August 24-26, 2012. The next retreat is scheduled for later this spring - stay tuned for more details. (Photo by Desiree Williamson)

THE GOD PILL: SPIRITUAL RESILIENCY IN A HYPERACTIVE CULTURE

By Capt. David Leung Kahler, 108th Wing Chaplain

It's hard living with a seemingly slow moving God in the midst of a rapidly paced world. In a day and age where we can get nearly anything at our fingertips within seconds, it is hard waiting for a God who seems to take an eternity. We've become accustomed to heating our food in one minute in the microwave whipping our cream in an instant with Reddi-Whip and getting our messages in a flash through texting and instant communication devices. So how do we stay spiritually resilient in a hyperactive world?

If the Northeast had anything to do with it, we'd develop a God pill that we could take to spiritually medicate our souls against horrifying events such as Hurricane Sandy and the Sandy Hook Elementary School incident. If a God pill existed, we'd never have another spiritual crisis, either as individuals or as a society.

But there isn't such a thing, and we do have spiritual crises as individuals and as a society. While spiritual crises feel terrible, they are not necessarily a bad thing - spiritual crises can be a great opportunity to grow in theology and spiritual practice. Still, some crises can be avoided.

Just like a cut to our skin, we get spiritually wounded. Just like a Band-Aid or stitches, we get treatment for our spiritual hurts. Depending how well we take care of our bodies - eating right, sleeping well, exercising, etc. - the circumstances leading up to our wounds (hygiene, practicing safety, etc.) and the wound itself will determine if we go to the shelf for a bandage, go to the doctor for a stitch, or go to the emergency room for intensive care. So it is with our souls.

I was blessed to tend to the spiritual wounds of the New Jersey National Guard in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Some simply needed the presence of the Holy, some needed a prayer and others needed spiritual counseling. Many saw the same devastation - the wreckage of the landscape, the decimation of homes and neighborhoods, the downtrodden looks of the displaced victims - but depending on an individual's spiritual resiliency and the compounding of other stressors in their lives determine what degree of spiritual care was necessary.

We cannot control a hurricane or the damage it creates, but we can do our part to prepare for the possible outcome. When a storm arrives, we can "batten down the hatches" but we cannot control the unexpected deluge our souls face. It



108th Wing Chaplain's office: Back Row, left to right: Maj. James Buckman, Capt. David Leung Kahler and Master Sgt. Andre Williamson. Front Row, left to right: Tech. Sgt. Noemi Amendola, Lt. Col. Christopher Miller and Staff Sgt. Carla Cooper. Not Pictured: Senior Airmen Danessa Duverca and Kiera Clark. (Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Kellyann Novak/Released)

is important that we do our part to build spiritual resiliency, seek spiritual care and practice spiritual disciplines according to our faith in order to bounce back from spiritual wounds.

We cannot stop the clock nor can we turnaround this hyperactive culture we live in. However, we can choose to personally slow down and seek God on His timetable and live life according to His ways. In so doing, we'll find that religion can never be a pill because spirituality demands a relationship with God. Spiritual practices such as worship, prayer, etc. are not just "spare wheels" that we pull out when we're in trouble but are "steering wheels" that navigate us on God's path for our lives. 



Top of his class

Bioenvironmental engineer Tech. Sgt. Joseph Tabor displays his awards Dec. 8 2012. Tabor was selected as the Distinguished Graduate, graduating with an overall grade of 96, from his class at the United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Tabor also received the Professional Image Award. (Air National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Kellyann Novak/Released)

Medical Group first sergeant position available

Reach your potential by becoming a first sergeant!

The 108th Medical Group has a vacancy for a first sergeant. Any eligible enlisted member desiring consideration should prepare a detailed resume of military and civilian experience, letter of recommendation from member's Unit Commander, and a letter of intent. Applications should be submitted to the 108th Wing headquarters, Master Sgt. Rose Quinquino, assistant to the 108th Wing commander, no later than close of business Jan. 13.

You will be notified of the date and time of when the First Sergeant Board meets. A position description of the job can be found in Air Force Instruction 36-2113, The First Sergeant.

Pre-board requirements: Must be a promotable technical sergeant or master sergeant. Within the past 12 months, attained a minimum score of 75 points on the physical fitness assessment (PFA). To attend the school, the candidate must be able to run the 1.5 mile portion of the PFA; a minimum AS-VAB score of 41 administrative or 62 general, minimum physical profile of PULHES 322221 and possess a seven skill level. In addition, the candidate must be financially stable and meet minimum U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard's standards and overall image must exceed minimum standards.

Questions may be directed to the 108th Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant at 609-754-8510. 

How do you know it's not just the Winter Blues?

By Jill Barrett, Wing Director of Psychological Health



The Fairleigh Dickinson University Center for Psychological Services provides expert specialized confidential psychological evaluation and psychotherapy to veterans of war and their family members.

The Center is now offering depression screening and education specifically designed for veterans and adult family members.

Veterans and their families have unique sources of stress and may be vulnerable to depression but not even recognize it. Go to www.vetsmentalhealth.org for a free, anonymous, university-established, online Depression Screen and Education tool specifically designed for veterans and their adult family members. Find out 1) whether you have symptoms of depression, 2) how gender and Active Duty vs. Guard/Reserve status may relate to distress among veterans and/or their families, and 3) how to deal with depression in yourself or a loved one!

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Jill Barrett LCSW, Wing Director of Psychological Health at 609-754-2159. 

GUIDANCE FOR GI BILL RECIPIENTS ACTIVATED FOR HURRICANE SANDY

After the activation of more than 12,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen along the East Coast in response to Hurricane Sandy, officials want to make Guard members aware of the steps they need to take to ensure they don't lose their education benefits.

Guard members receiving any Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits for the current semester – and who were also put on state active duty orders for Hurricane Sandy response and recovery – are encouraged to immediately contact their educational institutions and notify them of their activation. Guard officials also recommend these Soldiers and Airmen request alternate arrangements for making up missed assignments and/or completing their courses.

Schools will authorize alternate arrangements based upon their individually published policies, but it is again up to the Soldier or Airmen to discuss these policies with their institutions, officials said.

The VA does not require schools to allow students to make up assignments or to grant students incompletes.

Officials said the VA will allow individuals up to 12



months to complete coursework for a course in which they receive an "incomplete" grade, but Guard members must discuss incompletes with their education institutions. If individuals do not complete the coursework within the 12 months, the VA will create a debt for the course that will need to be repaid by the student.

If schools do allow students to make up coursework without dropping the class, an individual's Basic Allowance for Housing will not be affected. However, officials said that if a student receives an incomplete and the course is not completed within the 12-month period, the VA will create an overpayment for the course to include payments for tuition, fees, books and the Basic Allowance for Housing.

Officials warned that students who are not successful in making arrangements with their schools to stay enrolled will stop receiving BAH payments on the date they are dropped from a course.

For more information, please contact your respective educational institution or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-888-GIBILL-1. 

WHAT IS A WILL AND HOW DO I DECIDE IF I NEED ONE?

By Senior Master Sgt. Janeen Fillari, 108th Wing Law Office superintendent

So the time has come for you to get a will, but what is a will and why do you need it?

A will is a legal document in which you specify certain instructions to be carried out after your demise. It becomes irrevocable when you die. In your will, you name certain individuals, such as: beneficiaries (spouse, family members, friends, etc.); a guardian for your minor children (if you and your spouse die before the child turns 18); and an executor (person or institution to collect and manage your assets, pay debts, etc.).

A will only addresses assets that are titled in your name at your death. Some assets that are not affected by your will include life insurance and retirement plans, as these are transferred to your designated beneficiaries. In addition, assets held in joint tenancy - owned by husband and wife - such as real estate and vehicles, automatically pass to the surviving spouse upon your death, and not in accordance with any directions in your will.

There are other assets that are not affected by your will, which is why you will need to speak with an attorney in deciding if you need a will. Even if your entire estate consists of assets held in joint tenancy such as life insurance policy, and a retirement plan, there are still good reasons for needing a will. For example, your beneficiary or joint tenant dies before you.

If you do not have a will, your assets are distributed to your children or grandchildren, if you have any, then to your parents, sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews or other relatives. If your spouse dies before you, his or her relatives may be entitled to some or all of your estate.

Wills should be reviewed periodically for any life changes such as additional children, divorce, etc. If updates are needed, a new will should be created, and the old will should be destroyed.

Determining if you need a will and what your will should specify requires careful planning and knowledge of probate law. Therefore, if you feel you may need a will, or need further clarification of this information, we highly encourage you to contact the 108th Wing Legal Office to further discuss your legal questions. We are here to help you with your legal concerns. 

108TH WING LEGAL OFFICE

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Legal Assistance (by appointment only) on drill Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

Notary/POA: 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Drill Saturdays and Sundays

CRG AIRMEN RECOGNIZED



Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, left, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, presents Staff Sgt. Heather Zweiback, 108th Contingency Response Group, with the Award for the 2nd Trimester 2012, at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs employee awards ceremony Dec. 6, 2012. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)



Col. Joyce Junior, left, commander, U.S. Army Reserve, 77th Sustainment Brigade, presents Senior Airman Jacquelyn E. Otero, 108th Contingency Response Group, with an Army Commendation Medal during a ceremony at the 108th Wing, Dec. 9, 2012. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen/Released)



MAN ON THE STREET

“What is your favorite holiday dish?”

Photos by Senior Airman Adrian Rowan, 108th Wing Public Affairs Office



“My mother’s potato salad, no one else’s!”

-Senior Airman Andre Jackson, 108th Force Support Squadron



“Arroz con gandules, because I grew up eating it in Puerto Rico.”

-Tech. Sgt. Noemi Q. Amendola, 108th Wing



“Lasagna, from years of being in such a diverse family, it’s a stick to your ribs, nice on a cold day meal.”

-Senior Master Sgt. James Granato, 108th Wing



“Almond bars, they’re addictive!”

-Lt. Col. Toni Waters, 108th Wing



“Orange cranberry relish, it’s delicious!”

-Lt. Col. Christopher Miller, 108th Wing



“My favorite holiday dish is turkey, it’s the only time of year I eat it.”

-Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Johnson, 108th Wing



“My favorite holiday dish is pasteles, it’s made of green bananas ground to a paste with meat inside, then boiled in a banana leaf. It’s a traditional Christmas dish.”

-Tech. Sgt. Michael Wagoner, 108th Maintenance Group



“Pumpkin pie, it’s delicious, I’d eat an entire pie if I could.”

-1st Lt. Tim Ellis, 108th Wing