



## Members thanked for their service

**1st Lt. Christopher Preffer**  
Public Affairs

The 171st Air Refueling Wing recognized 204 members at our Hometown Heroes Salute (HHS) during January's drill for their service in a deployed environment of more than 30 days since September 11, 2001.

"The 171st has a long tradition of deploying and serving abroad" said Senior Master Sgt. Mike DiFrango, first sergeant for the 171st Logistics Readiness Squadron. "The Hometown Heroes Salute is a wonderful way to honor our troops and their families."

DiFrango was one of the 204 tier one award recipients recognized for his deployment to Sather AB, Iraq for more than 120 days during 2009.



*Lt. Col. Greg Perez enjoys the entertainment at the Military Appreciation Day with his daughter Grace (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Ann Young)*

Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, 171st wing commander, hosted the annual event with Maj. Gen. Stephen Sischo, the Acting Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania National Guard. Local legislators, Congressman Murphy, State Senators Pippy and Solobay attended and thanked Airmen and their families for their service and sacrifices during the past decade.

January's HHS was the second time to honor our deployed members. The first celebration, in December 2009, honored 170 Airmen who were deployed from 30-179 days.

"Our Airmen are constantly on the go, be it overseas or at home station" said Lt. Col. Chuck Perrott, deputy mission support group commander. "This ceremony is a fitting way for the nation to say 'thank you' to our troops and especially their families for the sacrifices they make to defend America's freedom."

Each Hometown Hero received a framed thank-you letter and coins from Air National Guard Director Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III. In his letter, he states, "In times of war and national emergency, our nation relies on the skilled Airmen of the Air National Guard to defend freedom around the world. Citizen-Airmen are vital to our states during natural disasters and civil unrest. This dual role -- both federal and state -- has served as a source of great pride among Guard members for generations."

To qualify for a tier one award, Air National Guard Airmen must have served on active duty, for 30 or more consecutive days, deployed overseas or employed at home station, inside or outside of the Continental United States.

The Wing hosted an after party, dubbed the 171st Military Appreciation Day, for unit members and their families at the conclusion of the HHS ceremony. Bagels, Smiley Cookies and Steelers Blitzburgh ice-cream were supplied by Panera Bread Café, Eat'n Park and Turkey Hill Dairy respectively.

"I barely got my son's coat off and he ran, gleefully

**SEE HEROES ON PAGE 5**

## What keeps me up at night

by Brig. Gen. Roy Uptegraff, Wing Commander

# Commander's CORNER



As we say farewell to the first month of 2011, I cannot help but reflect about what a frenzied year 2010 was. Inspections, deployments and a high ops tempo at home; 2010 is a year for the history and record books. Simply put, Team Pittsburgh performed admirably and for your dedication and professionalism I thank you.

Looking into the 2011 crystal ball we have continued readiness and training commitments. This down year we'll be getting back to basics and emphasizing leadership across the chain-of-command.

As we focus our attention on getting back to basics, Secretary Gates had a news briefing with Admiral Mullen early in January discussing the progress and way-ahead for the DOD's reform agenda. Secretary Gates is looking to generate efficiency savings by reducing overhead costs, improving business practices or culling excess or troubled programs. One of the programs Gates highlights is TRICARE.

Secretary Gates stated, "The current TRICARE enrollment fee was set in 1995 at \$460 a year for the basic family plan, and has not been raised since. In the 2012 budget, we will propose reforms in the area of military health care to better manage medical cost growth and better align the department with the rest of the country. Potential savings from these initiatives could amount to nearly \$7 billion over the next five years."

Gates plans to reallocate the savings and for the Air Force he's looking at purchasing the most advanced Reaper UAVs as well as move essential intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance programs from the temporary war budget to the permanent base budget.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program has received funding for FY12. March 12-13 the 171st is hosting its second Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program at Nemaquin Resorts in Farmington, PA. Contact Deb Krall, our Airman & Family Readiness Program Manager, at 412-776-7365 to see if you qualify.

February is Black History Month, and this year's speaker at our heritage luncheon is Valerie Njje, Executive Director and Senior Vice President for Bidwell Training Center. I believe, we are in for a real treat.

Heritage holds a special place in my heart. Most of you know my love of aircraft, history and particularly anything WWII. In October 2010 we said farewell to Judge John Brosky. He and Brig. Gen. Phillipy are considered pioneers of the Pennsylvania guard. They were truly here from the beginning.

Like me, Judge Brosky was a voracious reader. With his passing, Judge Brosky's book collection has made its way to the 171st. The collection consists of more than 50 books. Most are military, non-fiction, but the truly remarkable thing is that every book has a combination of newspaper clippings or photos of John with the author, and all have passages underlined that the Judge deemed notable. Though Judge Brosky has passed, his heritage will live on.

We are planning the 2011 Commander's Call at the time I'm writing this article. Distracted driving is an issue we'll discuss at this year's meeting. According to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System, in 2009, 5,474 people were killed on U.S. roadways and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving.

It's easy to be distracted, especially on long car rides. I'm constantly on the road to D.C., and in my Nissan 370z there are numerous distractions consisting of GPS, blackberry, the Cosmopolitan channel on XM radio as well as the natural beauty of the Pennsylvania/Maryland countryside. Avoiding answering that text while driving is difficult; I implore you all to resist the urge to read and respond and wait till you can dedicate your full attention.

As we all know the Steelers are in Super Bowl XLV. This means terrible towels, black jerseys and Super Bowl parties. Gatherings with family and friends are a must for such a big game. With the parties comes alcohol. We have not lost an Airman to drunk driving while I've been your commander and this is a record I intend to keep. Be safe when celebrating the championship game.

**SEE CRYSTAL BALL ON PAGE 3**

### "Editorial Staff"



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## Take time for recognition

by Command Chief Master Sgt. Vic Guerra

Lois, my wife, and I were having brunch the other day at a local diner near our home, and there were a couple of older gentleman sitting at a table nearby. From what they were wearing and the hats by their side, it was obvious to me that they were veterans. As time passed, another would join the table and then another and another, until there were eight or nine of them there and they had to push two tables together to fit them all.

I could see signs indicating some were Marines, some had served in Korea, and at least one looked like he could have served in World War II. I didn't think much of this as it's not unusual to see a gathering of old friends like this, breaking bread and telling stories; it was nice to see. It was obvious that this "meeting" was a regular occurrence and the diner staff appeared to know them well. One of the gentlemen I noticed used a walker and had been helped into the diner by one of the waitresses, but I didn't otherwise notice much about him.

One couldn't help but overhear some of their talk and discussions, and at one point a younger gentleman, who had been sitting in a nearby booth, stopped on his way out and started talking to a couple of them about old guns. It sounded like he may have been a collector. Anyway, as the gentleman who came in with the walker was talking to the collector, his voice started to sound very familiar. And as I looked closer at him, he started to look familiar to me as well. He reminded me of a teacher I'd had in high school. The teacher had served in the military and was possibly in the Marine Reserves at the time.

Well, we finished eating, I paid the bill at the register and went back to help Lois on with her jacket. I stopped by the table of veterans to thank them for their service as I do on occasion when I run into veterans or those in uniform. They all seemed appreciative of the recognition of their service to our country. I then walked over to the gentleman with the walker and asked him if he had been a teacher, and he indicated he had. I then asked if he was Maz (the nickname I remembered he went by). The big smile that came across his face, and his pleasant surprise and that of his friends at the table was priceless. We chatted a bit and he said he was going to look me up in his '74 high school yearbook (yes, I know I'm old as well).

My point to all of this is that it didn't cost me anything, and it wasn't hard to bring a sense of pride and appreciation to this group of men who not only served their country, but one of them made a big enough impression on me that I remembered him close to 40 years later (I guess some of my high school years did sink in).

Take the time to let someone know how much you appreciate them; give them a sense of pride. It could be your wife or husband, significant other, son or daughter, mom or dad, co-worker, subordinate, supervisor, friend or neighbor. A simple thank you doesn't cost anything. And that recognition could just make someone's day.



## FROM CRYSTAL BALL ON PAGE 2

Last year Snowmageddon pummeled this region with more than three feet of snow overnight. This year January is hitting us with intermittent snow showers. If we get another apocalyptic snowstorm, be prepared. If the power goes out, have flashlights (with fresh batteries), a cell phone car charger and non-electrical ways to prepare food. A shovel is also a great tool during a snow storm. If you're like me, my snow blower couldn't handle the three feet of snow last year, so I went back to the golden days of shoveling.

In conclusion, continue to achieve greatly and most importantly, be safe this season. Go Steelers!

## Briefs FYI

### Events

#### 2011 Dining Out

The 2011 Dining Out will be held Feb. 25 at the Airport Regency Hyatt. The guest of honor and speaker is Suzy Broadhurst, director of corporate giving for Eat 'n Park Hospitality Group. Tickets can be purchased for \$40 from Master Sgts. Monica Heyl, Julie McBane, Kim Rose and Andrea Henry.

#### 2011 African American Heritage Luncheon

The 2011 African American Heritage Luncheon will be held Feb. 10 at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriott. The guest speaker will be Valerie Njie, the executive director and senior vice president of the Bidwell Training Center in Pittsburgh. For more than 40 years, Bidwell Training Center has offered innovative and career-oriented training to its students. Tickets can be purchased for \$22 from public affairs, recruiting, Capt. Darren Rogers, Chief Master Sgt. Charlie Thomas, Master Sgts. Linda Jordan and Charles Browder and Staff Sgt. Dominique Clerkly.

**For more information on uniform standards and changes, visit [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dress/index.asp](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dress/index.asp)**

Estimated pay date for the February UTA:  
February 15

Estimated pay date for the February SUTA:  
February 23



## Medical Group: Immunizations

**Tech. Sgt. Todd McFeeley**

Public Affairs

There is one place on base where every member of the 171st Air Refueling Wing is required to visit at least once a year. Our Airmen may not look forward to it but, it is somewhere that benefits our individual health more than anywhere on base. It is the immunization area of the clinic.

The 171st Medical Group immunization clinic administered 3,479 shots in 2010. They give about 100 shots on an average unit training assembly. During flu season, it's about 300 shots injected during a drill weekend.

The enlisted members who administer the immunizations are base medical technicians who go through extensive training to perform this job as an additional duty. These enlisted individuals are immunization back up technicians (IBT).

IBT require eight hours each quarter of giving shots and training. They must: possess knowledge of all vaccines they administer and how they are administered, be able to recognize any contraindications to shots, know how to perform emergency response to an adverse reaction, be competent in the ordering of supplies and vaccines, and monitor the wing status, just to name some of their duties.

In order to help larger units with getting their members compliant within immunizations, they offer "shots-to-go." IBT also partake in mobility processing lines during deployments in order to catch most personnel who are deploying to get their shots.

Currently seven of the 24 med techs here are IBT trained.

"It is an extensive program; we cover a lot of information and deal with a lot of things," said Tech. Sgt. Risa Schmiedlin, 171st medical group NCOIC immunizations.

"There are ever changing regulations, every month there's something new for immunizations. You have to monitor any vaccine changes, any dosage and how to give it."

There are a variety of immunizations required Air Force wide. At basic training most Airmen receive shots for: hepatitis A, flu, measles mumps rubella, and polio. When deploying, additional shots such as: anthrax, small pox, typhoid, and hepatitis B are necessary. These additional immunizations are a series of shots that require deploying unit members to return to the clinic in consecutive months for the next in the series.

"If your individual medical readiness is not up to date, you are not qualified to deploy," said Schmiedlin.

Occasionally the immunization section does get a unit member who is leery of getting a shot.

"If someone has a problem, they just need to let us know and we are able to adapt to anyone's needs. Giving shots is pretty much the only invasive thing we do in the clinic. We try to be as comforting as we can be," said Schmiedlin.

For the flu season, the Air Force wanted 100 percent accountability by the end of December, but we are still at only 92 percent.

"You have to get your shot, its mandatory, it's a good thing for you, and we're not here to hurt you," said Schmiedlin.



*Master Sgt. Monica Heyl receives her annual flu shot from Senior Master Sgt. Maureen Foley. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Stacy Gault)*

## FROM HEROES ON PAGE 1

screaming, toward Eat'n Park's Cookie Cruiser," said Lt. Col. Gregg Perez, 146th operations officer. "What can I say, he knows what he likes."

Chelsea Friday, former member of the band Brownie Mary, sang the national anthem to start the official ceremony and performed children's songs with her band, Chelsea Friday and the rest of the week, during the appreciation day

celebration. Children and adults were also entertained and decorated by face painters, a caricature artist, Smiley (Eat'n Park's mascot) and even the Disney princess character, Rapunzel.

"It was great to be thanked for my service, but even better to see the joy my kids had during the after party", said Lt. Col. David Sandala, operations group executive officer.

**Retiree Office**  
**300 Tanker Road #4210,**  
**Coraopolis, PA 15108-4210**  
**(412) 776-7587**  
**FAX: (412) 776-7441**  
**george.manown@ang.af.mil**  
**gmanown@gmail.com**

Our January luncheon was a success with 48 people in attendance. Jim Fuchs lined up a guest speaker, Lisa Ellek. Lisa is with Army Strong, a support center for all the military, not just the Army. At the center you can receive information on retirement and VA benefits, TRICARE, and get ID Cards. They also provide support for families of deployed personnel. They are located at the 316th Reserve Center in Moon Twp. They are open 8AM to 5PM, Mon-Fri. Their phone number is (412) 507-3813. If you're interested, we have informational packets about the center at our office. The next 171st/112th luncheon will be on April 18.

Congratulations to our recent retirees: Senior Master Sgt. Craig Mehrmann, Master Sgts. Mario Guarnaccia, Patrick Oreilly and Samuel Weir and Tech. Sgt. Patricia Bonello. Welcome to retirement, and if we can any assistance to you, give us a call.

**TRICARE:** Both the Gray Area Airman TRICARE coverage and coverage up to 26 years of age programs are now in effect. For more information, contact TRICARE at 1-877-874-2273.

That's it for right now. So for the Retirees Office, we hope you have a great retirement year.

## What's New in the OPSEC World

By Lt. Col. Jim Brown  
OPSEC Officer

Each group has an Operation Security (OPSEC) coordinator assigned by its commander and that individual is the prime liaison on all issues affecting OPSEC. The OPSEC coordinators from the four groups and representatives from the intelligence section, public affairs, and the anti-terrorism officer comprise the OPSEC Working Group (OWG).

The OWG is the main group of individuals to get the word out on issues impacting the unit's mission. These individuals develop their section's critical indicator.

During February's Commander's Call, the majority of the base will receive its annual OPSEC training. Individuals missing the mass training should accomplish this training with their group OPSEC coordinator.

The Signature Management (SM) program incorporates concepts from OPSEC and the Military Deception program to identify potential risks to the unit as well as ways to minimize the potential impact to unit operations. The Wing has been operating under the SM construct for almost a year.

The SM office is responsible for developing a wing level critical information list. Annually, the OPSEC coordinators develop their OPSEC critical indicators or information which is specific to their sections. If you have any suggestions regarding this list please provide input to your section's OPSEC coordinator. Members of the current OPSEC Working Group are:

**Maintenance Group:** Master Sgts. Rick McKee and Denise James

**Operations Group:** Capt. Shaun McRoberts, Maj. Hilary Ayanru and Master Sgt. Mark Dunn

**Medical Group:** Senior Master Sgt. Cheryl Guandolo and Master Sgt. Lloyd Carver (Alt)

**Security Forces:** Master Sgt. Ron Ryckman

**Communications:** Tech. Sgt. Brian Caughey

**Logistic Readiness Squadron:** Staff Sgt. Shana Frey and Tech. Sgt. Danielle Ripper

**Services:** Master Sgts. Darryl Ferricks Brad Dovey

**Other representatives include:** Lt. Cols. Mike Schmidt, Joel Stedford and Dave Stoebe and Capt. Dicie Hritz

171 ARW Signature Management Office

SM Program Manager/OPSEC PM

Lt. Col. Jim Brown (Pri) and Lt Col Bill Nixon (Alt)



If you're about Pride, call Lt. Christopher Preffer to be a part of something bigger than yourself, Honor Guard ~ 412-776-7350.

You have just entered the ...

# RECRUITER ZONE

Our Recruiting Team -- (412) 776-7495



Master Sgts. Sue Smith and Skip Powell, Tech. Sgt. John Frazier, Staff Sgts. Shayla Pollard and Lindsey Duncan and Airman 1st Class Lisa Weiss  
Contact us toll free at 1-877-249-5193 or through the web [www.171arw.ang.af.mil](http://www.171arw.ang.af.mil)

## Retention Corner

Master Sgt. Don Schauer  
Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Simoneau



### Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill UPDATES!

The Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 was recently signed into law. Just to list a few of the changes that can affect you:

- Title 32 service will be eligible.
- Will be able to use toward non-college degree programs, on-the-job and apprenticeship training, flight programs and correspondence training.
- BAH will be given to students enrolled in distance learning at half the full time rate for an E-5 with dependents.

This page lists changes to the GI Bill made by this law, notice the effective dates: [www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/Post911\\_changes.html](http://www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/Post911_changes.html) Contact the Retention office for more info on how to apply!

## Help Wanted

The 146th and 147th flying squadrons are now accepting resumes for a Traditional Guard Boom Operator Position.

The Aerial In-Flight Refueling position is one of the most exciting and challenging positions in the Air National Guard. Candidates must be willing to accomplish 48 additional flying training periods on top of their 48 drill periods. They must be available for deployments, alerts, as well as evening flights. They must pass a flying class III physical and be willing to attend the 17 week Technical School, 3-week Basic Water and Land Survival courses followed by 90 days Home Station Training. Minimum ASVAB Score for this career field is General 55 or higher. Applications must be accepted by: Feb. 28.

If you would like to apply, please forward a cover letter, ASVAB scores and resume to Chief Master Sgts. Plonski and Lucyk by mail, submit in person or fax to 412-776-7356. Interviews are being planned for the March UTA. If you have questions, call 412-776-7536 or 412-776-7431.

Mailing address:  
171 Air Refueling Wing  
300 Tanker Road  
Pittsburgh IAP  
Coraopolis, PA. 15108  
C/O CMSgt Plonski/Lucyk

## Welcome New Recruits

Idris Cates	Michael Roche
Douglas Chadwick	Christine Schiefer
Benjamin Elder	Sean Weber
Garett Lynch	

## Congratulations on your promotion!

### Promotion to Senior Airman

Samantha A. Alm	April S. Lemon
Jennifer L. Bowlden	Lawrence D. Morris II
Tobias J. Bowser	Katelyn Mulvihill
Megan S. Clancy	Paul M. Szallar
Zachry A. Hamilton	Jacob R. Tate
Amber N. Katarski	Bradford J. West
Brittany A. Kincaid	Matthew M. Zajdel
Michael D. Ladakos	

### Promotion to Staff Sgt.

Jessica M. Gonzalez	Christopher A. Moschgat
Lindsay R. Homer	Barry M. Mulraney
Gary W. Hutsler Jr.	Andrew J. Neely
Daniel E. Kaltenegger	Bobby L. Scurlock
Erik S. Larson	Matthew D. Stoltz
Garrett J. Lukacs	Elizabeth Venesky
Michael A. McCoy	Paul I. Webster

### Promotion to Tech. Sgt.

Jeffrey A. Cochrane	Dylan R. Lehmeier
Rachel M. Harrington	Nicoli A. O'Gilvie
Joshua A. Honick	Bradley R. Schumacher
Kevin J. Hennelly	Eric C. Wagner

### Promotion to Chief Master Sgt.

Sean A. Buzzard

# HIGH

Flyer



Aircraft: 59-1468  
Hours Flown: 52.6  
Sorties Flown: 12

Crew chiefs: Master Sgt. Joe Ferrara, Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Komo and Senior Airmen Justin Blinkey & Ed Stengel.

## Burghers' Beat... "What is your snowstorm story?"



**Airman 1st Class  
Brittany Hustler**

*Force Support Squadron  
"During February 2010 drill, the base had like three feet of snow and only 150 people showed up. I was one of those people."*

*(U.S. Air Force photos by  
Master Sgt. Stacey Barkey)*



**Master Sgt. Rosalind  
Ramos-Alvarez**  
*Chaplain Office*

*"I was driving into work during last year's snow storm and I was stuck in front of the Armstrong Tunnels on Forbes Avenue. Luckily I was in front of Duquesne University where four college students, out of the kindness of their heart, helped me move my car so I wouldn't be stuck."*



**Seth Ellison**  
*Student Flight*

*"Last year, that Saturday of the snow storm, I went to the only grocery store that was open. Before getting out of my car I saw a guy come out of the store carrying two bags of ice. I sat in my car, thinking to myself, 'Is he for real?'"*



**Chief Master Sgt.  
Charlie Thomas**  
*Human Resources*

*"During a recent storm I left the base after work to go home to Frostburg, MD after a conversation with my wife Carla and learned that she was stuck in the house. I started shoveling out (in) until we could open the front door. It was 2 am when I finished. I slept a few hours and then drove back! The things we do for love!"*

## Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

- ✦ **WHAT:** Informational Weekend Get-Away
- ✦ **WHERE:** Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort
- ✦ **WHEN:** March 12-13 (travel March 11)
- ✦ **WHO:** Deployed member and spouse, parent or significant other (children are also welcome)
- ✦ **WHY:** To link service members and their families with post-deployment support
- ✦ **HOW to sign up:** go to [www.jointservicesupport.org](http://www.jointservicesupport.org) click on events - find 171arw - click on the event - register. Event registration opens January 1.
- ✦ **HOW to reserve your room:** Call Nemaocolin and refer to "Air Guard Yellow Ribbon"- use your govt travel card to make your reservation. Deadline is Oct. 20th.
- ✦ **DETAILS:** You & up to two family members will be placed on orders (ST for member, ITO for family members) If you are bringing children you must notify Joy McKinney to set up child care.
- ✦ **QUESTIONS:** Any questions should be directed to Joy McKinney, 717-644-7353 or Deb Krall, 412-980-4835.

✦ The YRRP is designed to benefit National Guard and Reserve members and their families by helping to give them access to necessary support and guide them to the appropriate information, services, benefits, proactive outreach opportunities, and referrals to help them "reintegrate" following an operational deployment.

Some of the topics covered include: TRICARE, VA Benefits, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Personal Finance, GI Bill, Military One Source, Pennsylvania Law changes, and Suicide Prevention.



  
**NEMACOLIN**  
WOODLANDS RESORT