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Connecticut Soldiers Bring a Wealth of Expertise to Peacekeeping Mission

STAFF SGT. STEVE MARKOWSKI
65TH PCH

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina—As a carpenter, Jonathan Ducki became accustomed to working up to 80 hours a week. So, the hours he's now working at his temporary full-time job didn't take a lot of "getting used to."

But, while a carpenter sees the results of his work immediately, and there's at least some potential for a bit of creative license, his new job offers different options to review one's work. His anti-terrorism efforts at one of the entrance gates to Eagle Base, here, offer no margin for error, with some potentially bad consequences. He understands that reality very well.

"I take this job more seriously than any other job I've had," said PV2 Ducki, a member of the B Company, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry. "We look for car bombs or anything that could be a radio transmitter for a car bomb. So far, we haven't found anything."

That's obviously good news for the nearly 100 Connecticut Guard members who deployed with B Company, and are currently providing security for Eagle Base, in addition to conducting patrols in the area of the base. It's also good news for the approximately 150 members of the 143rd Forward Support



Members of the visiting delegation and some of the soldiers they went to Bosnia to see at the front gate of Eagle Base. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)

Battalion, who are based nearby at Camp Comanche, supporting the Multi-National Division North. Here, the 143rd FSB is known as the 143rd Logistics Task Force, or Task Force Sword. In addition to providing their support services, such as medical and maintenance, members of the 143rd are also providing security for Comanche. All Connecticut citizen-soldiers are working long days, and long weeks, supporting the peacekeeping operation. Force protection is the main concern for all involved.

MND North includes 4,742 troops from a total of 10 nations, including Russia. Of those, 2,672 are from the U.S. Five states have sent National Guard members, as part of the 29th Infantry Division. And the current operation marks the first time the National Guard has comprised 75 percent of troop strength for an operation in Europe.

The U.S. and NATO missions in Europe would not be possible without the reserve components, such as those from the used in

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Another First: Mother and Daughter Join the Connecticut Army National Guard

2nd LT. CELINE T. MARINI
ASSISTANT STATE PAO

The Connecticut Army National Guard (CTARNG) is still achieving firsts. On November 21, 2001 Brenda Scott joined the CTARNG after her daughter, Kristina Fouts, had joined a few days earlier.

Brenda and Kristina are the first mother and daughter duo to enlist in the CTARNG. They were recruited by Sgt. 1st Class Larry Ireland.

The military lifestyle doesn't come as a surprise to these new recruits. They have a long list of family members who have served. Scott also served three years active duty and 10 years as a reservist in the navy.

"I am proud to serve in the military," said Scott. "My military experience has given me a well-rounded life. The military training has given me many opportunities throughout my civilian endeavors. Joining the military has given me the confidence and leadership experience to do anything I have put my mind too. So when my daughter came to me and said she wanted to join I felt proud."

Scott said many people have asked her if having her only daughter join the military during the current events scared her. She said she had obviously thought about it but when she asked her daughter if the events of September 11 had changed her decision she said, "Why should it?" The decision was completely up to her. The current events have made her more eager and proud to serve our country, said her mother

"This decision to join the CTARNG is the best decision for me," said Scott. "I realized I could benefit too. I previously joined the Navy Reserve but as I listened to the recruiter explain the benefits of serving in the CTARNG to my daughter, I decided they sounded too good to pass up so I joined.

Currently, Scott is working for Fazzone Ballie Ryan and Seadale Law Offices in Cheshire as an administrative assistant. Scott wants

See MOTHER/DAUGHTER p. 7

Delegation of Connecticut Civic, Education Leaders Travels to Bosnia to Learn About Guard's Mission

STAFF SGT. STEVE MARKOWSKI
65TH PCH

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina—Connecticut National Guard members serving in Bosnia have been receiving packages from home since arriving in the Balkan Republic in mid-September, but the packages they received in mid-December arrived "Special Delivery."

Freshly baked goodies, Girl Scout cookies, town jackets, stuffed Christmas stockings, Christmas cards, wrapped presents, telephone calling cards and more were among the items bought to Tuzla, courtesy of a delegation of 55 people from Connecticut. Mayors, state officials, Congressional representatives, business leaders, representatives of higher education, clergy, retired generals, senior leaders from the Guard and even newspaper and television reporters hand-carried items aboard the military version of a 727 jet.

See DELEGATION p. 5



Elaine Adams visits with her son, Spec. Mark Adams, a member of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)

UP FRONT WITH THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

A Holiday Greeting

On 13 December I, along with a Connecticut delegation of 53 persons, visited our soldiers in Bosnia. Members from our community to include civic leaders, clergy, and the media were given the opportunity to go and wish our soldiers well. I can report that members of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B of the 102nd Infantry are doing well.

Our delegation consisted of senior Guardsmen and women, retirees, clergy members, local mayors, Congressional representatives, Legislative leaders, members of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve program and media members. All expressed a sincere appreciation for having the opportunity to express their gratitude for the dedication and commitment of our deployed Guard members.

The media did an incredible job covering the duties and responsibilities of our soldiers and also in providing a service that taped "Family Holiday Greetings." These holiday messages aired throughout the holiday season and were a big hit with our members and our family program.

As expected, the weather was cold and it was snowing when we arrived. We landed at Eagle Base in Tuzla, Bosnia; the home of Tuzla's Airport and that of our infantry soldiers. Upon arrival we were greeted by Maj. Gen. Blum, the

29th Infantry Division (LIGHT) Commander, and briefed on the current state of military readiness within the region. Our Infantry soldiers are conducting a vital mission providing force protection for all personnel who pass through or stay in the locale. Our Forward Support Battalion is providing critical medical, supply and maintenance support to the same. Both units are playing an essential role in the stabilization of Bosnia and the surrounding region. I am extremely proud of them and appreciated the opportunity to personally let them know that. This deployment is an excellent example of our Nation's Reserve Component system "working."

Upon completion, our delegation made its way to Comanche Base, home of our Forward Support Battalion. There we had lunch with our soldiers and were unexpectedly greeted by the Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Gen. Joseph W. Ralston. The general's visit was inspirational and a big hit with our troops.

Following lunch, we formed up members of the battalion to allow our delegation to formally greet our soldiers, present gifts and notes of gratitude for a job well done. It was truly a memorable experience to observe everyone enjoying our stopover. Concluding the trip to Comanche Base was the raising of a state flag we brought from

home. The flag, along with one presented to the Infantry at Eagle Base, had been flown over our state capitol in Hartford – they now fly proudly over both bases in Tuzla. We then made our way back to Eagle Base to say hello to members of our Infantry unit. Again presentations were made and words of gratitude exchanged.

In addition to meeting Gen. Ralston on our trip, on our way to Bosnia we were briefed by Gen. Gregory S. Martin, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe upon our arrival at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. Gen. Martin took time to inform our delegation on the military, geographic and political climates in his area of influence. Much change is taking place in Europe and Africa and the Connecticut National Guard is playing a productive role in it.

As we enter a new year we must not forget the events that shaped our world this past September, those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and those, like our soldiers in Bosnia, who defend our freedoms and liberties today. I look forward to an eventful New Year in 2002 and the return of our soldiers from Bosnia. Thanks to those in the State Military Department, their families, and all who lend support to our members who work so hard to promote peace. May you all have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM A. CUGNO
ADJUTANT GENERAL



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Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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By STATE COMMAND
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STEPHEN L. PRIMETT



ENLISTED UPDATE

A Productive and Unexpected Year Comes to an End; A New Year Promises More of the Same

It has been a very productive and busy year for the Connecticut National Guard, both Army and Air. Some of what we accomplished and faced was expected, much was decidedly unexpected. But we found that we were well-prepared and trained to meet the challenges we faced. We, as soldiers and airmen, faced the unexpected as a team, and we survived what would have destroyed a lesser-trained organization.

We knew we had 250 soldiers being activated for duty in Bosnia, we knew we had other soldiers returning from Bosnia; we knew we had annual training rotations in Germany, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, as well as around the United States. We knew we were facing the loss of our Field Artillery Battalion and gaining several new units.

What we didn't know was that we, as a state, would be facing healthcare workers' strikes that would put us on alert and in some of the medical facilities affected by the strikes. What we didn't know, and couldn't have conceived of in our wildest

imaginations or our worst nightmares, was that the United States would face its biggest crisis in more than 60 years. We didn't know that our beloved country would be hit by the largest terrorist attack in history.

But our soldiers and airmen were up to all of the challenges, expected and unexpected. When called upon, they reacted with professionalism, calm, resolve and a patriotism that is always there, but not always seen. After the Sept. 11 attacks in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania, our soldiers and airmen burned up the telephone lines to ask where they were needed. Some, unable to get through, just showed up to work with no thought about how they were going to be paid. They just knew they had to get to work and defend our families, our state, our country and our way of life. Our retirees were just as eager to help in any way they could, and many of them have.

Members of our 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry and 143rd Forward Support Battalion were sitting at Fort Dix finalizing their training for their mission to Bosnia when the attacks occurred. One can only imagine what was

going through their minds as they thought about the peacekeeping mission they were about to embark upon in a foreign land while their own country was being so viciously attacked. But they had a job to do, a job they had trained for, and that was their mission. And from all accounts, they are serving their country admirably and professionally in a country half a world away, and showing the people of Bosnia that despite the horrific attacks against us, we are still strong and that we have indeed survived.

2002 will undoubtedly bring us new challenges. We have 250 soldiers returning to Connecticut sometime in the spring that we will be returning to "normal" lives. We have soldiers about to embark on a security mission at the World Olympics in Utah this winter, we have new units to fill and one to say goodbye to. We still have soldiers and airmen from Connecticut stationed all over the country defending our airports and our skies.

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Connecticut STARBASE Graduates First 120 Students

CAPT. GEORGE WORRALL
103rd FW PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Connecticut's STARBASE program graduated its first group November 29 in the hangar of the National Guard Aviation Complex at Brainard Airport.

The graduates each received a diploma for completing the five-week program, which began October 23.

"We have done five classes already teaching about 120 kids," said Robert Gillanders, director, STARBASE/Connecticut. "We expect to teach a total of 720 children over the period of the school year ending in June."

The program is designed to teach applied science, math, technology and life-skills with a counter drug message according to Gillanders. All are areas students often do not get in their normal day-to-day school activities.

"The school system is always trying to build bridges between what the students learn in the classroom and the world of work," said Jodi Becker, School to Work unit coordinator, Hartford Public Schools. "We decided fifth grade would be our best population for the program for academics, scheduling and so on. This program really helps them to learn how to apply concepts to the real world."

Hartford has 35 classes of fifth graders and 24 are expected to take the course this school year.

"It is certainly worthwhile for the kids that are here," said Barbara Sanders, a teacher from Hartford's Milner School, who brought a group of handpicked fifth graders from hers and two other Milner classes. "The leadership part is very good as is the science aspect of it. I think they learned a lot about what an airplane does ... how it takes off and the parts ... that was very good."

Each class meets once a week for five weeks giving the students 25 hours of instruction.

"Four classes go through as a group for five weeks," said Amy Flynn, deputy director and primary instructor, STARBASE, explaining the class graduating today is the Thursday class from the first group of classes to graduate. "One class will meet every Tuesday, one on Wednesday and so on for five weeks."

In his graduation ceremony remarks Maj.Gen. William Cugno, the adjutant general, mentioned how pleased he was to work with Hartford schools and how wonderful they were to work with, a sentiment shared by the education officials he thanked.

"For us, it is an extraordinary opportunity to have our youngsters participate in something they normally would never get exposed to," said Robert Henry, chief of staff, Hartford Board of Education. "We consider it a great opportunity to collaborate."

Only six months ago there was no STARBASE program in Connecticut.



STARBASE students from Hartford's Milner Elementary School take their turns with a flight simulator program as Amy Flynn, deputy director and primary instructor, STARBASE stands by to assist. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)



Each STARBASE graduate came forward to receive their diploma in the Brainard Hangar from (left to right) Robert Gillanders, director, STARBASE, Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, the adjutant general, Robert Henry, chief of staff, Hartford Board of Education and Amy Flynn, deputy director and primary instructor, STARBASE. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)



Amy Flynn, deputy director and primary instructor, STARBASE uses an aircraft model to review with a class some of what the students learning during the five week STARBASE program. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)

Gillanders is aware of 40 states currently participating in the Department of Defense sponsored program.

"We started to inquire through Maj. Gen. Cugno about what we heard was a nationwide program," said Henry. "We were able to find out that Connecticut was eligible and so we started to interact with him. In the past six months we were successful and through Jodi Becker we were able to develop what was necessary to get STARBASE accomplished."

So as the first groups to graduate, how do the students and teachers feel about the program?

"I was very happy with the program," said Sanders, who started teaching 30 years ago. "They always had something planned, so

there was no lag time ... they really moved the program along."

All the students and instructors use call signs instead of actual names throughout the course.

"It was fun and I like working on a computer," said an 11-year-old-boy, call sign PACE. "Flying the rocket outside ... and watching them [instructors] do experiments in front of the class was best."

"We learned how to fly planes (through a simulator program)," said a 10-year-old girl, call sign LOVE TIGER. "I learned what's the parts of the plane ... and what can happen to us in life."

"We learned all about the planes parts like the cockpit and ailerons," said a 10-year-old boy, call sign WILD UZI. "I liked the planes

most ... how you could fly them anywhere you want with the computer."

What is the future plan for STARBASE/Connecticut?

"We presented the STARBASE program to all the principals in Hartford from K through 12," said Becker. "We let them know about the exciting benefits and opportunities in the program itself to entice more principals to become involved."

With demand outstripping available class dates now, the future may hold more classes or another STARBASE.

"We have had inquires from suburban towns and we just do not have enough time to teach them yet," said Gillanders. "Down the road demand might possibly call for a second STARBASE in the State of Connecticut as it has in Vermont."

Connecticut Soldiers Bring a Wealth of Expertise to

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Connecticut National Guard, according to Gen. Joseph Ralston, commander in chief, US European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, NATO.

"We could not do this mission without the Connecticut Guard. You do a better job than the active-duty soldiers, because you bring more focused skills that we desperately need here," Ralston said, while visiting members of the 143rd FSB in their dining facility at Camp Comanche. "You have corrections officers, police officers, teachers... You bring a wealth of expertise, and we couldn't do the job without you."

While Bosnia seems to be getting farther away from the multi-factional hostility that prompted the U.S. and NATO to deploy peacekeepers in 1996, the region still appears far from achieving a level of stability sufficient enough to cease Stabilization Force involvement. The current rotation is number 10.

In fact, the troops who receive their logistical support from the 143rd, and who are safe on Eagle Base due to the security performed by the 102nd, thwarted an apparent plot to launch an aerial, suicide-attack on the base, shortly after these Connecticut troops arrived.

After intelligence reports uncovered that an attack was imminent, the U.S. troops wasted no time in preparing to take a pre-emptive, anti-terrorist strike on an airfield in the French sector of the country, 137 kilometers away from Eagle. The troops rehearsed the mission, then headed out in a rainstorm, in the middle of the night. One of the four Bradley fighting vehicles on the mission crashed through a hangar, surprising two armed guards. After a brief chase, the guards were captured and interrogated. Chemical suits and masks were discovered.

"To complete this operation four days after arriving in country is a testament to the training these soldiers have gone through," said Maj. Gen. Steven Blum, commander of MND North. He said the successful mission prevented an attempted attack, but also led to more successful counter-terrorism. "There were subsequent operations after that, based upon information we found there."

That was in mid-September, when Americans back home were learning that a Saudi-born millionaire living in Afghanistan was the prime suspect in the worst terrorist attack ever launched on the United States. Americans serving their country in Bosnia soon learned firsthand that Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist network has cells operating worldwide.

"In the Turkish sector, a possible bin Laden associate was arrested, and intelligence unequivocally shows that this individual has very significant links to bin Laden," Blum said "Thirteen people are in custody,

due to out counter-terrorism efforts. These 13 individuals will never get out of custody. This is paying big, big dividends back home in the fight against terrorism."

Blum, commanding general of the 29th Infantry Division (Light), Virginia Army National Guard, knows all about the extensive training the citizen-soldiers have gone through to reach sufficient proficiency to perform their duties in Bosnia. He also knows all about the missions being performed by Guard members back in the states. For example, Connecticut has approximately 700 Guard members performing homeland security duties. The terrorist attacks on the U.S. have caused significant changes in the states, but in Bosnia, it's business as expected, with security measures increased. But, business as expected in this region has required preventive measures and force protection for years.

From mid-September to mid-December, Tuzla-based soldiers have found three land mines and 250 grenades on Eagle Base. Outside the base, they've confiscated six shoulder-fired rocket launchers, several mortar rounds, C-4 explosive material and heavy-caliber machine guns.

While these missions are mainly the work of the infantry stationed at Eagle, the 143rd FSB is there to make everything possible, said Capt. Chris Stanco.

"Our people were out on some of those 'cloak-and-dagger' missions. We've provided medics, physicians' assistants, fuel and logistical support to make the missions possible," Stanco said. "We're providing direct support and logistical support for MND North. We've also been called on to support other Multi-National Task Forces." The 143rd also keeps the Bradleys, Humvees and other equipment used in such missions functioning.

The discoveries made by the troops confirm that the peacekeeping mission, as successful as it has been lately, could have a long way to go. The Connecticut troops are doing what they can to change the hearts and minds of the people in the region. They have been actively visiting schools, speaking to school children, encouraging them to focus on what unites, rather than divides those who comprise the factions of this war-torn region that has been known for its "ethnic cleansing."

The September 11th attacks on the U.S. have changed conditions for Eagle and Comanche, prompting more stringent security measures than had been seen in SFOR-9. "We're definitely looking through the binoculars with a different view," Stanco said. But, he adds that the view outside of Camp Comanche, is improving, thanks to the work done by the rotations of troops who have served there.



(Above) Members of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry deployed in Bosnia greet their visitors from Connecticut. Fifty - five civic, religious, education and military leaders took the trip. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, accepts a plaque commemorating the SFOR 10 rotation from Lt. Col. Michael Casey, 143rd FSB commander. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)

"We're definitely making a difference. Whenever I talk to the local people, they tell me that," Stanco said. "Lt. Col. Casey (commander of the 143rd FSB) has stressed that he gets out to the schools, and everyone is telling us that we're making a difference."

Sgt. David Philip Aaronson, who patrols with the 102nd Inf., echoed that sentiment at Eagle Base.

"People are so happy that we're here," Aaronson said, adding that the support from the locals has lessened the tension the troops felt when they first arrived in the country. "Once we go outside and we see how people welcome us, we get more at ease. After seeing that, we didn't feel as tense."

But, the troops also say that their morale has remained very high, because they feel they are making a difference in an area that has needed positive changes.

"It feels great to be part of something larger than myself, and to be serving my country," said Spc. Jason Kawecki, 20, a history major at the University of Connecticut. "We can make a difference. I can't do it by myself, but it's a team effort. It's good to be with my unit. We know we have an important mission, and we're doing a great job." Although Kawecki is missing a year of school, the University of Connecticut

history major is getting quite a valuable history lesson in an area with a lot of history, some of which is being made while he patrols Eagle. "Reading books isn't quite the same as experiencing it."

Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan Gran, command sergeant major of the 1st Bn., 102nd Inf., visited his troops for several hours, Dec. 12th having traveled with delegation of visitors from Connecticut (see accompanying story). The visit by Gran, Connecticut National Guard Chief of Staff Col. Thomas Stefanko, former battalion commander, Command Sgt. Maj. William Skowronski, former battalion sergeant major, and other senior leaders who were instrumental in preparing the troops for their active-duty mission came approximately halfway through the deployment. The units trained specifically for the deployment for 18 months, prior to their departure in August.

"I was very impressed with their motivation, strong esprit de corps, and their 'can-do' attitude, three months into the deployment," Gran said. "They're very aware of the importance of their mission, and that as a company, they are doing a job that was done previously by an entire battalion. With the limited amount of time off, they are spending time in the gym, staying in shape and releasing stress. I'm impressed by this, as well, because they are doing what they need to do to become successful."

Peacekeeping Mission



Connecticut Army National Guard soldiers deployed to Bosnia have been spending some of their time working with children in a local one-room schoolhouse. On one visit, they distributed red mittens and other Christmas gifts to the children. (Photos courtesy Maj. Loring Boyden, HSC, 143rd FSB)



Blum also said he's impressed with the job performed by the Connecticut National Guard troops, and he made sure he told their officer, who led the aforementioned delegation.

"He is awed. 'They are the best of the best' (Blum) told me," said Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general of the State of Connecticut. "We really got it right. We handpicked the troops, we qualified them and sent motivated, willing-to-perform soldiers. They lived up to high expectations."

Keeping in touch with their friends and families back home is one way the citizen-soldiers have kept up their morale. Phones are available around the posts, but email is one of the most popular methods. A computer network specialist in his civilian job, Stanco has been busy keeping four different U.S. military computer networks in the area operating. Comanche has two cyber cafes operating 24 hours a day, so troops can send and receive email. But, Stanco has also been on the frontlines defending against cyber attacks.

"We have people trying to get into the network, either just to show they can do it, or to get information," Stanco said. "All different countries are trying to tap into our networks. We've been subjected to all kinds of viruses."

Whether they are rebuilding engines, or performing security patrols, Sgt. Joe LaRose, said he and friends from the Waterbury area,

where the 143rd is based, pass the time and stay focused by talking about life back home. LaRose, a Pratt & Whitney employee, said it's his first time overseas without his wife and children, so he's happy to work with people from greater Waterbury, such as Sgt. Gene Daily, section leader, Spc. Joshua Guiles and Sgt. Matthew Cheatham.

The approximately 250 Connecticut Guard members on the deployment volunteered for this tour of duty, sacrificing time away from their families, including Christmas, New Year's, Easter and more. In fact, two members of the unit, who are family, are serving together but are still apart in many ways.

Despite getting married in June, Sgt. Geanabelle Bermudez and Sgt. David Bermudez, Jr., are still waiting for a chance to take a honeymoon. Because they are stationed at Comanche, they are not allowed to live together. But, they are planning to take leave shortly after the New Year, so they can enjoy a honeymoon in Budapest, Hungary.

With approximately three months remaining in their deployment, the troops from the 143rd and the 102nd, will spend the rest of the winter in Bosnia, returning to Connecticut in April, just in time for springtime in New England.

Delegation Visits Connecticut Soldiers in Bosnia

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They delivered the gifts of good will on behalf of families, friends and other well-wishers from Connecticut. In fact, those who loaded the items at the East Granby Air Base were concerned that they might have to eliminate some of the gifts, to avoid overloading the plane.

Of course, the trip of more than 4,300 miles was not made simply to deliver packages. The VIP delegation was there to get a better understanding of the Guard's mission, how Connecticut Guard members interact with active duty components, and how the Department of Defense relies on the citizen-soldiers for missions throughout the world.

"I wanted to make sure we had representatives from a number of different factions of the community, such as clergy, especially with the holidays coming up, political representatives, particularly the towns that are home to our deployed units and that house our armories. This includes the area where our training post is located, because it was so important in our training," said Adjutant General Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, who conceived and organized the whirlwind trip.

In less than 72 hours, the delegation flew to Ramstein Air Force Base (AFB) in Germany, (with refueling stops in New Foundland and Ireland each way) to Tuzla, back to Germany and back to Connecticut. Members of the delegation who visited troops at Camp Comanche and Eagle Base, said they were very appreciative of the opportunity to get a detailed look at the military mission, and the people who make it happen.

"I felt it was the least I could do to show that our community supports them," said Bristol Mayor Frank NiCastro, who served 24 years in the Connecticut Guard. His six years in the Navy included war-time service.

"I know what it's like to be overseas, alone, especially during the holidays. I felt that I couldn't bring them a better gift, other than bringing them home, than to go over and tell them how much our community supports them." NiCastro presented miniature keys to the city to the 14 Bristol residents serving with the Guard in the peacekeeping mission. He also distributed Christmas cards made for the trip by Bristol school children.

New Britain Mayor Lucien Pawlak brought along a special package for one of his constituents, Sgt. Jill Klepacki, at the request of her mother. The mayor, amidst boasting of New Britain High School's recent state championship in football, helped Klepacki, with the presents, as she maneuvered around the Camp Comanche

dining facility on crutches. She was injured shortly after arriving at Camp Comanche. She half-jokingly assured the long-time incumbent that she had cast her absentee ballot in his favor, during the 2001 election.

Spc. Mark Adams received a gift that not even Santa Claus, at his most magical, could have been expected to deliver. It was a visit from his mom.

Elaine Adams represented Watertown, where she serves on the Town Council, as well as her employer Platt Bros., of Waterbury. As the personnel director from the company, she was invited on the trip by Gen. William Coffey (ret.), of the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve organization, while attending a informational seminar. Platt Bros. was looking for any updates on laws and programs that support citizen-soldiers who are called to active duty.

It was an opportunity that Mrs. Adams could not turn down, and she did what she could to make the most of it. In addition to visiting her son, she also delivered items on behalf of the 143rd's Family Support program. This included more than 50 pounds of baked goods, much of which she prepared just two days before the trip and Polaroid photos of families taken at the Waterbury Armory, at the unit's Family Christmas party December 8.

"They are the most wonderful people, and I mean that sincerely," Mrs. Adams said of the others in the unit's Family Support Program. "They're hard-working, always available, and they do so much with so little."

In the limited amount of time she was able to spend with her 20-year old son, she confirmed something she has suspected from reading his email messages for the past several months. Ironically, she had to travel overseas to notice just how much the middle of her three children, the one she calls "the quiet one," has grown up in a short time.

While she was having a conversation in the Camp Comanche dining facility, a soldier quietly approached from behind and tapped her on the shoulder. It was "the quiet one."

After shedding her tears of joy, amid hugs and kisses, she received a gift that couldn't be wrapped.

"He's becoming more self-confident. He takes a lot of pride in what he's doing, and in being a part of the team. I'm seeing a major change that is very positive," she said.

She also took the opportunity to speak to representatives from the University of

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The Community in Support of our Soldiers Campaign Fills the Manchester Armory with Well Wishers

SPEC. JESSICA MCKENNA
FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER, MANCHESTER ARMORY

On Saturday, December 22nd, the Manchester Armory was opened to the public. Members of the local communities, schools and businesses were invited down to record digital video clips for the Connecticut Guardsmen who are serving overseas for the Holidays.

Between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., 200 supporters visited the armory, and recorded 90 greetings for the soldiers. The messages were recorded onto CD's and will be hand carried to Bosnia by Sgt. Michael Vaughan, a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry currently on leave from duty in Bosnia, in the next few days, where they will be distributed to the soldiers.

The day-long event was a combined effort between the Recruiting and Retention Force,

the Family Assistance Center Staff and Family Support Group volunteers. Holiday music was provided by members of the 102nd Army Band.

Visitors throughout the day included Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general as well as mayors Larson and Cassano of East Hartford and Manchester, respectively. The Manchester Fire Department came out in force to record holiday messages to the soldiers who live and work in their community. Country 92.5 broadcast their morning radio show live from the armory asking for shoppers to take a moment to come record a greeting.

The community support was great and organizers of the event would like to thank all who took time out of busy holiday schedules to send a smile to Connecticut's soldiers serving in Bosnia.



Members of the Manchester Fire Department showed up in a large group to record a video message to the Connecticut Guardsmen stationed in Bosnia. Many of the Guardsmen either live in Manchester, or are members of Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry stationed at the Manchester Armory. (Photo by Spc. Jessica McKenna, Family Assistance Center, Manchester Armory)

2002 Military Pay and Allowances Explained

STAFF SGT. AMY PARR
AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS

WASHINGTON — In the event the fiscal 2002 National Defense Authorization Act is not approved by the end of the year, officials said people should not worry; guidelines are in place.

Effective Jan. 1, military pay and allowances will be based on previous statute authority, unless Congress approves the NDAA and the president signs it into law before then.

People need to be aware of what changes will be made and pay close attention to January and February 2002 leave and earning statements, said Maj. Shannon Averill, Air Force pay and allowance entitlement policy chief.

Without a signed NDAA on Jan. 1, basic pay will increase at 4.6 percent across the board. Averill said this number is based on the fiscal 2000 authorization for military raises to be set at the Employment Cost Index plus .5 percent.

If approved, there will be a minimum 5-percent raise across the board. Targeted ranks will see a 6- to 10-percent raise.

"These two scenarios are not cumulative," Averill said. "We will only have one pay raise, either the 4.6 percent or the targeted. If the legislative language permits, the fiscal 2002 NDAA rates will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 2002."

Averill said it is important for people to keep in mind that because the NDAA status for 2002 is unknown, finance officials anticipate late notification to the Defense Finance Accounting Service.

"Members may not see the new pay rates in

their mid-month (January 2002) pay," she said. "But, they will receive all required pay and allowances as soon as possible."

Because fiscal 2002 basic allowance for housing rates are based on fiscal 2001 authorization, new rates will take effect regardless of fiscal 2002 NDAA status. They will be based on an 11.3 percent out-of-pocket cost for the National Median Housing Cost.

Averill said out-of-pocket costs will be reduced to zero by 2005. Housing costs are calculated based on median rent plus average utilities and insurance in each local area for rank and dependency stats.

The goal of reducing out-of-pocket costs is so people can afford the same level of home, regardless of assignment location, Averill said.

"If a particular BAH rate doesn't increase, it's because the local BAH is already set at or below the dollar amount out-of-pocket expense for that grade and dependency status for the same level of housing," Averill said.

Housing costs are based on fair-market rentals and not mortgage prices. The separate BAH rate determined by the Secretary of Defense for transition from overseas locations and for reserve component members on periods of active duty less than 139 days will increase 4.6 percent. BAH-differential will also increase 4.6 percent.

Like BAH rates, fiscal 2002 basic allowance for subsistence rates are also based on last year's NDAA. On Jan. 1, enlisted people who have graduated basic military training

will see an increase in their BAS, raising it to \$241.81 a month. In circumstances where a prorated amount must be paid for a partial month, the daily rate will be \$7.95. Officer BAS will increase to \$166.48 per month. Prorated amounts for partial months will be \$5.47 per day.

People who currently receive the rations in kind not available may see a decrease in their BAS. RIKNA will terminate Dec. 31 unless the fiscal 2002 NDAA allows it to continue. If approved, the amount will remain \$262.50 per month.

Averill said overseas and continental U.S. cost-of-living allowances will be adjusted Jan. 1. New rates will be available on the per diem Web site.

Also based on the fiscal 2001 NDAA is the family subsistence supplemental allowance. "Beginning Feb. 1, 2002, all FSAA payments need to be recertified using new 2002 pay and allowance tables," Averill said. "To ensure there aren't pay gaps in payments, recertifications can be made between Jan. 2 and March 2, 2002."

Tables for 2002 military pay and allowances should be posted on the Internet by the end of the year. For more information, check out www.dfas.mil and www.dtic.mil. Questions should be directed to local finance offices.

(Editor's Note: As of the printing of this paper, the 2002 paycharts had not been posted on the Defense Finance and Accounting Service website. It is expected that will happen as soon as the bill is signed by the President. You can check the website at www.dfas.mil for updates. As soon as the paycharts are available for active and M-day soldiers, we will print them.)

Enlisted Update

From p. 2

Do we know what challenges lie ahead? In some cases, yes. But if nothing else, the Year of 2001 has taught us that we can never foresee all the challenges that lie ahead. Yet if we continue to train to the exacting standards we have in the past, there is no challenge too great for us to overcome as a team.

My challenge to all NCOs this year is to be prepared for anything. Make sure that your soldiers and airmen are prepared for anything. Train them to the highest standards possible and then train them some more. Prepare them to take over your jobs. Prepare them to lead. Prepare them to succeed. Prepare them for any challenge that lies ahead.

And encourage them to prepare their families, too. We could not have had the successes we have had in the past year without our families. To our families, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for your understanding, your strength and your growth this past year. Thank you for all the missed dinners, missed ball games, missed recitals and missed birthday parties. Our soldiers and airmen could not have been as strong as they were without your support, strength, understanding and love.

Together, as a team and as a family, we can survive any challenge.

Thank you for all you have done, and all I know you will continue to do.

Diversity and the Transformation of Military Culture

LT. GEN. RUSSELL C. DAVIS
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

The American military is unquestionably an institution whose corporate culture places an exceedingly high value upon uniformity. When we dress the same, talk the same, paint our vehicles the same, train to the same high standards and so forth, that is generally considered by all of us to be a good thing.

As a result, it might seem somewhat hypocritical for an organization of the armed services like the National Guard to embrace the cause of diversity and see it as a good thing. The two concepts are almost opposites. In truth, it is not hypocrisy – it is change.

To meet the new security challenges of the 21st century, both the Army and the Air National Guard, along with their active component counterparts, are presently engaged in a broad process of transformation and modernization to better deal with new threats and leverage new technologies. Most frequently the terms “transformation” and “modernization” refer to organization and equipment. But there is also a need to transform and modernize our institutional culture as well. We need to update, not only our organization charts, vehicles and aircraft, we also need to re-look our values, behaviors and interactions with one another.

The National Guard’s “Year of Diversity” is, therefore, offered as an initiative to transform and modernize the culture of the National Guard. This initiative was planned prior to the events of 11 September 2001, but it remains valid. The war on terrorism will be a

new sort of war. It will demand a broad-based yet cohesive team to prosecute it successfully.

For years now the Department of Defense has set the corporate standard and made tremendous strides in creating a more fair and equitable teamwork environment through equal opportunity and affirmative action programs. We have policies prohibiting extremist group activities and harassment based upon gender or sexual orientation. The positive results of these policies and programs are now obvious and widespread. The watchword for successful implementation of these programs was “compliance.” Comply with the EO and other rules and you were “good to go.”

Now, however, it is time for us to go to the next step and migrate the values of fair treatment from the regulations and rulebooks into our daily interactions with each other as a conscious effort.

The National Guard is a diverse organization. We are of different religions, races and ethnicities. Some are mixed races; some are not religious at all. We come from a variety of linguistic groups. We practice different politics. We hail from every region of the country and every corner of the globe. Our differences are myriad, but this is as it should be as each represents a segment of our society. The National Guard exists in and for an even more diverse nation. America is the most diverse nation on Earth. For us to be a representative and ultimately successful American institution we need to

not only recognize this diversity, but embrace and celebrate it as a good thing. We cannot allow ourselves to become isolated from the values or composition of the communities we serve.

The broader American civilian society is clearly moving toward an ever more positive appreciation of differences among people. Intolerance and bigotry have become quite unfashionable. Discrimination and harassment are no longer merely illegal, they have also become socially unacceptable. While we in the National Guard don’t want to be far out of step with the society we serve, we don’t embrace diversity merely for the sake of fashion or “political correctness.” We embrace and celebrate diversity primarily because, by doing so, it strengthens teamwork, creates a more effective work environment and thereby helps us to accomplish the mission. In these times, our country needs its National Guard to be as strong as possible.

Throughout this Year of Diversity, I ask members of the National Guard to pause and consider their own thoughts, words and actions with regard to people who are somehow different from themselves. Question your own motivations. Before you make a negative assumption about someone’s ability to do a job, stop and ask yourself if you are merely making that assumption based upon the person’s race, ethnicity, gender or some other irrelevant factor. Before you start imposing your

religious views on someone else or excluding them because of theirs, ask yourself how you would feel if you were in their place. Before you act on an impulse to taunt or harass someone for any reason, stop...just stop and think about it.

The Year of Diversity is not a 12-month EO seminar. It is a celebration. Once we check ourselves for negative thoughts and actions based on differences, then we can evolve to recognizing the actual benefits of those differences. The truth is that the National Guard is a stronger, better organization because of its diversity. Recognizing that fact and honoring it will make us even stronger and even better! That is what the Year of Diversity is all about.

With any such initiative advanced at the national level, however, there is something of a danger that it will not translate into action at the unit and individual level. All of our slogans, brochures, banners, and seminars around the Year of Diversity will mean nothing if they are not translated into real change and action. Generals can tout it; colonels can endorse it. But to be successful, the junior officers and the NCOs must take ownership in it, believe in it and make it happen at the flight, company and, yes, individual level. Indeed, every one of us from the most junior enlisted member to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau must make a commitment to internalize it, make it a part of ourselves, and ultimately to live it in practice. That is my challenge and my request to you. Make this work!

Mother, Daughter Duo a First for CTARNG

From p. 1

to pursue a career as a paralegal. The CTARNG could help her achieve this goal with its benefits and experiences including paying for four years at a state college.

Scott started drilling with her unit, HHD STARC in Hartford, the first weekend in December where she does data entry in the DOIM section. In the spring she is planning to take paralegal courses at Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College with the tuition covered by the Guard.

Kristina, the one who started it all by being at a friend’s house while Ireland was trying to recruit them, is in the Army National Guard delayed entry program, which allows a young soldier to join and start drilling with a unit before shipping out to basic training. She is currently a senior at Cheshire High school.

Kristina is proud of her mom and excited about the opportunities the military will open to her mother and herself. Kristina will start an 11-week basic training course at Fort Jackson, South Carolina this summer and then go for 23 weeks of advanced individual training as a network switching systems



Brenda Scott, Sgt. 1st Class Larry Ireland and Kristina Fouts after both were sworn into the Connecticut Army National Guard. Scott and Fouts are the first mother/daughter team in the Connecticut Army National Guard. (Photo courtesy of Brenda Scott)

operator-maintainer. This winter in Westbrook, she will start drilling with her unit, Company C, 280th Signal Battalion. Although Fouts excels in electronics she plans to attend Southern Connecticut State University to study elementary education. She wants her drill weekends to be different

from her daily job and she finds electronics to be entertaining.

Kristina is joining the Guard for the benefits and the job experience that the Guard will provide. Earning money for college and getting the job experience is going to make her more marketable in the career world.

OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Open House Dates:

26 Jan 02

23 Feb 02

23 Mar 02

20 Apr 02

1st OCS BN
169TH LEADERSHIP
REGIMENT

Lmmmm
Orr mmmrr
mmmmr Ommmmrr
mmr: 860-691-4214/4212
Pr: 860-691-4211
Emrr: mmmrrmmrr@mmrrmmrr

Bmr r mmmr mmr rr mmmmmr mmr
mr Hmr mr rr rr Bmmr 402
Lmmmm Hr: 1000-1200 mmr
mmmr rr ED: rr mm: Ommmr rr mmr:

103rd Hosts Annual Party for Connecticut Children's Place

CAPT. GEORGE WORRALL
103 FW PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

(Editors note: The Connecticut Children's Place requested that the children's faces and identifying information be omitted, which is why this article is not accompanied by pictures of the many smiling children.)

The 103rd Fighter Wing hosted its annual Christmas party for Connecticut Children's Place December 13.

Forty-two abused and neglected children came to the evening event, while the remaining three had to wait until the following morning for festivities.

The event opened with the pledge of allegiance, which was the only official reference to the changes in the world since September 11. The changes were on people's minds.

"It is very touching that we are being considered with the state of the world and everything," said Joyce H. Welch, superintendent, Connecticut Children's Place. "With the pressures put on everyone, that the Guard members still thought of us, we are very appreciative. It is another thing for you to do while you are protecting the world."

The children, too, had strong words of thanks, which a young man took a moment at the end of the program to express.

"I would like to thank you all... you guys make the kids feel like they are someone," said the young man. "You guys are our heroes."

One of the highlights of the night was a trip to the hangar. Each child sat in an A-10 Thunderbolt II, affectionately known as a Warthog, and had a cockpit photo taken.

"The airplane was the best," said a young girl after climbing down from the seat of an A-10. "I want to fly one to the top of the world."

"They love the airplanes," said Louvie Bourne, assistant commissioner, Connecticut Department of Children and Families. "The kids really look forward to this."

Although other groups send gifts and donations to children at the home, the 103rd Fighter Wing has the largest and the only event where the children are invited in for a party.

"This is the only one I know of where kids go to a place for a party," said Bourne. "They really appreciate what others do for them, they like the fact that people care about them, which is really important to show these kids."

"This is the only organization that does this big a thing," said Welch. "I want to thank you all for your generosity, for caring, and for being willing to share your time with our kids."

The most anticipated event of the evening was Santa's arrival. Played by Master Sgt.



Santa (Master Sgt. (Ret.) Joel Dobbins) and his elf (Tech. Sgt. (Ret.) Joanne Rhodes) call the next child to sit on Santa's lap as Maureen O'Reilly (rear), secretary, 103rd Logistics Group, prepares to dole out the gifts. (Photo by Senior Airman Eileen Casey, 103rd Communications Flight)

(Ret.) Joel Dobbins, and his elf, played by Tech. Sgt. (Ret.) Joanne Rhodes. Santa was greeted with hugs and cheers. Then, when it came time to dole out the gifts, each child was called up to sit on Santa's lap.

Before everyone went home, a special award presentation recognized Col. Ronald Force, 103rd Fighter Wing, who began helping with the event about 25 years ago and is retiring from his career in the Guard soon. This was the first year he attended after several years on assignment to Langley AFB.

"The event has been at the base and on a Thursday in December since the early eighties," said Force. "When I started in 1977, I played the guitar and Mike Reploi would dress as a Christmas present."

"An old-timer told me the party began back in the mid-sixties. Cheryl [Master Sgt. Cheryl Laporte] has been the foundation of the event for the past number of years doing all the behind the scenes work that needs to be done like contacting companies and lining up donations, without which it would be impossible."

Members of the 103rd Fighter Wing provided many of the gifts. Area corporations donated gifts, including Lego, Olympia Sales, and Hallmark. Base organizations too, chipped in to make the event a success including the Junior Enlisted Advisory Council, Flying Yankees Officer Club, Family Support, Det. 115 Reserve Officers Training Corp., and individual member contributions added up to a cash donation of \$1,525.

"Every year I am amazed how everyone just pulls together to make this event so wonderful for the children," said Laporte,



A young man from Connecticut Children's Place tries out an A-10 seat and helmet under the guidance of Master Sgt. James Shewokis, crew chief, 103rd Aircraft Generation Squadron. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)



The Christmas bear (Maj. Roy Walton, 103rd Logistics Group), who served as master of ceremonies, speaks on the radio to Santa Claus who is approaching the base in his sleigh. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)



Col. Ron Force (top right with guitar), 103rd Fighter Wing, leads the party goes at Connecticut Children's Place in a Christmas carol sing-along during the December 1978 party. (Photo courtesy of Col. Ron Force)



Tech. Sgt. Holly L. Caroon, Tech. Sgt. Regina L. Bergonzi and Master Sgt. Marsha E. Blessing (left to right), all from the 103rd Logistics Group, serve a second helping to a young man from the Connecticut Children's Place. (Photo by Capt. George Worrall, 103rd FW PAO)

coordinator of the event. "This year with so much going on it [the party] mostly came together in the last 10 days."

The event was clearly a success thanks to the efforts of the volunteers and generosity of the members of the 103rd Fighter Wing. This event would not be possible without all the effort put in by those who baked, bought and wrapped presents, donated turkeys, cooked and volunteered their time to be with the children.

As a facility of the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, the Connecticut Children's Place provides diagnostics, brief treatment, residential care and educational instruction for abused and neglected children between the ages of 10 and 18 from all over the state. The Connecticut Children's Place, which began as an orphanage in the 1880's, is the only facility of its kind in Connecticut.

Connecticut Military Department News

Join The Cavalry: Horse Guard Holds Open House

LT. HOWARD MILLER
1ST COMPANY, GOVERNOR'S HORSE GUARD
TROOP HISTORIAN

On Saturday November 17th, the First Company Governor's Horse Guard sponsored an open house and recruitment drive at their facility in Avon. From 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., visitors received tours of the stable, talks on the unit's history and weapons and chatted with members about what it takes to be a cavalryman in the 21st century.

Two hundred visitors toured the grounds and saw riding demonstrations by members of the company's "riding platoon" led by 1st Lt. Steven Meltzer.

Planning for the event was overseen by Capt. Andrew Arsenaault, Executive Officer of the troop and the unit's adjutant, 2nd Lt. Seamus McGovern.

Ten people expressed an interest in joining the next recruit class. Any other applicants should contact McGovern at the Horse Guard, 860-673-3525. The Troop's Thursday night drills are open to the public.



1st Lt. Steven Meltzer reviews the squad during the riding demonstration. Meltzer acted as narrator, explaining the various drills to an appreciative crowd of on-lookers. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Howard Miller, 1st Co., GHG)



Visitors watch a demonstration of formation riding by troopers of the 1st Co. Governor's Horse Guards at the open house on November 17th. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Howard Miller, 1st Co., GHG)



Sgt. Anna Bongiorno leads the troopers and their mounts as they demonstrate a "left diagonal," one of the many cavalry formations that are part of their drill. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Howard Miller, 1st Co., GHG)

18th Annual Governor's Care and Share Food Drive a Success

KATHERINE LEAVITT
DATA PROCESSING
CONNECTICUT MILITARY DEPARTMENT

November 30th was the deadline for this year's three-week Governor's Care and Share Food Drive. Connecticut FOODBANK raised \$1,600.00 and 2 tons of food. FOODSHARE raised \$18,742.00 and 19,329 lbs. of food. For every \$1.00 raised, they were able to buy \$10.00 worth of food.

Connecticut's Military Department raised 175 lbs. of food and enough money to buy \$360.00 worth of food. Collected food will be going to local food pantries, soup kitchens and emergency shelters throughout Connecticut.

These record-breaking donations are a compilation of state agencies and Webster Bank. Thank you to all that contributed.

Visit the new
*Connecticut National
Guard*
website at
www.ct.ngb.army.mil

COMMISSARY & EXCHANGE DIRECTORY

Here is a current directory of area commissaries and exchanges along with their phone numbers. Always call ahead to verify hours as they may change without notice. A valid i.d. card is necessary to use these facilities. Contact your unit administrator if you or your dependants need a card. If you have trouble, contact the State Family Program Office at 1-800-858-2677.

AIR NATIONAL GUARD
East Granby
TUESDAY – FRIDAY:
10:00 – 5:00
SATURDAY: 10:00 – 4:00
SUNDAY & MONDAY: Closed
UTAs: Open Saturday &
Sunday: 10:00 – 5:00
Phone: (860) 653-6994

COAST GUARD ACADEMY
New London
MONDAY – FRIDAY:
9:00 – 5:00
SATURDAY: 9:00 – 3:00
SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (860) 444-8488

CAMP ROWLAND POST EXCHANGE
MONDAY: Closed
TUESDAY – SATURDAY:
10:00 – 5:00
SUNDAY: 10:00 – 4:00
Phone: (860) 739-9672

COAST GUARD STATION
120 Woodward Avenue
New Haven, CT
MONDAY – FRIDAY:
9:00 – 4:30
SATURDAY: 9:00 – 2:00
SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (203) 468-2712

WEST POINT, NEW YORK
Exchange Hours:
SATURDAY – WEDNESDAY:
10:00 – 6:00
THURSDAY & FRIDAY:
10:00 – 7:00
Phone: (914) 446-5406
Commissary Hours:
MONDAY: Closed
TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY:
10:00 – 6:00
THURSDAY: 10:00 – 7:00
FRIDAY: 10:00 – 6:00
SATURDAY: 9:00 – 5:00
SUNDAY: 11:00 – 5:00
Phone: (914) 446-5406

SUB BASE, NEW LONDON
Exchange Hours:
MON., TUES., WED.,
FRI.: 9:00 – 6:00
THURSDAY: 9:00 – 7:00
SATURDAY & SUNDAY:
9:00 – 5:00
HOLIDAYS: 9:00 – 4:00
Phone: (860) 694-3811
Commissary Hours:
MONDAY: Closed
TUE., WED. & FRI.: 9:00 – 6:00
THURSDAY: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
SATURDAY: 8:00 – 5:00
SUNDAY: 10:00 – 5:00
Phone: (860) 694-2244

WESTOVER AIR FORCE BASE
Chicopee, Mass.
MONDAY – FRIDAY: 10:00 – 5:00
SATURDAY: 10:00- 5:00
SUNDAY: 11:00 – 5:00
Phone: (413) 593-5583

ARMY RESERVE CENTER
700 South Quaker Lane
West Hartford, CT
MONDAY – FRIDAY:
10:00 – 1:00
MONDAY – FRIDAY:
1:45 – 4:00
SATURDAY & SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (860) 236-3393

FSB Families to Celebrate Holidays



Ryan McCawley (left photo) and his twin sister, Meghan (right photo), seemed to enjoy their pasta at the party. The two are the children of Capt. Rodney McCawley, Headquarters Supply Company, 143rd Forward Support Battalion who is deployed in Bosnia. (Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Capt. Thomas Bordner's family takes a moment for a family photo. Capt. Bordner is a member of Headquarters Supply Company, 143rd Forward Support Battalion. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Robert Wilcox seems to be contemplating the Christmas tree. Robert's father, Sgt. 1st Class Todd Wilcox is a member of Company B, 143rd Forward Support Battalion. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



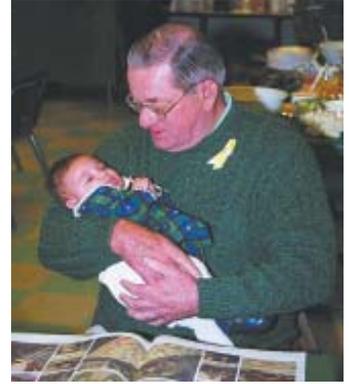
The kids couldn't wait to get down on the floor and check out their gifts at the FSB Family Holiday party. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

Families Gather Celebrate Holidays

Soldiers deployed in Bosnia gathered together at the Waterbury Family photos were taken next to the Christmas tree, Santa Claus delivered to individual soldiers that were later hand-carried to the 55-person contingent that visited Bosnia in December.



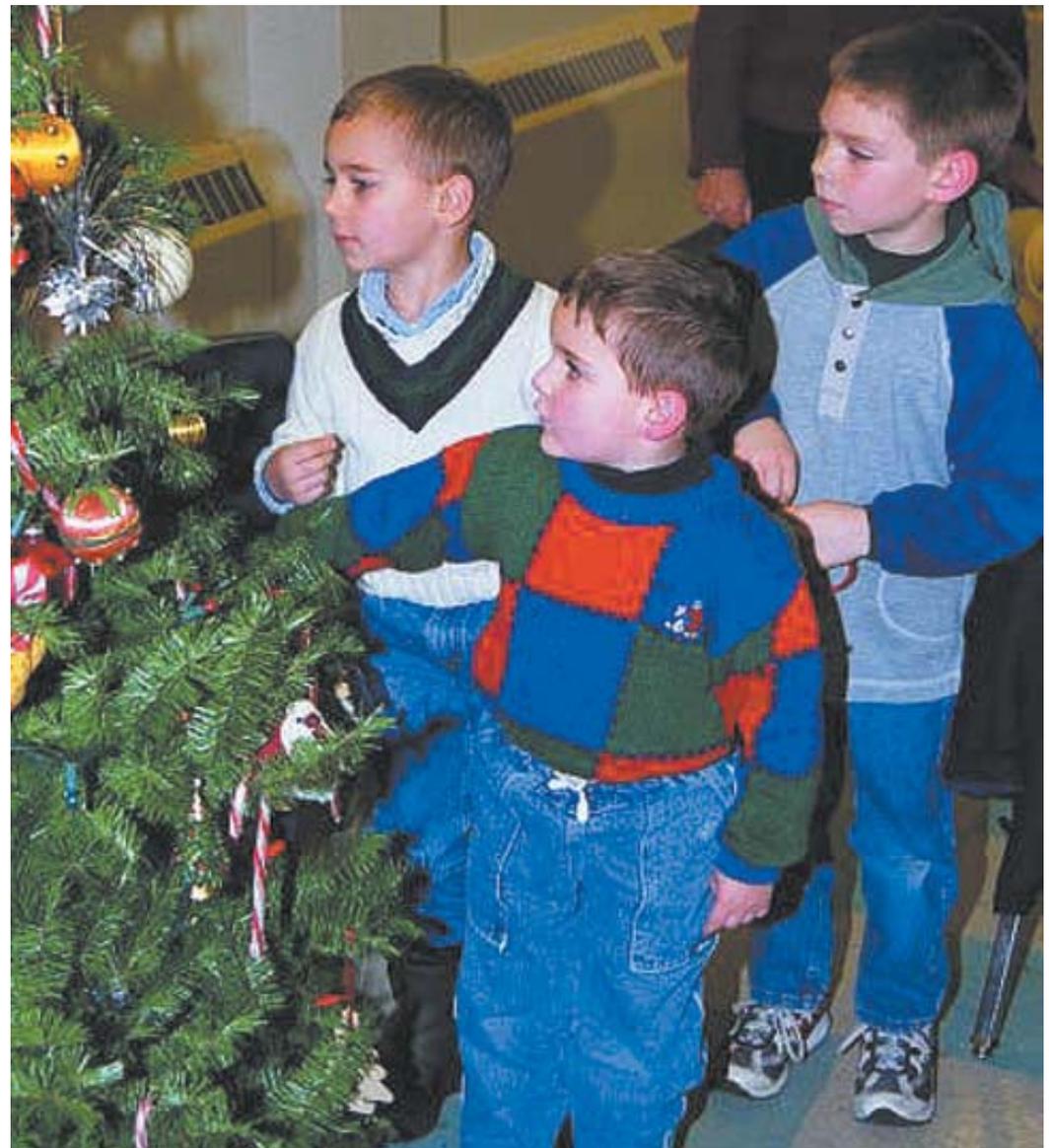
FSB family members gathered around the table together for food and comradere. They spent time writing personal note on Polaroid photos to be hand-delivered to their soldiers in Bosnia. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Ralph Hedenberg holds granddaughter Aislyn. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Group for a family photo in front of the Christmas tree. Capt. [Name], Company, 143rd Forward Support Battalion. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



The magic of the holiday season, and the decorations on the tree, hold the rapt attention of these young men during. All three have a family member deployed in Bosnia. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Children check out the loot Santa had delivered to them at the event. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

Reviewing 2001: A Year of Firsts, Deployments,

SGT. 1st CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

JANUARY

Brig. Gen. George A. Demers, Connecticut Air National Guard and Assistant Adjutant General, retired after more than 45 years of service. A retirement party was held at the Aqua Turf in Southington at the end of January.

Connecticut received its first Black Hawk helicopter on Jan. 23. The UH-60 arrived at the Aviation, Classification, Repair Activity Depot from Virginia. The plan is to eventually replace all 10 UH-1 Huey helicopters in the CTARNG with 10 Black Hawks.

The 712th Maintenance Company won the prestigious Philip A. Connelly Award for 2001. The Department of the Army competition selects the best food services section in the National Guard from throughout the country.

Members of Detachment 1, 141st Medical Company, New Britain, received their mobilization orders placing them on active duty in support of "Operation JOINT FORGE" in the Balkans. At the same time, the 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry were gearing up in anticipation of receiving orders for a Bosnian deployment of their own.

Members of the 1st and 2nd Companies Governors Horse Guards traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Presidential Inaugural parade.

FEBRUARY

Members of the 141st Medical Company deployed to Bosnia as part of Stabilization Force 9 (SFOR 9). The medics were to be in Bosnia for a six-month mission.

The 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry traveled to Fort Benning, Ga. to participate in TSIRT (Theater Specific Individual Readiness Training) in preparation for their deployment to Bosnia.



The Governors Horse Guard rides for President George W. Bush's Inauguration in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)

The 103rd Fighter Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron deployed to the West Coast Regional Training Site at March Air Force Base, Calif. To provide support requested by the 163rd Air Refueling Wing for four missions.

The Connecticut Air National Guard announced its Airmen and NCOs of the year for 2001. Senior Airman Benjamin Abbott was named Airman of the Year, Tech. Sgt. David Gruendel was named NCO of the Year, Master Sgt. Thomas L. Henderson was named Senior NCO of the Year and Master Sgt. Eugene A. Stellan Jr. was named First Sergeant of the Year.

Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry and the 143rd Forward Support Battalion traveled to Fort Dix, N.J. to undergo SASO (Sustainment and Stabilization Operations) training and certification there.

MARCH

The Office of Emergency Management braced for what was being called "The Storm of the Century" and went on 24-hour operations. State highways were closed to all tractor trailer truck traffic for a number of days.

The Connecticut National Guard Retirees of Florida held their annual meeting and reunion in Orlando, Florida.

Members of Company C, 280th Signal Battalion were called upon to support SETAF's Agile Lion exercise in Italy and the 2nd Signal Brigade in Germany.

Spec. Gunarso P. Nguyen, Headquarters/Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment, was named the Connecticut Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year, and Sgt. David F. Cyr, Company A, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry, was named NCO of the Year.

Maj. Gen. John F. "Fritz" Freund, former adjutant general of the state of Connecticut passed away and was buried at Arlington National cemetery.



The 143rd Military Police Company went on security detail at Bradley International Airport after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)

APRIL

Brig. Gen. Mary Ann Epps assumed command of the Connecticut Air National Guard, becoming the first female and first African American to attain the rank and hold the position in Connecticut.

The State Military Department announced the appointment of Larry Alibozek to the positions of Deputy Commissioner for Support, and Property and Procurement Officer (PPO) for the Connecticut Military Department.

The 143rd Forward Support Battalion traveled to Fort Dix, N.J. for weapons qualifications in preparation for the unit's deployment to Bosnia.

While in Bosnia, members of Connecticut's 141st Medical Company made the front page of the *Talon*; the American publication for troops stationed in Bosnia, for their participation in a Mass Casualty Exercise at Eagle Base, Bosnia.

Brig. Gen. I.J. Zembruski, assistant adjutant general and Commanding General - Army, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Paul Viola and Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Brian Phipps were inducted into the OCS Hall of Fame and Fort Benning, Georgia.

The 169th Leadership Regiment conducted graduation ceremonies for its Advanced and Basic NCO Courses at Camp Rowland.

Connecticut Air National Guard Lt. Col. Robert P. Fink, commander, 103rd Civil Engineer Squadron, went from a couch potato to an Ironman Triathlon competitor.

MAY

The Second Company Governors Horse Guard received four wild mustangs through a special adoption program run by the Federal Bureau of Land Management.

Command Chief Master Sgt. Wanda P. Wawruck became the first female to hold the senior enlisted position for the 103rd Fighter Wing.

The 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry traveled to Fort Benning, Georgia for TSIRT (Theater Specific Individual Readiness Training) in preparation for their deployment to Bosnia.

Dana Comerford accepted Honor Person of the Year honors for her husband, the late Sgt. 1st Class Brian Comerford, Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry, during the Armed Forces Day Luncheon.

JUNE

Thomas E. White became the 18th secretary of the Army and Dr. James G. Roche the 20th secretary of the Air Force after being nominated by President George W. Bush.

Joint Task Force Husky began its summer-long training opportunity program at Camp Rowland, Stone's Ranch Military Reservation and the East Haven Rifle Range with the 242nd Engineer Battalion tackling the first iteration of training and missions.

The black beret made its debut on June 14th, birthday of the United States Army, during ceremonies held around the state.

The Connecticut Air National Guard held its largest Space and Aviation Day at the Bradley Air National Guard Base in East Granby. More than 5,000 people attended the event.

Members of the 242nd Engineer Battalion returned from a training mission in Hohenfels, Germany where they were responsible for executing an obstacle plan set up by the regimental engineer from the Combat Maneuver Training Center.

The 2nd Battalion, 192nd Field Artillery conducted its last live-fire mission at Fort Dix, N.J. The battalion is slated to leave Connecticut sometime in the near future and will be replaced by several other transportation, military police, public affairs and chemical companies.

JULY

The 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry received their mobilization orders to support "Operation Joint Forge" in Bosnia.

The 192nd Engineer Battalion took over the reins of Task Force Husky.

Fourteen new officers and two fully trained and qualified soldiers participated in commissioning ceremonies held at Camp Rowland. The 16 soldiers had completed the 14-month course of instruction for Officer Candidate School conducted by the 169th Leadership Regiment.

Brig. Gen. I.J. Zembruski, assistant adjutant general and Commanding General-Army, was named Assistant Division Commander of the 78th Infantry Division, the famous "Lightning Division."

Lt. Col. Charles McKellar, public affairs officer, Headquarters Connecticut Air National Guard was awarded the prestigious 2001 Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award during ceremonies held at the 92nd Annual NAACP Convention in New Orleans, La.

Lt. Col. Elizabeth Bourbeau and Lt. Col. William Sobota completed War College, while

Returns, Attacks, Homeland Security and More



Members of Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry train for their mission in Bosnia as part of the 29th Infantry Division's SFOR 10 Rotation. (Photo by Spec. Jeffrey Austin, 65th PCH)

Maj. Joseph Danao and Maj. Alberto M. Higuera completed Command General Staff College.

The Connecticut National Guard Family Program hosted its 7th Annual Summer Youth Camp at Camp Rowland with 40 Guard children attending.

AUGUST

Hundreds of family, friends and supporters turned out for a farewell send-off ceremony for the 250 Connecticut soldiers headed to Bosnia as part of the 29th Infantry Division's SFOR 10 rotation. The soldiers from the 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry received a rousing farewell as they left on their first leg of a trip that would take them to a peacekeeping mission in the Balkans.

The Junior Enlisted Advisory Council of the 103rd Fighter Wing held its inaugural Combat Dining-In for junior enlisted personnel. The evening included dinner, live entertainment, fun and games.

The 103rd Air Control Squadron completed a successful annual training at Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass.

SEPTEMBER

On Sept. 11, the United States was viciously attacked on its home shores in what is being called the worst terrorist attack in history. New York City, the Pentagon and a rural field in Pennsylvania all bear the battle scars from the attacks.

The Office of Emergency Management and the Guard's Emergency Operations Center were up and running 24 hours a day within a couple of hours. Armories around the state were put on high alert and locked down with military police restricting entrance only to those who had official reason to be in the buildings. The 103rd Air Control Squadron in Orange was awaiting federal

orders to be placed on active duty. Medics, aviators and engineers were all on call if they were needed to go into New York.

Two Connecticut Army Guardsmen, Capt. Tim Corcoran, Troop Command, and Master Sgt. Jack Duncan, 192nd Field Artillery, both were on duty at Ground Zero in New York as part of their civilian jobs. Corcoran is a Metropolitan Transit Authority Police Officer and Duncan works for ConEdison at its Millwood (N.Y.) Substation. Duncan has also received specialized training in search and rescue and is certified to work in confined spaces.

Members of the 103rd Fighter Wing traveled to the Arabian Peninsula in support of Operation Southern Watch.

The 242nd Engineer Battalion hosted its 19th Annual Cannonball Run, and the National Guard Association of Connecticut hosted its 4th Annual Golf Tournament. Both events raised funds for charitable organizations.

OCTOBER

Members of the 143rd Military Police Company were on duty in Federal and Municipal Airports throughout the state as well as nuclear power plants and other areas needing heightened security following the Sept. 11 attacks.

The 103rd Air Control Squadron was on duty in Orange and in airports throughout the country providing air security.

Detachment 1, 141st Medical Company returned from its SFOR9 Rotation in Bosnia to a world very different than they had left. Despite being happy to be home, they were saddened by the events of Sept. 11, some saying they wished they had been home earlier in order to do what they could to help.

The Spirit of Connecticut, a P-75, the latest production model of the C-17 Globemaster III, was officially dedicated during ceremonies

held at the Connecticut Air National Guard Base in East Granby. The aircraft contains engines built by Pratt and Whitney, a Connecticut-based company.

NOVEMBER

Medal of Honor recipient, Col. (Ret.) Robert Nett addressed the mess at the Officer Dining-In. He also served as a grand marshal for the annual Veteran's Day Parade in Hartford.

The latest class of the Split Training Option Company began working together. This is the third year the company has kept split-training option soldiers together for drills between their initial basic training and their advanced individual training in an effort to keep their soldier skills sharp and give them additional adventure-type training.

A first of its kind, Diversity Conference drew participants from the Connecticut Army and Air National Guards, militia units and state employees.

DECEMBER

A contingent of 55 civic, politic, education and military leaders visited members of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion and Company B, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry in Bosnia, bringing gifts and well-wishes from family and friends back home just in time for the holidays. It was also an opportunity for the non-military members of the contingent to see first-hand the important role the National Guard plays in international missions.

December 7th marked the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese in 1941.

The Black Knights of West Point sank the Midshipmen of Annapolis during the 102nd meeting on the gridiron of the two military academies. President George W. Bush attended the game and tossed the coin that determined opening possession of the ball. Army won 26-17 before a sell-out crowd at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia.



Senior Airman Matthew Allard, satellite wide-band telemetry systems technician, 103rd Air Control Squadron, repairs test equipment on the TPS-75 Radar Set while on annual training at Otis Air Force Base, Mass. (Photo by Senior Airman Julie Bragg, 103rd Communications Flight)

Leonard Visits, Thanks Connecticut Guardsmen



Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard visits with members of the 143rd Military Police Company and thanks each of them personally for the sacrifices they are making while on airport security duty. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

**SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO**

On a very cold, very blustery day in December, Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard came to Connecticut to thank members of the 143rd Military Police Company for their sacrifices and hard work in patrol Connecticut's airports and keeping passengers safe.

"What you are doing is very important," said Leonard. "We know that at the Pentagon. We appreciate everything you are doing and know you are making sacrifices in your personal and professional lives to do it. Without the National Guard, we couldn't do everything we are doing for Homeland Security."

Leonard, the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, arrived at the Air National Guard Base in East Granby to meet with members of the MPs as they were getting ready to go shift. They were standing in formation for

inspection when he arrived, and after their inspection, he had them gather around and went to each soldier to shake their hands and thank them personally. He also took the opportunity to talk to several of them about how the "big guys" at the Pentagon could make things better for them.

He then went inside the building to meet with Air Guard personnel and thank them for allowing the Army Guard to use their facility as a staging area for their airport security operations. He waited for the crew of MPs being replaced to come off shift so he could speak with them, also. Upon their arrival, he again shook each individual soldiers' hand and spoke of their sacrifices and how important what they were doing was to every American passing through an airport.

Leonard then spent the next day travelling throughout Connecticut to visit soldiers on duty at Bradley International Airport, the AVCRAD facility and airport in Groton/New London and Sikorsky Airport in Stratford.

Space-A Travel Outlook Good

(The following excerpts are from the Armed Forces News (The FREE Weekly Email Newsletter for Armed Forces Personnel & Retirees), Friday, December 14, 2001 Issue.)

Although some aircraft are being diverted to war missions, so are many active duty troops, thus Air Mobility Command officials say that Space-A travel is still a good deal. In some cases, Space-A opportunities within the continental U.S. have even improved. In addition, the number of commercially contracted Patriot Express flights between the U.S. and overseas remains unchanged. New requirements for Space-A passengers: have two forms of identification, including a photo ID; pack no sharp-edged objects, regardless of length, in checked baggage; expect hand-carried and checked baggage to be inspected, and arrive three hours before the flight.

"Air Marshal" Age Limit Canceled for Retirees:

The Aviation and Transportation Security Act has dropped the maximum age limit of 40 for military and law enforcement retirees who want to become federal air marshals. Applicants must pass fitness and psychological screening and must be eligible for a top-secret security clearance. They also must never have been convicted of a domestic violence crime. Those accepted will receive special training, and if successful can expect the usual irregular hours and long-term deployments that occur on active duty. Pay will range from \$35,100 to \$80,800 annually, plus up to 25 percent more in special federal law-enforcement pay, and possibly locality pay.

Visit <http://jobs.faa.gov>.

Public Affairs Guidance

Response to Media Rules of Engagement

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 have drawn a great deal of media attention.

Since then, a lot of media focus has been on the military as a whole to include alerts, mobilizations and airport security.

In accordance with the law and Constitution, media personnel are free to conduct their business more or less, as they deem necessary and appropriate.

Soldiers and Airmen, however, should adhere to the following rules when dealing with news media:

1. Notify your NCOIC/OIC right away. Notify the State Public Affairs Office at (860) 524-4857 or (860) 883-5336.

Do not make any statement until directed by the State Public Affairs Officer.

2. Treat media with the utmost courtesy and respect.
3. The only authorized spokespersons for

the Connecticut National Guard are the State PAO and the 103d FW PAO.

4. When approved, you may respond to media questions. You may decline to answer questions you are uncomfortable with or do not know the answer to.

5. Refer questions about National Guard operations to your chain of command for forwarding to Maj. John Whitford, State Public Affairs Officer.

Visit the
Connecticut Guardian
on-line at
www.ct.ngb.army.mil

AVCRAD Hosts Annual Regional Conference in Mystic



(Left) Lt. Col. William Shea addresses the audience at an AVCRAD workshop held at the Mystic Hilton recently. Shea is the supervisor at the CT AVCRAD.

(Right) Soldiers look on during an Aviation, Classification, Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD) workshop held recently at the Mystic Hilton. The workshop is held annually and focuses on sharing of information, customer contact, and provides participants the opportunity to get feedback from customers and to work closely with National Guard Bureau.

(Photos by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)



Connecticut Guard Biker Takes First in Military Competition

SGT. 1st CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

When most people think of mountain bike competitions, they think of adventurous kids and teens, even 20-somethings speeding around at break-neck paces on rough terrain. Most do not think of a person less than a year away from military retirement as competing in an event such as this, let alone winning it. But that's just what one Connecticut's own did in November.

Col. Patrick Bowe, Facilities Engineering Office, Connecticut Army National Guard, has been riding competitively since his college days.

"I was a bike racer when I joined the Guard in 1970 and had been given time to try out for the US Olympic team while in OCS," said Bowe. "I felt with my years in the Guard winding down in 2002, I would like to try one more new kind of bike race before I retired."

So, on Nov. 4, Bowe competed in the Military Mountain Bike National Championships at the Navy's Cheatham Annex in Williamsburg, Virginia. Not only did he compete, he won the Military Division and came in second place overall. Bowe represented the Connecticut National Guard in the Over 45 Novice Division, competing against nine other racers.



Bowe enters the first turn of the Military Mountain Bike National Championship race with the rest of the field trailing. (Photo courtesy Col. Patrick Bowe)

"I was pleased that the Navy chain of command went ahead with their authorization to hold this race given all the security issues raised by recent events," said Bowe. The race included 60 representatives from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. Military members competed against each other as well as against the civilian field at the same time.

Racing took place over a 14-mile course on the base property and saw competitors negotiating flat, open terrain, steep hills and plenty of twists and turns. According to Bowe, a few ditches and some old collapsed bunkers provide obstacles that had to be negotiated while maintaining speed. Many competitors had minor spills during the course of the race, though there were no serious injuries suffered by anyone.

"My race plan was to get out front early while the course was open and flat, that way it would be difficult for all but the best riders to pass me once we got to the narrow, single track sections," said Bowe. "The strategy worked well. I was in the lead in my category most of the race and caught many people from other groups as the race unfolded."

At the end of the race, Bowe finished in second place overall, just seven seconds behind the winner, and first place in the military category.

Connecticut Guard Pistol Team Participates in 2001 Wilson Matches

1st LT. ANTHONY D. WILSON
JUDGE ADVOCATE, 103RD FIGHTER WING

A pistol team of six Connecticut Army and Air Guardsmen participated in the 2001 Winston P. Wilson Matches at Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas during October. The Wilson Match is a premium national competition sponsored annually by the Army National Guard Bureau, to which Army and Air Guardsmen from the various states and territories, as well as representatives from the Regular Armed Services and elite foreign competitors, are invited to test and improve their accuracy and skills in pistol, rifle, sniper and machine gun categories.

This year's pistol shooters participated in many individual and group matches throughout the week including: pistol and rifle Excellence-in-Competition matches in which top shooters can earn points toward distinguished badges; a single elimination run-down match in which four-person teams compete side-by-side to shoot down 10 plates of various sizes in the fastest time; a 50-yard Bullseye Match testing accuracy and shooting arm endurance, and the Patton Team Match in which runners must complete a timed two-mile run in full gear to qualify for subsequent shooting stages.

The Connecticut Guard team was represented by Staff Sgt. Charles Allen, Staff Sgt. Gregory Tomsen and Staff Sgt. Carl Bourne of the Connecticut Army Guard, as well as Master Sgt. Brian E. Roy, Tech. Sgt. Scott D. Ashley and 1st Lt. Anthony D. Wilson of the Connecticut Air National Guard. All three CTARNG representatives are current or former members of various All-Guard International Shooting Teams (see November 2001 *Connecticut Guardian*), as well as marksmanship instructors for the CTARNG.

Roy was a gold distinguished pistol shooter prior to this year's Wilson Match and earned six additional points in this year's rifle EIC match in an effort to achieve the prestigious "double distinguished" status.

If you are interested in sharpening or testing your shooting skills, then the Marksmanship program is looking for you. The Marksmanship program regularly competes at the Wilson matches, as well as other formal and informal competitions. Competitors have varying skill levels and come from many military walks of life. In addition to the Army Guard's marksmanship instructors, this year's Air Force pistol competitors hold positions in planning, fuels and legal.

ESGR: Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Additional Financial Support For Activated Personnel

LT. COL. (RET.) HARRY RITSON
ESGR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In an unprecedented way, more and more corporations are standing behind their activated employees and supporting their financial situation – usually by agreeing to make up the difference between the individual's civilian salary and their military salary. While the corporate motivation probably lies somewhere between their desire to support the individual and the national defense, and their desire to hopefully insure the return of these valued employees, nevertheless it is unprecedented, extremely welcome and important.

In a recent release FleetBoston Financial Corporation announced a program that goes even further to help relieve the financial situations of those called-up. Fleet will give priority hiring status for their part-time jobs to those called, their spouses or immediate family members. These part-time positions exist on most

shifts, times are flexible, and the positions include benefits. These might prove perfect fits for those mobilized for Homeland Security or those returning from Bosnia or Kosovo.

New positions are updated every two weeks, and positions are currently available in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Jersey. The Fleet contact person is:

JulieThompson
Phone: (201) 296-3174
Fax: (201) 641-3457

Julianne_M_Thompson@fleet.com

We're hoping other employers will follow this lead and search out other ways to support those who serve. Remember, if you have employment problems or are interested in information regarding your employment rights or responsibilities, you can call ESGR's Ombudsman, Capt. (Ret.) Thomas Langlais, at (860) 283-4222.

Closing The Back Door:

Protect, Serve, Defend: A Recruiter's Perspective

SGT. 1ST CLASS DAVID RINALDO
MARKETING DIRECTOR, CTARNG

The National Guard is at one of its most relevant points in history. Our purpose and existence is validated in many dimensions. Of course, soldiers and airmen are on call as we speak, overseas in areas of international conflict. Just as important, are the domestic efforts. Homeland Defense is instrumental to the stability of our nation. Domestic commerce, travel and daily living are relatively normal — with much thanks to the efforts of our citizen soldiers/airmen.

Patriotism is at an all time high. You may notice this when you stop for gas on the way home from drill. Or when you grab that coffee while on your break from military training. People look at you, and the uniform you wear, with visible approval and appreciation. You represent stability and security to the civilian eye.

In the tragic wake of September 11th an enhanced military prestige and honor has developed. Previously, the number one stated reason that new members joined was for college benefits. We are now deluged

with applicants that want to “make a difference” and support the cause. Prior service members are especially interested in re-affiliating and serving their country.

When you are in public, when you are with friends and family, when you wake up every day and enjoy the freedom this country is founded on, think about what it means to be in the National Guard. Think about how important a mission we have been tasked with.

We cannot complete this mission alone. As units get activated we must ensure we have a strong organization. Speak with your acquaintances and friends. Tell them what an important job we are doing. Ask them to become a part of the solution. We must enlist 765 new members and reenlist 481 current members for force structure maintenance to meet our duty and mission.

Interested individuals can contact us at 1-800-716-3550 or go to our national web site www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com. Protect, Serve, Defend: our country depends on you.

NGACT: Association Seeks Members

SGT. MAJ. (RET.) JOSEPH
AMATRUDA

The National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT) recently sent a mailing to all of its “life members”. Many of the envelopes were returned due to incorrect addresses.

If anyone knows where these members have relocated, please call the association office at 860-247-5000 and leave a message:

Raymond J. Baddour, Eugene J. Baldrate, Brett D. Bastedo, Maj. (Ret) William Beebe, Robert J. Bennett, Dean L. Berardi, Robyn L. Bievenour, Carl A. Blackstone, Kerry T. Blanchard, Michael P. Butler, Paul A. Carnevale, William Charbonneau, Lt. Col. (Ret) Anthony Cipriano, Lauri A. Cooksey, Michael D. Cottrell, Albert H. Crowley, Michael J. DeLeonardo, Harold J. Deschenes, Laurie A. Dickson, Bryan Dickson, Andrew W. Dieterle, Daniel F. Dineen, Randall A. Esber, Robert T. Fiest, Howard Fitzpatrick, Michael G. Flach, Anthony C. Francis, Ronald M. French, James W. Freston, John F. Frey, Vincent A. Geraci, Donald R. Graves, Frank J. Guastella, Steven R. Hilsdon, Ronald A. Hunter, Lt. Col. (Ret)

Anthony Kalkus, John J. Kearney, John Kidney.

Also, Henry J. Kuhlman, Andrew T. Lamb, Gary M. Leaming, Neil J. Leonard, Stephen A. Lott, Michele R. Lourigan, James F. Lupacchino, Nathan Macants Jr, John M. Macenroe, Amy T. Malia, Robert D. Mercer-Falkoff, Thomas R. Messick, Alfred J. Mestuzzi, Chief Warrant Officer 4 (Ret) Joseph Miller, George Mitchell, Thomas C. Mordowanec, Edward R. Morgan, Daniel C. Murphy, David W. Parent, Donna L. Peabody, Christopher J. Peck, Roy S. Perkins, Norman A. Pierce, Darwin L. Price, Gregory J. Russo, Russell C. Sage, Charles H. Schluter, Daniel B. Schwartz, Steven M. Sewak, William J. Shields, James M. Skiff, James N. Skirpol, Gary L. Smith, Robert P. Spaulding, Jeffrey R. Stamp, Kevin E. Stewart, Dean R. Strong, Thomas E. Stroud, Michael M. Tallman, John L. Tenerow, Sgt. 1st Class (Ret) Leonard Theriault, Maj. (Ret) Lawrence Tully, Andrew D. Tupper, Leroy P. Vanwhy, Philip O. Washington, Paul C. Westfield, and David D. Williams.

TSP Options Require Investors to do Their Homework

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER — Being informed is essential to making sound investment decisions — and the Thrift Savings Plan for service members is no different.

With the first open season currently under way, military members need to be able to comprehend enrollment, the five different funds, bonus and special pay options and more.

“This is a great program with the potential for service members to accumulate a good sum of money by their retirement and save on taxes now — but people must do their homework,” said Lt. Col. David Zeh, chief of the Contact Center here. “Especially since the first open season ends Jan. 31.” (Open season is the period in which members are allowed to designate into which funds their contributions will go. Two more open seasons will take place during the upcoming year: May 15 - July 31 in 2002 and Nov. 15, 2002 - Jan. 31, 2003)

Take the contributions for instance. Military members can initially contribute up to seven percent of their base pay with that percentage increasing to 10 percent by 2005. Military investors also have the ability to contribute all or part of bonuses or special pay up to the federal limits — \$11,000 in 2002.

In addition, those serving in tax-free combat zones are allowed up to \$40,000 in annual contributions.

“It’s really not as complicated as people may think,” said Zeh, “especially for those who take a little bit of time to research, compare and contrast.”

A good place to start figuring is the amount to contribute from your base pay — from one to seven percent.

“Each airman must determine for themselves what, if any, contribution amount will fit within their budget,” said Zeh. “It’s a personal decision that only they can make. The good thing about the contribution amount is that it is directly deducted from a member’s taxable income — so it lowers the amount Uncle Sam will take.”

Once the contribution amount has been determined, it’s time for an airman to look at the five different funds, determine an acceptable risk to them and make the allocations.

The Fixed Income Funds

The Government Securities Investment “G” Fund

This fund is known for being the safest investment of the five funds since the only way it will lose money is by some catastrophic event — say if the federal government defaults on its loans. But with low risk usually comes a lower interest rate or rate of return. For instance, this fund has gone up more than 5.6 percent in the past 12 months despite overall drops in most markets, according to the TSP web site. In some investment circles, it’s safety and earnings make it comparable to a savings account. The G Fund invests in specially issued short-term, nonmarketable U.S. Treasury securities.

The Fixed Income Index Investment “F” Fund

Essentially, the F Fund is higher risk than

the G Fund, but is still considered a low-risk investment because it is spread over many generally stable investments. Even if a corporation were to declare bankruptcy, the loss would be minimal. According to the TSP web site, this fund has gone up more than 13 percent in the past 12 months. Putting one’s money into the F Fund is an investment in the Barclays U.S. Debt Index Fund which tracks the bond-market. A mathematical model determines the amount in which this fund distributes investor’s money amongst the various types of U.S. government, mortgage-backed, corporate and foreign government sector securities.

The Common Stock Funds

The Common Stock Index Investment “C” Fund

Prior to this year, the C Fund averaged more than 10 percent return. That being said, as of Oct. 3 the C Fund was down more than 26.5 percent over the past 12 months. Investing in this fund puts members in the thick of the “Standard & Poor’s 500” companies. Through the Barclays Equity Index Fund, investors hold common stocks of all the companies within the S&P 500 index. This fund invests in 500 of the largest companies in the U.S. and are considered the least risky as stock investing goes.

The International Stock Index Investment “I” Fund

This fund along with the S Fund are new funds to the TSP and have little historical background data. Tracking the returns of the Morgan Stanley Capital International (Europe, Australasia and Far East) stock index, this fund provides coverage of stock markets in the 21 countries the index

represents. This includes 915 companies, 23 industry groups within 10 economic sectors. Simply stated, it grows as the world market grows.

The Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment “S” Fund

Again, there is little historical data to prove the profitability of this fund. While the S&P tracks 500 of the largest companies, this fund does just the opposite — but diversity is the key. It tracks small- and medium-sized companies through the Wilshire 4500 index (the Wilshire 5000 minus the 500 companies in the S&P). Its medium is the Barclays Extended Market Index Fund which buys stocks of those companies within the index that have market values more than \$1 billion — more than 3,400 stocks at the end of 2000.

(Find more detail about the funds at <http://www.tsp.gov/index.html>)

Finally, once a person decides they’re ready to enroll, they simply access the Defense Finance and Accounting Service website at <http://www.dfas.mil/emss/> to establish an account. An alternate method to enroll is to obtain a hard copy of the form from their local finance office, military personnel flight, or family support center. The initial election form is TSP-U-1.

Once the web-version or hard copy form is filed, the account is established. TSP will then mail the member a confirmation letter along with a personal identification number to access their account via the web. The member may then make their contribution allocation.

“It’s really a great benefit now available to us,” said Zeh. “But it’s essential they do their homework.”

In Defense of Connecticut's Children: *Ethical Decision Making*

MASTER SGT. MELISA L. LATA
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAM

In fiscal year 2001, the Drug Demand Reduction Program helped educate nearly 10,000 youth and adults on how to reject substance abuse. The most important way we teach youth how to live a drug free lifestyle is by teaching them ethical decision-making.

Ethics is a matter of action more than of contemplation, not just a system of beliefs, but a code of conduct. As soldiers and airmen, our code of conduct dictates to us a life based on our duties and responsibilities. As parents, we need to continuously teach our children the importance of ethical decision-making.

Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are

everywhere; on our televisions, in our neighborhoods, even in our schools. It's not enough just to tell your children to stay away from dangerous substances.

We must give them the insight to recognize what is right and wrong, and provide them with the tools to make the right decision. When illustrating ethical behavior to children, it is important to show and model examples of good ethical decisions for youth. Practicing ethical behavior involves making productive decisions.

In order to make productive decisions, children must know how to practice self-restraint. Crucial decisions can involve not doing what you have the power to do, not doing what you have the right to do, and not doing what you want to do, regardless

of the cost in popularity, money, prestige, or pleasure.

Choices are made everyday, one by one. Many of those choices revolve around ethics. Children are faced with thousands of conflicting messages whirling around in their brains. In a split second your child can make the wrong decision. It is very possible your children could decide to try marijuana or alcohol.

This decision happens so quickly, but at the same time has a lasting effect. A good decision involves reviewing facts, exploring our feelings, analyzing consequences, and listening to what other people think. Your child's decisions need to be the same whether you're standing over their shoulder or not.

Discuss with them the impact their choices can have on their lives and others. Teach

them to consider everyone involved as a result of their decision, not just themselves. Give them the knowledge to make choices with courage and foresight.

Trustworthiness, fairness, caring, citizenship, respect, and responsibility are the ethical principles children need and must have, in order to reject substance abuse.

Remember these principles are ground rules for life, not just factors to consider or rules of convenience. Parents should incorporate ethical decision-making into discussions with their children about drugs.

If you have any questions regarding other Drug Free events or Educational & Leadership Programs please call @ 860-493-2724 and ask for Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia or Master Sgt. Melisa Lata.

TRICARE Dental Program Offers Additional Dental Care

The TRICARE Dental Program is offered by the Department of Defense (DOD) through the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). United Concordia is the one who administers and underwrites the TDP for the TRICARE Management Activity.

The TRICARE Dental Program offers a high quality, cost effective dental care benefit for family members of all active duty Uniformed Service personnel and to Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members and their families. To be eligible for the TDP, the sponsor must have at least 12 months remaining on his or her service commitment with the parent Service at the time of enrollment. When the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) indicates less than 12 months remaining, United Concordia will validate the intent of the individual on active duty, Selected Reserve or IRR members to continue their service commitment. Since DEERS is used to verify eligibility – it is extremely important that sponsors keep their information up to date.

Q: How do I enroll into the TRICARE Dental Program?

A: There are several methods available to enroll into the TDP: Enroll online. You can enroll online by clicking on "Enroll Online." To utilize the electronic application, you must complete *both* the enrollment sections and the credit card sections of the form; Download the enrollment form. You can download the TDP enrollment form by clicking on the "Reference Materials." Fill out the form and mail to the address indicated on the back of the form. A check, money order, or credit card payment equal to one month's premium must be submitted with the form; Visit your local Uniformed Service Personnel Office, Dental Treatment Facility or Health Benefits Advisor/

Installation to obtain an enrollment form. A check, money order, or credit card payment equal to one month's premium must be submitted with the form; Contact United Concordia at EABEM@ucci.com to request an enrollment form be mailed to you. A check, money order, or credit card payment equal to one month's premium must be submitted with the form.

Q: How long after enrolling will I receive my TDP identification cards or confirmation of my coverage?

A: Once United Concordia receives your TDP enrollment form, the enrollment is processed after eligibility and payment verification is confirmed. After the enrollment is process, your identification cards are issued. The entire process takes approximately two (2) weeks.

Q: The Enrollment and Billing telephone line is always busy.

A: Currently, we are experiencing high call volumes. If you have an enrollment and/or billing question, you may also send an email to the Enrollment and Billing area. Customer Service Representatives will respond to your inquiries. Click "Contact Information", then on "Other UCCI Contacts" and then on the link for "Emailing the Enrollment and Billing Area". You can also send you email directly to EABEM@ucci.com.

Q: What determines getting a direct pay bill or having a deduction from my pay?

A: All Reservist family members and Individual Ready Reserve (other than Special Mobilization Category) service members will receive a direct pay bill from United Concordia.

All Active Duty or AGR family members and Select Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (Special Mobilization Category)

service members will be eligible for monthly deductions from their pay. However, if there are insufficient funds available to make the deduction at the time of our billing cycle, the member will be issued a direct pay bill and remain on direct billing for the remainder of the contract period.

Q: When are the direct pay bills issued?

A: The direct billing for March was mailed on February 13, 2001. These payments will be due on March 5, 2001.

The direct billing for April will be mailed on March 7, 2001. These payments will be due on March 25, 2001. As of May's direct billing and forward, the bills will be mailed on the 1st of the month, with payments due on the 25th of the month. Besides remitting your payment via personal check, there are two other payment alternatives: automatic monthly withdrawal from your checking account; or automatic monthly payment from your credit card

Q: If my check has been cashed does that mean I am enrolled?

A: No. You are not automatically enrolled in the TDP when your check is cashed. The bank deposits your check and then forwards the enrollment application to our Enrollment & Billing Department for processing. Eligibility is verified to determine if the request can be processed. If the enrollment can be processed, you will receive your TDP identification cards in the mail. If enrollment cannot be processed, you will receive a letter in the mail with an explanation along with a refund of your initial payment.

Q: What is the correct premium to enroll a Reservist and his/her family member(s)?

A: On the back of the TDP enrollment form there is a chart listing the premium amounts. If you wish to enroll yourself and your family member or members, you will need to add

the premium amounts from the sponsor column and the single or family column. The family column does not include yourself. If the total required premium amount is not received with your enrollment application, only you or some of your family members may get enrolled.

Q: Why does my dental coverage indicate a cancellation date of January 1, 2001 or February 1, 2001 when my coverage should be continuous?

A: United Concordia has been working with TRICARE Management Activity, the Defense Manpower Data Center and the Uniformed Services Finance Centers to update the contracts that did not convert to the TRICARE Dental Program. The Finance Centers will collect the missing premiums from January or February and these transactions will be reflected in your LES in the near future.

Q: How can I get a listing of participating providers in my area?

A: You can obtain a listing of participating providers in your area via our website: Click on "TRICARE Dental Program"; Click on "Find a Dentist"; Use the drop-down menu to select a Specialty if other than a General Dentist is desired. You may search via five methods: City and State; By Dentist Name; Zip Code; Zip Code with mile radius of 5, 10, 15, 25, or 35 miles; County and State. Click on "Find A Dentist" below each search option. If directions or a map are desired, click on "Map It."

If you have further questions, the United Concordia Website; <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricare/beneficiary/supprog.htm> is a very informative site. I suggest that if you are interested in extra dental care you start by reviewing this website.

KISS 95.7 Takes to the Airwaves at Hartford Armory in Support of Connecticut Troops Stationed Overseas



Ross, Courtney and Steve (front row) of KISS 95.7, Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, Connecticut's adjutant general and Lt. Gov. M. Jodi Rell take a break from a live broadcast at the Hartford Armory. The popular hosts of "The Morning Show" came to the armory to support Lt. Gov. Rell's "Hugs and Kisses for the Troops" program. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Hosts of the KISS 95.7 Morning Show known to listeners as Ross and Courtney, interview Lt. Gov. M. Jodi Rell during a live broadcast of their show from the lobby of the Hartford Armory. The event was planned to promote Rell's "Hugs and Kisses for Our Troops" Campaign which encouraged community members to drop off holiday donations of food, video tapes, books, local newspapers and other such gifts for Connecticut's troops stationed overseas at the armory or her office in the state capitol. Donations had been coming in during the weeks preceding the live broadcast, but hundreds of pounds of goods came in as a result of the show, including two truckloads of snack food from local supermarket chains. The donated items will be distributed among Connecticut's soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines stationed overseas. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

Retirees' Voice

ODCSPER Directorate of Retirement Services Answers Frequently Asked Questions

Q: After I retired, I discovered that my DD Form 214 does not contain all my awards and decorations and that my total service time is incorrect. How do I go about correcting my DD Form 214?

A: Send a copy (never an original) of your DD Form 214 along with proof of what error needs to be corrected to Commander ARPERSCOM, ATTN: ARPC-VSE, 1 Reserve Way, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. They will issue a DD Form 215 correcting the 214. It generally takes a considerable period of time for a total research of an individual's file and correction to be issued.

Q: What is the law that covers Heroism Pay for enlisted personnel?

A: Section 3991, Title 10 United States Code provides that enlisted retirees may receive an additional 10 percent in retired pay (not to exceed 75 percent of active duty base pay) if cited with Extraordinary heroism, e.g., awarded the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross or the Navy Cross.

Q: How do I change one of the allotments from my retired pay?

A: Allotments may only be changed by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Cleveland Center, PO Box 99191, Cleveland, OH 44199-1126.

Q: How do I obtain a copy of a specific document or a copy of my complete military personnel file?

A: Write to National Personnel Records Center, ATTN: Army Reference Branch (NCPMA), 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. Be sure to give them your social

security number when you send your request. Your request will take some time, so be patient.

Q: My spouse was Army Retired and I now receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Am I entitled to any military benefits?

A: Yes. The unremarried surviving spouse of a retiree is entitled to the same benefits as a spouse of a retiree. Contact your Retirement Services Officer.

Q: I'm retired with 100 percent disability. Will my surviving spouse still be eligible for military benefits?

A: Yes. Regardless of type of retirement (Length of Service, disability, mandatory or voluntary) military benefits to an unremarried surviving spouse are the same.

Q: How can I get the address of my Army buddies?

A: The US Army no longer provides locator services. It is suggested you contact units holding reunions, *Army Times*, or one of the locator services provided through the Internet.

Q: I lost my 1099R. How can I get a replacement copy so that I can file my federal and state income tax returns?

A: You must contact either DFAS-CL or your Retirement Services Officers and request a replacement. With the number of replacement requests received by DFAS-CL, it may be faster to contact your RSO if you reside close to an Army installation.

Connecticut National Guard Retirees of Florida to Hold Annual Reunion

The Connecticut National Guard Retirees of Florida will hold their annual reunion from March 1 to March 3 at the LaQuinta Hotel in Orlando, Florida (same location as last year). Hotel reservations should be made no later than Feb. 21.

Besides the annual business meeting, highlights of the planned events include dinner at Bill Wongs famous all you can eat buffet and a dinner cruise on the St. John's River.

Details have been mailed to all Connecticut National Guard retirees living in Florida who the organization has addresses for. For more information, or to find out if you are on the list, contact Art Finnegan at (727) 725-1206 or Aksel Hansen at (352) 686-1628.

Connecticut National Guard Fulltime Employment Opportunities

The following are Connecticut Army and Air Guard Technician openings. For a copy of the Technician vacancy Announcement, see your technician/military supervisor or call Master Sgt. Kevin Salisbury at (860) 878-6739

Note: Several additional job postings are available on the Connecticut National Guard Website.

Army National Guard Technician Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing Date
Aircraft Pneudraulic Systems Mechanic	AVCRAD	WG-10	1/2/2002
Military Personnel Staffing Specialist	HQ STARC R&R	GS-07	11/29/2001
Accounting Technician (Temporary)	USPFO	GS-06	1/2/2002
Agency Program Coordinator	USPFO	GS-07	1/7/2002
Heavy Mobile Equipment Repairer	UTES	WG-09	1/11/2001
Military Personnel Technician	TSSD	GS-07	1/11/2002
Military Personnel Technician	TSSD	GS-07	1/11/2002
Flight Engineer (Instructor)	AASF	GS-10	1/22/2002

Air National Guard Technician Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing date
Automotive mechanic	103rd FW ACS	WG-10	1/2/2002
Medical Clerk (OA)	103rd FW, Support	GS-05	1/2/2002
Electronic Integrated Systems Mech. (Indef.)	103rd FW, LOG	WG-12	1/17/2002
Aircraft Mechanic, Indefinite	103rd FW, LOG	WG-12/08/-5	1/17/2002
Aircraft Engine Mechanic	103rd FW, LOG	WG-10	1/18/2002

Listed below are current openings in the Connecticut National Guard AGR program. For a copy of the Military Tour Vacancy Announcement, see your supervisor or call Sgt. 1st Class Jacqueline Thomas at (860) 878-6729.

Note: Several additional job postings are available on the Connecticut National Guard Website.

Army National Guard AGR Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Production Recruiter	R&R Command, STARC	SFC/E-7	Open Statewide
Supply Sergeant	HHD 85th Troop Cmd.	SSG/E-6	Open Statewide
Aircraft Electrician	1109th AVCRAD	SSG/E-6	Open Statewide
Training NCO	Co.C, 242nd Engineer Bn.	SSG/E-6	Open Statewide

Air National Guard AGR Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Training Instructor (Supply)	103rd FW, LOG	MSG	On Board AGR Only
Materials Handler	103rd FW, LOG	SSG	Open Air
Medical Clerk	103rd FW, Support	TSG	Open Air

The complete listing of both Technician and AGR vacancies and job descriptions can also be accessed by going to the Connecticut National Guard website at www.ct.ngb.army.mil

Coming Events

January

January 21

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February

On Going

Support to Winter Olympics, Utah

February 12

Lincoln's Birthday

February 14

Valentine's Day

February 18

Presidents' Day

February 22

Washington's Birthday

February 20

Black History Month Celebration

March

Women's History Month Celebration

March 17

St. Patrick's Day

March 23

NGACT Annual Meeting

March 29

Good Friday

March 31

Easter

In the Next CG

Guardsmen to Support Winter Olympics in Utah

2002 Pay Chart

Black History Month Celebration

Family Gets Called to Duty

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month previous to publication.

Delegation Travels to Bosnia to Learn About Guard's Mission

From p. 5

Connecticut, to start the process of ensuring her son's educational future will resume shortly after returning to Connecticut in the Spring.

UConn sent representatives to visit students who put their collegiate studies on hold to serve in the peacekeeping mission.

"These students were pulled out of school to go, and we wanted to show our support, and let them know we care," said William Pizzuto, executive director of UConn's Tri-Campus Administration. "We had 12 students from all three of the campuses our department oversees (Waterbury, West Hartford and Torrington), and there were several from the campus at Storrs. They were concerned about the possibility of losing credits, and some wanted to know how the construction of the new campus (in downtown Waterbury, not far from the headquarters of the 143rd) is coming along."

Pizzuto and his boss, Edna McBride, as well as Ron Shurin from the office of the president of UConn spent time with the troops, but were also given homework assignments from the students who are now serving as soldiers.

"They asked us to send videotapes of the UConn basketball games," Pizzuto said. That assignment will be completed, he said, but he also encourages that members of the public send items to help make the time in Bosnia as enjoyable as possible. "They should be supported in any ways possible - letters, goods, anything from home. They're keeping the peace."

Pizzuto had the dual role of representing elected officials from the municipal government of Waterbury, where the 143rd is based. Like many other civilian visitors, he gained a new appreciation of the Connecticut National Guard.

"I realized that this country is protected by 19-year old men and women, who are highly trained and dedicated. I now have a lot more appreciation for what they do, and that they really believe in their mission, and in their country."

The adjutant general also invited several Guard retirees, so they could spread the word among senior citizens, how the military has changed during recent years. State legislators, especially those whose

committees deal with matters related to the Guard, went on the trip, or sent delegates. Congressman James Maloney, of the 5th District, and Congressman Rob Simmons, of the 2nd District, sent representatives. Both are members of the House Armed Services Committee.

"I will brief Congressman Simmons and the other people in the office," said K. Robert Lewis, a staffer specializing in veterans' affairs and constituent services. During the roughly eight hours of flying time on the way home, he began preparing that briefing. "We'll try to find ways that the

Congressional office can support the Guard and the military, in general, whether it's funding, training, educational benefits. A lot of people have put a lot on the line in order to be over here."

The story of the troops performing the peacekeeping mission was brought to the living rooms of their family members and friends by a large delegation of television and newspaper reporters.

"The media serve as our communication tool to the public," Cugno said, expressing his desire to get several messages out to the

public. One message was that the Guard plays a vital role in the "total Army" package. That's partly why the delegation spent time learning about Kaiserslautern, which contains the largest community of American citizens outside of North America, mainly because of the military. But, also he wanted the reporters to see something he knows as well as anyone.

In separate discussions with troops, and with the media, Gen. Joseph Ralston, commander in chief, US European Command and Supreme Allied Commander, NATO, as well as Gen. Gregory S. Martin, commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, and commander Allied Air Forces Northern Europe, both spoke of the professionalism and specialized job skills the citizen-soldiers have brought to the mission in Bosnia. They both said the overall military mission in Europe would be impossible without the service of these Guard members. Cugno was pleased that the important message was delivered by such credible, objective sources. That message was not missed by the media.

"I've been a reporter for more than a decade. I've interviewed an awful lot of people - people who get interviewed all the time. A lot of them don't know what they are talking about," said Kent Pierce, from WTNH-TV, Channel 8, based in New Haven. "Every man and woman (from the Connecticut Guard) I interviewed in Bosnia gave me intelligent, thoughtful answers. I told Maj. Gen. Cugno that he has a great group of people over there."

Cugno may have also gained at least one recruit from the mission. Channel 8 photographer Walter McGraw, a veteran of six years in the Navy, was impressed with the transformation of the military since he served in the 1970's.

"These people are citizen-soldiers, and there's a professional aspect of these people. They all have a different contribution to make, but they all join together in the unit, and do their jobs."

"I've always respected the military, but now I have a whole new respect for the National Guard... to the point at which I will talk to my family about possibly joining," McGraw said.

On behalf of Gov. John G. Rowland, Cugno presented special limited edition coins to the 55 members of the delegation, both four-star generals, and all 250 Connecticut troops.



Frank Niicastro, Mayor of Bristol, visits with Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Aparooft of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion in Bosnia during a recent trip. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)



William Pizzuto, executive director of UConn's Tri-Campus Administration spends time with Maj. Luke Boutot in Bosnia. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)



Mayor Lucien Pawlak spent time with Sgt. Jill Klepacki of the 143rd FSB while in Bosnia. Both are residents of New Britain. Pawlak brought along a special care package for the soldier who was maneuvering around Camp Comanche on crutches. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)



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