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The

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Skibird



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Fall / Winter 2016



Maintaining Excellence

Team effort ensures success

By Lt. Col. Rob Donaldson
109th Maintenance Group Commander

Greetings! What a great pleasure it is for me to speak to you in my new role as the Wing's Maintenance Group Commander. I am truly honored and humbled by the opportunity and proud to be part of an elite team with a winning streak that continues to impress. My 26 years at Stratton has been time well spent as I've been able to work with many of you along the way and in turn, observe firsthand a veteran expertise dedicated to a unique mission executed at levels exceedingly off the charts. All the while, watching the Wing pile up a long list of marked accomplishments that continue to serve as historical milestones. 2016 proved no different for the Wing in its list of pursuits and achievements.

No sooner do we exit Greenland when the FY17 Operation Deep Freeze season is already upon us along with its never-ending challenges. Currently, five of the seven Wing's LC-130H aircraft are forward deployed with Stratton maintainers hard at work to get the last two down in the mix. As Murphy's Law always seems to call it, if a strategic maintenance issue is going to happen, it's going to happen when you least want it to and more specifically, on the cusp of a deployment push. With two weeks to go prior to our LC-130H ODF launch, a fleet wide impacting propeller staking safety alert threatened an on-time ODF start. Through extensive multi-Group collaboration efforts, I'm happy to say this potential set-back was avoided through

an effective, safe and sound maintenance remedy. A great job by all and a net result directly attributable to effective Wing-wide communication. We anticipate another outstanding season working with our friends at National Science Foundation to achieve even greater feats in the world of science and discovery.

Our commitment to the polar region does not end with our ODF and Greenland obligations as evident by our LC-130H support during Canada's Operation Nunavut earlier this year. Three years in a row, the Wing has now demonstrated its ability to conduct flying operations in the Arctic. This area of the world is rapidly changing given the melting of the polar ice cap and with it, access to new sea lines of communication has elevated this region to new heights of strategic importance. The highlights of our LC-130 performance during this exercise demonstrated to DOD and others a vital capability that combatant commanders could access as this region of the world continues to evolve. Our timing couldn't be better--what terrific strategic foresight!

Our warfighting effort is in full execution mode with many of our Airmen already downrange supporting the Wing's RCP 5 mobilization taskings. This includes Airmen within our Mission Support Group to include the Logistics, Security Forces, and Civil Engineering Squadrons as well as Contracting and Communications Flights. Several MXG Airmen are also deploying as are several other folks from across the Wing. It goes without saying these professionals will be missed, and with their departure comes

the added tasking on those left behind to pick up the slack. I'm confident collectively we'll meet this challenge head on with the enthusiasm I've come to expect from the 109th team.

Unfortunately, 2016 was not without its domestic disturbances as evident by the New York City and New Jersey bombings. Despite the chaos that ensued from these Homeland acts of terrorism, our Security Forces' personnel were there to support with the measured timely response required. Their poised actions coupled with their leveraged professional expertise went a long way to ensuring a quick recovery for these communities.

This year also marked a first for the 109th Fire Department. It's very own Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team joined forces with FEMA's Task Force 1 and successfully demonstrated the talents of these expertly trained firefighters during the Vigilant Guard exercise in Vermont. As the lead USAR team for this event, their training was put to the test through an array of high angle rescue, confined space, breaching and breaking, and other vital urban search and rescue tactics and techniques. These fine emergency responders not only demonstrated their ability to save lives under extreme conditions but also their ability to rapidly integrate seamlessly into combined operations with their civilian counterparts making them a legitimate call-to-action force for domestic response.

The Wing continues to manage its resources wisely, which includes making inroads with revitalizing our aged LC-130H fleet with 3.5 engine upgrades along with incorporating the



File Photo

NP2000 8-bladed propeller system. An enormous amount of work and coordination between the Wing and a host of stakeholders, National Guard Bureau included, has been made to make this airframe revitalization project a reality. We anticipate both of these upgrades coming in the very near future as we near the finish line on a long road of planning, and execution.

For those keeping track, there are now four C-130 "wheelbirds" (up from two) aircraft sitting on our ramp, which brings the Wing up to a grand total of 14 LC/C-130Hs available to us to support operations. These additional C-130s are loaner aircraft made available by NGB to us to use for local sorties here at home while our main body LC-130H fleet is deployed down south. These additions were made possible through fantastic collaboration between NGB, the Alaska Air National Guard, and members of the 109th AW. The additional aircraft will help our Operations Group maintain the sortie levels necessary to train and qualify a large number of operators here at home while the rest of the available fleet and crews are supporting the ODF mission. A big thanks goes out to our very own Maj. Mario Zocchi of NGB

See 109th MXG, page 6

109th Airlift Wing



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Col. Shawn Clouthier

Vice Commander

Col. Alan Ross

Command Chief

Chief Master Sgt. Denny Richardson

The Skibird

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A collage highlighting Airmen of the 109th Maintenance Group. Read about all the great work these Airmen do to keep the planes flying. [Pages 10-11](#) (Photo Collage by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara)

Expectations for success

By Chief Master Sgt. Denny Richardson
109th AW Command Chief

Fellow Airmen of the one-hundred and ninth! As I settle in to my new role as Command Chief I can't help but to feel a sense of pride and excitement. Unit pride in serving for you and excitement in our future endeavors together. My career path has prepared me for this moment, and I intend to take full advantage of this opportunity on your behalf.

Effective communication is the key to success and my expectations will be clearly communicated throughout the ranks. Professional development, Air Force core values and respect; these three items represent the foundation of my expectations for success.

Professional Development Provides us with structure while focusing on the art of leadership and management. AFI 36-2618 provides us with this structure by clearly defining leadership and development levels. In order to become a successful leader one must first have the ability to learn and follow. Professional development objectives will be satisfied through your pursuit of skills training, professional military education and proactive participation.

Air Force Core Values The set of standards that allow us to accomplish our

mission to fly, fight and win! Our standards are clearly established in "The Little Blue Book" and is the common bond across the entire Air Force. No matter your specialty nor status we all are accountable to the same standards. Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do are our standards, and we must make them a part of our daily lives.

Respect In defense of our country we must not take our profession for granted and treat this with the upmost respect. It is imperative that we demonstrate respect for our country (American Flag and National Anthem), authority and each other. Customs and courtesies are highlighted in AFI 1-1 and establishes the importance of making respect a way of life. With respect there is no problem too big or small that we cannot overcome together.

Maintaining an intense focus in all three areas will prepare us for opportunities and create a foundation built on trust. Staying committed to all expectations will create an environment that is motivated and successful.

My challenge to leaders is to ensure these expectations are met and to provide Airmen with required assistance to obtain



File Photo

objectives. As leaders we must ensure our Airmen give maximum effort every day. We must continue to grow them and not allow ourselves or them to become complacent in our careers and/or our learning. Most Airmen come to work to do the best they can. It's up to us as supervisors and leaders to equip them for success, and that includes holding each other accountable. People will perform optimally when standards and expectations are high.

I'm ready...are you?



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

Richardson assumes duties as 109th AW command chief

Chief Master Sgt. Denny Richardson assumes his duties as the 109th Airlift Wing command chief from Col. Shawn Clouthier, 109th AW commander, during a ceremony here on Oct. 6, 2016. Richardson replaces Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto (right) who assumed duties as the New York Air National Guard Command Chief on July 25, 2016. As Wing command chief, Richardson is responsible for matters influencing the health, morale and welfare, professional development, training, readiness and proper utilization of about 700 enlisted Airmen assigned to the 109th AW.

Buzz Aldrin evacuated from South Pole Station

National Science Foundation

MCMURDO STATION, ANTARCTICA - The National Science Foundation (NSF) agreed to provide a humanitarian medical evacuation flight for an ailing visitor from its Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station to McMurdo Station on the Antarctic coast and then to New Zealand.



An LC-130 "Skibird" with the 109th Airlift Wing takes off from the South Pole Station in 2007.

The patient is Buzz Aldrin, who, in 1969, became one of the first men to walk on the Moon, as part of the two-man lunar landing crew of Apollo 11.

The request to NSF, which manages the U.S. Antarctic Program, came on Dec. 1 (local time, U.S. stations in Antarctica keep New Zealand time) from White Desert, a private tourism firm.

Ski-equipped LC-130 cargo planes flown by the 109th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard provide the air bridge between the South Pole and McMurdo.

After he was flown to McMurdo by an LC-130 crew, Aldrin was then transported to Christchurch, New Zealand by a Safair cargo aircraft and then brought to a local medical facility.

Leadership

Giaquinto takes over as NYANG command chief

By Eric Durr

New York National Guard
Public Affairs

LATHAM, N.Y. - New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto, became the first woman to serve as the top enlisted Airman in the 5,800-member New York Air National Guard during a change of authority at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs headquarters here July 25.

Giaquinto, who first served in the Army in 1984, had been serving as the 109th AW command chief since 2013. She replaces Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard D. King who has been the Command Chief of the New York Air National Guard since 2010 and has been named to serve as the Command Chief of the 1st Air Force, a three-star general officer command responsible for the air defense of the United States.

As the Command Chief of the New York Air National Guard, Giaquinto will be the senior enlisted adviser on training and morale of the enlisted force to Maj. Gen. Anthony German, the Commander of



Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding

Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto assumes her duties as the New York Air National Guard Command Chief from Maj. Gen. Anthony German, Adjutant General of New York, during a ceremony at New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs in Latham, New York, on July 25, 2016.

the New York Air National Guard and the Adjutant General of New York.

The New York Air National Guard, comprised of five wings and four separate

units, including Airmen charged with the air defense of the Eastern United States and the Washington D.C. area, is the largest Air National Guard in the United States.

Donaldson takes command of MXG



Lt. Col. Robert Donaldson takes command of the 109th Maintenance Group from Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander, during a change of command ceremony here Sept. 11, 2016. Donaldson replaces Col. Denise Donnell, who is now the 105th AW vice commander in Newburgh, New York.

Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

109th MXG from Page 2

who helped make this effort a reality.

Similarly, the Civil Engineering Squadron and its talented crew of engineers, craftsmen and support personnel continue to work toward making the Installation Development Plan a reality as we head into 2017 and beyond. This includes the complete renovation of Building 1, the design and construction of the fuel yard's above ground storage tanks, a new fitness center and a paved track, a combined County/Wing Maple Avenue road design project, and the design and placement of the High Expansion Foam fire suppression system in our aircraft hangars. Projects right around the corner

include the renovation of our firing range, a brand new Tactical Operations Center and a state-of-the-art aircraft flight simulator all of which would not have been made possible without the hard work of some dedicated members of the 109th AW.

As the record shows, the team continues to execute the mission at all-time levels, while managing our resources and improving the Wing through an array of training and exercise opportunities. We must not forget, however, that it's not the aircraft, money, or our infrastructure that makes this Wing strong—it's each of you. You are our most valuable resource and as such, your development is vitally

important to the future success of the mission. Supervisors and Airmen—you are all entrusted with developing yourselves and others, which is a heavy responsibility that must be closely watched. Attending the leadership development courses, earning your professional military education credits, completing your CCAF degree, and taking on challenging new roles are just some of the many ways we develop as future leaders. I encourage each of you to make 2017 the year you volunteer for these opportunities, and to encourage others to take up the reigns and do the same. Your professional development is a telling measure of the future

direction of our Wing and ultimately, its continued success. Seize the moment!

In closing, we've enjoyed a remarkable year and you should all reflect admirably in knowing you've served well having leveraged your efforts for the betterment of our nation and the world. As 2016 comes to a close, don't forget to enjoy whatever time you can with family and friends remembering all the things in our lives that we are truly grateful for. Be safe, and keep those who cannot be home with their loved ones in your thoughts and prayers as you enjoy the upcoming festivities. Happy Holidays and thank you for your service!

Leaders discuss strategic planning during staff ride

By Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding
109th AW Public Affairs

More than 20 officer and enlisted senior leaders with the 109th Airlift Wing had the opportunity to network with each other and discuss strategic planning during a professional development staff ride to Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, July 11-14.

“Traditionally, staff rides were something the Army had done to educate Soldiers in rudimentary combat tactics and hone their skills,” said Col. Jeffrey Hedges, 109th Mission Support Group commander. “The 109th has taken that idea and used it to further varying goals; from strategic planning to mission-based communications. These trips also serve as an opportunity to get Airmen off base, working and learning together in a different environment while building relationships.”

While the unit has conducted staff rides in the past, this was the first time senior leaders were invited to participate.

“We wanted to give them a firsthand look at what these staff rides do for our Airmen and why they’re important for their development in the unit,” said Hedges, who has been closely involved with these staff rides for several years.

Participants began the week with classroom instruction on the basic history behind Lexington

and Concord and what occurred there at the start of The Revolutionary War, including key historical figures and their involvement in the events leading up to the infamous battle. The purpose of this instruction was to set the stage and demonstrate the use of strategic planning during these historical events, according to Dr. Jim Scudieri, retired Army colonel and professor at the United States War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Scudieri then led the group on a walk of the Lexington and Concord battle road wherein British forces, following the initial battle at Lexington, march on Concord where they again met colonial militia in battle and were forced to retreat all the way back to Boston while fighting off enduring colonial attacks.



Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding



Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding

(From left) Lt. Col. Christian Sander, Lt. Col. Clifford Souza, Col. Alan Ross and Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Cerniglia discuss the 109th Airlift Wing’s strategic plan at the Southbridge Conference Center, Southbridge, Massachusetts, on July 12, 2016. More than 20 senior officer and enlisted leaders with the 109th AW participated in a professional development staff ride to Massachusetts July 11-14 and along with strategic plan discussion also had the opportunity to network with each other.

The group stopped at each of the historical sites along the route and discussed the events that occurred, oftentimes comparing the tactical decisions made by both sides, and relating them to modern day concerns at the Wing.

The group concluded their staff ride with a discussion of the Wing’s strategic plan moving forward, and how the lessons learned at Lexington

and Concord might relate to the development and support of the plan.

“An event like this rejuvenates you,” said Lt. Col. Ty Randall, 109th MSG vice commander. “It puts you in a better position to work toward and support the strategic goals of the unit.”

Randall said he believes the staff ride was a success and hopes that senior leaders can continue to participate alongside junior ranks in the future.

(From left) Chief Master Sgt. Raymond Morgan, Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Trottier and Lt. Col. William Carraher visit the Lexington and Concord battle road in Massachusetts on July 13, 2016. They were among more than 20 senior officer and enlisted leaders from the 109th Airlift Wing who participated in a professional development staff ride to Massachusetts July 11-14.

Airmen, aircraft migrate south



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

Two LC-130 "Skibirds" prepare to take off from Stratton Air National Guard Base on Oct. 18, 2016, to begin the journey to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze. This is the Wing's 29th season supporting ODF, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, managed by the National Science

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Airmen and aircraft with the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing started their annual journey to the southernmost part of the world in October.

Two ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules aircraft and 23 Airmen left Stratton Air National Guard Base on Oct. 18 to participate in the wing's 29th season supporting Operation Deep Freeze, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, which is managed by the National Science Foundation. The first LC-130 to leave Stratton departed Oct. 14.

Throughout the season, which runs through February, a total of six LC-130s and 500 Airmen are expected to deploy, with between 300 and 350 missions planned. About 120 Airmen will be deployed on the ice at any one time.

The unique capabilities of the ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft make it the only one of its kind in the U.S. military, able to land on snow and ice.

"Just the capability of landing heavy on the snow is a unique operational capability that only the United States has - that only we have at this unit," said Col. Christian Sander, 109th Operations Group commander.

The primary mission of the 109th AW is to provide airlift within Antarctica, flying to various remote locations from McMurdo Station. Crews will transport scientists, support, fuel, supplies, medical supplies and more throughout the season.

Last season, the 109th AW supported Antarctic research efforts by flying an estimated 3,900 researchers and support staff plus about 4 million pounds of cargo and 1.2 million pounds of fuel to research stations across Antarctica.

Crews will also once again be flying

missions in support of the Common Science Support Pod (CSSP) outfitted with IcePod science equipment. IcePod, an imaging system that can measure the depth of an ice sheet, was flown for the first time in Antarctica in the 2014-2015 season, and was deemed one of the biggest successes of that year.

The harsh Antarctic climate is probably the biggest challenge crews face each year, but constant training throughout the year enable these Airmen to overcome the demanding environment.

"We do all the standard (flying) training, and then we go to Greenland to do our Arctic survival school as well as Arctic flying school," said Sander. "Greenland's a great place to train because it's only about eight hours from here. There's science going on there too, but not quite as much as Antarctica, so we are able to mix the training and the science."

LC-130 Skibird crew receives Air Force Association Earl T. Ricks Award

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

A six-person LC-130 “Skibird” crew with the 109th Airlift Wing was recently recognized for their actions when they conducted an emergency landing in whiteout conditions in Antarctica on Jan. 19, 2015.

The crew -- Lt. Col. Stephen Yandik, pilot; Capt. Justin Garren, co-pilot; Capt. Jefferson Wood, navigator; Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Hubble, flight engineer; and loadmasters Tech. Sgt. Michael Wallace and Staff Sgt. Logan Brennan – were awarded the Air Force Association’s Earl T. Ricks

Award during the association’s 2016 Air Space and Cyber Conference held Sept. 19-21 in National Harbor, Maryland. The award recognizes Air National Guard personnel for outstanding airmanship.

When flying from Christchurch, New Zealand, to McMurdo Station, Antarctica, the crew encountered deteriorating weather conditions which made landing at Williams Field questionable. The crew had passed the point of safe return, not having enough fuel to return to Christchurch. LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft do not require a prepared surface to land, so the crew prepared for an emergency landing in the White Out Landing Area.

According to the award citation, the crew of Skier 72 successfully landed the aircraft in zero foot ceiling and zero miles visibility near Williams Field, Antarctica. The snow and the horizon were the same color, and there were no shadows causing the crew to be effectively blind looking outside the aircraft.

“We are extremely proud of these Airmen and that they have received this prestigious recognition,” said Col. Christian Sander, 109th Operations Group commander. “They exhibited the most amazing compilation of teamwork, risk management, quick thinking, situational awareness, and airmanship in their heroic whiteout landing on open snow.”

Firefighters respond to tanker truck fire

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Stratton Air National Guard Base firefighters were among local emergency crews that responded to a nearby tanker truck fire in Glenville on Oct. 17.

According to a local news report, emergency crews from across the area responded to the incident shortly after 1 p.m., when a truck being loaded with a mix of kerosene and asphalt caught fire and exploded.

Within three minutes of receiving the call, the Stratton Fire Department was on scene.

“The tanker truck was fully involved in flames and sitting beneath the 20,000 gallon tanks,” said Scott Pike, Assistant Chief of Operations, Stratton Air National Guard Base Fire Department. “There were three injured personnel from the facility that were being rescued from the area. The Stratton Fire Department immediately began fire

See Fire, page 14



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

Wing unveils Automated Fuel Service Station

The 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron unveiled its new Automated Fuel Service Station here Aug. 16, 2016. Pictured are Lt. Col. Tammy Street, 109th LRS commander, Col. Jeffrey Hedges, 109th Mission Support Group commander, Kim Kotkoskie, prior 109th Civil Engineer Squadron environmental specialist, Greg Waszmer, 109th CES water fuels maintenance, Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander and then 109th CES commander Lt. Col. Rob Donaldson. Kotkoskie and Waszmer were instrumental in getting the station up and running.

Alaska C-130s on loan to 109th AW



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

One of the two C-130 Hercules aircraft on loan to the 109th Airlift Wing sits on the flightline at Stratton Air National Guard Base.

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The 109th Airlift Wing has temporarily received two C-130 Hercules on loan from the Alaska Air National Guard because of a mission change with the Alaska unit. The aircraft add to the 109th AW's fleet inventory during the time of year when most of the aircraft have gone south for the winter in support of Operation Deep Freeze.

During the winter months, one of the biggest challenges for Operations is keeping up with their training requirements with only two aircraft available, said Lt. Col. Robert Donaldson, 109th Maintenance Group commander. At times, there may be no aircraft available because both may be

down for maintenance.

"This will allow us to offer a fully mission capable aircraft from a larger pool. If you have a larger pool of available assets to offer, then the chances of training getting pulled off in operations stands to be higher and they're meeting the mission requirements," he said. "This upholds the ability to execute the mission in a way that is right on point."

"It's not a permanent solution, but it gets us by for a little while until the National Guard Bureau decides if we'll get these permanently or if they'll move on to support another mission set somewhere else," he said. "In the meantime, it's a solution to support Operations' training needs. From a maintainer's standpoint it will allow our maintainers to work on different aircraft."

"It allows them to not only hone their

skills on our planes but on these aircraft that have older or different systems," said Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Cerniglia, 109th MXG superintendent.

The additional aircraft will also lower the stress load of the maintainers, Cerniglia said.

"If you have a larger inventory and something breaks, you have more available assets potentially that you could draw from without trying to jump through hoops to fix the broken one," Donaldson said. "This is a strategic win for sure."

"This opportunity, the collective effort from the Wing to come together as a team to work on this opportunity and see it through to success to me is a win across the board. It really stands as a mark for the unit as a whole as we go forward – it's a great thing."

Maintainers have also been busy with



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

Skier 95 sits in the hangar after an anomaly was detected during an inspection. Instead of sending the aircraft out for repair, which would normally be done in an instance like this, with the help of an engineer from Warner Robins, maintainers here are taking on the role as the Depot Field Team.

the LC-130 Skibirds as they make their way down to the ice. During one of the aircraft's (Skier 95) inspection, an anomaly was detected. Because the detection wasn't visible, the Maintenance Group put out a technical assistance request to Warner Robins and in the meantime did a very deep tear down of the aircraft, Donaldson said. Instead of sending the aircraft out for repair, which would normally be done in an instance like this, with the help of an engineer from Warner Robins, maintainers here are taking on the role as the Depot Field Team. "Such an undertaking stands as a testament to the skills, corporate knowledge and expertise consistently demonstrated by our veteran 109th AW

maintainers," Donaldson said.

While the maintainers remain busy, along with many of them deployed to Antarctica as well as other parts of the world supporting contingency operations, they have still been lauded for their effectiveness. Recently, the unit was assessed on their processes and procedures in place to prevent and mitigate corrosion.

"Their findings on us were that we are the best maintained C-130 unit that they've come across," Cerniglia said. "There's a lot of pride in that. You look at the hours that we fly compared to most Air National Guard units, and we will exceed them, yet we're still maintaining our aircraft where an outside organization comes in and says this

is the way it's supposed to be."

"It's a testament to the pride that leads over to the corporate knowledge," Donaldson said. "It reflects the hard work that goes into it. Airmen spend their careers here in maintenance basically adopting aircraft that become theirs. There's equity in that."

"What we observed on the Alaska planes, what we observed with Skier 95 and with the corrosion assessment is a testament to the compassion and the hard work (of everyone involved)," Donaldson said. "The Wing as a whole has looked at long-term strategic interests that will carry forward the longevity of the base and the Wing for tomorrow's generation."



Airmen hone cold weather flying skills and support science research in Greenland

Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

LC-130 "Skibirds" from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing in Scotia, New York, sit on the runway at Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, on June 27, 2016.

By Army Sgt. Maj. Corine Lombardo
New York National Guard
Public Affairs

KANGERLUSSUAQ, GREENLAND—Two hundred New York Air National Guard members rotated into and out of Greenland this past summer to support National Science Foundation research on the ice cap here, while also preparing for Antarctic deployments in the fall.

The New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing's aircrews, LC-130 aircraft maintainers, cargo loadmasters and other support personnel spent the summer months deploying to Kangerlussuaq.

The airport here serves as base camp as the National Guard aircraft fly scientists and supplies to research stations across Greenland. The ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft flown by 109th is the only U.S. military aircraft able to land on both snow and ice.

The rotations also allow Guard members to refine their skills for their annual participation in Operation Deep Freeze, the U.S. military support for Antarctica research. Those missions take place when it is winter in New York.

"The training we do in Greenland directly prepares us for our South Pole missions," said Lt. Col. Thomas Esposito, a 109th pilot and deployment commander for Greenland missions.

The well below sub-zero temperatures, the extreme wind and weather conditions in Antarctica are unforgiving, so having the opportunity to train in Greenland during the summer months allows all our folks to better prepare for working in the South Pole, explained Esposito.

The Wing transports fuel, equipment, supplies and passengers in and out of various National Science Foundation (NSF) camps on the Ice Shelf in

Greenland throughout the entire season.

Some Airmen make a couple of trips a season.

During a typical season in Greenland, 600-1,000 flight hours are flown; 1.5 to 2.5 million pounds of cargo is transported; 50,000 pounds of fuel is transported; and 1,500 to 2,000 passengers are transported.

"Just about everything we do here, from moving cargo and passengers to practicing ski landing and airdrops, we do in Antarctica," added Esposito.

According to Esposito, one of the biggest challenges landing the ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules is the drastic and sometimes unforeseen changes in surface definition based on weather conditions and the potential for deep cracks or fractures found on an ice sheet or glacier.

"We rely on navigation more to land in Antarctica because the dangers of crevasses," Esposito said.

For maintainers and cargo handlers, one of the major advantages to training

in Greenland is that the warmer climate allows them time to become more proficient in their duties.

"Although we're still supporting NSF researchers, our mission here is primarily training, but it's important because it sets the stage for Antarctica," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Jones, a loadmaster.

"Once we're down south it's a much faster pace, everything is time critical because it's too cold to shut down engines. We have to move cargo and passengers as fast as possible because the weather and conditions change so quickly," Jones said.

With over two dozen missions to Greenland and six to Antarctica under his wing, Jones' primary responsibilities as a loadmaster is load planning which includes determining fuel consumption based on projected travel distances and cargo weight, as well as computing the aircraft's center of gravity by evenly distributing cargo and passengers.

The 109th deploys aircraft between April and August each year with an average of six flight periods lasting from one to two weeks each depending on the needs of the NSF. During each rotation, two to four aircraft and roughly 75 Airmen are deployed.

The NSF is an independent federal agency that funds basic scientific research with most proposals coming from Academic Research Institutions, universities and colleges.

"We really rely on the 109th Airlift Wing for taking cargo for both research and to support life at our research stations, the fuel, food and all the essential things we need," said NSF Logistics Program Manager Renee Crain.

According to Crain, the 109th is the lifeline for the research programs overseen by the NSF's Division of Polar Programs in Greenland because it flies equipment and people where they are needed.

The Arctic Sciences section at NSF funds about one-third of research projects in Greenland, so any given year 30-40 research projects are underway that include Viking site archeology, atmospheric sciences, hydrology, and glaciology to understanding basic Arctic ecology, how plants, animals and environment interact, Crain explained.

"The partnership between the NSF and 109th has really grown over the decades that the 109th has been providing support for our research program in Greenland so we work



Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

An Airman works on an LC-130 "Skibird" at Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, on June 27, 2016.

together regularly, always communicating, developing schedules working with changes that come up throughout the season so it's a really strong and essential partnership for NSF and our research portfolio," Crain said.



An Airman with the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing offloads cargo from an LC-130 "Skibird" at Camp Raven, Greenland, on June 28, 2016. Crews with the 109th AW from Scotia, New York, use Camp Raven as a training site for landing the ski-equipped LC-130s on snow and ice.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

SFS Airmen mobilized in response to NYC bombing

109th Security Forces Squadron

In response to the Sept. 17 bombing in the Chelsea District of New York City, 10 Security Forces Airmen were mobilized on the request of the New York Governor in bolstering the total force of the New York Guard's Empire Joint Task Force.

The Airmen were deployed Sept. 19-26 and worked at Terminal 5 of the JFK International Airport, conducting high visibility security patrols of the exterior and interior of Terminal 5, providing overwatch for NY Port Authority K-9 sweeps and responding to calls for unattended bags.

"The overall experience was very fulfilling in that during a moment when the public and citizens of this state were in fear, we as Airmen and Soldiers in the New York National Guard were called upon to help ease that fear and help make them feel safer," said Master Sgt. Charles Hatch, 109th SFS.

"The fact that these 10 individuals could drop everything they were doing on the civilian side, - work, family and other obligations - shows their true character and dedication to not only the nation but the state of New York," said Maj. William Furmanski, 109th SFS commander.

Along with Hatch, other Airmen who deployed were Tech. Sgt. David Guyatte, Staff Sgt. Thomas Rorick, and Senior Airmen Stephen Cernak, Marc Cerrone, Miles Faas, Fredrick Freeman, Manuel Morales, Luis Robitaille and Dominic Scaringe.

Fire from Page 9

suppression on the tank truck and all involved exposures. The fire was knocked down within minutes, and a continuous cooling operation of the truck and tanks continued due to the risk of heated gases existing in the tanks which could cause them to explode. This was being accomplished by the Scotia, Thomas Corners and Stratton Air National Guard Fire Departments."

The Stratton Fire Department was on scene for about 90 minutes. Pike said the



Courtesy Photo

Capt. Jonathan Randall, Master Sgt. Charles Hatch, Master Sgt. Todd Lobraico, Senior Airman Stephen Cernak and Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe were part of the Security Forces team mobilized in response to the Sept. 17 bombing in Chelsea District of New York City. Randall and Lobraico are with the 105th Security Forces Squadron in Newburgh and Hatch, Cernak and Scaringe are with the 109th SFS here.

Stratton Fire Department worked side by side with the local fire departments.

"It was noted that the fast response and actions taken by the Stratton Fire Department played a major role in preventing this incident from becoming rapidly out of control," Pike said. "The personnel that responded did an outstanding job."

The firefighters who responded from Stratton were Station Captain John Saupp and firefighters Kevin Sarsick, Wayne Handford,

Adam DeRepentigny and Lloyd Hale.

"This emergency response effort demonstrates the close relationship between community and Stratton Air National Guard personnel where mutual aid is a shared responsibility for the benefit of all," said Col. Jeffrey Hedges, 109th Mission Support Group commander. "Our local response teams work hand-in-hand to ensure the best possible results in such crises. It's a testimony to strong relationships and common goals."

Counterdrug unveils prescription medication drop box on Stratton

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who work at Stratton Air National Guard Base now have a way to get rid of unneeded and unwanted prescription medications before a friend or family member abuses them.

The New York National Guard Counterdrug Task Force unveiled a prescription medication drop box July 11, which is currently located in the 109th Security Forces Squadron building.

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse, the prescription medication drop box program manager, said the intent of the drop boxes is to give people an avenue to dispose of their unused or expired medications without affecting the environment and keeping them out of circulation where possibilities of abuse could present itself.

“According to the National Institute for drug abuse, over 70 percent who abuse prescription medications are taken, bought or received by friends or family members,” Crouse said.

The National Guard Bureau reported that there were 538 cases of prescription drug abuse or misuse throughout the Air National Guard in fiscal year 2015.

“This indicates that it’s not just a problem in our communities but our very own backyard,” said Crouse. “I’m fully confident that with this initiative here on our base we will be successful and raise awareness resulting in the installation of other prescription medication drop boxes on military installations.”

“We’re happy to have this asset here on base,” said Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander. “It’s just another tool in our toolbox to keep our Airmen safe, especially from the unintended consequences of expired prescription drugs. ... I think having this here will entice people to go ahead and clean out the medicine cabinets to get the expired prescription drugs



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Stephen Girolami

Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse disposes of unneeded prescription medication in the 109th Airlift Wing’s new medication drop box located in the Security Forces Squadron building.

out of there so there is no inadvertent use.”

Counterdrug civil operators work with law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations to “reduce the availability of prescription pills to possibly abuse or accidentally consume,” Crouse said.

“The Center for Disease Control states that overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have quadrupled since 1999,” Crouse said. “In 2014, almost 2 million

Americans abused or were dependent on prescription opioids. Every day, over 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments for misusing prescription opioids.”

Maj. Gen. Anthony German, New York State Adjutant General, challenged everyone to take a look in their medicine cabinets.

“How many prescription drugs do you have in there that our outdated? Because ... it’s probably more than what you think,” he said.

Medical Airmen provide humanitarian care in Hawaii

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

A group of Airmen with the 109th Medical Group joined about 300 other servicemembers in providing health care to residents of Kauai, Hawaii, as part of Innovative Readiness Training Tropic Care 2016 from June 20-30.

Tropic Care 2016 was a joint and interagency training event sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and led by the Air National Guard. The initiative is a multiservice operation that provides medical support to a variety of underserved American populations located in remote or rural areas through the United States and its territories.

The group from the 109th included Lt. Col. (Dr.) Kimberly Peregrim, Maj. Elizabeth McNamara, Master Sgt. Juan Martinez, Tech. Sgt. Michael Lewis, Senior Airman Tiffany Dobrzanski, Senior Airman Emily Roth and Airman 1st Class Jason Malm.

Four sites were set up around the island for various health care needs; three static sites were set up in local schools as well as one mobile site designed to target the more remote locations on the island of Kauai. Physical exams, dentistry, optometry exams and glasses fabrication, medication review, provision of medication, nutrition education and basic behavioral health counseling were offered to the public free of charge.

The residents of the island anticipate this event which happens every two years. Because many are lacking insurance, they have grown to depend on the medical care they receive.

“Insurance for dental and optometry is really high there so a lot of them didn’t have it,” Dobrzanski said.

“Some of the people hadn’t gotten glasses since the last time there was a mission there two years ago,” Roth said.

The Airmen said they worked long



Senior Airman Emily Roth works in one of the optometry clinics during Innovative Readiness Training Tropic Care 2016 in Kauai, Hawaii. She was one of seven Airmen with the 109th Medical Group to participate in the humanitarian mission.

hours every day. In optometry, Roth said they would have various sections set up for eye exams. She also said that not only was this a humanitarian mission, it was also a learning opportunity for the servicemembers.

“We would switch jobs every day,” she said. She said the equipment wasn’t as high tech as what they were used to so they would have to learn new ways of doing things.

Dobrzanski also worked optometry but at a different site. “We saw at least 300 patients a day.”

Martinez would start his day early

sterilizing the dental instruments before patients started arriving for dental appointments.

“Most of it was surgical and operative work,” he said.

Throughout the 10-day event, nearly 18,000 patients of all ages were seen.

“It was overwhelming at some points with the amount of patients who wanted to be seen,” Roth said. “We would see them right up until the end of the day.”

As one can imagine, the waits were long, but the Airmen with the 109th said the patients really didn’t seem to mind.



(Above) Master Sgt. Juan Martinez prepares dental instruments during innovative Readiness Training Tropic Care 2016 in Kauai, Hawaii. He was one of seven Airmen with the 109th Medical Group to participate in the humanitarian mission.

They said the patients were thankful for the services and all seemed to be in good spirits. The Airmen weren’t only providing health care to the patients, but were establishing a connection with them.

“We would hear a lot about their culture and the history of the island,” Roth said. “People are very positive there. Whether or not they had much, they really were appreciative.”

“There were a lot of people without shoes,” Martinez said. “A lot of people were sunburned, they had high blood pressure, high cholesterol - their health was so bad, but they were still so happy. They were very welcoming to us.”

The Airmen agreed that the experience made them appreciate what they had.

“It was good to get out of the bubble,” Roth said. “We have the resources to take care of each other here. It makes you so thankful for what we do have.”

Dobrzanski said it was a valuable training experience and one that she would do again if given the opportunity.

“We got to be out in the field doing what we were trained to do,” she said.

“The gratification that you get from helping the locals and everything you learn makes it a great experience overall,” Roth said. “It restores your faith in humanity – there are people out there who are still so grateful for things. Even the people who didn’t receive any treatment were so thankful that we were there for the patients. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”



Airman 1st Class Jason Malm, Senior Airman Tiffany Dobrzanski, Master Sgt. Juan Martinez and Senior Airman Emily Roth, all of the 109th Medical Group provided humanitarian aid during Innovative Readiness Training Tropic Care 2016 in Kauai, Hawaii.

Couple strengthens 109th family

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Like many Air National Guard units, the Airmen here have often referred to the 109th Airlift Wing as one big family. Many have actual family ties on the base - parents and their children, cousins, siblings, and some have even met the person they would marry on base. For one couple here, they happened to meet in line at the Dining Facility during the May Unit Training Assembly in 2012. Four years later, they were married.

Tech. Sgt. Justin Carkner, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron, and Tech. Sgt. Abby (Nelson) Carkner, 109th Medical Group, got married in August of this year, surrounded by loved ones, including many from the wing. Chaplain (Capt.) Joshua Choquette, 109th AW chaplain, even officiated the ceremony.

The two started dating shortly after their encounter in the line at the DFAC. After a few short years, a proposal was in the works. Abby said she knew it would happen, but she just wasn't sure when or where. Co-workers were

certain it would happen during a trip to Greenland they were both on in June 2015. While a proposal on the icecap in Greenland would've been a unique story to tell, the Carkners wanted it to be at a place they could one day take their children to show them where it all started.

"On June 27, 2015, I had this beautiful ring in my pocket, and we went up to Lake George and hiked to the top of Buck Mountain," said Justin.

"Looking back, he was so nervous the whole time," Abby said as Justin told the story.

"The weather was supposed to turn to rain, so I had it in my mind that we had to hurry and get to the top," Justin said. "Everything could've potentially fallen apart if we got caught in the rain, so we kept pushing to get to the top."

Once they got to the top, a couple who they had met midway through their hike was behind them. It was then Justin had the idea for them to take pictures of his surprise proposal. "I asked them to step back to take the picture, and then I grabbed the ring and got on one knee."

"Although I knew it was coming eventually, I didn't know it would happen then - I was definitely surprised," said Abby. The couple took a few months to enjoy the engagement and then got right into wedding planning. Because they knew they wanted a lot of guests from the wing, one of the timing factors was the yearly Antarctic and Greenland missions. The couple decided on August.

The Carkners held their wedding at Pat's Barn in Troy, New York, on Aug. 20, 2016.

"We figured out before the wedding that with all of the military members who would be there, there was over 350 years of service, just at the wedding alone," said Abby. "It was like having one gigantic extended family there, because you get so

close to everybody that you work with here. Even as a guardsman."

The family ties for the Carkners don't stop with just them - Senior Master Sgt. Michael Decker, 109th LRS, is Justin's stepfather. Decker's daughter, Tech. Sgt. Kimberly Labunski, is also with the 109th LRS.



"It's every parents dream to have their child actually listen to your advice about life's challenges and to grow up and follow in their footsteps," Decker said. "The 109th has been a part of our family since 1999, and I've been blessed to have not one, but two of our children to follow

my footsteps into the 109th family; Justin and Kimberly are both on their second enlistments, still learning, and becoming outstanding Airmen and leaders along the way.

"And now I have a THIRD family member," he said. "Our wonderful daughter-in-law, Abby. I'm sure that most everyone knows Abby from their visits to the clinic, and know not only what an outstanding Airman she is becoming, but what a fine person she already is. I still have the pride of wearing the uniform, but my pride in the 109th family has been kicked up a notch with the addition of another member. Welcome to our family, Abby."

Now that Justin and Abby have settled into their roles as husband and wife, they're finding out that working at the same unit has a lot of benefits.

"It's great to have that resource and that person who knows what you're talking about when you come home and talk about work,"

Abby said.

"And we push each other," said Justin.

"We're at the same point in our careers. One of us will do something like finish the NCO (Noncommissioned Officer) Academy and then say 'So when are

you going to do it?' It's a lot of fun. It's nice because it's such a close family (at the wing). Chaplain (Lt. Col. Jacob) Marvel said it best - he said he knew us both separately, but once he found out we were together, he said it made perfect sense."

There are obvious challenges as a dual military couple, but both Justin and Abby aren't letting that get in the way.

"There's a lot of statistics out there saying military to military marriages fail, 'there's too much adversity,' 'there's too much risk if you have kids and you're in the same deployment cycle' - but I don't see though as hardships, I see them as adventures," said Abby.

"There will be challenges," said Justin. "But challenges just make a relationship stronger."

(Background photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara) Tech Sgts. Justin and Abby Carkner stand in front of an LC-130 "Skibird" on the flightline here. The two met in the line at the Dining Facility during a Unit Training Assembly in 2012.

(Below) Justin and Abby Carkner were married Aug. 20, 2016, at Pat's Barn in Troy. Guests included numerous Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing.



Courtesy Photo

Justin Carkner proposes to Abby Nelson at the top of Buck Mountain in Lake George on June 27, 2015.



Courtesy Photo Rob Spring Photography

Airman accomplishes goal of owning business

Story by Master Sgt.
Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs



Senior Airman Ryan Esposito, 109th Maintenance Squadron, owns and operates Espos Diesel Performance auto repair shop in Plattsburgh.

Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding

Senior Airman Ryan Esposito came back home to New York after leaving the active duty Air Force to pursue his dream of opening his own auto repair shop. He had ideas of running his own shop specializing in diesel performance, but he needed something to help him stay afloat so he could have a successful business. The 109th Airlift Wing ended up being the support he needed to do so.

Esposito, who currently lives in Plattsburgh, learned about the 109th's unique mission and decided this was the unit he wanted to join. Because he already held the Air Force specialty code in aerospace propulsion, he jumped right into the 109th Maintenance Squadron's Propulsion section, and soon after he was able to get temporary tours out at the base.

He spent his weeks at the base maintaining the propellers and engines of the unit's aircraft and on the non-Unit Training Assembly weekends he was getting his business started to repair automobiles. Fast forward about four years, and his dream of having his own business has come true. While he stays with the 109th AW as a traditional guardsman, he now runs Espos Diesel Performance auto repair shop in Plattsburgh.

"I've always had the idea of owning a shop since I was a kid," Esposito said. "This has been a passion for a long time."

Esposito joined active duty in 2008 and was stationed at Hurlburt Field, Florida. A few years later he stopped by a shop near the base that specialized in diesel repair to get his truck fixed. From that point on, he was hooked.

"I bought my first transmission from them and ended up being an employee with them" he said. "I spent my six months before

joining the Air National Guard working for them full time. That's really where I picked it up – I saw how everyone loved their job." He said it was his boss at that job who inspired him to open his own business.

While on terminal leave with the active duty Air Force, Esposito made the decision to come home and open his business and to also join the Air National Guard.

"I didn't even know this existed or else I would've done this from the beginning," he said. "It was a good backbone of support to fall back on (while I opened my business). I had another leg to stand on."

"The Air National Guard offers so many benefits to its Airmen – education, health, etc., and many traditional guardsmen, like Ryan, are able to find the extra support they need to be successful," said Tech. Sgt. Daniel Roth, 109th AW recruiter. "It's a great feeling to know that we are able to help Airmen in their future endeavors while at the same time gaining a valuable member to the unit."

Esposito said that running his own business and being an Airman have each benefited the other in their own ways. He said that running his own business has given him the skills to be a leader within the Air National Guard.

"I try to set myself up to see the end result," he said. "When we go for a job here I take the leadership role because now I have that mentality."

He also credits the training and experience from the Air Force to his business work ethic.

"It really gave me the drive and the organization skills (to get my business going)," he said. "I didn't give up."

Around the Wing

Cadets spend week at Stratton for Civil Air Patrol Encampment



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

One hundred and sixty-five Civil Air Patrol cadets, ages 12-21, graduate July 30, 2016, from a weeklong leadership encampment held here July 23-29, 2016.

109th AW Public Affairs

One hundred and sixty-five Civil Air Patrol cadets from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut, ages 12-21, were at Stratton Air National Guard Base for a weeklong leadership encampment July 23-29 and graduated July 30.

The encampment included flights in various military aircraft, an aerial drone

demonstration and the opportunity for the cadets to see an MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft operated by the 174th Attack Wing of the New York Air National Guard.

The Civil Air Patrol is a nonprofit corporation and is also the auxiliary service of the Air Force. Civil Air Patrol volunteers conduct search and rescue missions, assist the Air Force as required, and assist in disaster relief missions.

The Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program allows young people -- ages 12 to 21-- to

progress at their own pace through a 16-step program including aerospace education, leadership training, physical fitness and moral leadership. Cadets compete for academic scholarships to further their studies in fields such as engineering, science, aircraft mechanics, aerospace medicine, meteorology, as well as many others.

Those cadets who earn cadet officer status may enter the Air Force as an E3 (airman first class) rather than an E1 (airman basic).

Airmen compete for German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge



**BASIC
FITNESS
TEST**

Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt



100-METER SWIM

Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German



PISTOL QUALIFICATION

Photo by Master Sgt. Sara Pastorello

The German military award tests a member's physical fitness, marksmanship skills, and swimming ability. The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge is one of the few approved foreign awards American service members can wear. The badge is a military decoration of the Bundeswehr, the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Germany. 109th Airmen were scored in all phases of the competition competing for the gold, silver or bronze award.

RESULTS:

Gold
Senior Airman Francis DiCaprio

Silver
Maj. William Furmanski
1st Lt. Gregory Durrant
Master Sgt. Michael Stark
Tech. Sgt. Mike Crisalli
Staff Sgt. Jonathan Corcoran
Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Valk
Senior Airman Alanna Guay
Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe

Bronze
Chief Master Sgt. Joshua Walters
Master Sgt. Kara Tatlock

RUCK MARCH



Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

(Above) (From left) Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe, Staff Sgt. Jonathan Corcoran and Senior Airman Francis DiCaprio complete the ruck march, the last portion of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition, here June 24, 2016. (Top left) Staff Sgt. Amanda Cimorelli competes in the first phase of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge Competition with the Flexed Arm Hang event June 4, 2016. Along with the arm hang, Airmen also ran 11x10 sprints and a 1,000 meter run. (Top center) Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe and Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Valk compete in the swim portion of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge Competition on June 16, 2016, at the Glenville YMCA. To qualify they needed to swim 100 meters in under 4 minutes. (Left) Airmen complete the pistol qualification portion of the competition on June 21, 2016 at the 105th Airlift Wing Indoor Range in Newburgh.

From your Human Resource Advisor

By Senior Master Sgt. Deborah Nordyke
109th AW Human Resource Advisor

What an amazing experience! As the 109th AW Human Resource Advisor I attended an essential HRA Orientation Course in Colorado for two weeks in October. I was one of 30 HRAs who not only were the first Air National Guardsmen to have the privilege of training in Polaris Hall (the newly built U.S. Air Force Academy facility for the “Center for Character and Leadership Development”), but we were the first group of Air National Guardsmen to ever conduct training at the U.S. Air Force Academy! The first week

of training was held at the 104th Wing at Buckley Air Force Base while the second was spent at the Academy.

Over the two weeks we received instruction in Diversity and Inclusion, Character Development, a Profession of Arms Center of Excellence presentation, 4-Lenses training and certification, and much more. As your Human Resource Advisor my No. 1 priority is to bring awareness to how our differences are our strengths; to value this diversity and how it can improve retention, respect and resiliency. In



Courtesy photo

Senior Master Sgt. Deborah Nordyke, 109th AW Human Resource Advisor, was part of the HRA Orientation Course in Colorado.

In addition, I plan to seek out every opportunity to contribute to the development and mentoring of each Airman to prepare them for new and

challenging positions and advanced opportunities.

Diversity: The art of working independently together.
Malcomb Forbes

Solutions for your dental issues

By Capt. Joseph Ryan
109th Medical Group

Let's be honest, UTA weekend is absolutely bonkers and you've probably got about 1,872 other things that need to be done besides come and see the dentist. And who really likes to go to the dentist anyway? The office always smells like something very odd, the décor usually looks like it belongs in your grandmother's house (no offense to Grandma), or that you're fairly certain by the time you pay the bill you could have made at least two car payments. The problem is that things we avoid end up coming back to haunt us later on in the form of a list that the commander announces at the beginning of UTA. As a friend once told me, “Stay off lists,

and you will be golden.” Well, what I am hoping to do is help keep people off of my list. Over the past two years I find myself dealing with several common problems, so the following are some solutions to those problems for those of you who would like to be on one less list.

Problem: I am overdue for my dental exam, and I am getting ready to deploy.

Solution: Go see your dentist regularly! You only come to see my every five years. Per AFI you are responsible for your own dental readiness; I am merely the gatekeeper. You don't have to wait a full year to complete a new DD2813. Every time you get a dental exam completed, submit a new DD2813 to us. This will extend your “yearly clock” every time you give us one. Therefore, if you do get picked for a last-

minute deployment you will be in the green for dental.

Problem: I don't have a dentist or dental insurance.

Solution: Sign up for the Tricare Dental Program. It is extremely cost-effective, it's legit/actual dental insurance through a private company, and almost all dentists will accept it. Even if you already have dental insurance through work you can sign up for the TDP and be double-covered. If you have questions, stop by and ask. Though you can get one free dental exam every year through either an MTF or the RHRP program, these options are exam only. They will not provide treatment if you need it. Establishing yourself at a regular dentist's office is a very smart idea.

Problem: My dentist says I

need some major work done, and I am unsure about accepting the treatment plan.

Solution: I am a free second opinion. There are many different procedures that could cause you to be placed into a non-deployable status. Contact Master Sgt. Juan Martinez for a consult appointment during UTA. Please do not show up unannounced, we will not see you. Even if you call during UTA, which is acceptable, we just need some notice to manage our schedule.

Our job, in the dental section, is to find reasons that you SHOULD deploy or that you SHOULD be flying, and not the other way around. However, we can only do so much with what we are given. We are here to help! Please take advantage of that and contact us at 344-2408.

Airmen commemorate President Arthur

By Senior Master Sgt.
Greg Mihalko
109th Communications Flight

Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing participated in a wreath laying ceremony on Oct. 5 in honor of President Chester A. Arthur, the 21st President of the United States who is buried at Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands.

The event was led by the 109th Airlift Wing's Honor Guard in conjunction with 15 Airmen representing all sections of the Wing serving as the cordon. Brig Gen. Thomas J. Owens, assistant adjutant general for the New York Air National Guard, and New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto placed a wreath at the tomb of the late president on his birthday.

The wreath will remain on display for the remainder of the calendar year. Owens delivered brief remarks during the ceremony which was attended by nearly 50 spectators and elementary students from the local community.

An 1848 Union College graduate, President Arthur served in the New York State Militia (forerunner to today's National Guard) and was New York's Quartermaster General during the American Civil War. Following the war, Arthur entered politics and was later appointed by President Grant as Collector of the Port of New York. President Hayes later had Arthur removed from this prestigious position and replaced him with a member from Hayes' political party.

Arthur seeking redress for the outrage threw his hat in the ring for national office and was nominated as vice president under President Garfield. In 1881, shortly after taking the presidential oath, Garfield was assassinated thrusting Arthur into the White House becoming America's 21st President. Arthur was not re-nominated by his party to run for a second term and later, it was revealed that he lost the nomination due to a terminal kidney disease he acquired while president. He succumbed to the disease in 1886.

"I was honored and delighted to pay



U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer

Brig Gen. Thomas J. Owens, assistant adjutant general for the New York Air National Guard, and New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto (left) present arms after placing a wreath at the tomb of President Chester Arthur, the 21st President of the United States who is buried in Albany Rural Cemetery on Oct. 5, 2016. The New York National Guard represents the White House in this event annually on the late president's birthday.



U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer

Brig Gen. Thomas J. Owens, assistant adjutant general for the New York Air National Guard, and New York Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto (left) place a wreath at the tomb of President Chester Arthur, the 21st President of the United States who is buried in Albany Rural Cemetery on Oct. 5, 2016.

homage to the former president and share in this moment to reflect on the service of one of New York's most prominent veterans," Owens said.

"Not only is this a tremendous tribute to

all those who serve in the New York Army and Air National Guard, but it is also a tremendous accomplishment by this one former guardsman who should make New York and the nation proud," Giaquinto said.

Spouses experience LC-130 Skibird flight

About 50 spouses of Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing got the opportunity to go on a ride in a ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules on Oct. 21. “The spouse orientation flights are part of an incentive flight program designed to familiarize the military spouse with our unit’s aircraft/mission and to enhance understanding of our contribution to the U.S. Air Force,” said Col. Christian Sander, 109th Operations Group commander.



Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding



Photo by Senior Airman Jamie Spaulding



Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood

Amy Tatangelo visits her husband and aircraft commander, Capt. Dom Tatangelo, in the cockpit. (Right) Rebecca Rodriguez got the opportunity to join her husband, Tech. Sgt. David Rodriguez, a loadmaster, on the flight.



Photo by Master Sgt. Christine Wood



Photo Courtesy of Catie Truscello

Two separate LC-130 flights gave spouses the opportunity to become more familiar with the Wing’s mission.

I just wanted to thank you all for such a lovely flight. Your crew was wonderful and a pleasure to interact with. I was in amazement at the inner workings of the C-130. Everything designed for a specific purpose. Every cleat, clamp, and stitch placed exactly.

It also got me to thinking of all of the people who have been on that plane. The first timers, and last timers. The nervousness of a deployment, the adventure, the excitement. If you sit still enough you can almost feel it.

The sadness of departing, and the joy of returning to loved ones and friends. Making friends with your flight crew, and occasionally having had it with the same people in moments of stress.

So when you saw me fanning myself, yes I was having a hot flash, but it was because I was trying not to cry. All of the emotion that goes into working together, living together. Serving our country and sacrificing yourselves, and time with your families and friends. Yes, you are away from your communities, but you also strengthen your communities with your giving.

So to everyone who participated in today’s event, you are the best of us, and with a grateful heart I thank you for the opportunity to be witness it, even for such a short time.



*Warm Regards,
Joanie Peno*



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara

Honor and Serve Breakfast

Michael Castellana, SEFCU president and CEO, and Chris Koetzle, Glenville Town Supervisor, serve breakfast to Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing during the Capital Region Chamber's Honor and Serve breakfast for local veterans on Veterans Day, Nov. 10, 2016, at the Glen Sanders Mansion.



Courtesy photo

Daily Gazette Holiday Parade

Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing volunteered at the 49th Annual Daily Gazette Holiday Parade in Schenectady on Nov. 19, 2016. The Airmen assisted in ushering the floats in for the parade.



Photo by Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Popcorn Delivery

Boy Scout Troop 65 delivered boxes of donated popcorn to the 109th Airlift Wing on Nov. 28, 2016. The popcorn will be sent to the Airmen currently supporting Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica.



Courtesy photo

Thanksgiving Meal Delivery

Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing carried on the holiday volunteer tradition to help distribute donated meals to residents of Summit Towers in Schenectady on Nov. 21, 2016.

For information on community events or volunteer opportunities, contact the Community Manager's office at 344-2500.

Airman competes for MAJCOM Challenge Trophy at USAF Marathon

By Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Peck is no stranger to running. Not only is he an avid runner around the base, he has 11 marathons under his belt and is one of few people in the world who can say that three of those were in Antarctica. Most recently Peck put on his running shoes to represent the Air National Guard at the U.S. Air Force Marathon on Sept. 17 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

Peck said he wasn't always a runner, in fact it wasn't until he joined the Army in 1997 when he said he found his running legs. From that point on, there was no looking back. Fast forward almost 20 years and Peck was selected to represent the Air National Guard during the Major Command Challenge.

"The Air National Guard isn't formally represented at the MAJCOM Challenge – active duty Air Force gets formally funded, we do not, so it's really become a challenge for all of us to bring home the trophy," said Peck who is assigned to the 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "The Air National Guard has progressively done better every year, and I felt like I had the times that could help deliver the trophy."

The selection process is competitive. Only 10 runners throughout the Air National Guard are chosen to be part of the team.

"Each year the Air National Guard is invited to participate in the MAJCOM Challenge at the USAF Marathon," stated Chief Master Sgt. Edward Walden in an email looking for the best runners. "We did an outstanding job representing the ANG last year by finishing in 2nd Place and missing out on the trophy by a little over five minutes. This year I would like to see the ANG come home with the trophy. To do so we would like to put together a team that represents the best Marathon and Half Marathon runners the ANG has



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Ralph Branson

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Peck, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron, finishes strong in the Air Force Half-Marathon on Sept. 17, 2016, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Peck competed for the Air National Guard marathon team in the MAJCOM Challenge.

to offer yet again."

Although Peck was passed up for last year's challenge, he didn't let that discourage him.

"This year the base backed me up and encouraged me to put in for it again. I did, and I was accepted for the half," he said. "I do the McMurdo Marathon [in Antarctica] every year I can. I've run over 1,500 miles cumulatively in McMurdo over my time with the 109th."

Peck sent forward his best times, and not long after he was chosen to be part of the ANG team to run the half marathon. The team is made up of 10 Airmen – three males and one female to run the full marathon and four males and two females to run the half marathon. The times for all the runners are combined and the team with the fastest time wins the coveted MAJCOM Challenge Trophy.

"When I found out I was selected, I got very nervous – it's a lot of pressure, but I was also very excited," Peck said. "It did give

me motivation to train throughout the year."

"When I saw the solicitation for the MAJCOM Challenge, Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Peck immediately came to mind," said Lt. Col. Tammy Street, 109th LRS commander. "Jonathan is an avid marathon runner who has competed not only (stateside), but also in Antarctica and Greenland. He exudes an enthusiasm for running, and is known as the fastest runner on our base. Beyond that, he's a positive role model for fitness and healthy living. The entire 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron is proud that he was selected to be part of this elite team!"

The team met up for the first time at Wright-Patterson AFB.

"We had runners from as far away as Alaska, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania," Peck said. "There was a lot of nervous energy in the air, no one was saying much. I'm sure everybody's major command had pressure on them to do well, us included."

"The individuals on this team come

from all across the country," said Walden in an Air National Guard news article. "They are dedicated to show their support for the ANG and to proudly show the spirit of guardsmen across the land."

Peck finished the half marathon in 1:32:35 – taking 10th place in his division.

"(Sergeant) Peck is a great example of leading an active lifestyle that promotes a healthy higher level state of readiness," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Pingitore, 109th LRS Materiel Management Flight chief. "'Fit to Fight' Airmen are essential to our state and federal missions. (Sergeant) Peck's ability to achieve fitness excellence yearly and his representation for our Air National Guard at the Air Force Marathon's 20th Anniversary is a testament to his dedication to duty. I am proud to have an individual of his caliber at our unit who

continues to promote and foster this higher level of readiness."

Results of the MAJCOM Challenge have not been released yet, but the ANG team is hopeful they will take home the trophy. *

"We are cautiously confident," Peck said. If they were to take home the trophy, Peck said "It means the ANG has validated itself as a ready, able component of the Air Force. To have ANG on that trophy would be a huge thing and to know that I was a part of that team is big; that's something I can talk about for the rest of my career, and for sure I'll do everything I can next year to make it a repeat."

***EDITOR'S NOTE: On Nov. 16, USAF Marathon officials announced that the Air National Guard Team did in fact take first place in the MAJCOM Challenge. Congratulations to TSgt Peck and the rest of the team!**



Courtesy Photo

Patriot Highlander Challenge

Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing joined about 800 community members, military personnel and veterans in the second annual Patriot Highlander Challenge on Aug. 29, 2016 in Cobleskill. The Legion-sponsored event pits participants against each other in a six- or three-mile race through 18 different obstacles. Participants from the 109th AW were Col. Jeffrey Hedges, Capt. Shannon Pingitore, Tech. Sgt. Kat Gregory, Staff Sgt. Chuck Dufresne and Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Valk.

139th AES runs Adirondack Ragnar



Courtesy Photo Reebok Ragnar Adirondack

The Ragnar Ravens, a team comprised of Airmen with the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and civilian friends, participated in the 2016 Adirondack Ragnar on Sept. 23-24. The team accomplished 36 consecutive runs totaling 193.6 miles from Saratoga Springs to Lake Placid. The team finished first in their division with a time of just over 33 hours, 13 minutes and placed 119/276 overall. Team members included Maj. Scott Helmer, Maj. Heather Miner, Capt. Ashley VanPatten, Senior Master Sgt. Karolyn Devito, Master Sgt. Colleen Zeliph, Tech. Sgt. Sara Wood, Staff Sgt. Connie Anderson, Staff Sgt. Jason Miller and civilians Kristine Gravino, Sandy Stienhardt, Annette Laundry and Maria Russo-Tedeschi. The team is already preparing for the 2017 event and is looking for more team members. If interested, contact Maj. Heather Miner, Senior Master Sgt. Karolyn Devito or Master Sgt. Colleen Zeliph for more information.

National Guard education benefits

NY State Tuition Assistance

The spring 2017 window for RIRP aka "State Tuition Assistance" applications is now open! Applications will be accepted through December 2016 UTA.

The Recruitment Incentive and Retention Program (RIRP) is a New York State program designed to recruit and retain quality members for the State Military Forces (Army and Air National Guard, and Naval Militia). This competitive program will pay the cost of tuition up to a maximum of \$6,470 per calendar year for eligible qualified applicants. Airmen who apply by the deadline have an additional 30 days to forward any and all pertinent financial aid documentation to the Retention Office. Applications must be submitted electronically to Joanna.M.Walters.mil@mail.mil or Stephanie.j.lambert5.mil@mail.mil **No paper copies, faxes, etc. will be accepted.** Ensure you receive and save the email when your paperwork is received.

Learn more about this important benefit on the Retention sharepoint page at <https://eissp.ang.af.mil/org/109AW/WingStaff/reten/State%20Tuition/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

****Please note RIRP or State TA is a separate program from Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) for AGRs. Please contact Base Training for more information.**

Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) New York State Veterans Tuition Award

Veterans Tuition Award (VTA) are awards for full-time study and part-time study for eligible veterans matriculated in an approved program at an undergraduate or graduate degree-granting institution or in an approved vocational training program in New York State. Veterans of the armed Forces of the United States who served in hostilities that occurred after February 28, 1961, as evidenced by receipt of an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal or a Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal are eligible.

For information and how to apply go on the **HESC website at <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/>** or call (888) 697-4372 to request a scholarship Grant Payment Application.

Chapter 33 or Post 9/11

If you have 90 days of cumulative eligible orders you may be eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill. They do not need to be together. They just need to add up to 90 days to qualify. You must submit your proof of service (DD Form 214, current AGR order or ARPC Verification Letter) in order to be approved. This unique GI Bill pays a percent of your tuition, fees, book stipend and BAH. You must relinquish a GI Bill to receive this GI Bill. You cannot use more than 48 months for all GI Bills.

Transfer Post 9/11 GI Bill to Dependents

You need a minimum of six years in the service in order to apply to TRANSFER this benefit to your dependents. You will owe four years of service from the date that you apply for the transfer to your dependents. Termination of this commitment can only be approved by NGB for very specific reasons as per the AF Form 4406- Statement of Understanding (SOU) which is completed with the Retention Office Manager.

Yellow Ribbon Program

You (or your dependent) are only eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program if you are approved for 100% of the Post 9/11 GI Bill as per your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) mailed to you from the VA. This program can vary from school to school and is granted at a first-come first-served basis. You can call the VA Representative at the school to see what they offer and/or to be placed on a waiting list.

You must create a user name and password on Mil-connect before you retire. You will need to use this in order to change your allocated months for your family after you retire.

More information can be found on the Retention sharepoint page under Wing Staff/Retention/GI Bill/Post 911 or <https://eissp.ang.af.mil/org/109AW/WingStaff/reten/GI%20Bill/Forms/AllItems.aspx> or by calling the VA at (888) 442-4551 or va.gov.

Chapter 1606/ Guard Reserve GI Bill Provides up to 36 months of education benefits to members of the Selected Reserve. The amount of coverage is pro-rated depending on full- or part-time student

status. **To apply you will need to contact Veterans Affairs at (888) 442-4551 or apply electronically through VONAPP. <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>** You must verify your enrollment the last day of every month during the semester you are certified for benefits. Failure to verify will result in failure to receive payment from the VA.

Chapter 30/ Active Duty GI Bill

If you had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for first 12 months and continuously served for two years. The only GI Bill you can collect as AGR.

GI Bill Kicker is offered by the DOD through each service branch as part of an enlistment or re-enlistment contract for qualifying AFSCs. The college fund is an additional amount of money that increases an individual's basic monthly benefit and is included in his or her monthly GI Bill payment from the VA. You cannot get your GI Bill Kicker money without receiving the GI Bill. The kicker isn't a separate benefit, but an add-on to your GI Bill benefit.

109th AW Airman's Attic

Looking for that particular item and don't want to spend all of your paycheck to get it in time? The Airman's Attic will be opening soon! More information coming soon. Not sure what to do with all your unused items? **Donate** them to the Airman's Attic.

Looking for:

Rank Insignia Ribbons & Ribbon Racks, Fleeces, Parkas, Cold Weather Gear, Blues Shirts, Covers, Blues Ties & Tie Tabs, Maternity ABUs, Blues & ABU Belts

Not looking for:

Used Boots, Low Quarters, ABU Blouses & Pants, Blues Pants, Sand Tees & Socks, Service Coat

Contact Master Sgt. Jason Robelotto or Senior Airman Emily Roth to arrange drop off of donations. 344-2408

That time of year

By Chaplain (Capt.) Julie Taylor
109th AW Chaplain's Office

“It's the most wonderful time of the year...” so a popular song goes.

As soon as I heard that song in a store - the day after Halloween - I thought, well yes, and no.

The holiday season is upon us, and whether you celebrate a particular holiday this time of year or not, there is no way to avoid decorations, commercials, music and flavors (pumpkin spice or peppermint anyone?) This season does not bring cheer to everyone. For some of us expectations, bills, loss, history, memories and even family can increase stress and complicate emotions.

The 109th Airlift Wing has a lot going on. Between Operation Deep Freeze and contingency deployments our Airmen are being pulled many directions. For the Airmen deployed there is the need to be focused on the mission, the tasks at hand. And yet there will be a pull toward home. For the Airmen not deploying, there is a lot of to do to keep up our mission here; all the while keeping our colleagues close in mind and heart. No matter which role you find yourself in, the pressure is on.

Stress is a reality. I have a card in my home office that has a picture of a diamond nestled on a background of velvet. The caption reads, “Pressure: It can turn a lump of coal into a flawless diamond, or an average person into a perfect basket case.” Stress and pressure are constant companions in this thing called life; sometimes they are motivational and help you move forward, sometimes they break you down.

Since stress is not going away the question becomes, how are you going to deal with it?

There are a multitude of stress management techniques and strategies out there and that is good news since no one tool is going to work for everyone. The key is finding something that works to relieve your stress and then make sure to do it.

When the pressure is on I am not advocating going out and trying to start a brand new routine. This doesn't mean you're out of luck. Stick with me for a bit, I bet you've already got what you need to release some of the pressure.

Each of us has a physical, emotional, cognitive (thinking), social (the way we interact with others and the world), and spiritual side. One trick to stress reduction is to find an activity you already participate in and see how it connects to these sides. The more sides it connects to, the more powerful activity it can be in combating stress.

Lets take working out as an example. Obviously you can check off the physical box with this one, but what about the rest? Counting reps and writing down your routine can make this cognitive. Working out with colleagues and friends brings in the social aspect. The emotional and spiritual aspects may seem like a stretch, but for many people achieving a goal and the repetitive nature of some workouts and cardio definitely connect to emotional and spiritual sides.

I have a friend who knits. As we talked about knitting as stress management she discovered that knitting is cognitive for her (new patterns and counting stitches), emotional in that she was creating blankets or hats for loved ones and a homeless shelter,



File Photo

social since she regularly knit with a group of friends, and spiritual when she knit prayer shawls with members of her faith community. That hit four out of five, but knitting isn't inherently physical. My friend decided she'd park a few blocks further than she normally would when she went to knit with friends. Five for five!

Think of something you already do that you enjoy and see how many sides that activity hits. The closer to five it is, the better it is for your stress management. Be creative and see if there are ways to bump it up to four or five out of five. The key to success: Make sure you do this activity when the pressure is on. This is your pressure valve.

If this is the most wonderful time of the year for you, enjoy! If you're gritting your teeth until the decorations are put away, remember you aren't alone and the music will change... eventually.

Worship Services

December Drill

Catholic - 7 a.m., AES Auditorium

Protestant - 7:45 a.m., DFAC

Joint Catholic & Protestant - 8 a.m., DFAC

Holiday Blues Service - 8:45 a.m., DFAC

All other UTAs

Protestant - 7:45 a.m., DFAC

Catholic - 1 p.m., Bldg 19 Small
Training Room

Wednesday Service (NEW)

11:30 a.m. - noon, DFAC

Feelings we put away for safe keeping

By Kelly Young, LCSW-R, BCD P
109th AW Director of Psychological Health

The concept of a Time Capsule conjures up thoughts of collecting moments and important objects related to a specific time period, putting them into a non-penetrable capsule and burying it in the ground (or securing it elsewhere) for other generations to find and discover years into the future. At the Yellow Ribbon events on Sept. 7 and Nov. 6, the deploying Airmen of the 109th Airlift Wing did just that!

During the Yellow Ribbon events, attendees participated in resiliency briefs, iRest, benefit briefings, member and family briefs on the emotional cycle of deployment and other important briefs focused on the Airmen and their families. Children participated in an activity with the Director of Psychological Health where they learned about time capsules and expressing emotions. They decorated a large time

capsule that they understood would be filled with a collection of thoughts, ideas and emotions and of course, a stuffed Pokemon!

“But how?” they remarked. “How would we collect emotions and thoughts into a time capsule? We can’t touch them or see them, can we?” “But we can,” remarked one youth, “we can feel them!”

And so, with that in mind, at the culmination of the day, the time capsule was presented to a ballroom full of deploying Airmen and their families. The children addressed the group of anticipatory onlookers and discussed their participation in decorating the time capsule and pointed out special messages that were written on the time capsule to their deploying parents. The Airmen and family participants were each given note cards and envelopes, and after a short brief on taking care of self, the benefits of reflection and creating an attitude of gratitude, the participants were

instructed to write a few words to their current self, reflecting on the things that they were gracious for and the things that they were looking forward to. The envelopes were sealed and the Airmen’s names placed on the front of the envelopes and deposited into the time capsule.

The completion of the pre-deployment Yellow Ribbon is oftentimes symbolic of one of the last official duties of a servicemember and their family before a deployment commences and again when the deployment is complete. There will be many moments, experiences and activities that will happen in between, but for these deployers and their families, during their post-deployment yellow ribbon, a brief moment of reflection and hopefully joy and gratitude will be evoked when they return and open their time capsule to find their hand-written thoughts and feelings and join them with those that they are feeling during their much-anticipated homecoming.



Courtesy photo

Campers build rockets during Camp Ramp 2016. Other activities during the weeklong summer camp included roller-skating, bowling, swimming, hiking, a base tour and much more.

Wellness Team soaring to new heights

Colleen Casey, Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager, enhanced her qualifications recently, by attending Department of Defense-sponsored trainings in Personal Financial Readiness, Transition Assistance Program, Command Financial Special Training and Expert Transitional Assistance Program Core Compliance and The New York State National Guard Family Programs Professional Development Workshop.

Kelly Young, Director of Psychological Health, obtained her Master Resilience Training Certificate at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, and attended a weeklong professional development training course at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, and earned a Board Certified Diplomat in Social Work.

Camp Raven was another enormous success of what was a busy, fast-paced summer for the 109th. Junior Counselors (ages 13-17) assisted with daily setup and cleanup, camper registration and being positive role models for younger camp attendees. 12 Junior Counselors worked with 64 youth that attended camp and each counselor earned 36-44 hours of volunteer service and a training certificate signed by the Wing Commander. Activities for the five-day camp consisted of roller-skating, bowling, rocket building and launching, visiting a community camp, swimming, hiking, base tours and culminating in a celebratory New Year’s Eve party with party hats and horns.

The ever evolving and growing concept of Comprehensive Airman and Family Fitness

By Kelly Young, LCSW-R, BCD P
109th AW Director of Psychological Health

Resilience is referenced in the literature and AFI 90-506 as the foundation for all of Comprehensive Airman and Family Fitness. Social, Spiritual, Physical and Mental are the cornerstones of that foundation. The dedicated individuals of the Comprehensive Airman and Family Fitness team (Wellness Team) act as the mortar to join the critical cornerstones and to help build on that foundation. The Airman and his/her family can either choose to prescribe to all of the components of CAF or pick and choose from a menu of growing services for overall health and total fitness for the Airman and their family and the Air National Guard force.

The 109th Airlift Wing Wellness Center brings together all of these components and offers a warm and inviting place for Airmen and their families to obtain literature, talk to a CAF expert or to sit and take a moment to relax, socialize and enjoy the company of others as a break away from the duties of work or an upcoming deployment.

Beyond the physicality of the 109th AW Wellness Center, CAF initiatives have grown from a simple four-pillar model to a comprehensive grouping of activities and subject-matter experts who provide not only direct services, but also plan and provide activities and initiatives that promote health, well-being, self-confidence and resilience.

Comprehensive Airman and Family Fitness is introduced early on in an Airman's career. Airmen in the student flight get a thoughtful indoctrination of CAF and the importance of being a good consumer of services and never allowing the stigma of "asking for help" get in the way of becoming the best Airman they can be. The Airman and Family Readiness Coordinator and

the Director of Psychological Health plan and implement group activities to bolster social skills, help seeking skills, learning coping strategies and stress management.

Comprehensive Airman and Family Fitness is interwoven through SAPR Green Dot training, Suicide Prevention training and Resiliency Training that speak directly to prescribed helping resources and trainings that promote not only taking care of your Wingman, but also making yourself and your goals a priority. The Community Action Information Board (CAIB) and the Integrated Delivery System (IDS) meet to identify areas of needed attention and support and creates a pathway for the flow of information and solutions.

Chaplains bring Strong Bonds to couples and families and offer complete confidentiality for Airmen and their families that aid and promote the spiritual health and well-being of members and their families and potentially viewing the world with awe and compassion.

Educational briefs, consultations and support are given to Airmen and leadership either individually, at a Yellow Ribbon event, Wingman Day, Leadership Development Course, TAP briefing or while shepherding key volunteers.

The Psychological Health Program and the Director of Psychological Health take a comprehensive look into the resilient and buoyant nature of the Airman, his/her family and the health of the unit. Through individual intervention, consultation, counseling and education, Airmen and their families can tool themselves up to forge life barriers and climb to new heights in their careers, all the while, fostering endurance and resilience for their families in a high tempo deployment environment.

The Family Programs component of the



File Photo

Airman and Family Readiness Program reaches out through Camp Raven and aiding in the growth and enrichment of the military child. Children's Christmas parties, Fall Fests and Family Days enrich the lives of our Airmen and their families and offer balance to the annual deployments to Operation Deep Freeze and other far-reaching places. The transition assistance program (TAP), financial planning and retirement briefs and education are delivered on a biweekly basis by our AFRPM on any given week throughout the year.

So, when we talk about Comprehensive Airman Fitness, it is clear that at the 109th AW, we are embracing the four pillars of CAF (Social, Emotional, Physical and Spiritual) as evidenced by the pride and the extraordinary things that our Airmen accomplish each and every day in their work, in the community and during the annual deployment season.

Cheers and enduring pride from our Wellness Team to our 109th AW members and their families!

Awards

May 2, 2016 – Nov. 1, 2016

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Robert Donaldson – MXG
 Lt. Col. Jacob Marvel – AW
 Maj. Lisa Malone – LRS
 Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto – JFHQ
 Chief Master Sgt. Denny Richardson – AW
 Chief Master Sgt. Jacqueline Sweet-McNeill – MDG
 Senior Master Sgt. Karl Burghart – MXS
 Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Hanna – MXS
 Master Sgt. Clifford Devoe – AMXS
 Master Sgt. Anne Thayer – JFHQ

Aerial Achievement Medal

Capt. Amanda Coonradt – AS
 Capt. Dominick Tatangelo – AS

Joint Service Commendation Medal

Col. Jennifer Kondal – JFHQ
 Lt. Col. Mary Zajac – JFHQ

Air Force Commendation Medal

Col. Brian Backus – AES
 Lt. Col. Kimberly Peregrin – MDG
 Chaplain (Capt.) Joshua Choquette – AW
 Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Ausfeld – AES
 Master Sgt. Jennifer Dippo – AES
 Master Sgt. Catharine Schmidt – AW
 Tech. Sgt. Michael Crouse – AES

Air Force Achievement Medal

Lt. Col. Julia Moretti – AES
 Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Trottier – OG
 Senior Master Sgt. William Gizara – AW
 Master Sgt. James Czwakiel – MXS
 Master Sgt. Charles Hatch – SFS
 Master Sgt. Louis Pasacreta – MXS
 Master Sgt. Roger Yurko – CF
 Tech. Sgt. Joshua Bowers – MXS
 Tech. Sgt. David Guyatte – SFS

Tech. Sgt. Gregory McMullen – LRS
 Staff Sgt. James Comstock – LRS
 Staff Sgt. Trevor Gilligan – LRS
 Staff Sgt. Nghiem Le – LRS
 Staff Sgt. Devin Reilly – CES
 Staff Sgt. Thomas Rorick – SFS
 Staff Sgt. Scott Salisbury – AS
 Staff Sgt. Jason Stark – MXS
 Senior Airman Stephen Cernak – SFS
 Senior Airman Marc Cerrone – SFS

Senior Airman Miles Faas – SFS
 Senior Airman Frederick Freeman – SFS
 Senior Airman Michael Hack – CF
 Senior Airman Patrick Irwin – CES
 Senior Airman Manuel Morales – SFS
 Senior Airman Luis Robitaille – SFS
 Senior Airman Emily Roth – MDG
 Senior Airman Dominic Scaringe – SFS
 Airman 1st Class Israel Covey – CF

David V. Stott Scholarship winner

Tech. Sgt. Kimberly Burke, 109th Force Support Squadron, was selected as the winner of the 2016 David V. Stott Scholarship. Burke is currently enrolled at Touro College in Brooklyn and was licensed as an RN in August. She's been in the nursing program there since 2014. Tech. Sgt. David Stott was a member of the 139th Aero-medical Evacuation Squadron as well as the 109th MDG. Stott passed away in 2003 following a short illness. His parents continue



File Photo

to carry on his memory by offering a scholarship in his name each year.

Tech. Sgt. David Falcon – MXG
 Tech. Sgt. Michael Ignecia – FSS
 Tech. Sgt. Megan Lane – MDG
 Tech. Sgt. Anastasios Mantzouris – LRS
 Tech. Sgt. Kevin Partlow – AES
 Senior Airman Joshua Byerwalters – LRS
 Senior Airman Nicholas Chakurmanian – AS

Retirements

May - November 2016

Maj. Gen. Verle Johnston
 Col. Mark Sakadolsky
 Lt. Col. Frank Falvo
 Lt. Col. James Powell
 Lt. Col. William Salvaggio
 Maj. Sean Garry
 Maj. Marc McKeon
 Chief Master Sgt. Michael Ferrell

Chief Master Sgt. Douglas Miller
 Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Hubble
 Master Sgt. Theresa Brown
 Master Sgt. Marie Cronin
 Master Sgt. Michael Gorman
 Master Sgt. Derrick Irish
 Master Sgt. Robert McCormick
 Master Sgt. Scott Molyneaux

Master Sgt. Henry Panten
 Tech. Sgt. Joseph Axe
 Tech. Sgt. William Gauthier
 Tech. Sgt. Ugo Mascolo
 Tech. Sgt. Kenneth Scholl
 Tech. Sgt. Krystle Smith

Colonel

Brian Backus
Christian Sander

Lieutenant Colonel

Michelle Buonome
Steven Cousineau
Jacob Marvel
Kimberly Peregrim
Sharon Westbrook

Major

Kathryn Burnell
Ryan Giaconia
Emery Jankord II
Daniel Marchegiani
Elizabeth McNamara
John Patton

Captain

Xiomara Diaz
Michael Fusaro
Joseph Nolan
Julie Taylor
Ashley VanPatten

Officer Promotions

First Lieutenant

Eric Palmatier

Enlisted Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant

Michael Pingitore – LRS
Jeffrey Trottier – OG

Senior Master Sergeant

Kerry Booth – AS
William Gizara – AW
Rebecca Graham – MDG
Robert Gregory – MXS
Shawn Talbot – MXS

Master Sergeant

Matthew Baisley – AMXS
Kevin Byrns – AMXS
Johnny Cope – CF
Joseph Carolan – AES
Dennis Dauphin – MXS
Jason Deppe – OSS
Matthew Devito – MXS
Dylan Hassis – AS
Shawn Keating – AW
Marshall Kline Jr. – LRS
Christopher Nelson – AMXS
Kerry Nicklas – MOF
Benjamin Ogburn – MXS
Alicia Pratt – OG
Randy Powell – AS
Raymond Roberts Jr. – SFS
Kevin Ronca – MXS
Catharine Schmidt – AW
Diane Solmo – AES
Colleen Zeliph – AES

Technical Sergeant

Nicole Cotugno – AES
Matthew Doney – MXS
Edvin Donis – OSS
Brian Empett – AMXS
Daniel Faas – MXS
Wesley Fool – AS
Travis Hudson – MXS

Travis Inman – OSS
Jeffrey Kinder Jr. – MXS
Ernest Labounty – MXS
Megan Lane – MDG
Jeffrey Mazzaferro – FSS
Gregory McMullen – LRS
Brian Monaghan – MXS
Matthew Murray – AES
Christopher Olden – AES
Nicholas O'Neil – AS
Thomas Rivera – MXS
Brandon Runey – MXS
Matthew Smith – MXS
Daniel Tibbitts – AMXS

Staff Sergeant

Nicholas Alfano – MOF
Cody Bagwell – AMXS
Jacob Baxendale – LRS
Curt Beall – AW
Isaiah Burton – SFS
Ronald Butler – MDG
Jason Candido – MXS
Morganne Carpenter – OSS
Jared Cederstrom – STUF
Christopher Dumond – AS
Collin Eustis – CF
Victoria Guzekianni – AW
Joel Herrera – LRS
Christopher Holt – AMXS
John Konczeski – CF
Stephen Marra – LRS
Dallas Mesick – MXS
Austin Rivera – STUF
James Staines – MXS
Jarad Torres – OSS

Senior Airman

Michael Bala – MXS
James Cappadora – MXS
Courtney Cereo – AS

Marc Cerrone – SFS
Kaitlyn Dailey – LRS
Christopher Denegar – MXS
Tiffany Dobrzanski – AS
Jarrod Dolan – LRS
Melange Esmel – MXS
Jeremy Frye – LRS
Matthew Jukes – MXS
Jordan Kinder – LRS
Edwin Murey – LRS
Michael Obrien – SFS
Jonathan Petricini – CF
Meya Rayner – AW
Emily Roth – AS
Cody Russell – MXS
Laura Saddle mire – FSS
Shannon Schiller – OSS
Brett Stanavich – CF
Caitlin Sutliff – AES
Justin Tobin – FSS
Andrew Tomlinson – AES
Nyan Tun – MXS
Jared Walker – MXS
Scott Winchell Jr. – LRS

Airman 1st Class

Joshua Bogan – STUF
Keegan Enders – STUF
Jason Falvo – STUF
Courtney Hill – STUF
Taylor Wetsky – MDG

Airman

Jarrod Bonaro – STUF
Luke Champain – STUF
John Lawlor – STUF
Emily Lewis – STUF
David Skoda – STUF

May 16, 2016 –
Nov. 4, 2016

109th Airlift Wing
1 Air National Guard Road
Scotia, NY 12302-9752



File Photo illustration

Mission statement

The 109th Airlift Wing employs the Department of Defense's only ski-equipped aircraft to conduct operations in remote Polar Regions. We train, equip and deploy premier, combat-ready Airmen to support state and national objectives.

Vision statement

Unparalleled tactical airlift to remote polar environments, propelled by highly trained, combat-ready Airmen.