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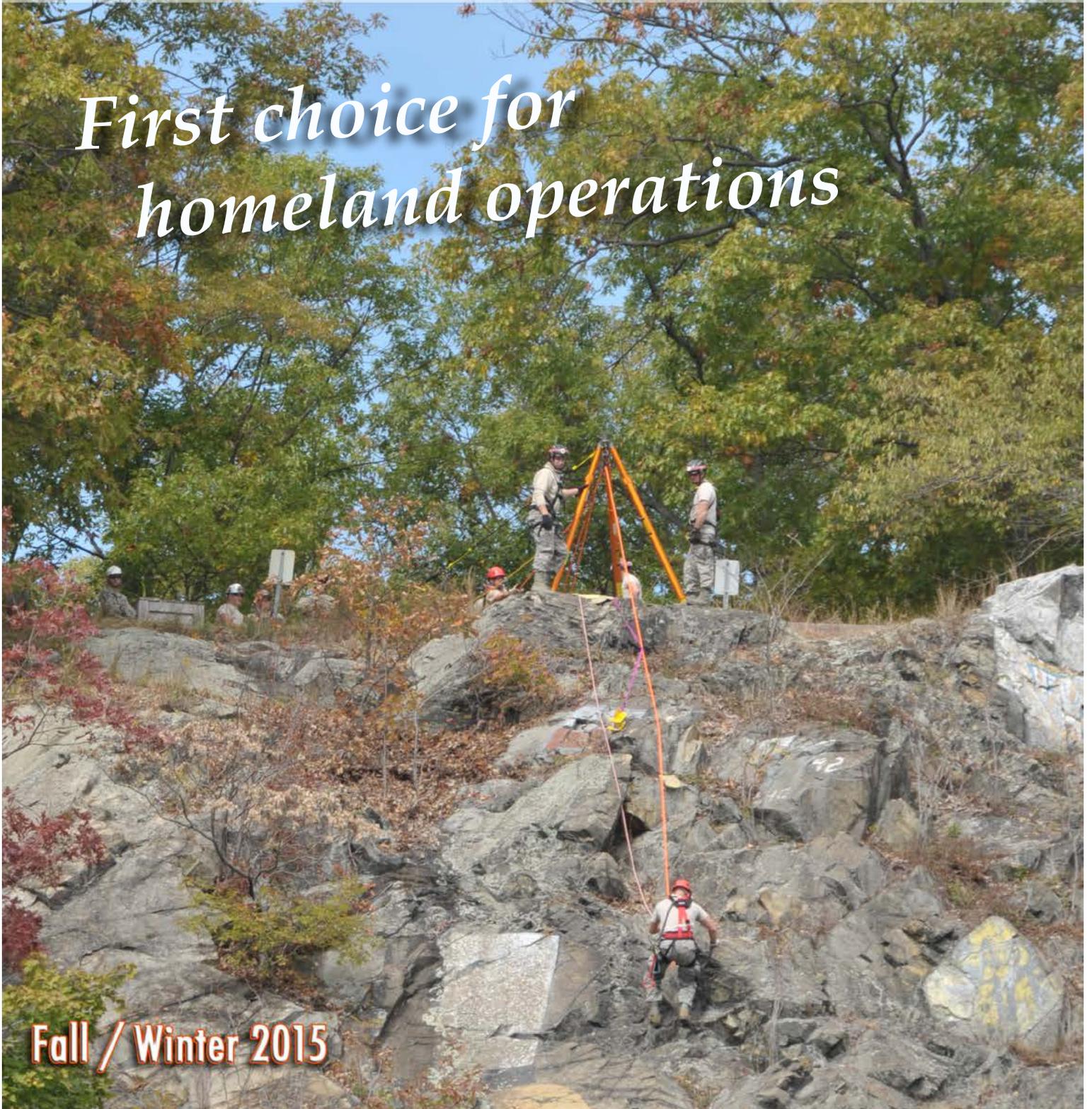
The **AIR NATIONAL GUARD** AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Skibird



Magazine of the 109th Airlift Wing, Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, N.Y.

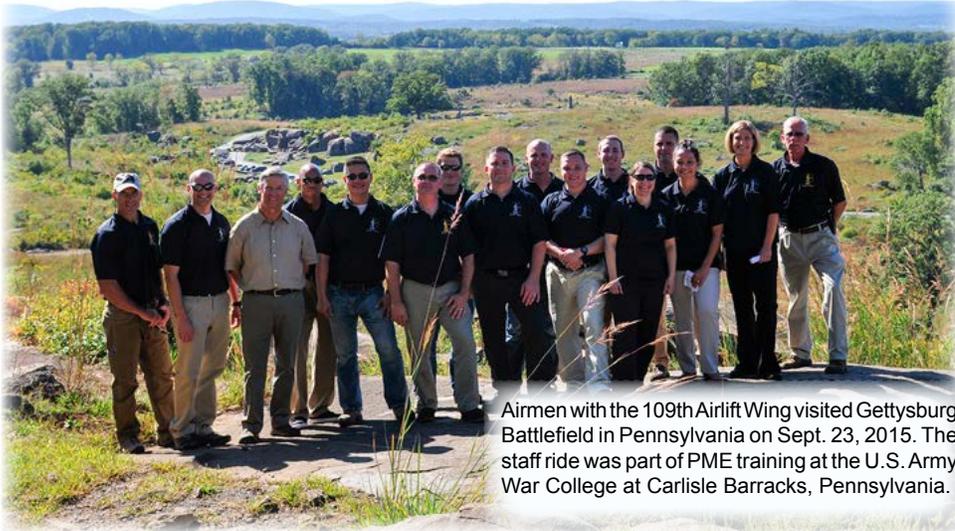
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Fall / Winter 2015

Building future leaders

By Col. Jeffrey L. Hedges
109th Mission Support Group Commander



Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing visited Gettysburg Battlefield in Pennsylvania on Sept. 23, 2015. The staff ride was part of PME training at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Courtesy Photo

Shakespeare pointed out that some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. And, upon the battlefields of Gettysburg, the courageous endeavor of competing forces ensured greatness in all three poetic dimensions endured.

Military leadership though axiomatic is clearly not instinctive for most. It is therefore a duty of those in senior martial roles to purposely advance initiatives designed to stress leadership development. Reliance on formal schools and centrally funded programs – a fading aberration, is plainly inadequate. So too is a proclivity to marvel at the complexity of the issue, highlighting the indispensability of leadership training and dismissively sighing away responsibility.

The 109th Airlift Wing has committed to a series of hard-hitting, focused developmental programs that invest in both officer and enlisted maturity. Over the past five years, the wing has sponsored Airman/NCO Leadership courses on base, trips to Washington D.C., and Staff Rides to Saratoga Battlefield, Boston, Concord, and Lexington. In September of 2015, senior leaders organized the second PME training to the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, with accompanying Staff Ride to Gettysburg. The focus audience was wing company grade officers with the trip covering two

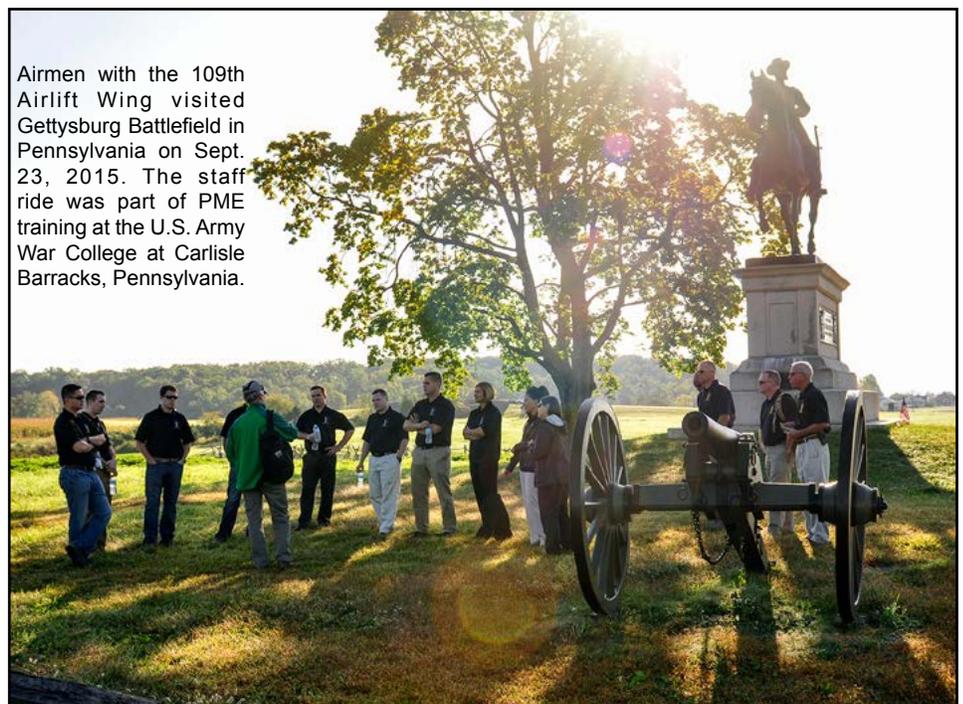
days at Carlisle Barracks and one day on the Battlefield. The War College offered the accommodations as well as professional support by way of Dr. Paul Jussel, Professor of Military Studies in the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, who spent all three days with the students lecturing and guiding the Staff Ride at Gettysburg. “The experience was one of



File Photo

kind and having walked the battlefields while hearing of the events that took place on the very ground we walked, was truly remarkable,” said 1st Lt. Jared Semerad, Wing Plans.

Whether at home station or on location at historically significant locations miles from base, the message to our Airmen remains the same – you are worth the investment! Finding ways to foster professionalism isn't easy or cheap but the results are priceless. One of the wing's tenants remains development of our nation's future – whether born or thrust into it.



Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing visited Gettysburg Battlefield in Pennsylvania on Sept. 23, 2015. The staff ride was part of PME training at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Photo by 1st Lt. Jared Semerad

The Skibird

109th Airlift Wing



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The Skibird

Fall/Winter 2015

Volume 51, No. 2

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On the cover:

The New York Air National Guard's 109th and 106th Fire Departments' urban search and rescue teams complete high angle training during a joint search and rescue training exercise Oct. 21, 2015 at Camp Smith, New York. Read the full story on [Page 15](#) (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt)

Airmen continue success

By Chief Master Sgt. Amy Giaquinto
109th AW Command Chief

This year has been a busy year, both with policies as well as the great things our Airmen do each and every day to get the mission done.

2015 has been the year of execution on policies that were being worked. The interim changes to the Airman Promotion/Demotion Program and Fitness Program capture the changes to fitness with regards to promotions and evaluations. The Community College of the Air Force degree or equivalent has been added to the promotion regulation as well. The Enlisted Evaluation System (EES) rollout has been slow; the Air Force is the lead on this project, and the Air National Guard is standing by

to respond to our unique policies. The bottom line: EES is a commander's and supervisory tool to help provide feedback and

performance-based evaluations along with promotion recommendations.

The formal Enlisted Grade Review (EGR) is underway. The 2015 EGR will follow a new set of business rules to improve the process, increase transparency, allow maximum flexibility to Directorate point of contacts, career field functional managers, and functional area managers, and ensure field involvement through the Enlisted Field Advisory Council (EFAC). The five core business rules are: field involvement (EFAC), no Air Force specialty percent cap, grades go where needed, career path (pyramid structure), and standardization (strategic manpower assessment). I know you all feel the pressure from all the change and implementation; but I can assure you that I and your senior leaders will lead you through these times and provide you with the tools you need to succeed.

Toward the end of July, the 109th AW

and the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, along with several local agencies across the Capital District, participated in a coordinated National Disaster Medical System Exercise. This exercise highlighted the vital function of the 109th AW and 139th AES in the NDMS and Homeland Defense mission as well as the cooperation and coordination between the 109th AW and New York state civilian medical and emergency management assets.

In August the 109th AW demonstrated its natural disaster response capability by assembling a 26-person domestic operations team, from base volunteers, to support homeland operations when disaster strikes. The first training exercise for the team was a debris removal request from the Schenectady County's airport authority

to remove some trees that were blocking their view of the ramp.

As the 109th AW prepared to launch its 28th

season supporting Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica, the Airman and Family Readiness Programs office held the first-ever White Ribbon event for Airmen and their families in October, offering information on benefits and services available to them while their loved one is away. The White Ribbon is very similar to the Yellow Ribbon events offered to those affected by contingency deployments. The White Ribbon is unique to the 109th AW because of their annual deployments to McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

By the end of October, Airmen and aircraft from the 109th AW were in place at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, supporting the National Science Foundation for the 28th season of Operation Deep Freeze. Throughout the season, a total of seven LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft and about 500 Airmen are expected to deploy, with 330 missions planned.



File Photo

October continued to be a busy month as firefighters from the 109th AW, 106th Rescue Wing, and 105th AW, met up at Camp Smith, New York, on Oct. 20, after convoying from their respective bases to complete three days of joint search and rescue training. The 109th Fire Department's urban search and rescue team, the lead USAR within the New York Air National Guard, is currently the only self-sufficient fully capable mobile unit in the Air National Guard.

Lastly, I would like to say "Congratulations" to the men and women of the 109th AW for being awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Thank you for all you do each and every day. You've earned it!

Once again the men and women of the 109th AW showed their adaptability and service before self while fulfilling their state and federal mission requirements. As we look forward to 2016 let's make sure to end 2015 on a safe and successful note. With the holidays right around the corner enjoy whatever time you can with family and friends remembering all the things in our lives that we are truly grateful for. I would ask you to keep those who cannot be home with their loved ones in your thoughts and prayers as you enjoy the upcoming holidays.

109th AW awarded AF Outstanding Unit Award

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The 109th Airlift Wing was recently awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its accomplishments between Nov. 1, 2012 and Oct. 31, 2014.

The Air Force-level award is given to units which have demonstrated outstanding achievement setting the unit above national or international significance, combat operations against an armed enemy of the United States or military operations involving conflict with or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force.

“Thank you all for your tremendous efforts each and every day,” Col. Shawn

Clouthier, 109th Airlift Wing commander said to the unit’s Airmen. “You have all earned this prestigious award.”

The award recognizes the 109th AW for its continued military support to the National Science Foundation’s Operation Deep Freeze mission, providing tactical polar airlift in the North and South Polar regions. Within the two-year period, the 109th AW generated nearly 8,500 flight hours, delivered 12.2 million pounds of cargo and transported more than 13,000 passengers to remote sites throughout Antarctica and Greenland. Additionally, the innovation of the 109th Mission Support Group contributed to the fulfillment of national economic savings objectives by overhauling the Operation Deep Freeze supply depot contract, resulting

in a \$400,000 annual cost savings.

The 109th Medical Group was also noted for their significance by hosting the 2013 National Disaster Medical System exercise, showcasing their seamless synchronization of federal, state and local medical response forces.

The award also recognized the Airmen of the 109th AW for exemplifying the Air Force core value of Service Before Self for their volunteerism in more than 40 local events within the surrounding community.

This is the eighth time the wing has received the Air Force-level award.



New locations for Building 1 occupants

Bldg 1 Occupant

Wing Command Suite -----

IG -----

Recruiting -----

HRO/MEO -----

JA -----

Chaplain Assistants -----

Finance -----

Wing Plans -----

Medical Group -----

FSS -----

 Customer Service -----

 Readiness -----

Base Testing Room -----

Wellness Center -----

Safety -----

Retention -----

Mission Support Group Command Staff -----

Credit Union -----

New Location

Bldg 3

Bldg 15 (IG Office); Bldg 24 (IGQ); Bldg 19, Maintenance Classroom (IG Staff)

Bldg 19 office and classroom

Bldg 24

Bldg 15, CU area

Bldg 20, Upper Left Mezzanine

Bldg 15

Bldg 26

Bldg 25

Bldg 16, B- Dining Hall

Bldg 27, Comm Help Desk

Bldg 27, KOM area behind mailboxes

Bldg 27, Comm Classroom

Bldg 15

Bldg 31, Firehouse Classroom

Bldg 19

Bldg 25

Bldg 2, Main Hangar, old union office

Bldg 3: Logistics Readiness Squadron

Bldg 15: Honor Guard

Bldg 16: Dining Facility

Bldg 19: Maintenance

Bldg 20: Small Air Terminal

Bldg 24: Counterdrug

Bldg 25: Civil Engineering

Bldg 26: Security Forces

Bldg 27: Communications

Bldg 31: Firehouse

109th AW begins 28th ODF season

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The takeoff of the New York Air National Guard's LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft here Oct. 16 marked the official start of the 109th Airlift Wing's 28th season of support to science research at the South Pole.

By the end of October, Airmen and aircraft with the 109th Airlift Wing were in place at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, participating in Operation Deep Freeze, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, managed by the National Science Foundation.

Lt. Col. Seth Barrows was part of the first aircrew to leave and the 139th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron deployed commander. Barrows said as the deployed commander he must ensure planes, people and weather are all good to ensure a safe, successful mission. "The weather is the biggest challenge so

you watch that weather very closely, and from there you do your mission," said Lt. Col. Christian Sander, 109th Operations Group commander.

Throughout the season, which runs through February, a total of seven LC-130 ski-equipped aircraft and about 500 Airmen are expected to deploy, with 330 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. 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.

This year, the IcePod missions are expected to increase from the previous season. The IcePod is an externally mounted electronics pod that provides an integrated

ice imaging system that measures in detail both the ice surface and the ice bed.

"This season is seeing the maturation of the Common Science Support Pod with 18 IcePod missions planned compared to three missions last season," said Lt. Col. Blair Herdrick, 139th Airlift Squadron's Antarctic Operations chief. "IcePod is a project by Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO) at Columbia University in New York. The IcePod project utilizes the Common Science Support Pod to house a variety of instruments to measure changes in the Antarctic ice sheet."

The IcePod missions were flown for the first time in Antarctica last season, and were deemed one of the biggest successes of the year.

The 109th AW has been supporting the NSF's South Pole research since 1988. Since 1999, the unit has been the sole provider of this type of airlift to the NSF and U.S. Antarctic research efforts.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

An LC-130 Skibird and aircrew with the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing departed Oct. 16, 2015, from Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, for McMurdo Station, Antarctica. This is the 28th season that the unit has participated in Operation Deep Freeze, the military component of the U.S. Antarctic Program, which is managed by the National Science Foundation.

Family Programs holds first White Ribbon event for Airmen, families affected by ODF

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

As the 109th Airlift Wing prepared to launch its 28th season supporting Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica, the Airman and Family Readiness Programs office held the first-ever White Ribbon event Oct. 3 for Airmen and their families, offering information on benefits and services available to them while their loved one is away.

The White Ribbon is very similar to the Yellow Ribbon events offered to those affected by contingency deployments. The White Ribbon is unique to the 109th AW because of their annual deployments to McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

"I thought it was very important to pull together some kind of event where families could come, they could get information, they could get resources, and they could get hooked up with these resources," said Colleen Casey, 109th AFRP manager.

Casey said when she took the position here earlier in the year, she learned about the 109th's unique mission and wanted to

put something together to let the Airmen and families affected by ODF each year know what resources were available to them.

Multiple vendors were at the event, providing information on what resources they could provide.

Vendors included the New York State Child and Youth Program and Teen Council, the American Red Cross, Military One Source, Blue Star Mothers of America, Saratoga Warhorse as well as on-base resources such as the Chaplain Corps, Director of Psychological Health and the all-volunteer 109th Family Matters Group.

"I feel like this is going to be great for my wife because it gives her a little bit more information of when I'm gone what different outlets she might have," said Staff Sgt. James Comstock, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron customer service representative. This will be his third ODF deployment.

"I think this program is great, and I'm glad that they're offering it" said Jenna Herdrick, whose husband has deployed to Antarctica for multiple years. "I think it's going to benefit me by knowing the services (that are offered)."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Amy Nevells, New York Military One Source Consultant, talks with an Airman with the 109th Airlift Wing who will be deploying in support of Operation Deep Freeze, about services available to him and his family during the first-ever White Ribbon event at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on Oct. 3, 2015. The White Ribbon is very similar to the Yellow Ribbon events offered to those affected by contingency deployments. The White Ribbon is unique to the 109th AW because of their annual deployments to McMurdo Station, Antarctica.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt



Click the arrow to watch the video story, shot and edited by Tech. Sgt. Jason Cooper.

Airmen and family members with the 109th Airlift Wing attended the first-ever White Ribbon event at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on Oct. 3, 2015. The White Ribbon is very similar to the Yellow Ribbon events offered to those affected by contingency deployments. The White Ribbon is unique to the 109th AW because of their annual deployments to McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

Airmen, aircraft support NSF in Greenland *International, national media join crews, document 109th mission*

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The 109th Airlift Wing's support for National Science Foundation research in Greenland was once again a success – crews flew 684 hours, moved 1.6 million pounds of cargo, delivered nearly 65,000 pounds of fuel, and moved more than 1,500 passengers.

Throughout the season, which ran March through August, Airmen and aircraft provided support for Greenland research by transporting fuel, cargo and passengers to and from the various camps throughout Greenland aboard LC-130 ski-equipped Hercules transport planes.

The LC-130s are the largest planes in the world equipped to land on snow pack.

During the U.S. winter season, the 109th AW is supporting Operation Deep Freeze in Antarctica, and in the summer months, the unit flies to Greenland to not only continue their support for National Science Foundation but also to ensure they are ready to supply bases across Antarctica when the long Antarctic winter ends.

The 109th deploys at various times between March and August for Greenland. Each year, about six rotations consisting of two to four aircraft and up to 80 Airmen each, go up anywhere from six to 14 days at a time depending on the needs of the NSF.

"We supply various science camps on the Ice Shelf in Greenland," said Maj. Erik Srokowski of the Greenland shop. "We bring in fuel and supplies to these camps and bring passengers in and out the entire season.

"One of the most important science missions we have are the transportation of ice cores out of the remote camps and back to the United States," he said. "Ice cores are a vital part of the science effort in the Arctic in analyzing the composition of Earth's atmosphere thousands of years ago."

This year, national and international reporters had the chance to see the wing in action, as they boarded an LC-130 aircraft at the end of June at Stratton for the trip to Kangerlussuaq, Greenland – the hub of 109th AW activity.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

Media gets imagery of a 109th Airlift Wing LC-130 Skibird at Summit, Greenland, on June 29, 2015. Airmen and aircraft from the New York Air National Guard's 109th AW stage out of Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, during the summer months, supplying fuel and supplies and transporting passengers in and out of various National Science Foundation camps on the Ice Shelf in Greenland throughout the entire season. 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.

While there, media had the chance to see aircrew, maintainers and other support personnel hard at work in Kangerlussuaq. They also got to visit Summit, one of the camps supporting researchers whose primary focus is global climate change.

"We wanted to learn about the experience of landing on a snow or ice-covered runway, and how the 109th prepares for this mission," said Christoph Kaestner, of the German magazine, "Der Flugleiter" and website, World of Aviation. "We had a really good opportunity to get all of this information. To be able to see the whole mission, including the preparation that went into it was really great. We had great opportunities to take pictures and film; it's been a great experience all around."

"I was really surprised to see how big Camp Summit is, and how many people are working here," said Thomas Urbild, editor in chief of World of Aviation. "It was also great to see the operations from the 109th in Kangerlussuaq and how many people it

takes to get the mission done."

The media outlets, including ABC News and CBS News, produced news pieces highlighting the 109th AW's mission in Greenland.

"It's really important for the media to see firsthand how we support the National Science Foundation and all that goes into it so they can get our story out there and highlight the amazing work our Airmen are doing on the ice," said Maj. Anthony Bucci, the 109th AW public affairs officer who escorted the media on the trip.

Angel Canales with ABC News produced a video segment, "New York Air Guard unit is lifeline for scientists in Greenland and Antarctica." Click [here](#) to see the segment.

Sander assumes command of Operations Group

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Christian Sander assumed command of the 109th Operations Group during a change of command ceremony here Sept. 13.

Sander, previous 109th Maintenance Group deputy commander, assumed command from Col. Michael Steindl in a ceremony officiated by Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander. Changes of command are a military tradition representing the transfer of responsibilities from the presiding official to the upcoming official.

Ross spoke about the many leadership positions Sander has been in throughout the years including the opening expeditionary airlift squadron commander in Antarctica. He also spoke about Sander's role in the 1999 rescue of Dr. Jerri Nielsen from the South Pole.

"I just remember how professional he was in handling the crew and the mission," Ross said. "I knew from that experience that he would do a lot of good things for the unit and rise to higher levels and responsibility, and he's done that. I just want to thank you for that and for all you do in the future," he said to Sander.

Steindl, a 26-year veteran, will be retiring within the next couple months. Before relinquishing command, he thanked his family and the Operations Group for the years of support they had given him.

"I found out quite recently that leaving this position is at least as stressful as entering it," he said. "But I comfort myself knowing that the unit is in good hands. ... I cannot thank you all enough for making me so proud to have been your commander. It is truly the highlight of my career. You are an amazing group of Airmen that together do great things and amazing things."

"This is an extraordinary

"I have a clear vision of the future - it's now my job to support you as I've been supported in the past."

Lt. Col. Christian Sander
109th Operations Group commander



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Lt. Col. Chris Sander assumed command of the 109th Operations Group from outgoing commander Col. Michael Steindl with Col. Alan Ross, 109th Airlift Wing vice commander, officiating the change of command ceremony at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on Sept. 13, 2015. Sander was previously the 109th Maintenance Group deputy commander.

wing and we do amazing things and the Operations Group is a big part of that," Ross said. "I'd like to thank Colonel Steindl for his three years of leadership in the Operations Group and for all you've done to make us ready and relevant and continue on in the 21st Century."

After the Operations Group guidon was passed to Sander, he addressed the audience. Sander thanked the Maintenance

Group for all they had done and his family for their support over the years before addressing the Operations Group.

"I have a clear vision of the future - it's now my job to support you as I've been supported in the past," he said. "Through fine mission sets, an effective chain of command, and empowering our young people, we're going to focus our incredible intellectual fire power on getting unified goals finished, and we're going to do a good job of it every single day. And every single day we're going to take care of each other so that we really enjoy our time here."

Around the Wing

Wing, area first responders hold MARE

The 109th Airlift Wing worked with local first responders in a Major Accident Response Exercise on base June 14, 2015. MARE is annual requirement by the Department of Defense to exercise the wing's disaster response, utilizing mutual aid agreements with community first responders. The exercise simulated a tanker truck explosion on base.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Benjamin German

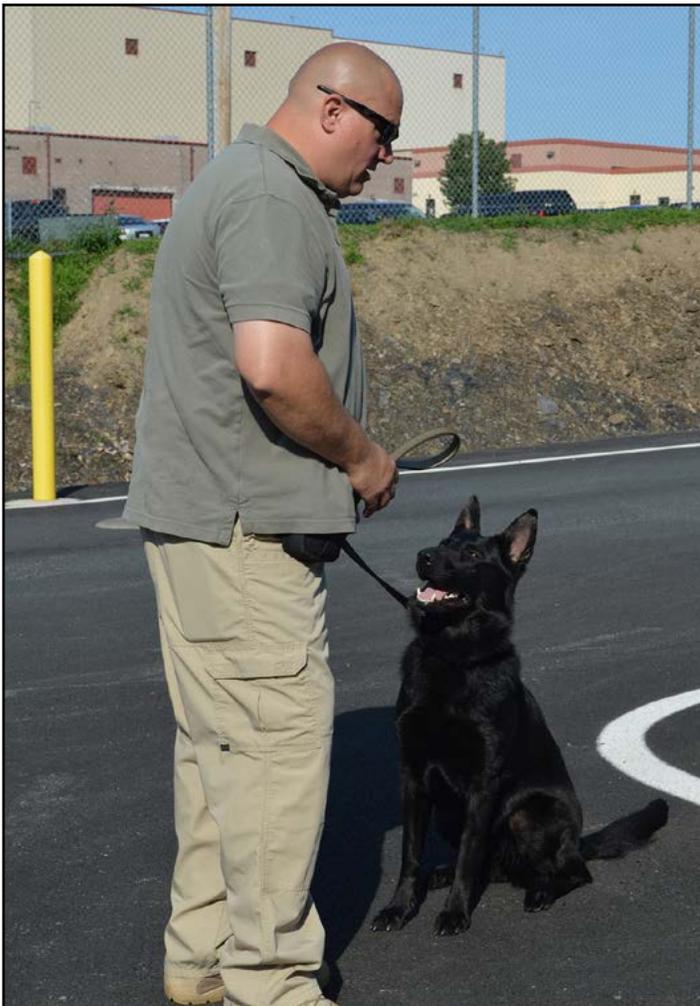


Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

K-9 security on Stratton

Tech. Sgt. Scott Everson, a loadmaster with the 139th Airlift Squadron, works as a K-9 handler in a private security company on the civilian side with Aggie, an explosive detection K-9. Everson was given approval by 109th Airlift Wing leadership to train Aggie at the base, giving the 109th Security Forces Squadron an added measure of security at the front gate. Aggie assisted with random vehicle inspections over a few months while at the same time receiving real-world training.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

NYNG CDTF hosts community anti-drug groups at conference

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

More than 100 members of community anti-drug groups from across New York attended a conference hosted by the New York National Guard's Counterdrug Task Force on Wednesday, Oct. 28 at the Glenville Armed Forces Reserve Center.

"This conference was an opportunity to get the latest drug threats and information out to community based organizations whose main goal is the prevention of drug use and implementing environmental strategies to stop drug abuse in communities," said New York Army National Guard Capt. Joseph Moeller.

Moeller heads the task force's Civil Operations effort.

The Airmen and Soldier assigned to Civil Operations work with local community anti-drug groups to help them do their jobs better and more effectively. They provide administrative and planning support to these local groups.

The 100 participants represented 15 counties in northeastern New York.

"We used to be very isolated in our own field of thought, but we've found that the more we've gotten together to do these conferences we not only share knowledge, but we also come up with incredibly effective environmental strategies that individually we may not have thought of," said Air National Guard Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik, a civil operations specialist.

"When you meet other people in several different fields all with the same common goal, it's amazing the strategies you can come up with," she added.

Kaitlin Downey, the youth specialist for the Community Coalition for Family Wellness in Saratoga, agreed that everyone collaborating is very beneficial.

"When we all come together, we can be working on the same sort of mission in all



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

New York Army National Guard Counter Drug Task Force members and Northeastern New York Prevention Cooperative representatives hosted the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Prevention and Recovery Conference at the Naval Operations Support Center in Glenville, New York, on Oct. 28, 2015. More than 100 community anti-drug program members attended the conference.

of our surrounding counties in a regional way ... to make sure they're getting clear and consistent messages across the board," she said.

Education is the key for coalitions, and they do this with environmental preventative strategies – policies, programs and practices that promote the well-being of people and aim to reduce substance abuse.

"Environmental preventive strategies work to change the culture and climate of a community," Downey said.

"One of the strategies we use is really trying to educate our community but at the same time educate our prevention folks and the people who have boots to the ground, like Counterdrug, to make sure we're all speaking on the same page," said Kristin Sweeter, the grant coordinator with the Niskayuna Community Action Program.

"It's important for coalitions to give people the information, whether they're parents or students, and let them do with it as they choose. It's about giving them all of

this information, and allowing them to make their own decisions," Sweeter said.

"Oftentimes in the prevention field we don't have the resources and we don't have the manpower so we have to do as much as we can to change things on a broader scale and leave the direct programming up to school districts and the counselors and therapists," Downey said.

The conference not only brought together coalitions, but also others in the community who are affected in some way by substance abuse, such as judges, lawyers, doctors and prevention treatment specialists. Attendees spent the day in various workshops such as Incorporating Prevention in the Classroom, Engaging the Addict at all Costs, and Recent Marijuana Research and Trends, just to name a few.

The mission of the Northeast New York Prevention Cooperative is to build capacity among agencies, communities, and coalitions to provide effective prevention services for the people of 15 counties around the capital region of New York State.

Veterans Day



Antarctic Sun photo by Michael Lucibella

Two nations celebrate Veterans Day on the ice

Residents of McMurdo Station and New Zealand's Scott Base joined together on Veterans Day to honor the service of their nations' men and women in uniform. Pictured, Jeremiah Clark and Terrell Skafer raise the American and New Zealand flags as Master Sgt. Al Moon plays reveille in a joint Veterans Day ceremony.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Honor and Serve Breakfast

Airmen with the 109th Airlift Wing were among many service members and veterans who attended the 7th annual "To Honor and Serve" Breakfast at Glen Sanders Mansion in Scotia, New York, on Nov. 5, 2015. The event is hosted each year by the Capital Region Chamber.

Airmen practice medical evacuation at Stratton

By Maj. Anthony Bucci
109th AW Public Affairs

Flight medics rushed to stabilize a patient and move the litter onto a waiting LC-130 Hercules aircraft, a life-saving training exercise where minutes and hours can mean life or death for casualties.

The event was a training exercise for the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron here July 30.

Airmen who routinely train for overseas missions to handle combat casualties also prepare for disasters at home where their skills might save the lives of fellow Americans.

The exercise, part of a coordinated National Disaster Medical System Exercise, included several local agencies from across the Capital District.

The joint agency training helps build much better familiarity with those other response agencies before a disaster occurs, said Capt. Richard Legault, 139th AES Operations Flight commander.

“Understanding our state mission,” Legault said, “which separates us from our active duty counterparts, we realize how important interagency cooperation is when disaster strikes; that is why we along with our civilian partners participate in these field training exercises. ... When disaster strikes, like a Hurricane Sandy, we are better prepared to operate effectively and seamlessly in a joint

interagency environment.”

Agency partners in the training included the Albany Stratton Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Disaster Medical System, the Civil Air Patrol and the East Glensville Fire Department.

Coordinating such diverse groups under a unified effort requires practice and communication, Legault stressed.

During the training, patients were stabilized for transport, loaded onto an LC-130 Hercules and evacuated by members of the 139th, who were sharpening their skills for medical evacuation missions.

The simulated patients, volunteer cadets from the Civil Air Patrol, were moved from a staging site at the East Glensville Volunteer Fire Department to Stratton and then loaded onto an LC-130 for transport.

For the Air National Guard, the shift in focus from an overseas contingency operation to disaster response is a seamless one, made even more realistic with the agency partners during training.

“These types of joint training exercises demonstrate the dual-use value of the Air National Guard – continue to deliver homeland forces to the nation, states, territories, and district in times of need, and strengthen enduring relationships at home and abroad,” said Lt. Col. Brian Backus, 139th AES commander.

The National Disaster Medical

System is intended to enhance the medical response during a crisis by combining federal and non-federal medical resources. It is federally coordinated, but includes medical resources at the state, county and local level when disasters strike.

“The National Disaster Medical System combines federal and non-federal medical resources into a unified response to meet natural and man-made disaster needs, as well as support patient treatment requirements from military contingencies,” Backus said.

The training also highlighted the important role of Stratton Air National Guard Base. The facility is designated as a federal coordinating center, one of only 10 National Guard bases with this responsibility.

The role of Stratton during

a medical disaster is to recruit hospitals and maintain local non-federal hospital participation in the National Disaster Medical System. The leaders and staff of the 109th Airlift Wing support that role in coordinating exercises and emergency plans with participating hospitals and other local authorities.

The goal is to establish patient reception, transportation, and communication plans, and during system activation in a crisis, coordinate the reception and distribution of patients being evacuated to the area.

Members of the New York Air National Guard and the 109th Airlift Wing already have a good deal of experience with such response efforts following Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and Superstorm Sandy in 2012.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

Members of the New York Air National Guard's 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, the Tennessee Air National Guard's 118th Medical Group, and the Albany Stratton Veterans Affairs Medical Center carry "patients", made up from the New York Civil Air Patrol, from the staging area tent to an LC-130 Hercules aircraft during an exercise at Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, New York.



Tech. Sgt. Michael Eldred instructs a firefighter with the 109th Airlift Wing on how to operate a skid steer Aug. 12, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. The skid steers are part of the equipment package the 109th AW received as part of the debris clearance package to support domestic operations. The 109th Logistic Readiness Squadron's Vehicle Maintenance Flight has been training members throughout the base on the equipment received.



Tech. Sgt. Brian Kissinger, a firefighter with the 109th Airlift Wing, operates a skid steer during training Aug. 12, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York. The skid steers are part of the equipment package the 109th AW received as part of the debris clearance package to support domestic operations.

109th AW gains capability for debris removal

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The 109th Airlift Wing is well known for its polar operations in both Antarctica and Greenland supporting the National Science Foundation; but being part of the Air National Guard means the unit is also a first choice for homeland operations, including natural disaster response, and the 109th AW stands ready to respond when needed.

Recently a new tasking came down to all Air National Guard units for debris clearance as part of natural disaster response. With it, came all the equipment needed to fulfill this task - chain saws, skid steers, rakes, shovels, safety gear and much more. A debris clearance team consisting of 109th AW members is now fully trained on the equipment and ready to go.

“In 2010 it was indicated that equipment was needed by some units to support airfield and route debris cleanup,” said Maj. Jason Zeliph, Directorate of Operations (J3) Operations and Plans officer at Joint Force Headquarters in Latham. *See Capability, page 16*

Domestic Ops



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

The 109th Fire Department trains on vehicle extraction Oct. 3, 2015, at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt

Staff Sgt. Jennifer Bristol participates in the 109th Fire Department's search and rescue team's confined space training at Stratton Air National Guard Base, New York, on Sept. 17, 2015. The 12-person search and rescue team trains monthly on various rescue techniques.

NYANG firefighters conduct joint search and rescue training

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

Firefighters from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing, 106th Rescue Wing, and 105th AW, from Scotia, Long Island, and Newburgh respectively, met up at Camp Smith, New York, on Oct. 20, after convoying from their respective bases to complete three days of joint search and rescue training.

The 109th Fire Department's urban search and rescue team, the lead USAR within the New York Air National Guard, is currently the only self-sufficient fully capable mobile unit in the Air National Guard.

"As we stand now, we are mobile-ready to go anywhere, anytime," said Master Sgt. Brian Kissinger, 109th Fire Department assistant chief of operations.

See Rescue, page 16

VIDEO ▶

Click the arrow to watch the video story, shot and edited by Master Sgt. William Gizara.

Domestic Ops

Capability

“Over the years, more equipment has been added. All of the air wings in the nation have now been equipped with the debris clearance package.”

“It’s an Air Force-funded UTC (unit type code) for domestic operations,” said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Schaible, 109th Logistics Readiness Squadron’s Vehicle Maintenance superintendent. A UTC is a package consisting of either equipment or personnel to support specific missions. “If the Air National Guard was needed anywhere in the state to clear roads for first responders and power companies, the intent is that initial response force would go out and start clearing the roads of trees and debris - anything that’s blocking responders from getting to a site.”

What the 109th was initially missing was the 26-person UTC, assigned to Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (BEEF) squadrons. During the 109th Civil Engineer Squadron’s reset

years ago, its Prime BEEF unit was eliminated.

“Most of these packages went to a Civil Engineering Squadron that had a Prime BEEF unit,” Schaible said. “It doesn’t come with manpower – it’s strictly an equipment UTC.”

The Vehicle Maintenance Flight was tasked to develop the capability needed. “We had to figure out how to do this without having these 26 people,” Schaible said. “The driving factor for using vehicle maintenance is that my mechanics are already qualified operators on all the equipment. So to get this program up and running, it just made sense to do it that way.”

Vehicle Maintenance began recruiting people from throughout the base to be part of the debris clearance team and then started training them on how to use the equipment. They reached out to the New York Guard for training on chain saw operations. On June 16, New York Guard 1st Sgt. Robert Rathburn conducted the

Chainsaw Basic Coursework for 15 members of the 109th AW at Stratton. The timing couldn’t have been better, as the wing received a request from Schenectady County’s airport authority to remove some trees that were blocking their view of the ramp.

“We partnered with Schenectady County and used this as a training event for the team,” Schaible said. “We cleared all of the tree line over a three-week period. It was at no cost to Schenectady County or Stratton Air National Guard Base, and we got training out of it for the team. We decided it was not only a great opportunity to do it, but get training at the same time.”

“We should take every opportunity we can to garner goodwill within the community, and not just from a political standpoint but because it is the right thing to do,” said Master Sgt. Scott Bailey of the 109th Medical Group who volunteered to be part of the tree clearing team.

Vehicle Maintenance conducted

more training – this time with the 109th Fire Department’s 13-person search and rescue team as they taught them how to operate the skid steers.

“Our job is to search and locate victims in any natural disasters, building collapses – anything of the sort,” said Tech. Sgt. Adam Myers, a 109th firefighter and member of the search and rescue team. “We have numerous specialties including rope rescue, vehicle extraction, and structural collapse.

“This kind of training here with the skid steers gives us another skill in our pockets to respond to disaster situations,” he said. Not only can the search and rescue team now use this equipment if needed, they are also qualified to be on the debris clearance team.

“Our vehicles, equipment and personnel are fully ready to go,” Schaible said. Vehicle Maintenance will continue to conduct more training opportunities so more 109th AW members are available to respond.

Rescue

“This exercise was a proof of concept for our USAR mission set,” said Lt. Col. Robert Donaldson, 109th Civil Engineer Squadron commander. “The collaboration efforts among the 109th, 106th and 105th AW USAR teams helped streamline our existing convoy capabilities and also helped refine our high angle rescue tactics, techniques and procedures. The USAR members were able to share their valuable skill-sets with each other, and worked together as an integrated team, which made this training opportunity reach far beyond ordinary expectations.”

Once at Camp Smith, the Airmen completed high angle rescue training as well as breaching and breaking training. High angle is defined as a very

steep environment in which a person is primarily supported by a rope system. “Breaching and breaking is like if a building were to collapse, we would cut through the concrete using different methods,” Kissinger said. Along with the rescue training, three Airmen from the 109th Vehicle Maintenance Flight who convoyed down with the firefighters, trained the 106th on skid steer operation. The skid steers are part of the debris clearance package the 109th AW obtained earlier in the year.

“A lot of my guys haven’t had training on the debris clearance kits that all the units have,” said Senior Master Sgt. James Nizza, 106th Fire Department chief. “(The 109th) brought their (skid steer) and now we’re getting all of my guys certified on it.”

Camp Smith proved to be the

ideal location for the units to come together as it is the central location between Scotia and Long Island, and also had the environment the teams needed to complete the training they wouldn’t be able to get at home station, including the cliff they used for the high angle training.

“We don’t get the ability to do this type of training at home, and (because of that) the skills are diminishing; if we don’t continue to practice it, we’re going to lose the skill-set,” Nizza said. He said this joint exercise gave them the opportunity to continue their training to keep the domestic operations mission going, “and it also builds the partnership with the other state units.”

The Airmen agreed the importance of this type of training in keeping the Air National Guard the first choice for homeland

operations. In a real-world situation, the search and rescue assets throughout the state would be activated. “Our goal is to be out the door in four hours ... This is huge training. We are now training together and learning how each unit works. This is our first joint training exercise.”

“A special thanks goes out to the Camp Smith leadership for allowing us the opportunity to use their facilities and to the multitalented Airmen who made this event a huge success,” Donaldson said. “I have no doubt that the support and training we received here will pay dividends when our USAR teams are called upon for their life-saving skill-sets during real-world events. We’re actively planning additional collaborative training opportunities in the very near future.”

Airman Development

109th Communications Flight Professional Development Day

By Senior Master Sgt. Greg Mihalko
109th Communications Flight

Members of the 109th Communications Flight visited the State University at Albany College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering Aug. 21, 2015, to gain insight regarding major advances in micro technology and learn about the vision of combining government, academia and industry.

During the visit, tour guides explained the primary goal of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering is to propel New York to a leadership position in technology and economic development.

There are two key drivers constituting this vision; using an investment of taxpayer funds and the leveraging of private-public partnerships.

“I have often heard about the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, but I did not realize how much research was accomplished there,” said Senior Airman Collin Eustis, 109th CF network engineer. “It was great to see in person all of the technological advances taking place right



Courtesy photo

Airmen with the 109th Communications Flight visited the State University at Albany College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering on Aug. 21, 2015.

in our backyard.”

At the end of the tour, Airmen with the 109th CF gathered for a brainstorming strategy session to discuss nanotechnology applications toward the mission of the 109th Airlift Wing and the military as a whole.

Some ideas discussed included using micro technology to perform research at the South Pole, developing micro-drones for research and weapons, and creating micro tools to perform maintenance on the base network infrastructure or even aircraft maintenance.



Courtesy photo

Airmen with the 109th Communications Flight visited the State University at Albany College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering on Aug. 21, 2015.

Patriot Ruckmarch – pride, one step at a time

By Lt. Col. Benson “Rucksack” Louie
109th Medical Group

Myself and three other 109th Airmen wanted to do something special for our fellow veterans, so on a beautiful Saturday morning we ruck marched 24.8 miles (which included about 10 miles uphill with an average 17 percent grade) to help raise money for the Heroes at Home Veterans support organization.

On Sept. 19, Tech. Sgt. Ryan Milton, Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik and Lt. Col. Bret Wood joined me in participating in the Patriot Ruckmarch. The goal of the event was not just to fundraise for the Heroes at Home Project, but also to raise awareness of what veterans go through by having people endure “a walk in their shoes”. The event succeeded in both areas.

The morning was busy with pre-start events. After checking in and signing a waiver, we weighed our rucksacks (the rucksack weight standard was 35 pounds) and checked our equipment and water. After opening remarks from Rensselaer County Executive Kathy Jimino and retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks and a group portrait, we set off on the foot march with guidons in hand.

The course started at the Sullivan-Jones Poestenkill VFW, wound through Poestenkill on County Route 351, up State Route 2 toward Grafton with a turnaround halfway point at the Grafton Fire Hall, and then back.

Heroes at Home is one of 11 New York State funded programs providing peer support to anyone who has served in the military, as well as their families, regardless of discharge status, era in which they served or combat experience. Since 2012, they have partnered with the VA, the VFW and American Legion, and community providers to ensure that Veterans have access to services, and to provide mutual support as they navigate the reintegration process. Please go to www.heroesathomerensco.com for more details on what they offer.

Thanks to all who supported us and we’ll see y’all out there next year!

(Right) Lt. Col. Benson Louie, Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik, Tech. Sgt. Ryan Milton and Lt. Col. Bret Wood participated in the Patriot Ruckmarch on Sept. 19, 2015, to help raise funds for the Heroes at Home Project.

Photos courtesy of David Hyldelund, Heroes at Home volunteer

(Below) Tech. Sgt. Ryan Milton and Master Sgt. Candace Stefanik carry the guidons during the Patriot Ruckmarch. The 24.8-mile course started at the Sullivan-Jones Poestenkill VFW with the turnaround point at Grafton Fire Hall.



Air Force Band performs in local area

By Tech. Sgt. Catharine Schmidt
109th AW Public Affairs

The U.S. Air Force Band, the premiere musical organization of the U.S. Air Force, was in the local area recently as part of a 10-day Fall tour throughout New England.

The Concert Band and Singing Sergeants, two of the six Band ensembles, performed in Saratoga, Albany, Hudson and Queensbury on Oct. 21-23.

“Our goal is to honor our veterans, inspire patriotism to our American citizenry, and to positively impact the global community through our music,” said Senior Master Sgt. Phillip Krzywicki, a French hornist with the Concert Band.

Krzywicki described the

concert as “A pleasant mix of patriotic favorites, an instrumental soloist performing a modern work for clarinet, and the second half will feature the Singing Sergeants, the official chorus of the United States Air Force.”

“It was fantastic,” said Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Trottier, of the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton Air National Guard Base who attended the concert Oct. 21 at Saratoga Springs High School. “From the start of ‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ by the Singing Sergeants, the Air Force Band had a crisp sound, nostalgic theme, exciting moments, reminiscent with a take-back in time but most of all relaxing.”

Also on stage was clarinetist



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

The Singing Sergeants perform at Queensbury High School on Oct. 23, 2015. They joined The Concert Band for a 10-day Fall tour throughout New England. Both ensembles are part of the U.S. Air Force Base, the premiere musical organization of the U.S. Air Force.

Tech. Sgt. Brian Wahrlich, an Albany native. “He was recognized, and it was great to see and hear his solo. I’m proud to be in the Air Force for sure,” Trottier said.

Along with Saratoga Springs High School, the Band also performed at the College of St. Rose in Albany, Columbia Green Community College in Hudson, and their final performance in New York was at Queensbury High School.

Before arriving in New York, the tour started in Boston on Oct. 15 and then various locations throughout Massachusetts followed by Connecticut. Their final stop on their tour was St. Albans, Vermont, on Oct. 25.

The U.S. Air Force Band, based out of Washington, D.C., comprises 180 players and six different musical ensembles to cover a variety of music genres, including jazz and rock.



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gizara

The Concert Band performs at Queensbury High School on Oct. 23, 2015. They joined The Singing Sergeants for a 10-day Fall tour throughout New England. Both ensembles are part of the U.S. Air Force Base, the premiere musical organization of the U.S. Air Force.

Wellness team soaring to new heights

Wellness Center Staff

Your 109th Wellness Team has been hard at work over the summer and fall, sharpening their skills, expertise and deepening their relationships with community providers so that we can keep our members and their families, tooled up for success!

Colleen Casey, 109th Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager participated in SafeTALK, a training sponsored by LivingWorks, focusing on Suicide Prevention and Intervention. In October, Casey traveled



Casey

to Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts, to train alongside seasoned AFRPMs for one week and get trained on the most up-to-date Transition Assistance and the Air Force Family Integrated Results and Statistical Training. In mid-November, Casey participated in the New York State Family Programs Professional Development Workshop in Niagara Falls, New York.

Kelly Young, LCSW-R, 109th Director of Psychological Health participated in a comprehensive training at Andrews AFB, Maryland, in August with leadership from Air National Guard and Directors of Psychological Health representing all air wings in the United States. In October, Young

became an Air Force credentialed provider, adding another level of clinical support to the 109th Guard Medical Unit (GMU) and the 109th members. In November 2015, Young participated in the Center for Deployment Psychology week long training hosted by the New York State Department of Military and Naval Affairs and sponsored in conjunction with the New York State National Guard, The Center for Deployment Psychology, Suny New Paltz and the New York State Star Behavioral Health initiative. The training



Young

developed for civilian, clinical providers in our communities, educates and informs of the military culture, DOD clinical best practice and evidence based treatment methodologies so that they can better serve our military members.

We are proud to announce that one of the brightest stars in the Wellness Center, Capt. Lynsey Cross is definitely soaring to new heights; setting her sights on a career in active duty Air Force, Cross was selected by active duty Air force as part of their Medical Service Corps. Congratulations, Captain Cross!



Cross

Airmen affected by mandatory TAP

By Colleen Casey
109th Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager

Mandatory requirements through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) are currently in place for Airmen retiring, separating or coming off a Title 10 deployment of more than 180 days. The three requirements include a pre-separation briefing, a TAP Goals, Plan, Success (GPS) workshop and a capstone meeting.

Pre Separation Briefing:

Wing Airman and Family Program Readiness offices are required to conduct a 90-minute briefing for any Airman who is retiring, separating or coming off a Title 10 deployment of more than 180 days. The briefing

covers resources and benefits available to those affected. I am currently scheduling briefings for the following times:

2nd Tuesday of the month at 1 p.m. in the Security Forces Classroom

3rd Thursday of the month at 9 a.m. in the Security Forces Classroom

Saturday of UTAs at 1 p.m. in the LRS Conference Room

All briefings are by appointment only, and locations are subject to change.

TAP GPS Workshop:

Once you have attended the pre separation briefing, AGR retirees and those coming off a Title 10 deployment of more than 180 days will be registered for a five-day workshop outside of Stratton Air National Guard Base. The workshop is

a one-time requirement, so if deployed again, Airmen would not have to attend a second time. This workshop doesn't apply to traditional guardsmen and although not mandatory, is available (at the member's cost) for retiring technicians and spouses/significant others.

Workshops are held once a month at Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts; West Point; Newburgh AFB; and Saratoga Navy Base.

The workshops cover in-depth information of resources and benefits. A sample agenda is as follows:

Day 1: VA Benefits

Day 2: MOC Crosswalk and Financial Planning

Day 3-5: Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW)

There are exemptions for this portion. Those who are retiring after 20 years or more and those coming off Title 10 deployments confirming civilian employment, acceptance into school or who have previously attended the DOLEW do not need to attend Days 3-5.

An optional two-day track is available for those seeking to enroll in college or graduate school, obtain a technical license or certification, or start their own business.

Capstone:

The final requirement is a 30-minute Capstone appointment with the wing Airman and Family Readiness Program office. I need to have eyes on and verify that Airmen have completed all requirements from the TAP GPS workshop.

MyVector

The Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force have placed mentoring at the top of their priorities. MyVector - a Web-based, mentoring and development tool custom built for the Air Force - supports this priority. The fundamental role of mentoring is to develop well-rounded, professional Airmen by sharing resources, expertise, values, competencies, perspectives and attitudes. Air Force Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1) enhanced MyVector (formerly known as the Career Path Tool) to assist Airmen in creating strong mentoring partnerships while being actively involved in their career development. The SecAF is anticipating that commander emphasis and the reconfigured, standardized platform for mentoring will promote career development and support Diversity and Inclusion, Comprehensive Airman Fitness, and Total Force Integration initiatives.

MyVector is for all Airmen - civilians, regular Air Force, Guard and Reserve can all benefit from the mentoring, knowledge sharing and career planning capabilities within MyVector. Mentors and mentees can review past experience, plan for career development and use tools like the bullet tracker, discussion forums, and the "Find A Mentor" capability. In cases where Airmen cannot find a mentor through the match capability that meets their desired criteria, they can by-name request a mentor who is registered in MyVector using that individual's email address through the "Direct Connect" tab. If the email address is not found, the Airman should request the desired mentor register in MyVector in order to establish a mentoring relationship within the site. We encourage Airmen to return regularly, as new mentors are registering and building profiles daily. Mentor/mentee relationships are private, and their relationship/communications are not visible to any others. Mentors are selected by mentees based on whom they admire/respect, have career field expertise, or who have appropriate insight into professional and personal development. Sister-service and political appointees can also register and search for or become mentors. MyVector is not mandatory, but the SecAF encourages everyone to "seek a mentor, be a mentor;"

MyVector provides a platform to do so.

Duty history and record data in MyVector is retrieved from either the Military Personnel Data System (MilPDS) for military personnel or the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) for civilians. The DCPDS data is not currently as robust as the data in MilPDS and also has data issues that are being resolved. For this reason, the career pyramid is not as helpful for a civilian at this time, but it can be used by the mentor to show the standard career field and also can be used as the basis for a career conversation. Additionally, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel who are also civilians may initially only have access to their civilian MyVector profile. Reserve and Guard personnel who want to view their other record should put in a help desk ticket request, and technicians will respond to change the data the member wishes to review. MyVector increased capabilities for the Reserve and Guard in Fall 2015 with the release of configurations that enable personnel to choose between viewing their military and civilian records. In addition to being able to choose between their military and civilian records, future iterations will also incorporate component specific career paths and bring Reserve Career Field Managers/Major Command Functional Managers into the system. Sister service personnel and political appointees will not have access to their duty histories or records, as MyVector does not have access to their duty records.

MyVector can be accessed through a link on the Air Force portal or accessed directly from MyVector. Initial registration will require a Common Access Card and your social security number. SSNs, in combination with the Airman's CAC, enable a seamless login and access to the personnel records stored in MilPDS and DCPDS. Without this vital information,

MyVector would be unable to link your session with your underlying data (specifically education and duty experience). The development team has ensured that all SSNs are encrypted both in transit (over the network) and at rest (when stored on a server). Additionally, the Twenty-fourth Air Force - Air Forces Cyber - has completed a review of the security of the system as well as ensured all Information Assurance requirements have been met.

SGLI Traumatic Injury Protection Program (TSGLI)

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI) provides automatic traumatic injury coverage to all servicemembers covered under the SGLI program. It provides short-term financial assistance to severely injured servicemembers and veterans to assist them in their recovery from traumatic injuries. TSGLI is not only for combat injuries, but provides insurance coverage for injuries incurred on or off duty.

Eligibility

If you are automatically insured under full-time SGLI, you are automatically covered by TSGLI. TSGLI coverage applies to active duty members, reservists, National Guardsmen, funeral honors duty and one-day muster duty.

To be eligible for payment of TSGLI, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- You must be insured by SGLI when you experience a traumatic injury
- You must incur a scheduled loss and that loss must be a direct result of a traumatic injury
- You must have suffered the traumatic injury prior to midnight of the day that you separate from the uniformed services
- You must suffer a scheduled loss within two years (730 days) of the traumatic injury
- You must survive for a period of not less than seven full days from the date of the traumatic injury (The seven-day period begins on the date and time of the traumatic injury, as measured by Zulu [Greenwich Meridian] time and ends 168 full hours later)

This benefit is also provided retroactively for Servicemembers who incurred severe losses as a result of traumatic injuries incurred between Oct. 7, 2001, and Nov. 30, 2005, regardless of the geographic location where the injury occurred, and regardless of whether coverage was in effect at the time of injury. Effective Oct. 1, 2011, the Veterans' Benefit Improvement Act of 2010 removed the requirement that injuries during the retroactive period be incurred in Operations Enduring or Iraqi Freedom.

David V. Stott Scholarship winner

Senior Airman Isidora Monteparo, 109th Medical Group, was selected as the winner of the 2015 David V. Stott Scholarship. Monteparo is currently enrolled at the University of Albany. Tech. Sgt. David Stott was a member of the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron as well as the 109th MDG. Stott passed away in 2003 following a short illness. His parents continue to carry on his memory by offering a scholarship in his name each year.



File Photo

Hall named UCA of the Year



File Photo

Tech. Sgt. Richard Hall was selected as the 109th Airlift Wing Unit Career Advisor of the year for 2015. "TSgt Richard Hall has done an outstanding job in supporting his unit, commanders and most importantly his members," said Master Sgt. Joanna Walters, Retention Office manager. "TSgt Hall is a wealth of knowledge and is always willing to help out. The Unit Career Advisor Program is a huge additional duty. All Unit Career Advisors put in a lot of extra time to support their members' careers."

Retirements

May - December 2015

Col. Kurt Bedore
Lt. Col. Paul Bernasconi
Lt. Col. Ernie Grey
Lt. Col. Matthew LeClair
Lt. Col. Mark Sturgi
Capt. Thomas Feeley
Capt. Bernadette Weaver
Lt. Kenneth Walther
Chief Master Sgt.
Robert Michaels
Chief Master Sgt.
William Nolin
Chief Master Sgt.
Edward Warner
Senior Master Sgt.
Mark Olena
Master Sgt. Daniel Magdziuk
Master Sgt. Ray Palmer
Master Sgt. Collin Rost
Master Sgt. Misty Straus
Tech. Sgt. Andrew Faulkner
Tech. Sgt. Gary Whitworth
Staff Sgt. Paul Bonificio
Staff Sgt. Kevin Couture
Staff Sgt. Anthony Schultz
Staff Sgt. Brian Smith

Awards

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Ty A. Randall - MSG
Lt. Col. Christian E. Sander - OG
Maj. Patric R. Brew - AS
Chief Master Sgt. Edward L. Warner - JFHQ
Tech. Sgt. Andrew D. Ham - AS

Awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who distinguishes themselves by either outstanding achievement or meritorious service to the United States.



Air Force Commendation Medal

Capt. James R. VanWormer - CES
Tech. Sgt. Robert C. Jones - AS
Tech. Sgt. Michael J. Peckham - SFS
Tech. Sgt. Kristina N. Squillo - JFHQ
Staff Sgt. Nicholas J. Robles - FSS

Awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving in any capacity with the Air Force after March 24, 1958, shall have distinguished themselves by meritorious achievement and service. The degree of merit must be distinctive, though it need not be unique.



Air Force Achievement Medal

Awarded to Air Force personnel for outstanding achievement or meritorious service rendered specifically on behalf of the Air Force. It may also be awarded for acts of courage lesser than for award of the Air Force Commendation Medal (AFCM).



Capt. Joshua R. Choquette - AW
Tech. Sgt. Jason P. Gardinier - MXG
Staff Sgt. Cheryl L. Zwijacz - LRS
Senior Airman Benjamin M. McCabe - MXS
Senior Airman Manuel L. Morales - SFS
Senior Airman Jamey D. Paddock - OSS
Airman 1st Class James P. Cappadora - MXS

May 2, 2015 - Nov. 1, 2015

Officer Promotions

Colonel

Jeffrey L. Hedges - MSG

Lieutenant Colonel

David A. Panzera - AS

Major

Daniel W. Urband - AS

Captain

Kristen M. Cummings - MDG

First Lieutenant

Mark S. Fuller - AS

Salem K. Jacobsen - LRS

Matthew C. Rinaldi - LRS

Richard J. VanPatten - AS

Enlisted Promotions

Chief Master Sergeant

Joseph V. Cerniglia - MXG

John W. Lawlor - AMXS

Senior Master Sergeant

Jamie L. Hill - AS

Master Sergeant

Albert Alvarado - JFHQ

Douglas S. Anderson - AS

Jason P. Babiarz - LRS

Jason R. Bull - AS

Geoff G. Cerrone - AS

Zachary A. Falle - LRS

Adam C. Helligrass - AMXS

Thomas G. Houck - LRS

Brian K. Kissinger - CES

Michael A. Mattera Jr. - MXS

Mark S. Milian - CPTF

Amie J. Moore - LRS

Brian T. Rulison - AMXS

Jeremy B. Shultis - MXS

Henry R. Smith - CF

Staff Sergeant

Andrew T. Archambault - MXM

Seth J. Bateman - AES

Rachel L. Bentley - FSS

Molly A. Best - MXS

Robert T. Buehler - LRS

Michael J. Byerwalters Jr. - LRS

Paris M. Clement - STUF

Jonathan M. Corcoran - SFS

Jared M. Diehl - CF

Jeremy F. Frye - STUF

David M. Gillis - OSS

James G. Healey - AMXS

Brandon L. Hubal - MXS

Laura E. James - STUF

Derek E. Jubert - CES

Stephanie Lambert - AES

Nghiem N. Le - LRS

Sarah E. Ledger - FSS

William J. Lee - MXS

Zachery G. Lettko - AMXS

Todd M. Lewis - MXS

Janath W. Madden - MXS

Daniel E. Marchand - CES

William J. Medina - LRS

Travis J. Mihok - AES

James W. Olson - CES

Brian C. Pelletier - CPTF

Jodie L. Ruther - CES

Cameron N. Staulters - MXS

Daniel W. Street - AES

Emmanuel A. Terrazas - STUF

Laurence A. Truscello - AW

Daniel V. Urbanski - STUF

Senior Airman

Dante M. Barrera - LRS

Morgan K. Boldish - LRS

Anthony P. Brown - MXS

Justin K. Candee - MXS

Sarah E. Chandler - AES

Gabriela Diaz - MDG

Francis T. DiCaprio - SFS

Jarrold L. Fowler - MDG

Frederick K. Freeman - SFS

Michael Hack III - CF

Derek R. Hakes - AMXS

Elijah R. Hammondwood - AES

Jacob E. Hemstreet - AMXS

Daniel C. Hall - AMXS

Jonathan T. Hooker - AMXS

Bradford J. Jollie - MXS

Paul J. Lafond - MXS

Gerald M. Mesick - LRS

Isidora I. Monteparo - MDG

Marianna R. OBrien - MDG

Wyatt G. Peters - AS

Perry M. Rayner - FSS

Luis L. Robitaille - SFS

Joshua T. Speziale - CF

Nicholas S. Tousignant - CF

Cole E. Vanderlinden - CPTF

Brett W. Voelker - AMXS

Airman 1st Class

Dante J. Angerosa - STUF

Kyle P. Bachem - LRS

Anthony N. Bartlett - STUF

James W. McPartlin IV - STUF

Kevin M. Shufeltmange - STUF

Airman

Bianca D. Bustamante - AES

May 2, 2015 - Nov. 1, 2015

109th Airlift Wing
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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.