

ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD

PRAIRIE SENTINEL

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PUMPING IRON: ARMY GUARD GETS FAMILIAR WITH THE
NEW ACFT

BACK HOME: HERO'S MEDALS RETURN TO FAMILY AFTER
61 YEARS

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ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD PRAIRIE SENTINEL



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Take it From the Top:

Senior Leader's Corner

Doing better to protect our greatest resource: People

I am proud to be part of the Illinois National Guard and the Illinois Department of Military Affairs. It is an honor and a privilege to lead the 13,000 dedicated men and women in uniform and the devoted federal and state civilians who enable this organization to excel day after day despite the many and varied challenges before us.

The Illinois National Guard is a learning organization that is always looking to improve. Our ability to adapt to change has been impressive. This has been especially evident in the last year.

However, there are many difficult to solve problems. These are problems that involve people - our most important resource. These are suicide and mental illness, sexual harassment and assault, domestic violence, drug abuse and addiction, racism, bigotry, and hate. We have made strides in these areas. The data shows that incidents of suicide are down in the Illinois National Guard, despite a global pandemic that has taken a toll on mental health. I am relieved when I see reports of first-line leaders engaging with a troop who is having suicidal ideations. It tells me that we as individuals and as an organization are doing the right things. That we care.

Member on member sexual assaults are also down and we have worked closely with the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault to ensure those in our ranks who are victims of sexual assault get the services they need. Our diversity councils at the headquarters and within the field are beginning the hard work of self-examination to root out policies and practices that create systematic racism and increase the diversity of the organization, particularly in leadership.

We have made strides in the right direction, but we cannot afford to slow down or relax.



Maj. Gen. Richard Neely
The Adjutant General
Illinois National Guard

One life lost is too many. One assault is too many. One troop hooked on drugs or alcohol is too many. Prejudice and hate within our ranks in unacceptable. We need to keep striving to improve the way we identify, track and act with troubled Soldiers and Airmen.

In some cases, these problems involve Soldiers or Airmen who just need guidance and help to get on the right track. Other cases involve individuals who should not be wearing the uniform. They should be removed from service as quickly as possible.

Christopher Miller was one of those who disgraced the uniform. He was still a captain in the Illinois Army National Guard when on September 21, 2019 he broke into the back door of his estranged wife's house nearly stomped and beat her to death with his Army boots on, terrorized and beat her 9-year-old daughter, and murdered 18-month-old Colton Miller before killing himself.

Miller hid from the National Guard his addiction to drugs, abuse of alcohol, domestic violence against his family, loss of job and arrest for assault. There were other red flags in his file more than a year before he took Colton's life and there were Soldiers who were trying to do the right things by intervening for this family.

That said, I am not prepared to say that we could not improve the way we handle the cases of troubled service members; however, I believe we can do better. In the coming weeks, we are going to start Colton's Council, named after Colton Miller. This council, based on the Army's Ready and Resilient initiative, will help us identify troubled service members early, try to get them the appropriate help, track their progress, hold them accountable and, when necessary, separate them from service.

65th Troop Command Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month over drill weekend

By Staff Sgt. LeAnne Withrow, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Chicago - Soldiers of the Illinois Army National Guard based in Chicago, including members of the 144th Army Band, the 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, and the 244th Digital Liaison Detachment, gathered September 20th, 2020, to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month at the Calumet Armory. The festivities, hosted by the 139th MPAD and spearheaded by Staff Sgt. Isaura Islas, the Unit Readiness Noncommissioned Officer and a Chicago resident, included not only traditional Hispanic foods from across Central and South America, but also a cultural display of dolls, artwork, and other culturally significant items.

"I don't think you can speak on the people that make up the Illinois National Guard without mentioning diversity," said Sgt. Kyle Odum, a Mass Communications Noncommissioned Officer with the 139th. "I view diversity as a crucial aspect of what keeps us moving forward as an organization. I know that diversity is valued in the [ILNG]. I've seen Guardsmen and women of many different cultures in leadership roles. They

each bring their own unique perspective to the guard and those perspectives allow us to better understand each other and make it possible to move forward as an organization in terms of equality."

"I really enjoyed the display," Said Spc. Laura Procarione, a Supply Specialist with the 139th and Niantic, Illinois, resident. "Seeing the different blankets, dolls, and hats was really interesting."

The food served was prepared and donated by local members of the Hispanic community, and included such regional delicacies as Colombian empanadas, Arepa Dominicana (Dominican cornmeal cake), and Arroz con Gandules (Puerto



Rican rice with pigeon peas), Opuntia fruit (commonly referred to as "tuna"), and a variety of sauces, condiments, and beverages for Soldiers to sample.

"I liked the different types of food too," Procarione said. "Honestly, I would like to have more cultural events in the future. I think it's good for soldiers to be educated on different cultures especially given how diverse our military is today."

The Soldiers who drill together in Calumet frequently dine together for lunch, and this event provided an excellent opportunity to bring the armory together in celebration of the immense contributions of Hispanic Americans both to the military services and to the nation as a whole.

"Events like these are imperative for unit cohesion," said Odum. "We all come from very different backgrounds and they are not always easy to talk about. This event allowed that conversation to happen and allowed Staff Sgt. Islas to teach us about her culture in a way that excited her, and seeing that genuine enthusiasm made people really want to try her food and get involved."

This event is only the first of many planned cultural observances intended to boost cohesion, build esprit de corps, and celebrate the broad diversity of the Illinois National Guard.

The Department of Defense recognizes a variety of cultural observances codified by law through guidance provided by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, but also encourages Soldiers and units to look beyond the nationally recognized events and focus on all the individuals and cultures in their own units in order to celebrate the diversity within their ranks. 🇵🇷



Task Force Illini, Ukrainian trainers observe CAR

By Cpl. Shaylin Quaid, 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

YAVORIV, Ukraine - Task Force Illini, 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Illinois National Guard, and the planning staff of Armed Forces Ukraine's 59th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade conducted a Combined Arms Rehearsal (CAR) at Collective Training Center - Yavoriv, Ukraine, Sept. 1.



The CAR is an opportunity for AFU rotational training units to rehearse how they will conduct their planned combat operations while simultaneously adjusting their mission planning process to be more interoperable with NATO standards. The CAR allows commanders to see how units will interact with each other in the operational space.

"CAR is extremely important in order for units to move and reflect on the combat situation," said Armed Forces of Ukraine Maj. Roman Znak, Senior Officer of the CTC-Y Simulation Center



Department.

The 59th staff spent the previous two weeks conducting the military decision making process and writing it's operational plan. The CAR requires all the staff sections and maneuver units to physically move icons in accordance with their operational plan to gain a better understanding of how their plan will play out on a battlefield.

"Our OCTs were able to learn new approaches to cooperation on the terrain model, and the 59th Brigade soldiers had a chance to develop their skills according to NATO standards and how it is done by our NATO partners," said Znak

The CAR also allows maneuver units to visualize where their neighboring units and support elements will be during the course of the training exercise. The 59th will make final adjustments to its plan based on the CAR and execute its plan in the field in the coming weeks.

"The benefit for all of us in conducting the CAR is that we need to improve upon these exercises as well. Teaching someone going through this process and mentoring helps us realize the importance of each step and this is a chance for us to get better along with our partners," said Lt. Col. Simon Wlodarski Senior Brigade Advisor with Task Force Illini.

"The 59th Brigade is learning and applying many new processes and techniques to achieve NATO interoperability, and we are impressed with their progress," said Col. Clayton Kuetemeyer Task Force Illini Commander.

Task Force Illini is the command element of Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine, which is responsible for training, advising, and mentoring the Ukrainian cadre at Combat Training Center-Yavoriv, Ukraine in order to improve Armed Forces Ukraine's training capacity and defense capabilities. 🇺🇸



Bourbonnais Soldier retires from Illinois Army National Guard

By Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Illinois Army National Guard Soldier and Bourbonnais, Illinois resident Master Sgt. Joshua Carlile retired from the Illinois Army National Guard after more than 20 years of service Sept. 12 at the Illinois Military Academy, Camp Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois.

Carlile, who served as the Branch Chief for the Illinois Army National Guard Officer Candidate School (ILARNG OCS) under 2nd Battalion, 129th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), enlisted in the Illinois Army National Guard in 1994. Following basic and advanced individual training at Fort Benning, Georgia, he was assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 131st

participate in the state level competition, Carlile was mobilized for state active duty at the Dresden Nuclear Power Plant following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Following a six year break in service, Carlile reenlisted in the Illinois National Guard in 2009, volunteering for deployment to Afghanistan with the Bilateral Embedded Support Team in 2011.

In 2013, Carlile became an instructor in the Illinois Army National Guard Officer Candidate School, later becoming the branch chief.

“Master Sergeant Carlile’s dedication to the Officer Candidate Program has been paramount,” said Maj. Kyle Scifert, of Elgin, Illinois, Commander, ILARNG OCS. “He has helped to shape, mentor and instruct more than 1,000 officer candidates from 15 states during his time here.”

Carlile’s military service includes deployments to Kuwait, Germany and Afghanistan where he earned the Combat Infantryman’s Badge. 🇺🇸



Infantry Regiment as a machine gunner.

In 2001, Carlile was named the Brigade Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for the Illinois Army National Guard’s 178th Infantry Regiment, based in Chicago. Before he could



Wheels Up

183rd AOG Welcomes New Commander

By Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Kerr, 183rd Wing Public Affairs



Col. Daniel McSeveney took command of the 183d Air Operations Group (183 AOG) from Col. Lee Wheeler during a ceremony presided over by 183d Wing Commander, Col. Donald Carpenter, who expressed his gratitude for Wheeler's leadership and highlighted some of his accomplishments. Wheeler is retiring after more than 43 years of distinguished service in the Illinois Air National Guard, serving with the 183d Wing in Springfield, and the 182 Airlift Wing in Peoria.





Hanging it up

Command Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Armstrong retires

by, Senior Airman Jay Grabiec 182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs



Friends, family and colleagues gathered at the 182nd Airlift Wing in Peoria, Illinois, Sept. 12, to celebrate the retirement of U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Armstrong, the command chief of the 182nd Airlift Wing, Illinois Air National Guard. Armstrong retired after 31 years of military service.



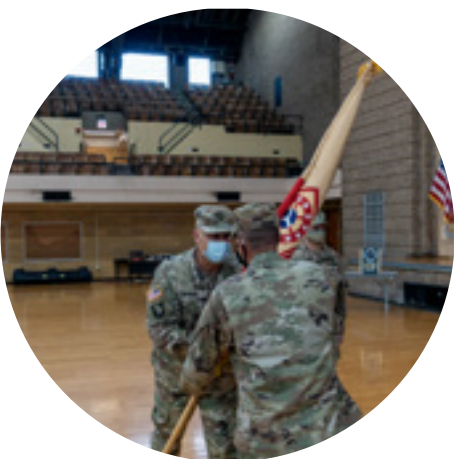
“Chicago’s Brigade,” the 108th Sustainment Brigade, welcomes new commander

By Sgt. Stephen Gifford, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



CHICAGO - Lt. Col. Timothy Newman, of Champaign, Illinois, assumed command of the 108th Sustainment Brigade, during a ceremony at the Northwest Armory, Kedzie Ave., Chicago, Illinois, on Sep. 12.

Newman now leads a unit with a storied history, stationed at a historic landmark of Chicago. Known as “Chicago’s Brigade” the 108th most recently deployed to Iraq in 2019-2020. Originally known as the 108th



Quartermaster Regiment, with a unit insignia that dates to 1939, the unit has been a part of the Illinois National Guard since 1964. The 108th is a highly diverse unit in the nature of the city

they represent making them a highly capable force.

Newman assumed command from two officers of the 108th, Col. Justin Osberg and Col. Gerald Newman. The brigade

supported two rotations to Iraq, with Osberg and Newman each leading one while the other



commanded the 108th at home.

Newman’s command of the 108th is the latest achievement in a 21-year military career. During his remarks he stressed his excitement to work with the men and women of the 108th.

“The reputation of the 108th precedes you, and the work that the Soldiers have done, here at home,

and on deployment has been noticed across the Army,” Newman said. “I look forward to building on that hard work, and continuing to strive for excellence as Chicago’s Brigade.”



Pumping Iron



Army Combat Fitness Test familiarization at MTC

By Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

MARSEILLES, Ill. - For the first time since 1980, the U.S. Army will use a different method to test the physical readiness of its active duty, Reserve and National Guard forces. On Oct. 1, the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) became the testing method of record.

Gone is the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), which consisted of push-ups, sit-ups and a two-mile run. In its place is the ACFT, which consists of six events including the deadlift; standing power throw; hand release push-ups; sprint-drag-carry; leg tuck abdominals and the two-mile run.

To assist the Illinois Army National Guard in the transition, a team of ACFT instructors traveled from Fort Eustis, Virginia, to conduct a

Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) and Officer in Charge (OIC) validation course over the course of four days at the Marseilles Training Center Sept. 22-25. Approximately 70 unit NCOs and officers from across the Illinois Army National Guard attended the course.

"We want to know they can execute the events themselves and can teach their units,"

said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Thomas, NCO in charge of the training team from Fort Eustis. "Our focus is to make sure they know the standards and are



training to the standards."

"This validation will insure the Illinois Army National Guard is prepared to conduct the ACFT within Army standards," said Thomas. "Soldiers become knowledgeable in the ACFT



and then can conduct their own validation training within their units.”

Soldiers attending the course have started the process of validating their units for upcoming ACFTs.

“It’s important to take all the information you learned in the validation course

back to your unit. I conducted our first unit wide ACFT grader validation training event during this past weekend’s inactive duty training. I followed the exact training format the mobile training team provided,” said Staff Sgt. Adam Palisoc, of Darien, Illinois, Readiness Non-Commissioned Officer, Joint Forces Medical Detachment based in Kankakee, Illinois, who attended the validation course.

Palisoc said for the grader validation training, the Soldiers learned how to validate equipment, the proper execution of each event, criteria for event termination, scoring standards, proper lane set up, and how to correctly fill out the ACFT score card.



“The Soldiers in my unit were thankful to have a 100 percent hands on training experience and having their questions and concerns finally addressed so that

they can alter their physical fitness training appropriately,” he said.

During the validation course, each Soldier receives training on the ACFT, specifically the


exercises and standards.

“As part of the validation course, the team goes through the scoring, lane set-up, NCOIC and OIC responsibilities, how to set up the field and what that entails,” Warrant Officer Shelby Nolte said. “We know what to expect with the ACFT and how to conduct the test to Army standards.”



According to Nolte, standards for the ACFT will be identical for men and women, with no adjustments made for age. Soldiers will be placed in one of three categories based on their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), or their military job, and the physical demands to complete the tasks of their MOS. The three categories are gold for moderate demands; grey for significant demands and black for heavy demands.

“The Army has used the APFT to measure physical readiness for a number of years,” said Thomas. “The ACFT training is more realistic and correlates to the Soldier’s job and will result in better overall physical fitness.”

“The ACFT will definitely show how Soldiers maintain and improve their overall physical fitness and nutrition,” Palisoc said. “The ACFT is challenging that will require Soldiers to take charge of their physical fitness. It’s a step in the right direction for the Army to move into today’s fitness era.” 

BEST A-25 Soldiers receive “combat patch”

By Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - In a time-honored tradition, Soldiers from the Bilateral Embedded Staff Team A25, received combat patches for their overseas deployment during recent ceremonies in the U.S. Army Central Command area of responsibility.

“The awarding of the shoulder sleeve insignia for wartime service, better known as the combat patch, is a tradition that first began during the Revolutionary War under General George Washington,” Lt. Col. Jason Osberg, of Champaign, Illinois, Commander of BEST A25, told the Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers taking part in the ceremony. “It is an honor to receive a combat patch and your work here has earned you that honor.”

BEST A25 received the 10th Mountain Division patch, which is the unit’s higher headquarters in theater.

According to guidelines published by the U.S. Army, the Army combat patch, officially known as the

‘shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service,’ recognizes Soldiers’

participation in combat operations.

To be eligible for the combat patch, Soldiers must be serving in a theater or an area of operation designated as a hostile environment or serving during a war period as declared by



Congress.

“The rituals of significant events mark those important life moments and etch them into our collective memories,” said Osberg.

After mobilizing in early May, the team

transitioned to Fort Bliss, Texas where they received final training prior to deploying overseas. This unit’s unique mission allows them to deploy side-by-side with their Polish counterparts. The Soldiers are from various towns in Illinois. They were selected for the mission based on their training and skills.

As part of the deployment supporting Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, the team is assisting the Polish Military Contingent in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. In partnership with allied and coalition forces, BEST A25 is training, advising and assisting the institutions within the Afghan Ministry of Defense and Ministry of the Interior.

The Illinois National Guard has had a State Partnership Program with the Polish military since in 1993. The State Partnership Program between the Illinois National Guard and Poland has been the most successful State Partnership in the nation, helping Poland emerge from the

Warsaw Pact to become a member of NATO and one of the United States’ staunchest allies. In addition, Illinois Army National Guard

troops have co-deployed with Poland on every Polish rotation to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003. 🇺🇸

En Garde!



Soldiers called upon for possible support to law enforcement

*by Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs
photos by Tech. Sgt. Brian Ellison, 126th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs*

SPRINGFIELD, ILL. – Governor JB Pritzker ordered the activation of approximately 375 Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers for a potential law enforcement support mission in Chicago, Sept. 22.

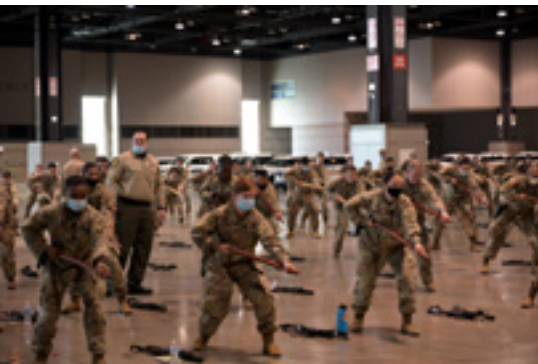
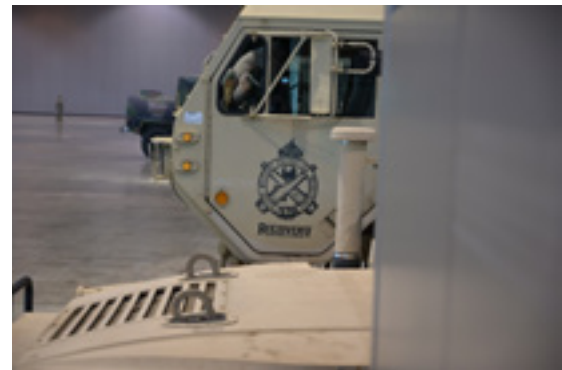
Approximately 125 Soldiers reported to their respective readiness centers for in processing and screening with an additional 250 Soldiers reporting Sept. 23. Following in processing and screening, Soldiers reported to McCormick Place in Chicago for additional guidance. The Soldiers were drawn from the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, headquartered in Urbana, Illinois, and the 33rd Military Police Battalion, headquartered at Machesney Park, Illinois.

This call-up is was conducted under state active duty orders under the command and control of Governor Pritzker. The Illinois State Police were the lead state agency for this mission.

“The Illinois National

Guard are Citizen-Soldiers, drawn from every community in Illinois to help when we are needed,” said Brig. Gen. Richard Neely, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. “I’m thankful to our communities and their support of our Illinois National Guard members. During these difficult times, we are reminded time and again of the generous kind-hearted nature of most of our community members.”

The 33rd Military Police Battalion is comprised of the 233rd Military Police Company, based in Springfield, Illinois; 333rd Military Police Company, based in Freeport, Illinois and 933rd Military Police Company, based at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. The battalion is part of the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, based in Normal. 🇺🇸



CERF's Up

Illinois' CERF-P and 5th CST conduct Prairie Assurance 20
by Sgt. Steve Gifford, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment





Soldiers and Airmen of the Illinois National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) and the 5th WMD Civil Support Team conducted the Prairie Assurance 2020 exercise at the Sparta Training Center, Sparta, Illinois Sep. 20-24. The CERFP and 5th CST bring together CBRNE, engineering, medical and communications assets to support civilian agencies in emergency response. Prairie Assurance 2020 focused on an explosion that collapsed buildings and trapped people under the rubble.





Back Home

War Medal returned to family after 61 years

by Tech. Sgt. Lealan Buehrer, 182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

PEORIA, Ill. - No matter whether they were in Illinois, Wisconsin, or anywhere in between, Annie and Rich would see contrails in the sky from a jet plane flying high overhead, and their mother would remind them, "There's Dad flying up in heaven. Dad's watching."

Ann J. Ward was just 2.5 years old and Richard L. Ward

II only 3 months old when their father

perished in an F-84D Thunderstreak crash on Runway 31 of what is now the 182nd Airlift Wing at the General Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport. Circumstance stole their chance to grow up with their father when his aircraft failed to reach safe flying speed, causing

it to collide with terrain during a drill-weekend training flight.

Tragedy could have closed the family's chapter in Peoria that day, and yet 61 years later the Ward siblings found themselves reconnected with both blood and military family members Aug. 27, 2020, at the unit where their father last

served.

Air Force Capt.

Richard L. Ward was

"Capt. Ward was the kind of American hero that our military heritage is built on."

a military hero long before becoming a fighter pilot with the Illinois Air National Guard's 169th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. In addition to his Distinguished Flying Crosses, he wore the decorations of Presidential Unit Citation and five Air Medals. He flew F-86 Sabrejets



with the 25th Fighter Interceptor Squadron “Checkertails” in the Korean War and earned three bravery citations during his 70 sorties. Prior to that, he survived a fiery T-33 Shooting Star crash landing in Denver, Colorado — the aftermath being him later marrying his hospital nurse, Joan; ejected from an F-86 Sabrejet over the mountains of Kyushu, Japan, during a violent storm; and parachuted from a burning plane in Georgia.

His warrior spirit never waned and he kept flying, joining the Illinois National Guard in his hometown in 1956. By the time his life came to an untimely end shortly after 2:40 p.m. June 6, 1959, he had logged more than 1,500 flying hours and earned two Distinguished Flying Cross decorations for heroism during aerial flight. Some of the captain’s military belongings — including a parachute, helmet, and the Distinguished Flying Cross medal and ribbon — went to his brother upon his passing, and life continued on for the family as best it could.

His widow, Joan, moved the family back to her hometown of Delavan, Wisconsin. Following a decade of studies and work in anthropology and public health, Ann became a humanitarian and spent 18 years in the Middle East and Afghanistan with various international organizations, as well as the United Nations. Rich earned a degree in industrial psychology, married, and raised children, who then had their own children. When Richard Lee Ward IV was born in July 2020, Rich felt an urge to reach out to his long-lost relatives and did so by finding them through social media.

When he found first-cousin Tim Ward of Peoria, Tim said “Hey, I’ve got something you might want to have.”

By happenstance, Tim was a family friend of Air Force Col. Daniel McDonough, the current commander of the 182nd Airlift Wing. Tim had found military memorabilia while going through boxes belonging to his departed father — Capt. Ward’s brother — and consulted with McDonough. The colonel immediately recognized the Distinguished Flying Cross as tracing back to Capt. Richard Ward. Tim considered mailing it to the family or meeting them halfway to Wisconsin to return it, but McDonough insisted on inviting the Ward families on base for a ceremony to honor Capt. Ward’s memory and celebrate the occasion of returning the medal back to the captain’s children.

“Typically, when someone gets a D.F.C., it’s because they’ve taken great risk to themselves,” McDonough said during the ceremony, “typically saving someone’s life on the ground at great risk to their own. So, they don’t give these things away just because you were there. You had to do something really amazing.”

Capt. Ward, in fact, earned the decoration during battle with enemy MiG-15 fighter jets that put he and his team outnumbered 6-to-8 during the Korean War May 14, 1953. His



selfless judgement and courageous combat skill ensured he and his wingman returned home from the fight victorious.

“Capt. Ward was the kind of American hero that our military heritage is built on,” McDonough said. “Before he died, he was an American hero. There’s no other way to put it.”

Capt. Ward's gravestone reads "The Greater Love," a reference to a Biblical passage invoking the ultimate sacrifice to give one's life for friends.

"He did just that. I would say that my life would probably be a little bit different now if he was alive," Richard said. "It'd just be interesting to know what life would be like if he was around."

"[Being here is] just a reconnection with a piece of history that I feel like I lost. You know?" said Ann. "And when you're a kid — 2.5 years old — I remember I'd ask about Dad, and maybe I got a couple piece of information, but I feel like I don't have the information."

To help fill some of those gaps, McDonough took the families on a tour of the base after the ceremony, including a static display of the F-84D Thunderstreak, a lineage exhibit of their father's unit's emblem, and the C-130H Hercules aircraft that the Peoria unit currently operates.

Rather than say the visit brought closure, Rich said it rekindled family that had become separated when life changed so quickly those decades before.

"So many times you ask people about your dad from people that knew him, and it's usually 'Oh, he was good looking, and he was this, and he was a great dad, and he was happy, and he was funny,' but to come and learn exactly what he did, and where it happened



and what kind of man he was. I never heard anything about that stuff, about his bravery and his medals, and so it's like 'Oh, my word!' It's just unbelievable. It's almost surreal."

"We left here. And we left here with memories, some memories, but the death of our father cut the family in some ways.

Rich and I did lose a lot," Ann said. "When I talk about this place, I never, ever thought I would be here — in the Illinois National Guard base — ever in a million years, in Peoria, Illinois. So, thank you all for bringing our families together again."



The Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded first to U.S. Army Corps Reserve Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh for his solo flight of 3,600 miles across the Atlantic in 1927, a feat which electrified the world and made Lindbergh one of America's most popular heroes, according to the Air Force Personnel Center. It is still awarded to officers or enlisted persons of the U.S. armed forces for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine. 🇺🇸



Peoria photojournalist wins top honors in National Guard Bureau Media Contest

By Tech. Sgt. Lealan Buehrer, 182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

PEORIA, Ill. - A photojournalist with the 182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs won first place in the commentary category of the 2019 National Guard Bureau Media Contest April 1, 2020.



Airman 1st Class Wynndermere Shaw's April 24, 2019 article, "I'm not running for myself," described her first-hand experience in participating in a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program awareness run and why the event was important to her as an Airman.



"I feel like the biggest thing that made it memorable for me was having my friends from Student Flight, who have seen my career from the beginning, share the moment with me," she said. "For me to be able to share my emotions [in the article] and have it impact the audience that it did, that's why this is really special to me."

Shaw received an award certificate from the National Guard Bureau and letter of endorsement from 182nd Airlift Wing commander Col. Daniel McDonough during drill weekend Sept. 13, 2020. It was the first visual information award for the photojournalist apprentice, who has two years of service with the U.S. Air Force.



"The awareness run is something that the SAPR office has only done for a few years, and it's great to see exactly how the event impacts participants," said 1st Lt. Sam Norville, the 182nd Airlift Wing executive officer and Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. "Airman Shaw's article gives me hope that we are beginning to see a change in cultural and social norms in relation to prevention and awareness among our younger generation of Airmen. I am very proud of her courage to write about such a sensitive topic and to do so in such a manner that positively influenced the audience."

The Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) serves as the single point of authority for program accountability and oversight, in order to enable military readiness and reduce — with a goal to eliminate — sexual assault from the military. 🇺🇸



Fini Flight

Chief Master Sgt. Cyrus Snider takes his last ride

by Senior Airman Wynndermere Shaw, 182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs



Chief Master Sgt. Cyrus Snider, a flight engineer chief enlisted manager with the 182nd Operations Support Squadron, 182nd Airlift Wing, based in Peoria, Ill., took his last ride in a C-130 Hercules Oct. 4, 2020. Snider enlisted in Illinois Air National Guard in 1984 as a weapons load crew member and retired with more than 35 years in service.



Franklin Soldier promoted to colonel

By Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Illinois Army National Guard Soldier Kevin G. Little, of Franklin, Illinois, was promoted to colonel in a ceremony at the Illinois Military Academy, Camp Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois, Oct. 15.



served in a variety of leadership positions with the 3637th Maintenance Company, based in Springfield, Illinois, and the 126th Maintenance Company, based in Quincy, Illinois, and in numerous domestic operations including Hurricane Katrina response operations in 2005 and as a company commander in flood response operations in 2008.



“This is a big day in the Little family,” said Maj. Gen. Michael Zerbonia, Assistant Adjutant General – Army, Illinois National Guard, and Commander of the Illinois Army National Guard. “The colonel rank stands alone because colonels run the Army. Lieutenant Colonel Little does a fantastic job of running the Army in logistics. He’s probably the smartest, most dedicated logistician in the state of Illinois.”

Little deployed to the Kunar Province, Afghanistan with the 1-14th Agribusiness Development Team from 2011 to 2012 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“I couldn’t stand up here without the support of my family,” he said. “I have an overwhelming amount of support from family and friends.”



Little enlisted in the Illinois Army National Guard in 1995, serving with the 233rd Military Police Company, based in Springfield. In 2001, he commissioned through the Illinois Army National Guard Officer Candidate School.

The newly-promoted colonel has held a number of staff and leadership positions in the Illinois Army National Guard including logistics for the 232nd Combat Service Support Battalion, based in Springfield, Illinois; 766th Brigade Engineer Battalion, based in Decatur, Illinois, officer in charge; Commander, 766th Brigade Engineer Battalion Forward Support Company, based in Decatur; Commander, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, based in Springfield; Executive Officer, 108th Sustainment Brigade, based in Chicago; Deputy Chief of Staff for Information Management; Logistics Management Officer and Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics.

Little offered advice to friends and family in attendance.

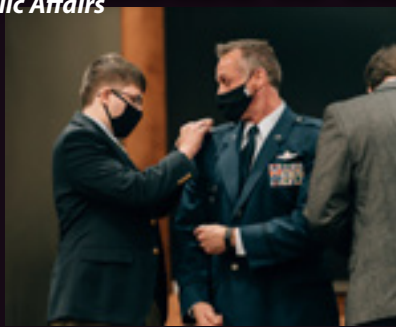
“Develop a people first mentality,” he said. “Listen to and empower your team members.” 🌸

Little has

Eagle's Wings

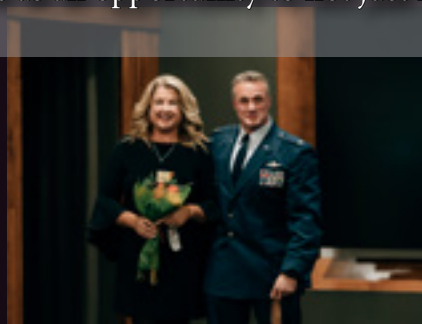
Chatham Airman promoted to colonel

By Robert Adams, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs



Shawn D. Strahle of Chatham, Illinois, was promoted to colonel Oct. 16, at Camp Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois. Strahle, Director of Communications for the Illinois National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters, was joined by friends, family and colleagues at the ceremony. Strahle was pinned by his wife and two sons.

"He is great at building teams, he is great at building relationships and he is great at getting in and doing the hard work," said Maj. Gen. Richard R. Neely, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. "Every time he has been giving an opportunity to move and better himself, he has said yes. He always looks at each career move as an opportunity to not just improve himself but also the organization."



World War II medals recovered in Texas returned to Illinois family

By Barb Wilson, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

MACHESNEY PARK, Ill. – The Illinois National Guard returned seven World War II medals recovered in Texas to an Illinois family in a brief ceremony at the Illinois National Guard armory in Machesney Park, Illinois, Oct. 20.

“Today we return these medals belonging to a great American hero to his family,” said Brig. Gen. Mark Jackson, of Frankfort, Illinois, Director, Joint Staff, Illinois National Guard. “It’s an honor to be part of this on behalf of the United States Army.”

Jackson presented the recovered medals belonging to the late Homer Stanger, of Loves Park, Illinois, to Stanger’s great niece Kathy Andersen of Roscoe, Illinois.

In early March, the Wise County Sheriff’s Department, Decatur, Texas, contacted the Illinois National Guard seeking assistance in returning Stanger’s medals to his family. Prior to sending the medals to Illinois, the Wise County Sheriff’s Department mounted the medals in a shadow box.

“We were cleaning out our evidence locker and came across these medals,” said Sgt. Paige DoByns, Property and Evidence Manager, Wise County Sheriff’s Office. “The medals were seized in a 2014 felony narcotics investigation.”

DoByns said she reached out to the Wise County Veterans Affairs (VA) Office to help track down the rightful owner.

“I called our local VA office and said ‘hey, you guys have got to help me,’” she said.

With help from Blake Walls and Laura Clark, who work for the Wise County VA office, Andersen was located.

“From Facebook, we were able to find someone who knew someone, and it just started steamrolling from there,” Clark said.

During the brief ceremony, Andersen described Stanger as a kind and humble man who never went into detail about his military service.

“He and his wife never had children of their own, so they were always excited to see my brother and I when we visited,” she said. “I knew he served, but he never talked about his military service.”

Andersen said her family did not know the medals were gone until the call from DoByns, and then she thought the call was a scam.

“We had no idea he had received these medals,” Andersen said. “Getting them back means a lot to our family.”

The medals included the Bronze Star Medal with two stars, Purple Heart Medal with one star, Good Conduct Medal, Army of Occupation with Japan Clasp and one star, American Campaign Medal with one star, World War II

Victory Medal with one star, and the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two stars.

Andersen plans to keep the medals for a little while to share with friends and family and research what Stanger did to earn the medals. She eventually has plans to reach out to the Clifford E. Johnson Post 9759 in Loves Park, Illinois, to see if they would be willing to display the medals to honor his military service.

“I don’t know if he belonged to the VFW, but as a veteran I would like to think he would go to the post to visit with his friends,” Andersen said. “We want to make sure he’s honored and the medals aren’t just shoved in a drawer somewhere.”

Andersen offered some advice to veterans and service members regarding their own military service.

“Talk to your family,” she said. “Let them know what you did in the military.”

Andersen also thanked those who played a part in returning the medals.

“There were many amazing people who went the extra mile to get the medals returned to our family,” she said. “This restores my faith in humanity.”



General Richard L. Jones Day



Celebrating nearly 150 years on Chicago's Southside
by Sgt. Kyle Odum, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CHICAGO-- Illinois National Guard leaders, alongside state and local leadership, gathered at Washington Park in Chicago on Oct. 17, 2020 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the General Richard L. Jones Armory and to celebrate the Illinois National Guard's nearly 150-year history with Chicago's South Side.

"You can't help but know that the National Guard is a big part of this community and a big part of Chicago."

Gov. JB Pritzker, U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Ward 4 Alderman Sophia King's Chief of Staff Prentice Butler and Washington Park Advisory Council President Cecilia Butler were among the public officials joining Maj. Gen. Richard Neely, the Adjutant General of Illinois and Commander of the Illinois National Guard, at the event.

Brig. Gen. Rodney Boyd, Assistant Chief of Staff, Joint Logistics (Wartime) for U.S. Forces Korea, reached back to his

childhood on Chicago's south side.

"I grew up 14 blocks north of here, I remember watching black men and women from this armory in the Bud Billiken Day Parade in their fancy uniforms and their cool vehicles," said Boyd. "I said, 'One day, I'm going to wear that uniform. If there's any doubt that this community does not need a facility like this in it,

then shame on you. This facility in a community like this is what influences people like me to dream big and go for the stars and eventually get one."

Boyd was promoted to brigadier general earlier this year and appointed to his current position with U.S. Forces Korea, making him only the second African-American federally recognized as a brigadier general in the Illinois National Guard.

The Governor praised the Guard and said he was incredibly proud to be





commander-in-chief of such a dedicated and committed force of citizen-Soldiers, calling the Guard “the best of Illinois and, in fact, the best in the nation.”

“It’s a commitment to service that stretches all the way back through to General Richard Jones, a decorated World War I and World War II hero who ensured the lineage of the nation’s first all-black and all-black led National Guard unit would not be lost with the integration of the Armed Forces,” Pritzker said. “He ensured the 178th Infantry carried on the legacy of the Fighting Eighth at a time when their country still refused to serve Black Americans like him. The Fighting Eighth battled valiantly for the freedom and justice they themselves were denied. As a nation, we are still in pursuit of that full vision for all our people, though it’s a commitment that has advanced with each generation who takes up the fight.”

General Jones, who was the first commander of the 178th Infantry, ensured that the lineage of the 8th didn’t die at a time when basic human rights were still being denied. The late 40s, 50s, 60s – it was important to the African-American Soldiers of the 178th that they were part of a historically black unit and carrying the legacy



of their forefathers. The armory was dedicated to General Jones on Oct. 17, 1970 in honor of his



accomplishments in the Illinois Army National Guard and his accomplishments for racial equality. He was the first and only Illinois National Guardsmen to have an armory named after him and served in the “Fighting” 8th Infantry Regiment, the United States’ first all-black, and all-black led, National Guard unit.



General Jones is among the Illinois Army National Guard’s most acclaimed African-American leaders. He served in both World War I and World War II, where he earned numerous medals, and served as the U.S. Ambassador to Liberia under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. General Jones also helped establish and served as the first Commander of the 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment based on the South Side of Chicago.

The 1-178th Infantry Battalion carries the lineage of the Illinois Army National Guard’s 8th Infantry Regiment. The roots of the 8th Infantry date back to 1871, when African-American leaders in Chicago formed the Hannibal Guard and applied for admission into the state militia. It would be seven years before the unit was admitted into the state militia, today’s National Guard. The state legislature would discontinue the unit a couple more times before what would become the 8th Infantry finally became part of the state militia for good on May 5, 1890.



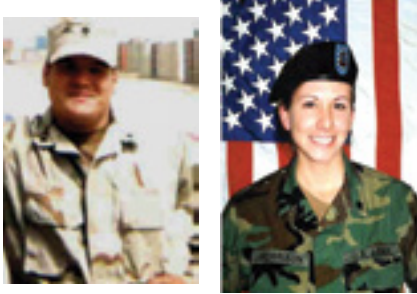
Maj. Gen. Neely said that the National Guard has been in Chicago for nearly 150 years. “You can’t help but know that the National Guard is a big part of this community and a big part of Chicago.” 🇺🇸

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

September

5 Spc. Charles Lamb and Sgt. Shawna Morrison

2004: Spc. Charles Lamb, 23 of Casey, Illinois, and Sgt. Shawna Morrison, 26, of Paris, Illinois, died from wounds suffered during a mortar attack in Baghdad, Iraq. They were assigned to the Illinois National Guards' 1544th Transportation Company, based in Paris, Illinois.



6 Grant prepares for assault on Paducah

1861: One month after taking command of all Illinois volunteers, Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant prepared to lead his men in the assault on Paducah, Kentucky. Grant's plan called for an amphibious attack from the Ohio River by the 9th and 12th Illinois Infantry Regiments the following day. Aboard two steamboats, the 9th and 12th Illinois Infantry Regiments steamed south down the Ohio River to Paducah, Kentucky. With the support of the Federal gunboats Tyler and Conestoga, Grant and his troops landed without incident early on the morning of September 6th.



Famous Guardsman: Harold G. Holesinger

1983: Major General Harold G. Holesinger became the Adjutant General of Illinois. He held this position until November 1991.

17 Sgt. Joshua Harris and Staff Sgt. Jason Vazquez

2008: Sgt. Joshua Harris, 21, of Romeoville, Illinois, and Staff Sgt. Jason Vazquez, 24, of Chicago, died of wounds suffered when the vehicle they were in struck an improvised explosive device in Gerdia Seria, Afghanistan. Both men were assigned to B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 122nd Field Artillery Regiment based in Robbins, Illinois.



19 Barnes earns Distinguished Service Cross
1918: Sergeant Robert Barnes of Company L, 370th Infantry earned the DSC for gallantry while reporting enemy positions under heavy artillery fire. Barnes was wounded during his mission, denied medical treatment and stayed on the battlefield to complete his mission, vital to the advance of the Allies

27 Sinai Peacekeeping Mission
1994: Major General Donald Lynn, the Adjutant General of Illinois announced that fifty-five members of two Guard units had volunteered for a six-month deployment to the Middle East as part of the Sinai peace keeping mission. The Soldiers came from the 33rd Infantry Brigade; and the 66th Infantry Brigade, 34th Division. Their mission added security to the border between Israel and Egypt.

30 33rd IBCT Completes Task Force Phoenix VII

The 33rd IBCT mobilized during the summer of 2008 as Task Force Phoenix VIII in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Their primary mission was to train and mentor the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police Force. The Soldiers mobilized to assist the emerging government of Afghanistan as the country struggled to recover from nearly 30 years of conflict. The last welcome home ceremony was on September 30, 2009. This was the largest mobilization of Illinois National Guard Soldiers since WWII.



October

2 Air Guard Activated for Operation Noble Eagle

2011: In response to the terrorist attacks of September 11th, Illinois Air National Guard units manned security checkpoints at tens state airports. The 183rd Fighter Wing patrolled the skies with the help of the 126th Air Refueling Wing. Operation Noble Eagle remained in effect until May 31st 2002.

6

Sgt. Jessica Cawvey

2004: Army Sgt. Jessica L. Cawvey, 21, of Mahomet, Illinois, was killed in action when an improvised explosive device detonated near her convoy vehicle in Fallujah, Iraq. Cawvey was assigned to the 1544th Transportation Company based in Paris, Illinois.



7

Cpl. Rayln Hill Earns Medal of Honor

1918: Corporal Rayln M. Hill of Company H, 129th Infantry witnessed a French plane go down on the German side of the Meuse River near Donnevoux, France. After Hill observed movement from the pilot, he darted across the footbridge and over several hundred yards of open ground to the wrecked plane. He lifted the pilot onto his shoulder and ran back amid a storm of enemy shells and bullets. Hill succeeded in reaching his own lines and received the Medal of Honor for his bravery.



12

Sgt. James Grijalva

2005: Spc. James Grijalva, 26, of Burbank, Illinois died from a non-combat related injury in Baghdad, Iraq. Grijalva was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment based in Urbana, Illinois.



17

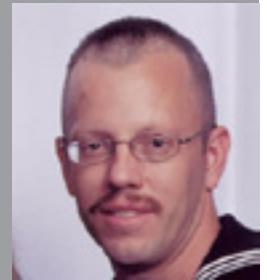
Pvt. Charles Carlson earns Distinguished Service Cross

1918: Private Charles G. Carlson of Headquarters Company, 129th Infantry voluntarily carried important regimental messages through heavy enemy fire near Consenvoye, France. Though shelled with artillery and poison gas the entire time, he successfully reached his destination and accomplished his mission. For his bravery he received the Distinguished Service Cross.

27

Staff Sgt. Kevin Greico

2008: Staff Sgt. Kevin Grieco, 35, of Bartlett, Illinois died from wounds sustained when a suicide bomber detonated explosives as Greico was preparing to enter a building in Baghlan, Afghanistan. Grieco was assigned to Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 122nd Field Artillery Regiment based in Sycamore, Illinois.



28

Famous Guardsman: Joseph Fifer

1840: Joseph Fifer was born Oct. 28, 1840 in Staunton, Virginia. He first entered military service in 1861. He enlisted as a Private with the 33rd Illinois Infantry. In the Vicksburg Campaign he received serious wounds that affected him throughout the rest of his life. He finished the war as a guard aboard a prison boat. Fifer refused a medical discharge. His postwar career as a city attorney in Bloomington led to involvement in state politics. He served 2 terms as a state attorney before being elected governor in 1888. His daughter became the first female senator of Illinois in 1924. Fifer died in 1938.



17

Three from 122 FA Earn Distinguished Service Cross

1918: Cpl. Gordon W. Kellogg, Pvt. 1st Class Harvey M. Hopp, and Corporal Irwin Myers of the 122nd Field Artillery were awarded the DSC for scouting enemy positions around Romagne, France. For extended periods of time they gathered intelligence with sketches and handwritten notes, all while under intense enemy artillery, machine-gun, and sniper fire. All made it back to their lines safely and with information that pinpointed artillery barrages for subsequent fire missions.

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