

The

Eagle's Eye

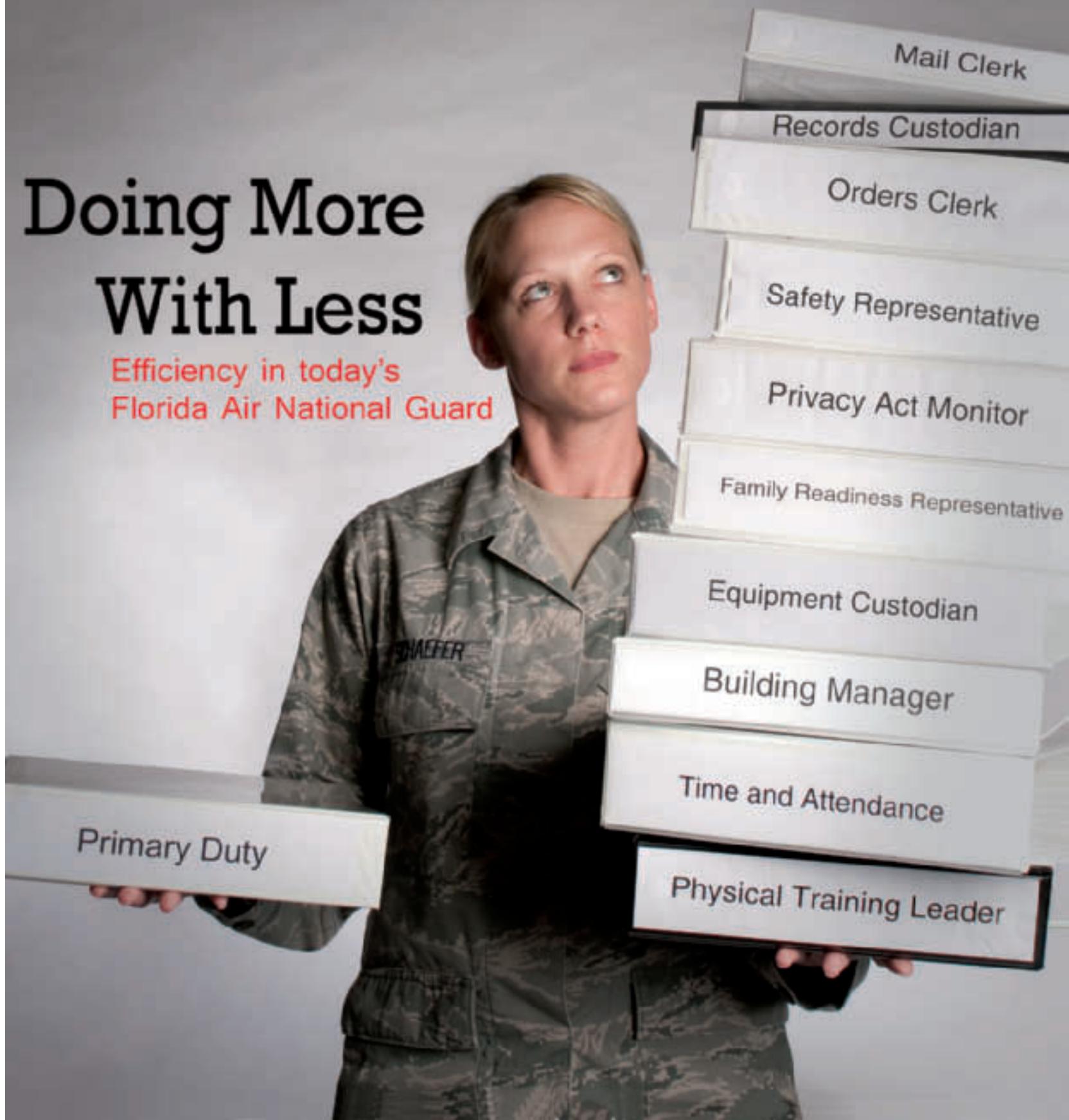
Florida Air National Guard

Summer 2011

Volume 11, Issue 2

Doing More With Less

Efficiency in today's
Florida Air National Guard



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FEATURES

- 6 159th Weather Flight**
takes on "one of our smallest enemies."
- 7 From the Cockpit**
- 8 Letter from the Adjutant General**
- 9 Deployed Medics Help Troops Heal**
- 12 The End of an Era: The Chief Warrant Officer**
- 13 Happening at the 125FW**
- 14 Maj. Gen. Titshaw Reflects**
on first year as Florida's Adjutant General
- 16 Guardsmen Supporting Final Atlantis Mission**
- 18 'From 50 we've become 12,000'**
Florida National Guard celebrates 446 years of history
- 19 Final Flight for Pilot**
marks first flight for his godson
- 20 Airmen and Soldiers take part in Vigilant Guard Earthquake Exercise**
- 22 Jacksonville Surgeon promoted to Major General**
- 23 CONR Supports Final Space Shuttle Launch**
- 24 101st Air & Space Operations Group Receives New Commander**
- 26 RED HORSE Riding Hard**
- 28 Detachment 1 Hosts Military Affairs Committee at Homestead**
- 29 Team-Building Excellence**
- 30 Florida Airmen Participate**
in Ocala's Hurricane and Storm Ready Expo 2011
- 31 Air Force Weather Leaders Gather at Camp Blanding**

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 FLANG Commander's Column**
- 4 Chief's Counsel**
- 5 Chaplain's Corner**
- 10 In the Spotlight**

Our front cover depicts the balancing act faced by today's Airmen as they strive to continually "do more with less."



18



24



20



30



22



16

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By Brig. Gen. Joseph G. Balskus
Assistant Adjutant General for Air
Commander, Florida Air National Guard

Our Florida Air National Guard proves it is the best value for America every day.

We are pleased to bring you another volume of our award winning Eagle's Eye magazine. I always enjoy meeting with our Public Affairs team and my headquarters staff to discuss the theme of each edition and am fascinated how from our early discussions we are able to come up with extremely creative covers.

This particular cover reminds us how efficient we must be today and how we rely on our Airmen to do more and more, beyond primary duties to fulfill the demands of our business. It also reminds us of how we should concentrate on becoming more efficient in order to better balance the workload and not stress our Airmen unreasonably.

Our drive to become more "efficient" in the military began several years ago but gained momentum with the reality of a decreasing budget. On May 8, 2010, the Secretary of Defense issued a mandate. He directed the military services and major functional and regional commands to comprehensively review how they operate and to cut overhead to increase tooth-to-tail ratios. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB), General McKinley stated in his 2010 "Great Value for America" paper, "not only can we work to find efficiencies in our own organization, but we believe that sustained, predictable, and rotational utilization of our Air and Army units and personnel can be a significant factor in helping the services to meet these objectives."

Recognizing the current fiscal situation and doing an evaluation of

our state, our Commander Advisory Group (CAG), Council of Colonels, and Chiefs Council, along with our state Strategic Planning System (SPS) team put their heads together and began crafting ideas to improve efficiencies while concurrently reducing frustrations on our Airmen who felt like the Airman on the front cover of this issue. Yes, we have to do more with less, but our emphasis would be on working smarter. Additionally, our mission performance and production was analyzed and we concentrated on providing the highest level of military capability and the highest level of operational readiness within our allotted budget. Our teams looked at manning and end strength and we asked people like Lt. Col. "Rufio" Wetzel and Lt. Col. Dave Thomas to analyze "effective manning" to ensure our go-to-war Air Force Specialty Codes were being identified and filled. We asked our Strategic Planning System group to look at our missions and make plans for Transitional units to survive and contribute and we expanded units involved in emerging missions.

Now as we close out the fiscal year 2011, I can proudly say our Continuous Process Improvement programs have resulted in reducing our excess assignments by 70 percent and our commanders and recruiters now have a mechanism to recruit only to legitimate vacancies. Even with our F-15 Instructor pilot unit (325th Associate) in mission transition and on hold for recruiting and our 101st Air Operations Group still waiting for NGB manpower to



provide an approved Manning Document, we are keeping units strong and more effectively manned than any time in our history. Our mission performance has never been better with wing sortie production high, the 101st AOC establishing international credibility, our space mission growing and preparing to open up a new facility on Cape Canaveral, our Red Horse preparing for a 2012 full unit deployment, our Weather Readiness Training Center expanding to an additional 13 classes with Combat Weather Training, and our 290th augmenting OCONUS requirements and state J-6 contingencies.

With our immutable commitment to Continuous Process Improvement and with the steadfast professionalism and service above self attitude of our FLANG Airmen, we are confident in a fabulous future for this proud organization, now in its 65th year. We remain thankful to those who served before us who instilled in us a tremendous pride and professionalism that is a part of our DNA. Our Florida Air National Guard proves it is the best value for America every day and we take pride that even in an environment of limited resources, we are a value-added, ready, capable, and accessible force our state and nation can depend on. Enjoy this edition of the Eagle's Eye!

By Chief Master Sgt. Charles W. Wisniewski
State Command Chief Master Sergeant

*It has been my great honor and pleasure to serve alongside all of you these many years...
I will certainly miss visiting your units.*

Friends and fellow Air Guardsmen, this will be my last article for the Eagle's Eye as I will be retiring in January and doing my last UTA weekend this coming December. I enlisted in the active duty Air Force January 1971 and joined the Florida Air National Guard in Jan 1974; the last 41 years have been great and I would not change the career choices I made if I had it all to do over again. I spent 30 years at the 125th Fighter Wing as an Air Technician and saw many changes over the years. Back when I first joined the unit we deployed once a year to Tyndall Air Force Base for live firing with the F-102 and F-106 aircraft for our annual training. When we converted to the F-16 things began to change rapidly; with the F-16 we became world-wide deployable and when Desert Storm One started we effectively changed from a strategic reserve to an operational force. As most of you know, the Air Force and Air National Guard including the FLANG has been in a steady state of war for 20 years now and the ops tempo has been that of a military at war. The FLANG has proven to be up to the task! In all the missions we perform around the state, nation and the entire world – from State Headquarters in St. Augustine to the Space Mission at the 114th Range Operations Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, to the 24-hour alert at Detachment 1 in Homestead and the 290th Joint Combat Communications Support Squadron at MacDill Air Force Base, to the 24/7 365 mission of the 101 Air Operations

Group at Tyndall to the 202nd RED HORSE and Weather Readiness units at Camp Blanding,

and back to the 125th Fighter Wing - our people always have and will continue to perform at the highest level. It has been a great honor these last few years to represent you at national conferences and events as the FLANG has the reputation of leadership within the National Guard and is considered by our national leadership as one of the premiere Air National Guard States in the country. We continue to lead the way in "Excellence in all we do"!!

Chief Master Sgt. Robert Lee from the 114th ROPS has been selected to replace me and will officially take over the state the State Command Chief role on Jan. 1, 2012. Chief Lee has served with distinction in every position he has held including a tour as First Sergeant and several overseas deployments. I know that he will find what I found as I traveled around the state – an organization second to none.

It has been my great honor and pleasure to serve alongside all of you these many years and I will certainly miss visiting your units. Thank you for all the friendships, leadership and mentorship I have received from all of you and keep up the great work you do for State and Nation.



FLANG Retirees' Association

By Senior Master Sgt. (Ret.) Donald Bunk

The next dinner meeting of the FLANG retirees will be held on Saturday, Oct. 29, at NAS Jax Officer's Club. Social hour starts at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m.

In the spirit of Halloween everyone in costume will receive a ticket for a drawing. There will be two lucky winners and they will receive their dinners free this night.

You are invited to come and bring photos of happy/funny FLANG days of old and your best and funniest memories. Stories and laughs are shared and

sometimes rewarded by a small gift or at least a lot of smiles and laughs!

Dinner is open to any retiree and their dinner guest. Reminders, details and information are sent by email to all signed up on RETIREES EMAIL with Senior Master Sgt. Bunk. Postal notices are no longer being sent. Anyone desiring to be on the email list should contact Don.

Contact information: Donald Bunk at Cell (904) 910-9428/ Home (904) 284-7357 and by email at FANG.125@bellsouth.net.

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Gary Poplin
125th FW Chaplain

What does that picture say? Well, if you can read Hebrew you already know. Earlier this year I was fortunate to travel to Israel and this was one of the first signs I saw. It reminded me that God tells us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem in Psalm 122:6-9: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.' For the sake of my brothers and friends, I will say, 'Peace be within you.' For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your prosperity." If fact, one of the definitions of the word Jerusalem means "be safe" or "peaceful." It is a good thing to try to be a peacemaker, Scripture says, "Blessed are the peacemakers..." and "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." So, when you pray, pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

A lack of peace in people's lives causes despair which can lead to really bad decisions. The worst decision a person can make is to end their life, especially in light of a problem that is temporary. Hang in there, you will



make it through the problem. If you are hurting and lacking peace, you are not alone so please ask to speak to someone. There are many options both on and off base to speak to people. There is help online too—a couple of websites I like for questions are: www.truelife.org and www.gotquestions.org. There is help in your smart phone (check your app store for things related to suicide, depression, and the like). I have multiple free apps on my phone from these categories. If you are hurting, get help and a great place to start is in prayer. Pray and ask God for help too. One thing for sure, He loves you! So, when you pray, pray for peace in your life.

Oh yeah, the sign, it says, "Welcome to Israel."

Safety

By Senior Master Sgt. Dana Gaffney
125th FW Safety

Labor Day wrapped up the 101 Critical Days of Summer - that's the timeframe that usually marks the season of greatest risks for our Air Force members since we are outside more often. For 2011, the numbers improved compared to last summer's 16 Airmen lost during the same time. As we all know, any number is still one too many. The leading causes of preventable fatalities during this period are off-duty private motor vehicle mishaps. We need to emphasize the importance of fastening seatbelts, driving at reasonable speeds and not driving drunk or fatigued. Everyone needs to take every opportunity to reach out and remind our fellow airmen to take care of themselves and each other. Your hard work and ceaseless efforts in keeping our airmen alive and well are very much appreciated.



Now that summer's gone, autumn is here! Kids are back at school and football season is back! We'll finally get a break from the heat, humidity (hopefully), and wildfire smoke, and will complete the UCI/LCAP with flying colors! Everyone has worked hard to finish the UCI/LCAP in typical FLANG fashion! Now, maybe we can enjoy the approaching holidays and also look at how we can ensure this is a safe and joyous time of year for all. Let's not let our "Guard down."

The 3rd Quarter 2011 Outstanding Safety Performance Award winner went to Airman Stephanie Karst from the Medical Group. She was awarded with a certificate and a gift card to Outback Steakhouse. Congratulations!

If you witness a safe practice or a "safety attitude," nominate that individual by submitting an AF Form 1206 to the 125th FW Safety Office. Safety...It's an attitude!

159th Weather Flight takes on 'one of our smallest enemies'

By Master Sgt. Nick Barnhardt
159th Weather Flight

Being a weather forecaster in the Florida Air National Guard can sometimes offer unique opportunities to practice meteorological skills that most wouldn't normally consider.

Earlier this year one such opportunity arose when the 159th WF was asked to take part in joint mission supporting various governmental agencies



Master Sgt. Nick Barnhardt records data to be used by Navy entomologists and the USDA during a joint aerial spray project at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center.

from around the eastern U.S. Typically, 159th WF forecasters are tasked with providing tailored weather support to warfighters; allowing them to exploit the weather and defeat America's enemies with precision strikes. In this case 159th WF members were charged with providing support to help defeat one of our country's tiniest enemies. What would be the target of this precision military strike? What some would consider as being Florida's unofficial state bird: the mosquito.

The aerial spray project was truly a joint effort partnering the Florida Army National Guard, Navy, Air Reserve and the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA). The study took place at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center.

The goals of the project were to analyze various types of pesticides to determine which are the most effective and long lasting in unique environments of a combat zone such as the Middle East. The aerial spraying was performed by an Air Reserve C-130 Hercules from the 910th Air Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Base. The

C-130 aircrew flew the demanding low level approach into Camp Blanding's Weinberg drop zone numerous times during each of the four days that the project covered. During the study the USDA and Navy entomologists required fine scale weather observations from multiple locations at the testing site. The 159th WF was able to record high-resolution, minute-by-minute, observations of meteorological variables such as temperature, wind speed and direction, dew point and barometric pressure. From these measurements scientists were able to gauge factors such as disbursement and coverage of the pesticides enabling them to determine the efficiency of each test. The data gathered was utilized to formulate the best means and methods of supporting our military combat operations to effectively conserve the combat fighting force through insect-borne disease suppression or elimination. Like many other governmental studies before it, this study's findings is hoped to provide benefit to the civilian population in the very near future.

Whether it be providing weather support to an armored infantry division's direct assault or a precision strike on our states mosquito population, the 159th WF stands ready to provide weather knowledge no matter the enemy.



A C-130 Hercules from the 910th Air Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Base, participated in a joint aerial spray project along with members from the 159th Weather Flight at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center.



Once again, we want to highlight the Adjutant General's world. June 26th was his one-year anniversary as the Adjutant General of Florida, and it was a phenomenally successful year. We are all extremely honored to serve him and appreciate the example he and our first lady Gretchen set for all of us. – Brig. Gen. Joseph Balskus



STATE OF FLORIDA
Department of Military Affairs
Office of the Adjutant General

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Soldiers, Airmen, Civilian Employees, Families, and Friends of the Florida National Guard:

This year, on June 26th, marked my first year serving as your Adjutant General. I am honored to represent the Florida National Guard and the Department of Military Affairs. As I reflect upon the past 12 months, I am impressed with this organization's extraordinary contributions to our mission. And, I truly thank each and every one of you for your dedication and service to our communities, state, and nation. Today, our Florida National Guard is the most professional and most capable National Guard in the country. I can attest to this having witnessed firsthand the motivation of our 12,000 National Guard members, including 2,200 full-time military personnel and state employees.

Since September 11th, tremendous resources have been allocated to the National Guard. This has transformed us from the traditional role of a strategic reserve to an operational force embedded in our national defense strategy. This past year, we saw the return of the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team -- our largest, single unit deployment since WWII. Other deployments also included the 3rd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group; the 164th Air Defense Artillery Brigade; the 690th MP Company; the 779th Engineer Battalion; the 125th Fighter Wing; the 1153rd Finance Management Detachment, and Special Operations Detachment-Central. More than 3,700 Soldiers and Airmen were called upon to defend our freedom this past year -- our entire organization stood ready to do their part -- thank you for a job well done!

Your dedication and commitment to safety and security here at home is especially critical as we consider our nation's ongoing engagement in worldwide contingency operations. In 2010, the Florida National Guard provided more than 100 Soldiers and Airmen to perform missions in support of the response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Just this past month, the Florida Army National Guard joined the battle against wildfires across the state, providing invaluable aviation and ground support to civilian firefighters as we fought together to contain the blazes.

We have excellent partnerships between Florida National Guard and government leadership, the private sec-

tor, and international leaders. Our members continue to build relationships through active participation in exercises such as Vigilant Guard in Mississippi -- the nation's largest multi-agency exercise involving a catastrophic earthquake in the New Madrid Earthquake Zone. We supported Task Force Bon Voizen, a two-month humanitarian mission in Haiti, in which our servicemembers constructed schools and medical clinics. Our Florida National Guard members forged critical relations that made lasting impressions.

I am also extremely proud of the participation in the Governor's Inauguration and the close cooperation with the new administration. Governor and Mrs. Scott have a keen interest in our Florida National Guard, and have demonstrated their support time and again through visits to our facilities and meeting our Soldiers and Airmen. The relationships we build with our state and local leadership are the cornerstones of our ability to provide safety and security for our families, the citizens of our state, and our nation.

This past year was truly remarkable -- beset with challenges, but definitely marked by victories. As we move forward toward new horizons...no matter the uncertainties that lie before us...I have absolute confidence in your ability. Your commitment of serving and protecting Florida's citizens is a heritage which began more than 445 years. And I know you will continue to proudly bear the tradition of the Citizen-Soldier and Citizen-Airman well into our future. Gretchen and I pledge our total dedication to you as we work together, one team, one fight, to faithfully serve and protect the vital interests of this great state of Florida and our nation.

Be it past, present or future, the Florida National Guard is an enduring force that is . . .

"Always Ready, Always There"

EMMETT R. TITSHAW, JR.
Major General
Florida National Guard
The Adjutant General

Deployed medics help troops heal

by Senior Airman Veronica McMahon
379th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

6/9/2011 - SOUTHWEST ASIA -- A group of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines are all playing cards while telling stories and laughing, a usual setting in a deployed environment. But for these warriors it's much different. Just days prior, each of these individuals were downrange in the heat of the action and were injured due to explosion, gunshot, or other instance. And due to a program here Southwest Asia, they are given the opportunity to be treated here in the area of responsibility and more quickly return to their unit and their mission.

"The Intra-Theater Care Program is a program where injured troops from [Forward Operating Bases] have the opportunity to actually rehabilitate in theater," said Staff Sgt. Marlon Smith, 379th Expeditionary Medical Group ITCP NCOIC. "The goal is to get them back to their FOBs, back to the fight and back in their mission."

Sergeant Smith begins many of his days meeting with the wounded servicemembers during one of the two morning musters. There is one at the coalition compound and one at the medical clinic to accommodate all the patients. During this time he goes over appointment changes, problems, concerns, flights either home or back in theater and morale trips.

"I develop a rapport with them," Sergeant Smith said. "Honesty and trust is important. I'm hoping to rehab them here and get them what they need."

While the first morning muster is for the mobile patients, the second one is held in the hospital where the non-mobile also reside. Sergeant Smith also gets food and other necessities for those who can't move around base easily.

The program's success hangs on the efforts of a few sections of the 379th EMDG. Aside from Sergeant Smith, physical therapy, the general surgeon, the orthopedic surgeon, mental health and nursing all play a huge role in getting troops back in the fight. The medical staff had good things to say about the program.

"It's great the patients are right here," said Dr. (Capt.) Felix Islas, 379th EMDG physical therapist. "The program is fantastic. We have a great team and everything is set up perfectly."



Warrior Airlift -- Staff Sgt. Marlon Smith and Senior Airman Daniel Cooper secure a patient during an air evacuation flight, May 21. The Aeromedical Evacuation Flight transports wounded, injured or sick servicemembers from remote locations to higher level of medical care. (U.S. Air force photo/Staff Sgt. Liliana Moreno)

Tech. Sgt. Micki Hinnershitz, 379th EMDG physical therapist, said their goal is to get them back to their mission within 30 days. "This is as far forward as we can get without being in the fight," Sergeant Hinnershitz said.

The servicemembers expressed extreme gratitude for all the help and support they receive here.

"Here is a complete 180 from what we are used to," said Pvt. Joshua Teel while in his physical therapy session with Sergeant Hinnershitz. "Out in the FOBs it's nothing like this. We came here and they treat us like royalty."

Private Teel has been attending physical therapy sessions three times a week after tearing cartilage in his arm while rolling from a vehicle in an IED blast.

The injuries the doctors see vary. "It's rewarding being able to see patients coming in that are injured or sick and getting them back duty which is what they all want to do," said Maj. Bruce Lynch, ITCP general surgeon. The extent of the injury determines if the patients go back downrange or home on one of the missions that occur a few times a week.

"If there is a mission that day it's an all day event," Sergeant Smith said. "We have to get all the patients prepared, packed and medically cleared."

Sergeant Smith, and other team members, bring the outbound patients to the flightline and load onto a C-130 aeromedical flight for take-off. "For me it's tough because you get to know the folks and you want to make sure they are safe," Sergeant Smith said. "I'm proud of them and the recovery they've made. Overall, I am excited for them and I feel like our mission was successful." Sergeant Smith has been working this program for a few months and has seen many patients come and go.

"From the beginning I pick them up from their AE mission and I am with them until they leave," Sergeant Smith said. "This has been the most rewarding position of my life and it's going to be something I always remember."



Scuba diving with a purpose

By Senior Master Sgt. Rick Dautzenberg
290th JCSS Flight Chief

Master Sgt. Scott Crawford began scuba diving in 1986 and soon realized that this was something that he wanted to do for a very long time. In 1991, after much training and dive experience, he became a Professional Association of Diving Instructors' (PADI) open water instructor. He also acquired his U.S. Coast Guard captain's license and ran dive charters for scuba classes in the Gulf of Mexico operating out of Tarpon Springs. After performing over 5,000 dives and certifying hundreds of students, Crawford moved out West where his passion seemed to have faded away. Soon after returning to Florida his interest in diving was reignited and he became recertified as an instructor with and worked for a local dive shop in Dunedin, Fla.

Crawford joined the 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron in 2005 and looked for ways he could incorporate his military experience with his dive experience. After doing some research online he found that there were several organizations teaching scuba to disabled veterans and their families, and thought that would



Master Sgt. Scott Crawford, 290JCSS, and another instructor prepare Sgt. Jesse Karns to enter pool at MacDill AFB Pool. USAF Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Rick Dautzenberg, 290JCSS

be a great way of using his knowledge and experience to make a positive impact.

In order to do that, he needed another certification, the Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) Instructor Rating. HSA allows you to certify individuals with varying disabilities from blindness to quadriplegia. The students are rated on the basis of what challenges they can accomplish, and with that rating, they must adhere to strict standards in order to dive safely.

For this certification Crawford had to play the role of a disabled student associating how challenging the skills are and how to overcome or enhance them. Then he had to play the role of the instructor with another person playing the role of the disabled student. This was challenging both physically and mentally, he explained: "You really have to think outside the box and about ten steps ahead in order to make this comfortable for everyone involved."

Crawford teamed up with Care Coalition and Task Force Dagger Foundation which assists U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) Soldiers and their families. They had a need for an instructor for one of their disabled Rangers. Crawford was teamed up with Sgt. Jesse Karns, a quadriplegic who was



Master Sgt. Scott Crawford, 290JCSS, and Sgt. Jesse Karns travel to dive location.



Master Sgt. Scott Crawford, 290JCSS, readies Sgt. Jesse Karns to submerge at MacDill AFB Pool.

very interested in becoming scuba certified, and the two were teamed together and soon began working diligently practicing in a large pool to complete all the skills required before open-water certification dives.

The pool work was challenging. Karns required special attention getting into his wet suit, getting in and out of the water and donning his scuba gear. The smallest things became an issue if everything was not done to

the letter. Karns had an additional challenge of thermally regulating his body; even with a full wetsuit, he had about a 45 minute limit in the tepid waters of the pool. All of the skills that a non-disabled diver is required to perform must be attempted with a disabled diver as well. The difference being the disabled diver may require assistance with those skills. For Karns most skills require assistance: equalization of air spaces, mask clearing, ascent, descent, and buddy breathing.

After successfully completing the required pool skills several times, it was time to start the open water training which consists of five dives. They recently dove six miles off the coast of Clearwater. There they completed a dive to 30 feet and were able to practice open water skills to include buoyancy control, mask clearing, and sightseeing where the student must identify five types of marine life.

Although not completely certified at the time of this article, Karns has shown great courage in just attempting this recreational activity and will soon be certified. The real beauty of this endeavor for Karns is that it's not just a sport; it's a part of his rehabilitation - the feeling of being weightless provides freedom, and a group of people with a common goal provides a sense of belonging, much like in the military.

Master Sgt. Crawford and Sgt. Karns have proven that limitations can be overcome through patience, dedication and courage. They both look forward to traveling to Key West and continuing their dive adventures.



Master Sgt. Scott Crawford, 290JCSS, performs submerged training with Sgt. Jesse Karns under water at the MacDill AFB Pool.

THE END OF AN ERA: THE CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER



By Col. (Ret.) Frank Kozdras
Director, FLANG Heritage Center

The 125th Fighter Wing owes a great debt to a level of management that just seemed to disappear when the Air Force stopped appointing warrant officers in 1959. At that time there were approximately 4,500 authorizations for warrant officers in the Air Force. Five of these were in the 125th Fighter Squadron. Many of our Guardsmen remember the five warrant officers and the tremendous impact they had on the recorded success of the Florida Air National Guard. CW4 Garner Harris was assigned to Consolidated Maintenance, CW4 Bill Stokes became the Aircraft Maintenance Officer, CW4 Carl Childress became the Comptroller and Finance Officer, and CW4 Harry Smith became the Aircraft Maintenance and Missile Explosives Officer. The fifth warrant officer Kinsey "Skinny" Brinson went on to become a lieutenant colonel and Director of the Personnel Section. Each held critical leadership positions thru retirement and without question were the unsung heroes of the Florida Air National Guard and its rich heritage.

The FLANG Warrant Officers served through five aircraft conversions from the initial P-51, followed by the F-80, F-84, F-86D, F-102, then the F-106. They were involved with the Korean activation, the William Tell Competitions, the Ricks Race, and all operational and training support functions that made each event successful. At one time there were nine different aircraft on the ramp at the same time at Imeson Airport including support aircraft such as the T-33, T-34, B-26, C-45, and C-47. The leadership provided by the Warrant Officers through this critical time period cannot be adequately described.

The USAF inherited warrant officer ranks from the Army at its inception in 1947, but their place in the Air Force management structure was never made clear. Congress had authorized the creation of two new senior enlisted ranks in 1958, (E-8 & E-9), and the Air Force leadership privately concluded that these two new "super enlisted grades" could fill all Air Force needs that were then performed at the warrant officer grades. That is why there were no E-8s and E-9s at the base until the early 1960s. Arguments continue today about the decision not to use the rank.

When the warrant officer appointments stopped in 1959, that same year the first promotions began to appear

at the new top enlisted grades of Senior and Chief Master Sergeant with considerable qualifications to be met. Most of the existing Air Force warrant officers entered the commissioned officer program and were promoted according their age and qualifications during the 1960s. A small number chose to continue at their Chief Warrant rank for the next 21 years. Chief Warrant Officer, CW4 Harry Smith was the last FLANG CWO to retire March 9, 1982.

The last surviving 125th FW CWO, CW4 Carl C. Childress, said that the argument given by Air Force Leadership regarding added costs and additional management layering, did not affect the Air National Guard because of the quality of our warrants and the way the Guard used them. Having established themselves as the technical experts in their operational fields, they were highly respected by the enlisted and regular officer ranks. They were unafraid to engage the commissioned officers on technical and advocacy issues, and were the strict standard setters for all the enlisted ranks, a role never quite duplicated in the new organizational structure. All of the sister services continue to maintain the CWO level of management with much success. The Army has assigned a great number in their aviation units and has taken advantage of many other opportunities to compartmentalized specialty areas requiring strong leadership and technical knowledge.

While the debate continues, our mission has expanded and we continue to achieve great successes with the organizational structure currently in place today. We can all agree, however, that without the contributions of the Florida Air National Guard Chief Warrant Officers, we would not have the solid foundation that they ultimately provided under such challenging times or the leaders they trained who still carry the gauntlet of excellence in all that we do.

The most interesting thing, however, is that although the Air Force does not use the intermediate rank of Warrant Officer for various reasons, they have never relinquished their authority to appoint warrant officers in the event that they might change their minds. Who knows what direction history will take?

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS AMAZING THING THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN AT THE 125FW!!!

(Because if this article was entitled "Reasons to Donate Blood" no one would read it!)

By: Staff Sgt. Rachael Lewis
125th FW Family Readiness

Everyone knows the importance of donating blood, but we don't always find the time to do it. For years, the Florida Air National Guard has been working with the Blood Alliance by holding several blood drives each year at the 125th Fighter Wing, which is scheduled in conjunction with drill weekend. How many times have you walked across the parking lot, straight into the Dining Facility, seen the Blood Mobile and thought "I'll do it next time" or "I just don't have time today". Numbers don't lie, and ours prove that this has been true for more and more of you. A few years ago, a blood drive at the 125th FW would yield about 50 units of blood; which goes to people recovering from illness and injury who need blood transfusions. Disappointingly, our numbers have taken a dive in the past couple of years and our recent blood drives result in anywhere from only 12 to 20 units. We are thankful for each person that donates their time and blood – please know you are not taken for granted!

Since joining the Airman & Family Programs team last May, I have made it a personal goal to see those numbers rise. We are still brainstorming and working with leadership to meet this goal. Fortunately, and not so fortunately, the Blood Alliance has always had to deal with the major hurdle

that most people aren't knocking their doors down to get stuck with needles and drained of their own blood!

So, they have developed several initiatives that all blood donors get to reap the benefits of.

Whereas the Blood Alliance used to mail gifts to donor's homes after so many donations, they have recently developed an online rewards store that donors can 'shop' from with the points they earn each time they donate. Some of their top level items include: iPad, iPod touch, canon digital camera or Xbox (unless you'd rather the umbrella).

They also try to throw in some sort of added incentive whenever possible. For the May blood drive, MetLife came along to give away gas cards and t-shirts to all the donors. They also have drawings for bigger prizes, like the recent Smart Car drawing. The bottom line is, whether there's 'something in it for you' or not, donating blood saves lives! With upcoming UCI, we will likely not have another blood drive until November, and I encourage everyone who is able, to consider donating the next time you see the Blood Mobile on UTA weekend.

POC: SSgt Rachael Lewis / rachael.lewis@ang.af.mil

Appointments are highly encouraged by either contacting the POC or visit: <https://www.thebloodalliance.com>

Security Forces Building Groundbreaking



Maj. Gen. Joseph Balskus (second from right), Assistant Adjutant General for Air, and members of the 125th FW participate in a groundbreaking ceremony Sept. 13. The building, which is scheduled to be completed in November 2012, will be the new home of the Security Forces Squadron.

Maj. Gen. Titshaw reflects on first year as Florida's Adjutant General

By Master Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa
Florida National Guard Public Affairs

When his first year as Florida's Adjutant General drew to a close this summer, Maj. Gen. Emmett R. Titshaw Jr. said he was confident the men and women under his command were the best generation of military professionals he had seen in his 41-year-career.

During an interview on June 24, Titshaw asserted that the nearly 12,000 uniformed service members and civilian employees who make up the Florida National Guard have proven themselves to be the most dedicated leaders, Soldiers and Airmen he has been associated with since he joined the military in 1970. He also took time to discuss other issues affecting the organization, including what Guard members should expect in the future and the importance of family support.

"I'd like every member of this organization to know how very proud I am of their performance," Titshaw, who took command of the Florida National Guard from Maj. Gen. Douglas Burnett on June 26, 2010, said. "They have done remarkable work. I sometimes feel a little guilty because I get to stand at the top of the organization and collect the credit, but it is they who deserve the credit. They are the ones who are sacrificing each and every day."

A Significant First Year

During Titshaw's watch the Florida National Guard and the Florida Department of Military Affairs have already tackled significant and historical events: the return of the largest single-unit deployment of Florida Soldiers since World War II; critical response to the largest environmental disaster in our nation's history; and an increasing partnership with the new gubernatorial administration.

"If I could sum it up in a few words it would be: 'Thank you,'" the Adjutant General said of his feelings towards the members of the Florida National Guard. "And, I would follow it up with 'Well done.' We've just come off of our highest number of mobilizations and deployments since World War II. In November we peaked with 3,700 Soldiers and Airmen deployed in the war-fight. That is a significant accomplishment."

Titshaw cited several examples of Florida National Guard success during the past year, including the deployment of the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team to Kuwait and Iraq which drew accolades from senior Army and National Guard leadership, and the 125th Fighter Wing's high-profile exercise performing air-to-air training in Saudi Arabia. He also pointed to the recent Operation Enduring Freedom mission of the 3rd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, which sparked praise from International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commander Gen. David Petraeus.

"Their accomplishments were preformed with a professionalism that got the attention of Gen. Petraeus," Titshaw said. "(He had) very favorable comments about their performance. In fact he called their work a 'game changer.' The work that they did was superb. No one could have asked more of them. One of the most personally gratifying things about the deployment was all of our Soldiers came home from a very risky operation."

An Uncertain Future

Despite those accomplishments, Titshaw prompted the force to continue to maintain focus. He said the men and women of the organization need to now consider how current issues like budgetary constraints and U.S. foreign policy will dictate the future of the Florida National Guard.

"A very important question for the future of the National Guard is simply 'What now?'" Titshaw said. "Since 9-11 tremendous resources have been allocated to the National Guard that changed our role from being a strategic reserve to being an operational force embedded in our national defense strategy. That force has been relied upon to have a significant role in the war-fight, plus maintain safety and security here at home."

Since 2001 nearly 15,000 Florida National Guard Soldiers have been operationally deployed. Those deployments were often concurrent with mobilizations for hurricanes and other natural disaster actions in Florida. Titshaw questioned what impact a shrinking defense budget or force reductions in Southwest Asia would have on the force.

“What will the role of the National Guard be?” he asked. “Will we be able to maintain it as the ready, reliable force that it is today? Or will we regress to some other shape and form that will no longer be the Guard that we know? A tremendous investment has gone into making us what we are and those of us in senior leadership want to maintain that investment and maintain our capabilities.

“That is really the biggest question looming before the National Guard,” Titshaw added. “Are we going to maintain our big formations – our Brigade Combat Team on the Army side or our Wing on the Air side – at the current level of readiness that we have? The National Guard leadership is saying we must.”

Titshaw echoed the sentiments of Chief of the National Guard Bureau Gen. Craig McKinley in the National Guard’s 2012 Posture Statement, calling for previous investments in the Guard to be “capitalized upon and leveraged for the future.”

Fiscal responsibility

While the future evolution of the National Guard is unknown, the Adjutant General is confident that resources like Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, and the professionalism and talent of the force, will keep Florida relevant. He also cautioned the force to exercise fiscal responsibility at all levels as part of that professionalism.

“Individually Soldiers and Airman – almost every day – have to responsibly utilize their funds,”

he explained. “If a few individuals don’t exercise this responsibility, it tends to label all National Guard organizations as not trustworthy. We have to execute our budgets appropriately. We have to leverage them to get the maximum amount of training, readiness and capability that we can from every dollar.”

Sustain the Guard family

The Adjutant General also stressed the continued importance of family support in keeping the Florida National Guard strong.

“It is not just the Soldier or Airman who serves this organization, it is also the family,” he said. “The family has to support this organization, and they do. That is what I believe is sustaining this organization through this tremendous operational tempo that we have.”

He said that if Guard members lose the support from their spouses, children, parents, and siblings, it would degrade the effectiveness of ongoing missions.

“It is a remarkable system of support we have built, and now we need to sustain that support,” Titshaw said. “I would ask every Soldier and Airman to focus on that; to make sure they are keeping their families informed of what their role is, of what they’re doing, of what this organization is doing.

“If we’re going to sustain this effort for the long haul, in an era of persistent conflict that we’re told we are going to be in, it will be critical to keep those families on our team,” he added.

COMM BUILDING OPENING



125th Communications Flight Commander Maj. Richard Guckenberger (left), Adjutant General of Florida Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw, Airman 1st Class Chanai Heath, and Chief Master Sgt. Keith Cooper help dedicate the new 125th Fighter Wing communications facility May 13.



Maj. Carl Guckenberger, 125th CF commander, explains some of the state-of-the-art technology in the new building to Maj. Gen. Titshaw and Brig. Gen. Balskus.

GUARDSMEN SUPPORTING FINAL ATLANTIS MISSION REFLECT ON 30 YEARS OF SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM



Lt. Col. Todd Oller, 114th Range Operations Squadron (ROPS) Commander and Flight Safety-Mission Flight Control Officer, stands by the 114th ROPS sign, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., July 7, 2011. Florida Air National Guard's 114th ROPS will continue to be an integral part of the launch process for other space vehicle missions even though this will be NASA's final shuttle launch. (Florida ANG Photos by Master Sgt. Shelley Gill)

By Master Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa
Florida National Guard Public Affairs

When the space shuttle Atlantis thundered into the Florida sky on its final voyage July 8, a generation of Americans watched as their epitome of the space program came to an end.

Many who grew up during the past three decades saw the shuttle program as a symbol of America's ongoing venture into space. They woke up early to watch the launches on television or begged their parents to buy the same powdered drink the astronauts took with them into orbit. Some even dreamed of joining NASA and floating outside of the shuttle during a tethered spacewalk.

While hundreds of thousands gathered near Cape Canaveral to watch the final launch of Atlantis on July 8, members of the Florida Air National Guard supporting the mission stopped to reflect on what the end of this historic program meant to them.

"I'm a native to Florida, so I remember seeing the first several launches from my parents' rooftop," said Master



Master Sgt. Greg Jones, 114th Range Operations Squadron Deputy Surveillance Control Officer (left), and Master Sgt. Dan Alonso, 114th Range Operations Squadron Surveillance Control Officer, prepare for the upcoming launch for NASA's final space shuttle mission ST-134, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla, July 7, 2011. Although the launch, which occurred on July 8, 2011, was the final flight of the shuttle program, the Florida Air National Guard's 114th ROPS will continue to be an integral part of the launch process for other space vehicle missions.

Sgt. Gregory Jones, 45, a member of the Guard's 114th Range Operations Squadron (ROPS). "My dad was part of the space program here as well, so I'm a second generation guy. To be able to see this thing go from cradle to grave is a unique experience."

Jones and other Airmen from the 114 ROPS support space launch missions from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, working closely with active duty counterparts at the 45th Space Wing to ensure shuttle and rocket launches don't pose a threat to public safety. That support includes monitoring aircraft and boats that stray too near the Cape on launch day.

"Our role is to make sure there is a safe environment in which to launch the 'vehicle,' and make sure there is something we can do about it to protect the public," Jones, who has been supporting missions at the range since 1995 and assisted in about 40 shuttle missions, said. "We ensure that if any launch goes catastrophic that no debris rains down on people."

During the countdown for the Atlantis launch Jones worked in the Morrell Operations Center at the Cape, monitoring air and sea traffic in a 60 mile swath of ocean east of the launch pad. If a boat or aircraft wandered into the safety zone or restricted airspace, he would coordinate Coast Guard and security aircraft to assist in clearing up a potential "show stopper" during launch countdown.

"It's exciting to be on this last one," Jones explained. "It's bittersweet though. I'm looking forward to it flying

out safely and the program coming to an end, but I'll miss this platform. The shuttle means an awful lot to all of us."

Range Operations Commander Maj. Kyle Beatty, 37, said he also has mixed feelings about the end

'From 50 we've become 12,000'

Florida National Guard celebrates 446 years of history

By Sgt. 1st Class Blair Heusdens
 Florida National Guard Public Affairs

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. (Sept. 16, 2011) – Soldiers and Airmen from the Florida National Guard paid homage to their roots as they celebrated 446 years since the first Citizen-Soldiers mustered together to defend their homes from attack in what is now St. Augustine, Florida.

These Spanish citizens who accompanied Pedro Menendez de Aviles on his voyage across the Atlantic nearly four-and-a-half centuries ago laid the roots of the militia tradition in what would later become the continental United States. These early militia “musters” formed the roots of what we today call the Florida National Guard.

“From 50 we’ve become 12,000,” said Maj. Gen. Emmett R. Titshaw, the Adjutant General of Florida, who, since assuming command of the Florida National Guard in 2010, pursued a command philosophy that links the organization’s heritage to its horizons. “That is a remarkable growth and achievement over the years.”

According to the Florida National Guard State Historian’s Office, the “first muster” took place on Sept. 16, 1565, when Pedro Menendez de Aviles gathered around him the soldiers of his small Spanish army, as well as the civilian settlers who had accompanied him to the newly established presidio town of St. Augustine. He was about to march north to the French settlement of Fort Caroline near the mouth of the St. Johns River.

Because his plan called for the use of the majority of his regular soldiers, Menendez drew upon Spanish laws governing the milicia, or militia, in an imperial province. As both the civil governor and the commander-in-chief of the military establishment, he had the authority to call all free male settlers in the presidio province to active service.

The exact location of this “first muster” is unknown, but historians and archeologists believe it lies a few miles north of the Florida National Guard headquarters, most likely near the present site of the Fountain of Youth and the Mission of Nombre de Dios.

More than 100 Soldiers, Airmen and civilians were present at the historic St. Francis Barracks, Sept. 16, 2011, to mark the



Adjutant General of Florida Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw (left) prepares to fire a replica Spanish colonial “hand gonne” held by Assistant Adjutant General for Army Maj. Gen. Don Tyre during the First Muster events at the historic St. Francis Barracks in St. Augustine, Fla., Sept. 16, 2011. Period re-enactors were on hand to help the Florida National Guard celebrate the 446th anniversary of the first Citizen-Soldiers mustering together to defend their homes from attack in what is now St. Augustine, Fla.

event with a military retreat ceremony. The ceremony included a historic weapons demonstration by re-enactors from the Florida Living History educational group, dressed in period clothing firing several replica 16th century weapons including crossbows, swords, halberds and primitive firearms.

The event marked the second annual commemoration of the “first muster,” as part of a five-year plan to educate the public about the heritage of the Florida National Guard and its history in St. Augustine as the city moves toward its 450th Anniversary in 2015.

“It was a military expedition that was the central idea behind the village of St. Augustine,” said Titshaw. “And it was the military presence in this community which ensured that St. Augustine survived all of those 446 years of history. We have a great relationship here with the city and we’re proud to share our heritage with them.”

Today, the Florida National Guard carries on the tradition of the Citizen-Soldier by continuing to come to the aid of the state and nation when called. Florida Guardsmen provide support to the state during times of disaster and deploy Soldiers and Airmen overseas to support our nation’s defense. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the Florida National Guard has mobilized more than 15,000 Soldiers and Airmen in support of ongoing operations overseas and at home.

Just as those 50 Spanish citizen-soldiers were ready 446 years ago to defend their homeland from attack, 12,000 Florida National Guardsmen stand ready today and every day to leave their homes and take up arms to defend the State of Florida and the United State of America proving the National Guard is truly always ready, always there.



Historical re-enactors from Florida Living History join members of the Florida National Guard during a Command Retreat ceremony on the parade field at St. Francis Barracks in St. Augustine, Fla., Sept. 16, 2011, as they celebrated the 446th anniversary of the First Muster.



Historical re-enactors from Florida Living History fire black powder weapons during a Command Retreat ceremony on the parade field at St. Francis Barracks in St. Augustine, Fla., Sept. 16, 2011.

Airmen and Soldiers take part in Vigilant Guard earthquake exercise in Mississippi

By Maj. Theresa Travis
Florida CERF-P

In May the Florida CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P) was fortunate to participate in Vigilant Guard Mississippi (VG MS) as part of National Level Exercise 11. In the context of a large-scale natural disaster, the intent of this exercise was to build relationships between local, state, and regional emergency response agencies, foster interstate and inter-agency cooperation and integration, and practice life-saving skills.



CERF-P Search and Extraction members search a derailed train car for trapped victims during Vigilant Guard.



Airmen from the 125th Medical Group train on a computerized mannequin during Vigilant Guard.

In this scenario, a catastrophic, severe-magnitude earthquake occurred along the New Madrid Seismic Fault affecting eight states along the Mississippi River. Due to overwhelming damage and numerous casualties, the State of Mississippi requested assistance from National Guard emergency response teams in Georgia and Florida. The Georgia Homeland Response Force (HRF), which includes a CERF-P team, was first on-scene at the Meridian Public Safety Training Facility in Meridian, Miss., responding to a train derailment and several large collapsed buildings. The Florida CERF-P deployed 160 Soldiers and Airmen and their equipment via convoy and C-17 airlift, to conduct a relief-in-place/transfer-of-authority (RIP/TOA) with the Georgia CERF-P in order to support continuous rescue operations, to include search and extraction, mass decontamination, and medical triage and treatment.



Members of the Decontamination team monitor an injured victim for hazardous chemicals during Vigilant Guard.

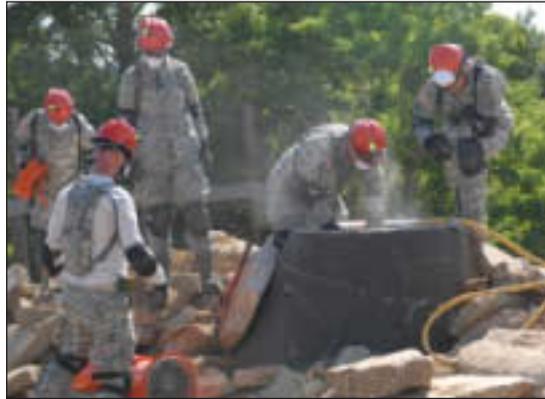


Members of the CERF-P Decontamination Team process a victim through the mobile decontamination trailer during Vigilant Guard.



Members of the CERF-P team board a C-17 bound for Meridian, Miss., for the Vigilant Guard field training exercise.

The faint cries for help by role players with simulated injuries and thick smoke billowing from thick slabs of concrete and overturned rail cars provided the realism that led to a fast-paced heart pumping training event that ran nonstop for 48 hours. Engineers from the 202nd RED HORSE Squadron and the Army Guard's 779th Engineer Battalion performed with speed and precision, breaching multiple obstacles (steel, concrete, crushed cars) to extract victims trapped in the debris. Victims were then expedited through a mass decontamination process by Florida National Guard Soldiers from the 146th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the 927th



Search and Extraction team members work to extract a victim trapped in the rubble of a simulated collapsed building.

By the end of the 48-hour exercise, the search and extraction

team had retrieved a total of 320 victims, the decontamination team had processed 550 personnel through its mobile decontamination trailer, and the medical team had processed 1,100 casualties.

Many "firsts" occurred for the Florida CERF-P during VG MS. It was our first-ever large-scale out-of-state emergency response training event, our first full RIP/TOA event with another CERF-P team, and our first training event conducted in conjunction with the Georgia HRF. The C-17 air movement marked the first time Florida CERF-P personnel, vehicles, or equipment had been transported via airlift, and allowed us to train to the air mobility requirement directed by CERF-P doctrine. Additionally, the team deployed with a Florida Regional Emergency Response Network (RERN) which was transported via airlift for the first time—an important milestone for this vital high-tech mobile communications platform. Logistical support in the form of load planning, joint inspections and aircraft loading was provided by airload specialists from the 125th Fighter Wing in Jacksonville and 165th Airlift Wing in Savannah, Ga.

Many thanks to the numerous people involved with this training event who helped make it a tremendous success!



Airmen from the 125th Medical Group, including Col. John Gallagher, Lt. Col. Cheryl Tillman, Maj. Mark Remz and Capt. Valerie Girona, perform a medical evaluation on an injured victim during Vigilant Guard.

Combat Sustainment Support Battalion who ensured they were free of any hazardous chemical contamination and that all contaminated effects were properly packaged and disposed of. Airmen from the 125th Medical Group assisted with the extraction, triage and treatment of injured victims, and the preparation and packaging of the most seriously injured for transport to area hospitals. An eight-person Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) from the 125th Services Flight also trained with their counterparts from Georgia and Mississippi to recover bodies at the scene.



Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Fox and Master Sgt. Mike Lowery assist Tech. Sgt. Mark Collins with his Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as he suits up to perform decontamination of victims in the hot zone.

Jacksonville surgeon promoted to Major General in Florida Air National Guard

By Master Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa
Florida National Guard Public Affairs

Jacksonville resident Joseph Kirk Martin was promoted to the rank of Major General, July 8, during a ceremony at historic St. Francis Barracks, the Headquarters of the Florida National Guard in St. Augustine, Fla.

“Kirk is the go-to person when we are in crisis either as individuals when we have a health issue or when we have a family member who has a serious illness,” said Maj. Gen. Emmett R. Titshaw, the Adjutant General of Florida. “Kirk has been the go-to person that we’ve gone to at all hours of the night and asked for advice.”

Martin is currently serving as the Air National Guard Assistant to the U.S. Air Force Surgeon General and the Joint Surgeon for the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. He also practices as an Emeritus Surgical Oncologist at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla., where he specializes in surgery of the pancreas.

Martin received a direct commission in the U.S. Air Force Reserve Medical Corps in October 1985. Throughout his more than 25 year career as an Air Force Officer, Martin served in various roles including flight surgeon.

On Sept. 11, 2001, Martin was mobilized and selected as the first-ever surgeon general at Headquarters, First Air Force, Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

During this assignment, he supported Homeland Defense and Civil Support medical issues for the Joint Staff. Martin was selected as the Chief of Staff, Headquarters Florida Air National Guard in July 2007 and promoted to brigadier general in 2008.

“Our lives as citizen-Soldiers wound through three wars and deployments to a lot of places including Germany, England, Iceland, Turkey, Japan, Antarctica, Hawaii, Alaska, islands from the Aleutian to the Polynesian chain, Norway, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia and now the Pentagon. The Guard is everywhere.”

Martin has received various awards and recognition throughout his career including being named the Air National Guard Outstanding Medical Officer of the Year in 1994 and he received the Distinguished Career Award from the Mayo Clinic in 2000.

“More than anything else that you will receive as far as recognition in your life, the satisfaction each time that you help save a life must be something tremendous to experience,” said Titshaw.

In his current position, Martin is playing a direct part in the National Guard’s emerging role in homeland defense. The National Guard is establishing several Homeland Response Forces – chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response forces – to respond to catastrophic events in the United States.

“We the people of the United States have relied again and again on the Guard,” said Martin. “Now, the mission for the Guard, our new mission of homeland defense, is here for us to rise to meet the challenge. I contend that our next mission is actually our first mission.”



Maj. Gen. Kirk Martin smiles as his new rank is pinned on by wife, Vicki, and Maj. Gen. Emmett Titshaw, The Adjutant General of Florida.

101st Air & Space Operations Group Receives New Commander

By Capt. Jared Scott
601st AOC Public Affairs

In an Air Force hangar surrounded by friends, family and other guests, members of the 101st Air and Space Operations Group welcomed a new commander and bid farewell to another during a change of command ceremony held here June 11.

A traditional passing of flags during the ceremony symbolized the change in leadership as Col. Thomas Cucchi assumed command of the 101st AOG from Col. Scott Barberides. Presiding over the ceremony was Florida's Assistant Adjutant General – Air and Florida Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. Joseph Balskus.

"Today we honor one who has served us faithfully and welcome one who promises to do the same," said Balskus. "Col. Barberides, you have performed superbly in your duties as



U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Barberides speaks to 101st Air & Space Operations Group (101st AOG) for the last time as the 101st AOG commander during a change of command ceremony held here June 11, 2011. This was the very first change of command ceremony for the 101st AOG, which was officially activated July 1, 2009. Colonel Barberides served as the first commander of the 101st AOG. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. Steve Burke/Released)



U.S. Air Force Col. Thomas Cucchi, far right, Col. Scott Barberides, second from right, and Col. Randy Spear, third from right, look on as Brig. Gen. Joseph Balskus addresses family, friends and fellow Airmen during the 101st Air & Space Operations Group (101st AOG) change of command ceremony held here June 11, 2011. This was the very first change of command ceremony for the 101st AOG, which was officially activated July 1, 2009. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. Steve Burke/Released)

commander of the 101st Air and Space Operations Group. You have formed the best relationship we have ever had with the Air Operations Center and 1st Air Force."

After nearly two years as the commander of the 101st AOG, Barberides will be moving to Philadelphia to take charge of the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program as the Senior Aerospace Science Instructor at Lincoln High School.

Barberides served as the first commander of the 101st AOG, a Florida Air National Guard unit that provides manning for the 601st AOC to fulfill its mission of defending the homeland. The 101st AOG, formerly known as the Southeast Air Defense Sector, was officially activated July 1, 2009.

"This is a great day for the 101st



U.S. Air Force Col. Thomas Cucchi addresses members of 101st Air & Space Operations Group (101st AOG) for the first time as the new commander of the 101st AOG during a change of command ceremony held here June 11, 2011. This was the very first change of command ceremony for the 101st AOG, which was officially activated July 1, 2009. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. Steve Burke/Released)

RED HORSE RIDING HARD

By Tech. Sgt. Bill Nicholls
202nd RHS

NUCLEAR EMERGENCY

A ten kiloton nuclear bomb exploding in Los Angeles; a 2.5 kiloton nuclear bomb exploding in McCormick, S.C.—those were the scenarios in a two week C-CMRF (Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, Radiological and High Explosive Consequence Management Response Force) Exercise in June 2011. The participants—31 202nd RED HORSE Airmen, and 1,100 Army Guard soldiers.

Exercise Commander Colonel Blake Storey said airlift capability would play a major role in an actual emergency: “That was the main reason I wanted RED HORSE with me preparing runways for C-17 and C-130 aircraft.”

Working in shifts, 202nd RHS Airmen staffed the Tactical Operations Center and RED HORSE Operations (code-named “White Cell”) all focused on accomplishing a wide variety of missions, including surveying local bridges to determine load bearing capacity, runway surveys, route clearance, personnel decontamination, identifying the deceased, refrigerating human remains, and humanitarian aid (food/water/medical care).

“Palmetto Response” had an economic impact totaling more than \$270,000 on McCormick County with many items locally purchased by troops, including meals and personal items. That was good news for Charles Jennings, Chairman of the County Council: “This is a rural, depressed county. You’ve lifted our spirits economically, and you’re welcome here anytime!”

202nd RHS Training NCO Master Sgt. Jeffrey Stanley received a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Performance at the Tactical Operations Center. Two 202nd RHS Technical Sergeants were promoted to Master Sergeant during “Palmetto Response”: Micaiah Amick and James Waters.



Col. Jack Paschal (left), 202nd RHS commander, discusses C-CMRF emergency response options with Police Chief J.R. Jones (center) and McCormick County Economic Development Director George Woodsby. The two-week C-CMRF exercise had an economic impact totaling \$271,941.

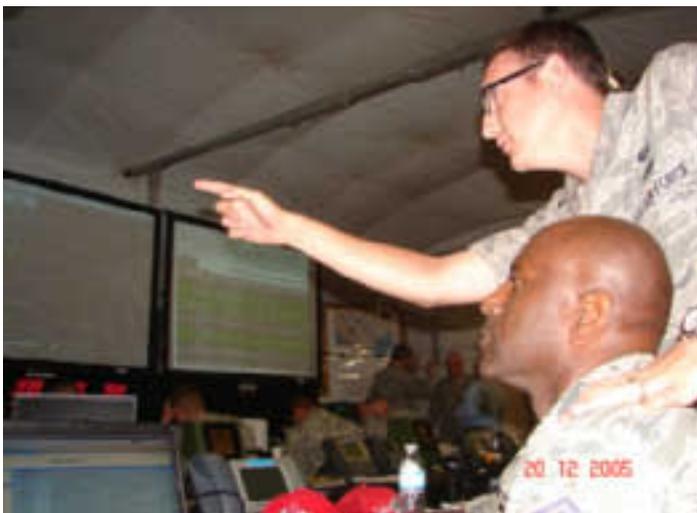
HELPING 201st R.H.S. PREPARE FOR AN O.R.I.

While RED HORSE Airmen raced against time to save lives in a nuclear emergency, another detachment of 202nd RHS Airmen waged a different war—assisting a Pennsylvania RED HORSE unit (201st RHS) in preparation for a November 2011 Operational Readiness Inspection. 202nd RHS Team Chief Douglas Gilbert said several areas were evaluated: “We looked at convoy procedures, radio traffic, weapons knowledge, accountability in terms of personnel, vehicles and keys, MOPP 4—you name it.”

ALASKA AND HAWAII

Meantime, two RED HORSE projects are continuing outside the “Lower Forty-Eight”—Hawaii and Alaska. 202nd RHS Commander Colonel Jack Paschal says the work in Newtok, Alaska is to “move equipment to the top of a hill, clear out a space, have a core drilling contractor come in and drill into the mountain, set explosives, blow the mountain, remove the debris, then stockpile it for the future job of building a road. We started out with a ten day delay because the boat bringing all of our materials and construction equipment to the site was delayed. Now the big effort is going to be—‘Can our team over-

202nd RHS Lt. Matthew Rockwell assists Senior Master Sgt. Terry Harris in the Tactical Operations Center during the June C-CMRF exercise in Georgia. The exercise, entitled “Palmetto Response,” involved 1,100 Army Guardsmen and 31 202nd RHS Airmen.



Detachment 1 Hosts Military Affairs Committee at Homestead

Courtesy 125th Fighter Wing Detachment 1

The Florida Air National Guard's 125 Fighter Wing Detachment 1 in Homestead, Fla., recently hosted the South Miami Military Affairs Committee (South Miami MAC) tour. The MAC is a civilian organization comprised of local business leaders whose goals include supporting military members and family.

The Committee serves as a connection between local businesses and both military leaders and personnel. Working with military leaders, the MAC will advise on major construction projects and renovations which many have dual military and civilian purposes. Homestead has been going through major reconstruction ever since Hurricane Andrew "blew" through in the early 1990s, when a majority of the base was either damaged or destroyed. The MAC has played a key role to assist organizations like the Coast Guard, Special Operations Southern Command, 482nd Fighter Wing, 125th Fighter Wing Det. 1 and other organizations make the transition back to normal operations throughout the 90's and today with every increasing support.

They bring the support down to the individual level by providing scholarships for schooling, coordination for special events (like free golf tournaments), awards

to individuals and other support when needed and able. One key award is called "The Annual MAC Award" where a superior performer for each major entity at Homestead is recognized for their significant contribution to the military mission in addition to their community involvement and support. "The MAC Award" not only recognizes the individual superior performer publicly, it also includes hundreds of dollars in gift certificates and cash given to the outstanding person receiving the award. The MAC is comprised of the business and political leaders from the immediate local community who have a close tie with the military since many once served their country in uniform.

This bonding between the community and our organization make us a highly motivated and better fighting organization to more effectively execute our common mission of "homeland defense."

During the tour the MAC members were given a walking tour of the alert facility, a presentation about our mission and lastly an up-close look at the mighty F-15 Eagle. Our hats are off to the South Miami Military Affairs Committee and we thank them for supporting our mission.

Giving You 'Credit When Credit is Due' Securing Your Financial Independence

Credit When Credit is Due is a FREE course is offered by your Airman and Family Readiness Program office and the JFSAP team. Classes are being offered quarterly and we hope to arrange on-site classes with the GSUs.

Whether you are fighting a "financial war" or basking in "financial tranquility," this course will benefit you tremendously going forward. You will gain a 360 degree view of everyday personal finance topics as they apply to all aspects of lending/borrowing, managing credit, and repairing damaged credit.

There are twelve lessons and a "mini-quiz" after each lesson. Some of the most popular lessons include the

process of creating a household budget, loan negotiation, financing homes and cars, understanding credit reports/scores, bankruptcy, and credit repair strategies.

The course provider has forged an agreement with the three major credit bureaus, rewarding those who successfully complete the course. The bureaus have agreed to post a positive entry on an individual's credit report to reward their efforts. Based on tracking conducted by the provider; the median credit score of students has increase by 30 points!

For more information on the course or finances in general please contact Mark Huston, JFSAP Financial Counselor, at (407) 618-6237 or mark.huston@ang.af.mil.



Team-Building Excellence

as the Florida National Guard and Civilian Agencies Prepare for Hurricane Season

SrA Aaron M. Potts
290th JCSS

As Florida continues to maintain constant hurricane and natural disaster readiness, civilian and military agencies reinforce the value of teamwork during recent emergency response exercises.

Army National Guard Soldiers stationed at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center worked alongside Air National Guard's 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron Airman in recent communication exercises aimed at maximizing Florida's natural disaster preparedness. In turn, that combined military component worked hand-in-hand with multiple civilian emergency response agencies. Interoperable communications capabilities were tested between the various groups, and in the end, all were reminded that regardless of the uniform that we wear, it is the accomplishment of the mission that really matters.

In one area, Army Staff Sgt. Jackson worked diligently with a crew from the 290th JCSS, ops-checking and inventorying the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC) vehicle. Meanwhile, Army Sergeant 1st Class Graves and Air Force Senior Airman Potts took one of the Regional Emergency Response Network (RERN) vehicles to participate in Operation Communicate Freedom, part of a series of statewide exercises to test communications between military and civilian emergency response agencies.

As Jackson and the team from the 290th prepared the JISCC to be transferred to MacDill AFB so the 290th JCSS can deploy it in support of a hurricane or other emergency situation, Graves and Potts set up the RERN and commenced communications interoperability training with multiple civilian agencies. The National Guard's RERN and JISCC vehicles both specialize in taking diverse civilian and military communications systems and linking them together so they can communicate with each other. During past natural disasters, lessons were learned about the importance of military and civilian emergency responders being able to interact with each other in real time to save lives, and military assets such as the JISCC and the RERN can make that happen.

During Operation Communicate Freedom local police, fire, medical, and other emergency

responders were on site with their own emergency response vehicles, and thanks to the vast capabilities of the RERN, all communication objectives were easily met. In addition, the civilian and military leaders that were on site all realized just how powerful and flexible assets like the JISCC and the RERN can be when Florida's citizens are in danger.

Just as important as the technical capabilities, however, were the bonds that were built between the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, and the civilians that the Florida Guard works closely with.

Army Guardsmen from Camp Blanding and Air Guard members from MacDill gained mutual respect for each other while forming professional bonds that will undoubtedly be called upon in the future. Likewise, the military and the civilian agencies were able to meet and learn from each other, building strong, cross-cultural relationships that will ensure the future success of potentially life-saving missions across the state of Florida.

These types of exercises have obvious value when it comes to training and demonstrating the technical capabilities of statewide communications equipment. However, they also have another inherent value of reminding us that our military's best asset is now what it has always been – our people.



A member of the 290th JCSS checks his equipment while participating in an emergency response exercise.

Florida Airmen Participate in Ocala's Hurricane and Storm Ready Expo 2011

By Tech. Sgt. Tabitha Venable
Weather Readiness Training Center

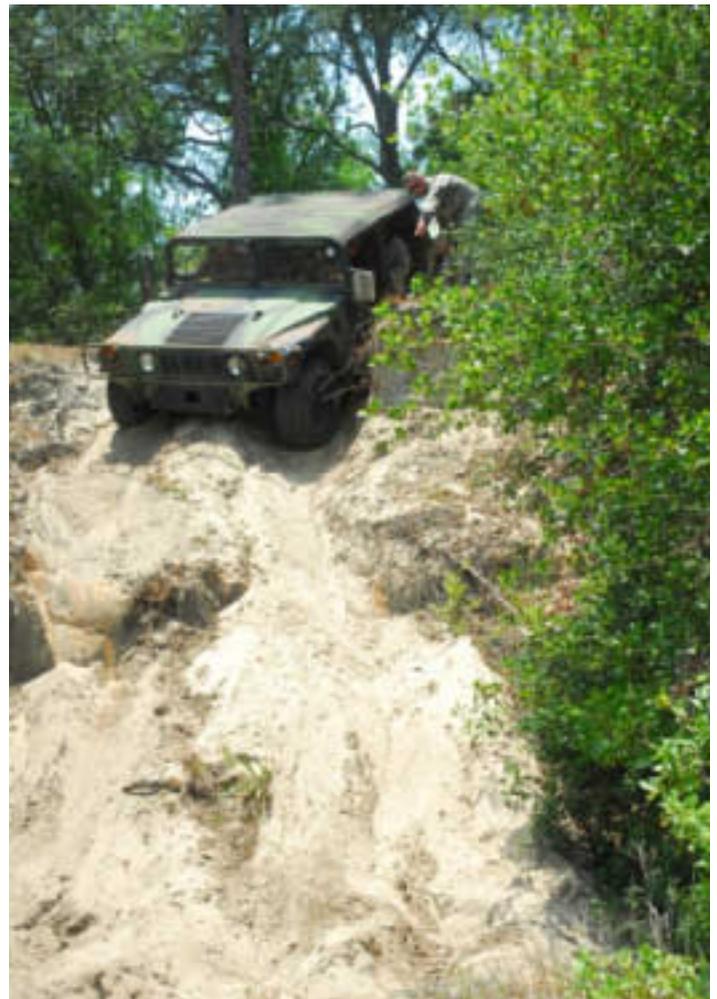
Did you know the last hurricane to hit central Florida was over seven years ago?

It's true; almost a decade ago Hurricane Jeanette brought 120mph winds onshore to central Florida, causing massive structural damage and three deaths. Therefore, in order to maintain community disaster preparedness among the general population, each year the Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) Emergency Management hosts a Hurricane Expo, located at the Ocala International Airport.

The Weather Readiness Training Center (WRTC) made its debut in this year's Hurricane and Storm Ready Expo 2011. This volunteer based community-wide hurricane readiness event featured a wide array of creative, yet informative military and civilian exhibits and vendors, all directly related to hurricane disaster preparedness and awareness. In addition to the WRTC, featured exhibits included those of the Jacksonville National Weather Service, the Lockheed WC-130J Hurricane Hunter aircraft, the Marion County Fire and Sheriff's Department, the Ocala Police Department, the Marion county public school JROTC, several local colleges and businesses, and food and beverage vendors. The Hurricane Expo featured a variety of interactive displays; including various military and civilian aircraft. There were educational, hurricane-themed, games for children and adults to enjoy, and informative hurricane and preparedness presentations for all ages.

The WRTC volunteers consisted of two instructors and twelve students. These volunteers represented the WRTC, the Florida Air National Guard and the Air Force Weather Career Field. The group was led by instructors Tech. Sgt. T.J Mahan, Tech. Sgt. Tabitha Venable, and Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Burns.

Within the WRTC display at the Ocala International Airport, three pieces of tactical weather observing equipment were set up, in addition to a satellite based Internet system and a High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV). WRTC instructors and students demonstrated the uses of the tools of the Air Force Weather trade.



A Soldier instructs Airmen on tactical driving techniques during a recent Battlefield Weather Mission Qualification Training Course.

Additionally, information was given about the WRTC's mission, in the form of brochures and pamphlets. Among the crowd, there were several potential, highly interested, Air Force Weather recruits. The Hurricane Expo 2011 provided an excellent opportunity for the WRTC to introduce the mission of Air Force Weather to the general public and allowed WRTC staff and students to intermingle with local weather agencies, creating invaluable contacts with National Weather Service personnel for potential future training opportunities. Furthermore, the WRTC students also were able to examine various weather career opportunities for future reference.

Of all booths and displays included in the Hurricane Expo 2011, the WRTC's was among the most populated by all age groups. Among the military booths, the WRTC's booth was the only completely tactical booth, which drew the attention of the public. All of the students





Airman 1st Class Jordan Buss demonstrates the Kestrel 4500 to a young onlooker.

and instructors were highly engaged with the public; they answered questions and explained the various parameters of the equipment. The main attraction of the WRTC display was, without a doubt, the TMQ-53 (TMOS). This tactical weather observing system drew spectators in with its assorted intricate sensors like a magnet. The HMMWV was a hit among children and retirees.

The Hurricane Expo 2011 was an unequivocal success and provided an opportunity for the WRTC to advocate the importance of Air Force weather as a Total Force concept, promote Air Force core values, allow students to gain relevant interest in career field, develop a professional network within the community, provide information about the WRTC mission and goals, and foster a sense importance of Air Force weather in resource protection and mission effectiveness, within the general public.

Air Force Weather Leaders Gather At Camp Blanding

*By Sgt. 1st Class Blair Heusdens
Florida National Guard Public Affairs*

STARKE, Fla. (June 30, 2011) – Leaders from across the Air Force weather career field met up at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center recently to discuss present operations and the future of the weather career field.

“We need to make sure we’re supporting the Airmen that are downrange and giving them the right training and tactical skills so they can do the job,” said Dr. Fred P. Lewis, the Director of Weather for the U.S. Air Force.

Camp Blanding is home to the National Guard’s Weather Readiness Training Center (WRTC) and the 159th Weather Flight. The WRTC trains National Guard weather Airmen and conducts Battlefield Weather Mission Qualification Training in conjunction with infantry instructors from the state’s Regional Training Institute for Airmen who deploy with Army units.

“The leadership gets to see firsthand here the training,” said Maj. John Waltbillig, the Commandant of the WRTC. “They get to see what hasn’t ever been done before. We’ve all deployed with Army customers before, but we’ve never had the training that the typical Soldier gets.”

The 30-day course provides the Airmen with five days of tactical meteorology training taught by the weather instructors and three weeks of intensive tactical training taught by Army infantry instructors. The Airmen are familiarized with tactical driving, weapons systems and tactical movement.

“The training is focused on what we need,” said Lewis. “We need combat skills and we need to practice our tactical weather skills at the same time. That’s what we do – we provide weather support on the battlefield for the Army and Air Force.”

Individuals in the weather career field collect, analyze, tailor, integrate and disseminate weather and space

environmental information in support of military operations. Air Force weathermen deploy with both Air Force and Army units and must be prepared to operate as part of the unit they are attached to.

According to Waltbillig, the training is important to ensuring that the Airmen are able to take care of themselves and not be a liability to their Army brethren. A close relationship between Florida National Guard leadership and senior weather leadership, as well as positive feedback from Airmen in the field, is important to the continued success of the course.

“I would say that every person involved with it has seen the value of the training,” said Waltbillig. “They’ve all been in situations or know someone who’s been in situations where they wish they would have known how to be a co-driver or man the mounted weaponry or be a navigator.”



As part of the BWMQT course, Airmen also receive in-depth classroom instruction on tactical meteorology.

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