Presidents Message

Our State Defense Forces stand at the threshold of even greater opportunity to serve our states and nation. The confluence of our federal budget crisis, state budget difficulties, increased extreme weather systems and threats of terrorism, provide a challenging environment that our troops can provide a meaningful solution. We now have an established track record of excellence upon which we can build an even more elite force.

Members of SGAUS, as you may know, I have just come off of a whirlwind U.S. congressional campaign launched with broad-based support. It was an extraordinary experience in which the great success of our South Carolina State Guard was made an issue. We enjoyed particularly strong support among military veterans throughout the district and across the state. And we received the published endorsements of several of those veterans, including two MEDAL OF HONOR recipients – Maj. Gen. Jim Livingston, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.) and LT Mike Thornton, U.S. Navy SEALs (Ret.). Their stories by the way, like all recipients of our nation’s highest award for combat valor, are beyond remarkable.

But it wasn’t simply support and endorsements. I had the opportunity to sit down with scores of veterans – men and women who have served this nation in both peace and in war – currently serving U.S. military leaders, and various political leaders (including Pres. Trump). And based on those conversations and many others, I gained a deeper personal appreciation for both the relevancy of our nation’s state defense forces (SDFs) and the importance of SDFs in terms of the volunteer manpower and professional expertise we bring to the overall emergency response apparatus of our respective states.

With the ever-increasing operational tempo of our federal forces deploying overseas and always training to deploy, and with the increasing instability and uncertainty throughout the world; SDFs are needed now more than ever.
This reality has already been recognized right here in South Carolina wherein the S.C. Military Dept. (SCMD) is responsible for three demanding responsibilities as I see them.

The SCMD, as you may know, includes the S.C. Army National Guard, the S.C. Air National Guard, the Emergency Management Div. and the S.C. State Guard among other agencies – of which the S.C. State Guard is the SCMD’s state defense force component.

The SCMD’s three broad responsibilities are 1) providing forces to protect our national interests overseas, 2) protecting our citizens here at home (in the event of natural or man-made disaster), and 3) constantly training and conditioning our personnel to meet the challenges of the first two.

We as members of the S.C. State Guard are responsible for providing professional support to state operations. That S.C. State Guard support includes the ability – on very short notice – to regionally deploy physicians and other medical professionals, engineers, search-and-rescue experts, attorneys and law enforcement professionals, communications experts and various other solutions people (and these are but a few of our professional lanes). In this and in other ways, we are responsible for assisting the various emergency-response components of our state and overall protecting our state’s citizens.

There is so much more, and so much in this that we plan to address as regards all of our SDF’s and our association at our annual SGAUS conference, slated for Sept. 22-24, here in my home state of S.C. in the resort city of Myrtle Beach.

Lt. Col. Scott Malyerck, S.C. State Guard, will have more on the convention in this issue.

Thank you all for your service. Thank you for your support. And we look forward to seeing you in Sept. In the meantime, please don’t hesitate to let me know how I, my staff or my office may be of service to you.
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The Alaska National Guard participated in Arctic Eagle 2017, a command post and tabletop exercise, Feb. 22 – 26. Decision makers and supporting players practiced the logistics and coordination required to respond to a state emergency. The Alaska National Guard and other agencies assessed their ability to conduct effective and sustained operations in Arctic conditions.

This year’s exercise was in preparation for Arctic Eagle 2018, a major emergency response exercise that will occur next year, which will test the capabilities and effectiveness of a multi-national, multi-agency response to a major incident in the state.

Arctic Eagle 2017 provided a platform for participants to practice operations in a collaborative environment and integrate new and emerging capabilities for responding to a state emergency in the harsh terrain and weather conditions of northern environments and challenging geographical locations.

The countries of Denmark and Canada partnered with the Alaska National Guard, the Alaska State Defense Force and other agencies, in collaboration with U.S. Northern Command’s Alaskan Command, to apply and respond to scenarios that will prepare them for the 2018 exercise.

“It’s important that we are proficient, equipped and effective at providing support to civil authorities as requested,” said Col. Tony Stratton, Alaska National Guard joint staff director of operations, training and exercises. “We are the first military responders to domestic emergencies, and we must be ready to help Alaskans in times of need.”

The command post exercise, commonly referred to as a “CPX,” employed the scenario of a failing satellite—powered by a nuclear reactor—in a deteriorating orbit, which reentered the earth’s atmosphere and broke apart, scattering radioactive debris on parts of Alaska.
“Arctic Eagle 2017 included two tabletop exercises [or “TTX”] as well, which rehearsed the stand-up of a dual status command and explored the role of the National Guard during a homeland defense scenario,” said Stratton.

Dual status command is an important and necessary function during defense support to civil authority response, as it enables simultaneous command and control of both federal and state military forces by one commander. Dual status command is an authority that is requested by the state’s governor for approval by the Secretary of Defense.

“It is an important process to get accomplished quickly and correctly so that operations are not slowed or negatively impacted during a time that expediency is needed most,” said Stratton.

The Alaska National Guard’s joint staff hosted the exercise, which occurred primarily in the Guard’s joint operations center. The AKNG’s JOC is the joint force commander’s headquarters established for planning, monitoring and guiding the execution of the commander’s decisions, and is where command and control is carried out during major incidents requiring the National Guard’s assistance.

Theoretical response during AE17 included providing support by the AKNG’s 103rd Civil Support Team strike team to test radiation levels after debris from the notional satellite was found in areas of Alaska. There were additional plans built into the exercise that included CST strike teams to test an Alaskan port, assess potential radiation at a hatchery, decontaminate personnel in the vicinity and secure the area to avoid further contamination.

The 103rd CST’s primary function is to respond to a suspected weapons of mass destruction attack, which may include chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or other explosives.

“The exercise was a success, in that we were able to meet our objectives and identify courses of action for improvement,” said Stratton. “As a new staff, learning was exponential and we will apply that to Arctic Eagle 2018.”
Congratulations!

**Award Recipients:**

**Officer of the Year:**
Maryland

CPT(MD) Frederick Sanford

**Soldier of the Year:**
Mississippi

SGT(MS) Troy Smith

**Stipend Recipients:**

South Carolina

CW2(SC) John Bradley

Texas

SrA(TX) Christopher Bracken

**Scholarship Recipients:**

Ohio

McKenzie Kelly

Texas

John Hamilton

Texas

A1C(TX) Caroline Bracken

Mai Trevino
KODIAK, Alaska — Soldiers from the Alaska Army National Guard gathered at the Kodiak Readiness Center to participate in an enlistment ceremony for two new members of the Alaska State Defense Force.

In recent years, the State Defense Force has been focused primarily in Anchorage and the surrounding communities. It is currently opening detachments in several rural communities, as part of the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs rural initiative program.

“The reorganization of the Alaska State Defense Force presents unique opportunities and challenges in each community across the State,” said 2nd Lt. Ryan Sharratt, commander of the Kodiak detachment. “I am thrilled to have the opportunity to be involved.”

The Alaska State Defense Force is an all-volunteer organization, which traces its lineage back to the Alaska Territorial Guard founded by Maj. Marvin “Muktuk” Marston. Since 1984, the ASDF’s primary mission has been to provide logistical support to the Alaska National Guard. The unit in Kodiak is a detachment of B Company, 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 49th Brigade.

Their missions are to support and defend the Constitution of the State of Alaska, support the Alaska National Guard, maintain disaster preparedness, work alongside the Alaska National Guard and other state and local agencies in response to major emergencies and support the community in which they live and work. The National Guard and State Defense Force will be sharing the Kodiak Readiness Center, and training together when their goals overlap.

Military experience is not a prerequisite for membership. Some members, such as the detachment commander, 2nd Lt. Ryan Sharratt, and the noncommissioned officer in charge, Staff Sgt. Jay Baldwin, have prior service with the National Guard or active duty military. Others, such as recently enlisted Pvt. James Glenn, have no prior experience.

The Kodiak detachment currently has four members, with a goal of growing to fifteen by the end of 2017. Parties interested in joining the organization should contact 2nd Lt. Ryan Sharratt at ryan.sharratt@ak-sdf.net. For more information: [https://www.dvidshub.net/news/222618/alaska-state-defense-force-activates-signal-detachment-kodiak](https://www.dvidshub.net/news/222618/alaska-state-defense-force-activates-signal-detachment-kodiak).
CSMR Soldiers from across the State participate in OPFOR Mission Supporting the 1/18th CAV

By: CW2 (CA) Suzy Shimonishi

“Train as you fight. Because you fight as you’ve been trained.”

Camp Roberts, CA) – “Train as you fight”; a common quote heard amongst soldiers. US Army FM 7-22 states: “All Army training is based on the principle “Train as you will fight.” Training must be both realistic and performance-oriented to ensure physical readiness to meet mission/METL requirements.”

During a recent rainy week in April, the 1/18th CAV and CSMR Soldiers from throughout the 40th SPT CMD did just that. They trained in austere and inclement conditions including mud, rain, cold, rough and difficult mountainous terrain in darkness through daylight helping the 1/18th CAV meet their mission/METL and improving soldier readiness and resiliency.

This mission was led by Charlie Company Commander, CPT Daniel Derkum, with the support of other CSMR soldiers from within the 79th SPT BDE and 40th SPT CMD. The April Mission was realistic, performance oriented training that supported the 1/18th Cavalry with their METL of Screen, Guard, and Reconnaissance with the CSMR playing the role of an enemy opposing force (OPFOR). OPFOR consisted of mock Arianian insurgency who invaded the NATO county of Atropia using highly trained Krasnovian, irregular and regular (302nd Light Infantry Battalion) forces.

This was the third of three pre-Annual Training (AT) Field Training Exercises (FTX) that the 79th CSMR SPT BDE and 40th SPT CMD participated with the 1/18th CAV in preparation for their June AT. The weather and night conditions added a healthy amount of realism and proximity to the scenarios. The OPFOR missions included reconnaissance and combat patrols, target identification and engagement, multiple and simultaneous attack thrusts, and unconventional harassment using Battle Field Effects (BFX) simulators.
CSMR Soldiers from across the State participate in OPFOR Mission Supporting the 1/18th CAV Cont.

By: CW2 (CA) Suzy Shimonishi

The overall success of this mission validates the CSMR commitment, capability and dedication to meeting missions successfully in support of the CAARNG. Soldiers, both National Guard and CSMR, trained and sharpened their skills. This third and final FTX before the June AT provided valuable experience for Soldiers of the 79th CSMR SPT BDE and 40th CSMR SPT CMD. During the exercise, CAARNG Command Team MG Lawrence Haskins and CSM Menard spent a morning visiting Soldiers of the 1-18th Cavalry Regiment. CPT Derkum briefed MG Haskins on the CSMR’s role during the FTX.

The upcoming June AT will be held at Camp Roberts with the 79th SPT BDE and 40th SPT CMD continuing their role as insurgency OPFOR. Soldiers interested in participating are encouraged to sign up through their Chain of Command or by contacting CPL Adam Bennett (acbennett.csmr@gmail.com) of the 79th CSMR SPT BDE for additional information.

The California State Military Reserve (CSMR) is the all-volunteer State Defense Force of the California Military Department. Our primary mission is to support the Soldiers and Airmen of the California Army National Guard (CANG)/Air Guard and serve California during times of State Emergencies. For more information and joining the CSMR, see us on facebook.com under C/79th SPT BDE.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Conference registration and hotel reservation information will be out by July 2017. For area information and family activities ...

http://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com/
http://discoversouthcarolina.com/products/25503
Beautiful Myrtle Beach to host 2017 SGAUS Conference
By LTC Scott Malyerck, S.C. State Guard

This fall, beautiful Myrtle Beach, S.C., will play host to the State Guard Association of the United States’ (SGAUS) annual conference. And all state defense force (SDF) members and their families, nationwide, are urged to join us at this popular annual event on the South Carolina coast, Sept. 21-24.

While official on-line registration will not open until July 1st, you'll want to SAVE THE DATE and make plans to be a part of this year’s exciting conference.

"South Carolina is honored to host this year’s convention," says MG Tom Mullikin, commander of the S.C. State Guard and pres. of SGAUS. “This is going to be a fun and exciting event for the entire family.”

Myrtle Beach consistently ranks as one of the top family vacation destinations in the country. There is simply so much to do and see in Myrtle Beach, including the 60 miles of pristine sandy beaches (nicknamed the “Grand Strand”). The area also boasts of a variety of award-winning music, dance, comedy, dinner shows and celebrity concert; not to mention over 100 quality golf courses many of which were designed by some of the legends of the game. You can explore all the experiences Myrtle Beach offers or just stay on site at the beautiful ocean front Embassy Suites resort at Kingston Plantation.

There will be top notch guest speakers, this year, as well as specialized training for all SDF members. And conference participants do not have to be members of SGAUS in order to attend.

Workshops that will be offered at this years conference will be: MEMS, Chaplain, Engineer, National Search and Rescue, Judge Advocate, Medical, and Public Affairs. We will also have a SDF CG, CSM, and G3 meeting to discuss the SGAUS 5-Year Strategic Plan, Best Practices, and COOP/COG/ECG.

For up to date information on the convention and to see what Myrtle Beach has to offer, visit http://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com/meetings/special/sgaus/. We will provide more detailed information on guest speakers and all the specific training that will be offered in the days and weeks to come. So keep checking back!
CSMR CHAPLAIN COMFORTS NEIGHBORS IN TIME OF NEED

By: Tech. Sgt. Charles Vaughn

Evacuees at the Los Molinos shelter displaced by flooding in the unincorporated community of Williams received some unexpected comfort and spiritual support. On the night of Feb. 18, Chaplain Harlan Confer, a major in the California State Military Reserve, traveled to the shelter to provide spiritual support and comfort to those displaced by the flooding.

“They seemed very grateful to see someone in uniform and wearing the Chaplain’s cross,” said Confer. The CSMR’s mission is to augment the National Guard in a variety of support roles. Part of the California Military Department, CSMR personnel specialize in homeland defense and emergency management missions.

“The CSMR is the official state defense force made up of approximately 1200 volunteers,” said Col. (CA) Mirtha Villareal-Younger, the CSMR chief of staff. “They drill one Saturday a month and volunteer a minimum of 100 hours a year, though many do more.”

Confer, who is 82, has been in the chaplaincy more than 50 years. “It was a privilege to do what God has called me to do,” Confer said. Confer added the CSMR can help gather information from people in need and pass it to those agencies that can help. For example, Confer was instrumental in getting dog crates out to the shelter enabling displaced families a safe place for their animals.

“He has the gift of mercy,” said Chaplain Maj. (CA) Marc Unger, the CSMR Chaplain Command executive officer. “He cares for people. He went over and ministered comfort and mercy. He is to be commended.”

The California Military Department mobilized about 50 CSMR personnel to augment National Guard elements that assisted federal and state agencies with recent flooding in Central California.

“A unique aspect of the CSMR is that it includes specialties that do not readily exist on the military side, such as support in family law,” said Villareal-Younger.

CSMR personnel wear uniforms nearly identical to those of their National Guard counterparts, the main difference being the “California” tape in place of “U.S. Army” or “U.S. Air Force.” Some CSMR units are tightly integrated with National Guard detachments for training and other purposes.

“Chaplain Confer’s dedication demonstrates what it means to be a member of the CSMR,” said Brig. Gen. (CA) Frank Emanuel, the CSMR commander. “Commitment remains to the state and the nation.”
California State Military Reserve Establishes Maritime Component

By: MAJ(CA)K.J. Powers Photos: MSG(CA) Gene Arias

ALAMEDA, California, March 18, 2017 – The soldiers and airmen of the California State Military Reserve (CSMR) could be forgiven for not knowing naval protocol for reporting aboard an aircraft carrier. Well-accustomed to working in the field with the California National Guard at Camp Roberts in Central California or at Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos near Los Angeles, most CSMR troops had never heard a 1MC announcement, nor had cause to request permission to come aboard a warship – especially not one with the storied history of the decommissioned USS Hornet (CV 12), now pierside in Alameda, CA. Not since World War II had California had an operational maritime component – yet with the official activation of the CSMR Maritime Support Command (MARSCOM) on Saturday, March 18th, the Golden State once again seemed “haze gray and underway.”

“The Adjutant General, Major General David S. Baldwin, really wanted to see this happen,” said Brigadier General (CA) Frank Emanuel, CSMR’s Commanding General. “The Adjutant General understands that many of our service members bring a wealth of maritime experience to the California Military Department. Some have served in federal maritime services or in civilian maritime professions – either way, we want to maximize the use of their experience and talents in support of the State.”

The Maritime Component mission is to provide a qualified and ready force to support the California Military Department’s defense support to civil authority and response to natural or manmade disasters. BG (CA) Emanuel’s vision for the Maritime Component is to maximize the capability within the Naval and Marine forces. Additionally, Maritime will both lead and support operations in California’s harbors and on its inland waterways by partnering with other organizations (e.g., Coast Guard Auxiliary, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, CalTrans, etc.) to increase their capacities.

Units of the California State Military Reserve’s Maritime Support Command (MARSCOM) in formation on the hangar deck of decommissioned USS Hornet (CV 12) in advance of the command’s activation ceremony. Maritime, Army, and Air service members represent California in this joint command.
California State Military Reserve Establishes Maritime Component Cont.
By: MAJ(CA)K.J. Powers Photos: MSG(CA) Gene Arias

While MARSCOM is the operational command that focuses on support to federal, state, and municipal agencies with maritime connections to their missions, the California Maritime Regiment (CMAR) is the maritime service component. CSMR Soldiers and Airmen were offered the opportunity to switch service components to become Sailors, with or without transferring to MARSCOM. Since all CSMR units are joint commands, there is now a mix of Soldiers, Airmen, and Sailors serving in important roles throughout the organization.

Within its various units, MARSCOM is staffed by experienced sea service veterans, former Soldiers and Airmen, and even first-time military volunteers. Whether they are old salts who want to keep serving or new recruits who are joining a military organization for the first time, CMAR and MARSCOM have welcomed all volunteers. “I have a great deal of respect for all of our plankowners. It took personal courage to make the leap to Maritime and to help us build this new organization,” said Captain (CA) Michael Hanson, commander of MARSCOM. “I’m confident that their integrity, skill, and hard work will enable us to make many important contributions to the State of California in the years ahead.”

The more than 90 Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen of MARSCOM’s five operational units located throughout Northern and Southern California were well-represented aboard the decommissioned USS Hornet, and the historic warship buzzed with the energy of a formal unit commission ceremony. Sideboys rendered honors to the official party as the bosun’s pipe (played by a member of USS Hornet’s Vietnam-era crew) and the CSMR Band filled the ship’s hangar deck with the sounds that traditionally signify important naval events. MARSCOM’s official unit colors were unveiled for the first time and the first watch was officially set.

In a formal activation ceremony aboard decommissioned USS Hornet (CV 12), CSMR MARSCOM Senior Enlisted Advisors display the new command’s official colors for the first time.
California State Military Reserve Establishes Maritime Component Cont.

By: MAJ(CA)K.J. Powers Photos: MSG(CA) Gene Arias

“In almost 20 years of military service, this is the first time I’ve ever been a unit plankowner,” said Lieutenant (CA) Johan Lai, the commanding officer of MARSCOM’s North Harbor Detachment ONE and a veteran of both the Navy Reserve and the Coast Guard Auxiliary. “Now the real work continues for us: training, building our capabilities, developing our personnel. We’re part of a proud legacy of state military service, and we can’t rest on our laurels.”

With its complement of Sailors, Soldiers, and Airmen participating in major state exercises, State Active Duty emergency activations, and ongoing operational missions with other units across the state, MARSCOM is already providing vital contributions to the CSMR, the California Military Department, and the State of California – and has done so with honor, courage, and commitment.

CSMR MARSCOM South Shore unit members share the stage with their commanding officer, CSMR’s commanding general, and MARSCOM’s commander aboard decommissioned USS Hornet (CV 12).
The SGAUS PME Academy is in full swing! The Academy continues to provide online Professional Military Education (PME) services to State Defense Forces (SDF’s) across the nation. As of 21 April 2017, there are 594 students who have completed or are actively enrolled in online courses. Since the end of March in 2016, the PME Academy has awarded 482 course completion certificates. Requests for enrollment are coming in on a daily basis. Once requests come in, students are set up and enrolled within two business days, max! We work very closely with the approved SDF’s PME coordinators to ensure each student’s effort and course work data is in the hands of the SDF training departments.

We would like to remind Commanders to appoint state Training Officers and to identify Subject Mater Experts who are willing to become part of the PME Academy curriculum development teams. Upcoming projects will include developing a senior officer training course and developing course Programs of Instruction that allow organization with existing curriculum to integrate their curriculum using a resident and non-resident phases. The resident phase would allow the organization to customize the training to fit their organization and the non-resident phase could be built largely of SGAUS PME online Courses. This process would allow units to greatly increase their annual training hours with minimal expenditure of training resources.

The SGAUS online Academy also hosts the JAG Academy and their 10-module “Practicing Military Law” course available to SDF attorneys nationally, after approval by the JAG Academy Committee. The JAG Academy has awarded 35 certificates of course completion since its inception last Fall.

We are starting to see more military education standardization arise by the commonality the PME Academy and JAG courses across the various SDF’s. In addition to the JAG course, the current suite includes 12 PME courses:

Preventing Sexual Harassment (annual mandatory course in some SDF’s)

- Officer Basic Course (OBC)
- Officer Advanced Course (OAC)
- Command & Staff Course Phase 1 (CAS1)
- Command & Staff Course Phase 2 (CAS2)
- Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC)
- Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC)
- Warrant Officer Staff Course (WOSC)
- Primary (Warrior) Leader Course (PLC)
- Senior Leader Course (SLC)
- Advanced Leader Course (ALC)
- Command Sergeant Major Course (CSM)
Some SDF’s are now requiring their students to go through the online PME Academy courses before the in-residence academies in their states. They are discovering that this approach exposes the students, especially non-priors, to the instruction before the classroom experience which makes the discussion in class more focused and richer and the retention of instruction higher due to the repetition.

Some SDF’s are also requiring non-prior recruits to sign-up and enroll in courses as part of their recruitment/onboarding processes. The same goes for specific courses being required for promotions.

So, if your state is interested in participating, the SDF Commander needs to contact the SGAUS Executive Director, BG (TN-R) Kenneth Takasaki at:

  kenneth.takasaki@sgaus.org

BG Takasaki will brief the SDF Commander on the program and the onboarding process. Each state has the flexibility to merge the services of the Academy into their PME process.

I also need to remind everyone that the instructional content of the PME Academy is a living entity. The current suite of courses is not static. We anticipate more courses being added in the future and existing courses being refined for more effectiveness of instruction. The SGAUS Education Committee Chair is COL James Hardy. Please make any suggestions for changes, improvements and new courses to him at:

  James.Hardy2@fema.dhs.gov

If you have technical questions, don’t hesitate to contact me at:

  Chago.santiago@sgaus.org

Thank you.

CHAGO SANTIAGO, COL (TN)  JAMES J. HARDY, COL (NY)
Chief Technology Officer  Chair, SGAUS PME Academy
SGAUS  SGAUS
Chaplain candidacy in the Georgia State Defense Force offers a tremendous opportunity to serve both God as well as soldiers and their families. A newly designed and developed *Chaplain Candidate Handbook* is intended to help candidates adjust to this new responsibility and provide some basic information pertaining to their role as a Chaplain Candidate. It is *not* intended to be an exhaustive manual, but rather a springboard to lead the candidate into further exploration of the call as a Chaplain and a GASDF officer.

It also serves current Chaplains as a professional development tool for mentoring Chaplain Candidates and junior Chaplains. As always, it should be augmented with current applicable Army/GASDF doctrine, guidance, and instructions.

The *Handbook* covers who we are and what we do (Chapter 1); who we serve and how we fit in (Chapter 2); in-processing (Chapter 3); the unit ministry team (Chapter 4); becoming a chaplain (Chapter 5); uniforms and appearance (Annex A); basic standards, customs & courtesies (Annex B), recommended reading (Annex C), and Chaplain insignia (Annex D).

Our intent and hope in this endeavor is to further standardize and professionalize the GASDF Chaplain Corps in line with the Georgia Army National Guard Chaplain Corps (on whose material it is based). And we offer this, also, as a contribution that other State Guards and Defense Forces may use and build on in their service to their respective states and to the United States.

Login to download the Chaplain Candidate Handbook at ...

https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/chaplain-academy/

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**Scholarship, Stipend, Soldier, NCO, and Officer of the Year**

**Suspense: 15 March 2018**

**Guidelines:**

1. Please go to this link for guidelines and application: https://sgaus.org/reference/programsawards/
2. Soldier of the Year: E-1 to E-5
3. NCO of the Year: E-6 to E-8
4. Officer of the Year: O-1 to O-5 and WO1 to CW4

Send to: kenneth.takasaki@sgaus.org
GA SDF conducts a Mobile Surge Hospital exercise during the Vigilant Guard 2017  

By CPT(GA) Vadim V. Timchenko  
vadim.timchenko@gasdf.us

The Air Dominance Center, Savannah, Ga., March 29, 2017 – Members of the Georgia State Defense Force (GA SDF), Georgia Air National Guard (GA ANG), Georgia Army National Guard (GA ARNG), Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH), Georgia Disaster Assessment Response Team (DART), Emergency Medical Services (EMS) units, Georgia Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) and Youth Challenge Academy cadets participated in Mobile Surge Hospital Full Scale Exercise, which is a part of a multi-state training exercise - Vigilant Guard 2017, sponsored by U.S. Northern Command, in collaboration with the National Guard Bureau.

The objectives of the exercise were outlined as follows: evaluating the existing response procedures during the catastrophic disasters; to grow the partnership among healthcare organizations, emergency responders, GA SDF, GA ANG, GA ARNG; and to identify areas for improvement.

During the exercise, Lt. Col. Michael Greene, Capt. Lee Duncan and Sgt. Jonathan Melko were assigned to lead the GA SDF Task Force in setting up, running and conducting the security of the Mobile Surge Hospital.

GA SDF Command Surgeon Col. John S. Harvey, who is also a Medical Director of the Medial Reserve Corps, GA DPH, was leading the joint State Medical Assessment Team. GA ANG supported the mission with the airlift by fixed and rotary wings.

GA SDF soldiers assembled the Mobile Surge Hospital at Air Dominance Center (ADC). The Medical Assessment Team and GA SDF Task Force (Medics, Communications, Force Protection and Public Affairs) arrived to ADC from the Dobbins Air Reserve Base (DARB), Marietta, GA by C-130 Hercules aircraft. The Mobile Surge Hospital contains the following sections: Triage, Medical, Trauma and a designated area for overflow patients, as well as an area for health and safety officers.

Youth Challenge Academy cadets were acting as casualties of the disaster. Victims (role players) were delivered by UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopters from the “disaster” area in Tybee Island. Upon arrival to the Mobile Surge Hospital, victims were triaged by the Medical Assessment Team in order to determine the required medical care and distributed to the appropriate section of the hospital for stabilization.
GA SDF conducts a Mobile Surge Hospital exercise during the Vigilant Guard 2017 Cont.

By CPT(GA) Vadim V. Timchenko  vadim.timchenko@gasdf.us

Pfc. Sullivan and Pfc. Cowan were responsible for setting up and running a communications station at the Mobile Surge Hospital exercise area and establishing the line with Vigilant Guard exercise Mobile Operation Center (MOC) in Marietta, GA.

The following observers visited the Mobile Surge Hospital exercise area during the training and observed a dedication, selflessness and excellent team work within the participants.

Maj. Gen. Burton Francisco, Special Assistant to Commander of NORAD, NORTHCOM,

Maj. Gen. Joe Jarrard, Adjutant General, Georgia Department of Defense,

Brig. Gen. Jesse T. Simmons, Jr., Commander, Georgia Air National Guard,

Brig. Gen. Thomas Carden, Jr., Commander, Georgia Army National Guard.

“During the Mobile Surge Hospital Full Scale Exercise members of multiple agencies were working together in realistic scenario,” - said Col. John S. Harvey - “such training will guarantee that a job will be done well if a real disaster should happen.”

GA SDF Mobile Hospital Task Force at Air Dominance Center March 29, 2017, during the Vigilant Guard 2017 exercise March 29, 2017, at Air Dominance Center in Savannah, GA. Vigilant Guard 2017 Georgia is a multi-state multi-agency training exercise, sponsored by U.S. Northern Command, in collaboration with the National Guard Bureau.
The Mid-Year Board meeting/conference is over and there will be a few revisions to the 2017 SGAUS MEMS Student Manual that were approved by the Board of Directors. The revisions are small in nature and there are no changes to the actual courses per prior agreement with the MEMS State Directors and Staff. As a reminder, IS 701 is discontinued and will be replaced in January 2018.

Some of the revisions are as follows: Reciprocity for FEMA employees wanting to join SGAUS and earn the MEMS badge; Practicum Time Limit of 18 months; Update to the Staff roster; prior Commandants of the MEMS Academy are now listed in Advisor Roles for the Academy.

MEMS, The Military Emergency Management Specialist certification, administered by SGAUS is not just for SDF soldiers. The MEMS program, started in 1998 is open to all SGAUS members, in uniform or not, SDF member or not. The program fully complies with current US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), Incident Command System (ICS), National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Response Framework (NRF) and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) and (PPD-5) requirements for emergency management personnel. The goal is to promote and advance the practice of emergency management. That goal remains the same for a SDF soldier, a National Guard soldier, a Civil Air Patrol cadet, or a local Volunteer Firefighters. As current MEMS specialists, talk about MEMS to your counterparts in other organizations and walks of life.

For more information and to access the updated State Director Roster, MEMS Student Manual, and MEMS application Click here -- SGAUS MEMS Program

As a reminder, SGAUS membership expiration date has replaced the membership number on the application.

Questions about the MEMS program should be directed to the State Directors or to the Chair of the SGAUS MEMS Academy, CSM(IN) Timothy White at Tim-white_sr@comcast.net

I want to thank all of you for your support these past 7 years as the Commandant. I hope to continue in the finest Traditions of the State Guard Association of the United States.

Login for more information …

https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/mems-academy/
The Georgia State Defense Force (GSDF) recently participated in Vigilant Guard 2017, a multi-state exercise intended to demonstrate response readiness in the event of a natural disaster. The GSDF demonstrated its own response readiness, with its members working in tandem with National Guard units each day of the exercise held in late March 2017.

The Georgia Department of Defense and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency teamed up to host Vigilant Guard 2017. Vigilant Guard was sponsored by the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in conjunction with the National Guard Bureau.

The exercise presented simulation scenarios involving hurricanes, flooding, and other natural disaster fallout. Participants readily responded to calls for search and rescue, mass-casualty medical evacuation, decontamination activities, and other simulated emergencies.

The exercise provided National Guard units from Georgia and six other states an opportunity to improve cooperation and relationships with local, state, regional civilian, military, and federal partners in preparation for emergencies and catastrophes. Should a “real-life event” occur, responders would be better prepared to plan, communicate, and take action to protect the citizens of the United States.

At the conclusion of Vigilant Guard 2017, Brig. Gen. Tom Danielson, GSDF Commander, described participants as, “the best example of tenacity, dedication, and singular professionalism.”

Approximately 9,000 military and civilian personnel participated in Vigilant Guard 2017, according to an estimate from the United States Department of Defense.
Vigilant Guard 2017

By 2LT (GA) Michael Chapman

Photos: Warrant Officer Oscar Cano, & SPC. Alexander Davidson

Photos by Warrant Officer Oscar Cano, oscar.cano@gasdf.us, and SPC Alexamder Davidson, alexander.davidson@gasdf.us

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., April 1, 2017 – The Georgia State Defense Force (GSDF) recently participated in a multistate, multiday training exercise. Known as Vigilant Guard, this joint regional training exercise was sponsored by U.S. Northern Command, in conjunction with the National Guard Bureau. The exercise was conducted at multiple locations in Georgia at the end of March 2017 and involved numerous civilian and military participants. The exercise was designed to provide the Georgia Department of Defense (GaDoD) a realistic training scenario in order to test and improve relationships between various local, state, regional, and federal partners.

Vigilant Guard featured a diverse array of training scenarios such as Evacuations, Operations Centers, Public Health Support, Search and Rescue, Shelter Operations, and Sustainment. Along with the GaDoD, Vigilant Guard involved a cross-section of state partners including the Georgia Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Public Health, and Transportation, as well as the Georgia Forestry Commission, Georgia Ports Authority, and Georgia State Patrol. Along with Clay National Guard Center, numerous other military posts were utilized during Vigilant Guard including the Air Dominance Center, Fort Gordon, Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield, Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, and Moody Air Force Base.

The GSDF provided approximately 300 of the 8,000 local, state, and federal participants in Vigilant Guard. By supporting state and federal authorities, the GSDF is an important part of the overall response to real-world natural and manmade disasters. At the conclusion of Vigilant Guard, Brig. Gen. Tom Danielson, GSDF Commander, wrote of the participants, “You are the best example of tenacity, dedication, and singular professionalism.”

Working in the Joint Operations Center at Clay National Center in Marietta, Georgia, March 27, 2017, Capt. V. Timchenko, GSDF Public Affairs Branch Chief, monitors the display board as he updates the news feed during Vigilant Guard 2017.

‘Ready to Serve’ Is No Joke

By Staff Sgt. Amber Kimble  amber.kimble@gasdf.us

FORT BENNING, Ga., April 01, 2017 - While participating in a recent opposing force (OPFOR) mission at Fort Benning, Georgia, Georgia State Defense Force (GSDF) members voluntarily helped extinguish a small fire in the Infantry Training Area. Nearby GSDF members saw the fire ignite during active OPFOR operations and immediately responded. Utilizing personal tools, vehicles, and various resources, GSDF personnel were able to extinguish the fire and prevent it from spreading. The fire was caused by a flare.

Even though the flames had already begun to spread, GSDF personnel were able to contain and then smother the fire before it was able to spread to other training areas. The Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) expressed their gratitude to the GSDF, citing that without their immediate response, the entire training area would have been shut down by range control and the training mission would have been compromised. After the area was cleared by the GAARNG, GSDF Soldiers continued with the physically demanding OPFOR mission.
SDF UPARS Training At SGAUS 2017 National Convention

By: 1LT Steven Estes (TN)

The State Defense Force Unit Public Affairs Representative (SDF UPARS) training package was approved at the 8 April 2017 Executive Committee Meeting of the State Guard Association of the United States (SGAUS) Mid-Year Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. Tasked by BG (TN Ret.) Kenneth Takasaki to stand up Public Affairs Officer (PAO) training through SGAUS, the training curriculum is led by SnAmn (TX) Christopher Bracken, 1LT (TN) Steve Estes, and MAJ (IN) Terry Heifetz.

Modeled after SGAUS’s Chaplain and Judge Advocate General (JAG) trainings, the SDF UPARs training will train unit PAOs to tell the SDF story: the who, what, when where, and why of the SDF mission. The need for PAOs in the 21st century is increasingly important due to the manner in which news and information is distributed through the internet. Many Americans do not know that SDFs exist, let alone what their mission is, and the task of the PAO is to get the word out to this external constituency. In addition, information about the SDF mission, SDF training, and SDF successes needs to be distributed quickly and accurately to SDF forces so that morale remains high and mission success is more likely to be achieved. Finally, PAO personnel are critical to making sure that SDF forces are appropriately informed of their commander’s intent so that mission success and training occurs according to design.

The contemporary PAO will also be trained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) role of Public Information Officer (PIO). This on-site role in the Incident Command System (ICS) is the “action” role of the PAO in the disaster relief environment. In order to successfully fulfill this role the contemporary PAO will be NIMS qualified in all PIO duties, and will hold appropriate NIMS certifications for these duties in the ICS.

A SDF UPARS training will be held at the SGAUS National Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on 22 September 2017. Lead instructors are SnAmn (TX) Christopher Bracken (Chishtopher.Bracken1@txsg.state.tx.us) and MAJ (IN) Terry Heifetz (terry.heifetz@igr.IN.gov). The agenda for the 8-hour training at the 22 September training will include: basic news writing, social media, photography, photo captioning, operational security, PIO exercise and presentation, and conclude with an AAR for future trainings. Point of Contact (POC) for the training is 1LT (TN) Steve Estes (LTSteven.Estes@icloud.com). Requirements are SGAUS membership, conference registration, and an active role as a unit PAO/PIO SDF soldier.

Login for more information ...
https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/pao-academy/
Indiana Guard Reserve feature on Boomer TV

Boomer TV (WISH-TV Indianapolis) featured the Indiana Guard Reserve on its program. Find out more about the IGR at www.in.gov/igr. All it takes is one day a month and week a year to serve the people of Indiana in an emergency. Hoosiers Serving Hoosiers!

See the video here ... https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrMLmR4ipj8&feature=youtu.be

Indiana Guard Reserve – Mobile Hospital.

The Indiana Guard Reserve along with the Indiana State Department of Health set up a portable hospital at the Warsaw Airport on 27 August 2016. The demonstration showed the IGR’s capability to quickly build the unit in an emergency, Several emergency managers and reporters came to see the demonstration by two IGR brigades and Medical Command.

See the video here ... https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6cXCSXEQmo
When Earth Rocks, IGR Ready to Roll

There was no shortage of training opportunities for IGR Soldiers during a warm fall weekend at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center. Hundreds of Guard Reservists spent three days learning new skills and refreshing old ones. This year, the Soldiers tackled a new role; they set up a mobile field hospital provided by the Indiana State Department of Health. The IGR also devoted a good portion of the weekend embracing other roles, training volunteers across the state in POD (point-of-distribution) setup and search-and-rescue operations. The Guard Reservists used these skills during a mock earthquake that hit southern Indiana. Some of the other activities included a physical training challenge and awards ceremonies. All of the activities will assist IGR members as they respond to emergencies across the state. See the Annual Training photo gallery here.

DID YOU KNOW?

VA to Offer Routine Eye and Ear Appointment without Primary Referral

Veterans receiving care at VA Medical Centers will now be able to schedule routine ear and eye appointments at local VA Audiology and Optometry clinics without a primary care referral. Before now, veterans seeking appointments with audiologists or optometrists had to first make an appointment with a primary care physician for a referral for a routine clinic consult visit. A clinic representative would contact the patient to set up the consult appointment and when the veteran was actually seen. The new process, the Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative, which began as a successful pilot at three sites in 2015, is being expanded to all VA Medical Centers. The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is expected to be fully operational within all VA Medical Centers by the end of 2016.

https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2817
For more than four years, the Maryland Defense Force’s (MDDF) 10th Medical Regiment has provided ongoing medical support to the 175th Wing of the Maryland Air National Guard (MDANG). Working with the 175th Medical Group at their Warfield Air National Guard headquarters, members of the 10th Medical Regiment provide medical support for the 175th Wing’s operations, cyberspace, maintenance, mission support, comptroller and civil engineering units. The MDDF personnel supporting the 175th Wing include a physician assistant, nurses and physical therapists.

“I was reluctant at first but the MDDF has provided really qualified personnel that over the years have been a tremendous asset to the 175th Medical Group,” said Col. Marvin Nielsen who serves as the Maryland State Air Surgeon. He continued, “I was initially worried about the rotation effect where the MDDF might send different people each drill weekend who would then have to be oriented. However, the MDDF personnel detailed to the MDANG have been regular participants at our drills and we’ve really enjoyed having them around.”

Col. Timothy D. Stevens, commander of the 175th Medical Group added, “I came to Maryland from Kansas and I had no concept of the MDDF. On my first day, we had a field training exercise with elements of the Maryland Army National Guard (MDARNG), the Maryland Air National Guard and the Maryland Defense Force. The MDDF medical personnel were actually educating the army and air staff. The MDDF professionals were more seasoned and their practical training of the 175th Medical Group staff continues to be extremely valuable.”

Col. (MDDF) Nikki Austin, commander of the MDDF’s 10th Medical Regiment commented, “The dedication of the MDDF team to the 175th is a model for the integration of health professionals in support of the MDNG. The team frequently drills with the MDNG and also attends the 10th Medical Regiment drills as well. This takes an extraordinary commitment to service.” Current MDDF staff supporting the 175th Medical Group include registered nurses Maj. (MDDF) Rosemary Critzer and Capt. (MDDF) Evelyn Kloos, and physical therapist 1st Lt. (MDDF) JoAnn Shapiro.

Col. Stevens continued, “The MDDF medical personnel are an integral part of our team and they are definitely missed whenever they are not at Warfield (MDANG Air Base).” Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Lorenza Cooper, the commanding general of the MDDF added, “Our MDDF mission is to provide professional and technical support to the entire Maryland Military Department. I’m very proud of what the 10th Medical Regiment is doing in support of the Maryland Air National Guard. Their hard work helps us to successfully execute our overall mission.”
SGAUS New Look and Feel

Check out the SGAUS web site. [Click Here]

To access the SGAUS Store you must be a SGAUS member and you must sign in.
Under the leadership of Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Lorenza Cooper, Commanding General, Maryland Defense Force (MDDF), the state defense force component has gone through a comprehensive realignment process to ensure that it provides improved support to the Maryland Military Department (MILDEP). This process has included changes and improvements with respect to MDDF culture, training, personnel and operations policies. This transformative process has assisted the MDDF improve its service delivery to the Maryland Military Department while also positioning the MDDF for success in the future.

On the cultural, training and personnel policy front, the MDDF has made a host of changes. The primary focus is continuously recruiting competent people through an organized recruiting effort aligned with the table of organization, job description and MDDF requirements. The MDDF is no longer accepting new recruits where their skills and the needs of MDDF do not align. Additionally, the MDDF has improved training standards, military discipline and its mission centric focus. There has also been a renewed focus on ensuring that MDDF members follow proper military customs, courtesies and professional bearing.

Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper commented, “We want all of our new recruits and current personnel to have emergency management training at the basic level. It’s a requirement for all new recruits to get the Basic Military Emergency Management Specialist (MEMS) Badge. Eventually, all personnel should achieve this certification. Furthermore, our focus on MEMS training strategically aligns with the development of a support element for Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and MILDEP.”

Additional MDDF changes include a reaffirmation of existing standards and a rededication to regular drill participation as the cornerstone of an effective command. The MDDF re-affirmed its retirement age, which allows the MDDF to seamlessly integrate into missions with the National Guard. The MDDF retirement age is 65 and limited waivers will be offered for critical skills requirements. “It’s important to adhere to age, height and weight standards for health reasons as well as because it adds to our overall military effectiveness,” Brig. Gen. Cooper added. The reduction in the headquarters staff and migration of personnel to field units will allow engagement with MILDEP personnel on a more regular basis. “This requires us to meet the highest standards of professionalism”, according to Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper.

“If personnel aren’t coming to drill regularly they are not getting the proper level of training, which means we can’t effectively use them when called to state active duty,” stated Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper. This naturally has led to a right sizing of the MDDF component.
MDDF Realigns to Better Support MILDEP Cont.

By: Maj. Stephen Rice srice@mddf.us

MDDF operations have gone through some changes as well. Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper is planning to add units that can bring more value to MILDEP. One of these units is the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Support Unit. This unit will consist of 20-30 personnel who can provide direct operational support to MEMA. “If there is an incident, our MEMA support team members can fill in for MEMA staff when necessary on a rotational basis as a force multiplier for MEMA staff.” The MDDF MEMA Support Unit will mirror the MEMA staffing pattern and comprise of trained MEMS qualified personnel that possess the required certifications necessary to fulfill operational roles.

The MDDF is also continuing to develop its Cyber Unit in concert with MILDEP. Maj. Gen. Linda Singh, the adjutant general of Maryland recently launched a Cyber Center of Excellence (COE). This initiative has incorporated Maryland National Guard cyber units (Army & Air), the MDDF Cyber unit and Maryland’s Department of IT (DoIT) in its planning and programming. The MDDF Cyber Unit is now actively engaged in supporting MILDEP in its efforts in establishing the Cyber COE.

The blueprint for the revised operational environment for the MDDF is their new table of organization (TO). “With the approval of the adjutant general, the MDDF has either written or rewritten many duty descriptions and improved rank alignment with their respective duties. We’ve also outlined the requirements necessary to maintain certain billets,” commented Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper. He continued, “Eventually we want to invert our existing organization to bring about a representative number of enlisted personnel with an appropriate number of officers at all ranks. Currently the MDDF is too top heavy. While we understand the professional value, our team needs to consist of a variety of skills in both enlisted and officers; not just doctors, lawyers or professionals. We need both!”

The MDDF has also re-affirmed mission and training procedures within the MDDF. Outside of the state missions and training activities will not be conducted without approval from the Adjutant General, and only then if an official Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) request is approved by the Governor.

Right sizing the organization has optimized the units to leverage better alignment between the MDDF and MILDEP. As an example, the MDDF Judge Advocate Corps (JAC) had ballooned to over 40 officers in recent years when their tempo was high due to the pace of deployments. The Judge Advocate Corps support to MILDEP supporting mission requests from the Joint Staff or MILDEP has diminished significantly. “The MDDF may have needed a large JAC in the past, however the needs are different today and deployment tempo has changed. Therefore, the JAC has been streamlined significantly,” added Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper.
MDDF Realigns to Better Support MILDEP Cont.

By: Maj. Stephen Rice srice@mddf.us

The MDDF realignment has not gone unnoticed. “During my recent tenure, we have really tried to rededicate the MDDF to its core mission which is providing technical competent support to MILDEP,” stated Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper. He continued, “Our transformative changes have increased cooperation at the MILDEP senior leadership level. The result of all these changes is that we have gained a lot of support from the adjutant general.” In 2016, the MDDF volunteered over 50,000 man hours to the State of Maryland valued at $3.1 million dollars. Brig. Gen. (MDDF) Cooper concluded by saying, “Continuous improvement is very important and the overall goal is to make us even better going forward.”

The Maryland Defense Force (MDDF) is the State’s uniformed volunteer military unit providing professional and technical assistance to the Maryland Military Department. Established in 1917, the MDDF consists of nearly 200 personnel who perform legal, engineering, finance, medical, chaplain, field support and ceremonial services for the State of Maryland. For more information: www.mddf.maryland.gov.

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DID YOU KNOW?

VA eliminates net worth as Veteran health care eligibility factor

The Department of Veterans Affairs is updating the way it determines eligibility for VA health care, a change that will result in more Veterans having access to the health care benefits they’ve earned and deserve.

Effective 2017, VA eliminated the use of net worth as a determining factor for both health care programs and co-payment responsibilities. This change makes VA health care benefits more accessible to lower-income Veterans and brings VA policies in line with Secretary Bob McDonald’s MyVA initiative which reorients VA around Veterans’ needs.

Maryland Defense Force Soldier and Officer of the Year

Captain (MDDF) Sanford and SGT (MDDF) Dixon were honored this morning at the Maryland State House. After photos with the Governor and Adjutant General they were recognized on both floors of the state legislature. Congratulations!

Maryland Defense Force Band

In support of the Maryland National Guard (MDNG), the Maryland Defense Force (MDDF) Band, widely known as “Maryland’s Musical Ambassadors,” performed three concerts of patriotic music. The MDDF Ceremonial Band performed at the Columbus Center in Baltimore for a reception, hosted by Maj. Gen. Linda Singh, the adjutant general of Maryland. MDDF Band performed two concerts. The first performance consisted of a Jazz Combo at Government House in Annapolis, Maryland which serves as the Maryland Governor’s residence. The second performance consisted of a Woodwind Quintet at the Baltimore Convention Center.

The Maryland Defense Force Band is a ceremonial unit of the MDDF that provides musical support to the Maryland Military Department and provides ceremonial support to the State of Maryland.

The Maryland Defense Force (MDDF) is the State’s uniformed volunteer military unit providing professional and technical assistance to the Maryland Military Department. Established in 1917, the MDDF consists of nearly 250 personnel who perform legal, engineering, finance, medical, chaplain, field support and ceremonial services for the State of Maryland. For more information: www.mddf.maryland.gov.
In its efforts to provide opportunities for continuing education for all SDFs, SGAUS will be sponsoring a 4 hour course on the National Guard’s Installation Status Report program, or ISR, at the upcoming Annual Conference in South Carolina. The National Guard Bureau has established the ISR program to develop a macro model which is annually populated with data from the field to establish infrastructure spending priorities. The most expensive part of a building is not the construction but the maintenance over the life cycle of the building. Too often, the maintenance, repair and upgrade of facilities are put off to a point where they affect mission readiness and soldier quality of life. The ISR program establishes an Army wide standard to assess the physical condition and readiness of facilities, identify substandard or unavailable facilities which may impact installation mission, identify facility revitalization and construction requirements, estimate macro-level planning costs and help focus future facility investment strategy.

This course will emphasize the importance of identifying the root cause of the "Infrastructure Crisis" and of maintaining its viability for a functioning society. It will delve into the metrics used in the ISR program to evaluate facilities and well as the building science of what you will be expecting.
SGAUS Engineer Program (Cont.)

Is the ISR a METL for you?

LTC(MD) Edward A. Hubner, PE - ehubner@mddf.maryland.gov

The Maryland SDF has been executing the ISR program for the State since 2006. They annually contribute in excess of $250,000 worth of in-kind money that the State can apply to their Federal obligation. In the past 10 years, Maryland has also seen their contributions from the National Guard Bureau grow in excess of $30,000,000. In Maryland, the program is managed by the Engineering Division, but is all-hands in execution. In fact, for the last three years, they have been teaching college freshmen to do ISRs as part of a service learning program at the University of Maryland.

Are you interested in a METL with high visibility to both your National Guard Units and your State Legislators? If so, this may be the METL for you.

Login for more information …
https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/engineering-academy/

DID YOU KNOW - HOW TO CORRECT

To request a correction of your records in the Defense Eligibility and Enrollment Reporting system (DEERS), you must start with the U.S. Army Human Resources Command’s Veteran Inquiry Branch. They will verify/or correct your records at the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS). If your DFAS record is not corrected first, any change you make in DEERS will be overwritten by the information in your DFAS record. Start by contacting HRC at (888) 276-9472 or askhrc.army@army.mil.
You’ll need to complete a Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records, and provide birth certificate.
Steve Kaminski, Deputy Commander of the Mississippi State Guard, passed away December 30, 2016. In Mississippi Steve was known for his leadership and innovative programs; and many in SGAUS recall Steve from the annual conventions; however, he will be best remembered for his actions on behalf of Medal of Honor recipients. His work in this area supports the SGAUS Mission of: “Educate public officials and communities of the benefits of establishing and maintaining state defense forces.”

Steve was fond of saying his service with the State Guard was his second fulltime job, and often he found ways for his work as a 777 Captain for Delta Airlines to overlap. With Delta he frequently met senior military officers and public officials and would tell them of his State Guard service and how it benefits the community. Steve often said that one of the benefits that public officials often overlooked when considering the State Guard was the experience and network that each volunteer brought to the organization. The best example of how Steve demonstrated this was at the Trail of Honor, an annual event for veterans in Jackson, Mississippi.

The Trail of Honor hosts over 30,000 during a weekend in May and the Mississippi State Guard provides support for this event. One of the highlights of the events are the WWII veterans such as the Navajo Code Talkers, Tuskegee Airmen and Medal of Honor Recipients. In one of the first planning meetings Steve attended as a liaison for the Mississippi State Guard, he attended a budget presentation on how they would like to invite more WWII veterans to speak but the funds did not allow for this. Stepping out of his role at the meeting to discuss logistics, and into his position as a Delta pilot he asked, “Would free airfare help?” and then met with Delta to help sponsor the event. Delta became a major event sponsor. If the Trail of Honor had not partnered with the State Guard this relationship may not have happened.

However, it was at this Trail of Honor event where Steve first began to plan a contribution that the recipients of our nation’s highest honor will be forever grateful for. During the Trail of Honor Steve had a chance to talk with the Medal of Honor recipients and made a discovery - those awarded our nation’s highest honor did not get an automatic upgrade to Business Class and since many had extensive injuries so legroom was almost a necessity. Yet, none complained. Steve knew these individuals would never complain, or ask for special treatment, or expect to be upgraded – but he knew as an officer in the Mississippi State Guard and a Delta Pilot he could do something. He wrote a letter to Edward H. Bastian, President, Delta Airlines. The introduction follows:

“Dear Mr. Bastian

There are 79 living recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor. I have had the privilege of meeting some of them while flying - but last March I spent time on the ground with Medal of Honor recipient Thomas R. Norris at the Trail of Honor event in Jackson, Mississippi where I am a Colonel in the Mississippi State Guard. Lieutenant Norris, like
many of the recipients, had been wounded in action – in his case it was a three-year recovery in the hospital. We forget that recovery from wounds does not mean full mobility, and I have noticed many of the recipients I have met often need a little extra space when getting up or down. Please consider giving 79 American heroes an upgrade to business class.”

The President and Board of Delta Airlines agreed with him and announced an automatic upgrade for Medal of Honor recipients. However, Steve was not done. He then distributed the Delta decision on upgrades to other airlines and in a few months this upgrade became an industry standard.

Steve continued his relationship with Medal of Honor recipients and was an honored guest at many of their gatherings. He also used his relationship and experiences with Medal of Honor recipients in the State Guard too. Soon after he accomplished his goal of the automatic upgrades, Mississippi State Guard members were informed that uniform name-tapes had to be changed to red from black. There was concern among some members that having a different color would mean that State Guard members would not be viewed as real members of the military. Steve countered this perception by saying,

“I was just with eight Medal of Honor recipients and they all addressed me as Colonel and thanked me for my service to our state. If our uniform is good enough for them, I would not worry about what someone else said.”

Steve was informed he had cancer in October; however, as many in the Mississippi State Guard can attest to – he just saw this as a reason to accelerate programs he had started a few months previously. Sadly, his prediction of at least six months to complete them did not occur – he passed away roughly 90 days after his diagnosis.

He was honored this past January with a memorial ceremony at Army National Guard Headquarters in Jackson, Mississippi where he was posthumously promoted to General and his widow received his Magnolia Cross, the highest peacetime medal the Mississippi National Guard may award.

Left: Medal of Honor Recipient Thomas R. Norris and Colonel Steve Kaminski (Right:) Medal of Honor recipient Hershel Woody Williams and Colonel Steve Kaminski
New Mexico State Defense Force (NMSDF) Personnel Serve as Controllers and Evaluators in the Santa Fe Municipal Airport Full-Scale Exercise  
By: LTC(NM) Stacy B. Leffler

SANTA FE, N.M. – Members of the New Mexico State Defense Force (NMSDF) participated in the Santa Fe Municipal Airport Full-Scale Exercise held Saturday, April 8. The exercise provided an opportunity for participating agencies to test their individual and collective capabilities in an operational environment. During the full-scale exercise, members of the NMSDF filled both operational and evaluator roles.

The NMSDF is an internal security and emergency services reserve force that can be called upon by the Governor of New Mexico to serve in support of the New Mexico National Guard; additionally, it serves as a spoke in the wheel of local, state, and national preparedness.

SSG Otis Chappell, who served as the exercise staging controller, managed the flow of resources into the incident. In reflecting on his experiences, Chappell found the training valuable from the perspective that it highlighted the importance of interoperability, unified command, and the value of individuals working collectively in pursuit of a common mission. “The complexity of large scale incidents serves as a reminder of the need for continual training,” Chappell said.

Officer Candidate Mark Rowley, who served in the capacity as law enforcement controller, provides oversight for meeting of the commander’s directive that all NMSDF personnel will be qualified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) by 30 June 2017.

Rowley said, “The New Mexico State Defense Force has placed a priority on members becoming qualified as Military Emergency Management Specialists through the State Guard Association of the United States (SGAUS) to ensure that members can respond to disasters and other emergencies and effectively work within a comprehensive emergency management operation. This is being accomplished through extensive training in the Incident Command System (ICS), the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and exercises and drills such as the full-scale exercise conducted today at the Santa Fe Municipal Airport.”

In 2016 the 26 members of the NMSDF donated over 4500 hours of service to the State of New Mexico. Although the educational spectrum runs from high school diploma through doctoral level—the average is four years of college education. Prior military service is not a requirement to join the NMSDF; however, roughly sixty-percent of the members have prior military service.

The Assistant Adjutant General of the NMSDF is Brig. Gen. David Torres; his requirements of those that serve include the commitment of each member to “uphold the standards of honor, integrity, and compassion.”
NM State Defense Force commissions new officers

In order to describe the role and mission of the NMSDF, Salas described the three missions of the NMNG: As an operational reserve, the NMNG is here to defend America and defeat America’s enemies. Second, the NMNG protects the lives and property of our fellow citizens here at home which includes helping first responders to help citizens in distress. Third, we build strong, vibrant communities so that we have safe places for our families, good schools for our children, good jobs, a clean environment, and preservation of our culture. We do all the things to make this a place worth living and a place that’s worth handing over to our children and our children’s children, Salas said.

In the past, the National Guard mobilized for long periods of time during war. According to Salas, the NMSDF was originally put into state statute to man the local armories and be there for first responders to help with local emergencies when the Guard deployed. Salas described it as a proper mission for that time and place.

“That still sort of exists, but times have changed because the National Guard is an operational reserve force and not just a deep bench to be called out in mass when there is a big world war,” Salas said. “We now go in packets where we send units and individuals in an ongoing contribution to our federal mission. So the new way of thinking about the NMSDF is as the NMNG’s domestic operational reserve force, having an active role in the Guard’s second and third missions - to protect lives and property and build strong and resilient communities.”

Salas said the NMNG has a very important training mission in order for Soldiers and Airmen to do what they need to do. From time to time, certain shortfalls may exist and the NMSDF helps bolster the NMNG’s capabilities. Second, with respect to when that emergency or natural disaster comes, we sometimes find ourselves with shortfalls in either numbers to respond to the emergency or capabilities required of us.
Salas sees the NMSDF having Red Cross certified shelter management teams, credentialed, trained and ready like the Minuteman of old to answer the call of duty in support of the NMNG while supporting emergency response. Third, Salas sees the NMSDF being available to assist our veterans with color guards, parades and military protocol. The NMNG is asked to do a lot of things because we represent the military aspect of our society, Salas said, and sometimes, sadly, we have to say no and it breaks our heart. Support for other like-minded entities, especially the Department of Veteran Services is important. With over 171,000 veterans across New Mexico, DVS is working hard to make sure veterans know about their benefits and entitlements as a way of saying thank you for your service, but DVS has a small staff. NMSDF can help with that important mission, Salas said.

“You are our domestic operational reserve force,“ Salas told the NMSDF members. “We as the higher headquarters have a responsibility to make sure you have the guidance, policy and oversight to do your work successfully. We want you to have a framework and structure that fits you and allows you to render the professional service you offer. Our job as your higher headquarters is to be your functional area managers with subject matter experts to assist you so we can work in sync for New Mexico.”

Salas said his commitment to NMSDF members is to make sure the Brig. Gen. David Torres, the assistant adjutant general of the NMSDF, is supported to build a better future for the NMSDF.

Salas told Torres how grateful he was for taking on this tough assignment and for his dedicated leadership. He also recognized Lt. Col Mark Gonzales, NMSDF commander for sparing no effort in the service of others and for doing what is necessary for the NMSDF to do their job. Salas also thanked Gen. Juan Griego, deputy adjutant general, and the rest of his NMNG senior staff for leading the effort to establish a good foundation that allows NMSDF patriots to come render service in our communities.

As Torres prepared the group for the oath of the commissioned officer, he reminded them of why today’s swearing in event is important - helping set the pace and the expectation. He reminded them that oaths convey allegiance and loyalty for our leaders and the public we serve.

Torres asked the group a series of questions to affirm their selfless commitment. Do you have the conviction to put self interests aside? Are you honest, true and courageous in all aspects of life? Will you be the officer that our state can depend on to do the right thing in moments of uncertainty and crisis? Will you uphold the standards of honor, integrity and compassion in the face of opposition? Will you display the behavior befitting the uniform you wear today and the dignity and discipline that it represents? Today, you answer these questions for yourself, said Torres, and if you can answer yes, I am proud to link arms and serve with you.
Improved Members Service!

Paper Applications are a thing of the past. All Memberships (New, Renewals, Chapter and Individual) can be processed online through the SGAUS website.

All current members may also print their SGAUS membership card from the SGAUS website. Each member is assigned a login and a password when a renewal or new membership is processed online.

To print your SGAUS membership card go to the SGAUS website click on “Update Your Info”, enter your email address on file, enter your password and print your membership card. Its that Simple!!!

To retrieve your password click on “Forgot my Password” and your password will be emailed to your email address on file. Your login ID is the email address you used on your online application and/or renewal.
New York Guard 89th Army Band Welcomes New Members

By: SPC Richard Mayfield, New York Guard

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLAND MANOR – The commander of the 89th Army Band, New York Guard, Captain Roy Coates, is welcoming two new members. Private Tatsuya Hondo recently enlisted in the New York Guard and has been assigned to the 89th, while Sergeant First Class (retired) Paul Myruski, New York National Guard, will be swearing in later this year once he completes the transition from National Guard service to the New York Guard.

SFC Myruski is no stranger to the military; he joined the West Point Band in 1976 and was a participant in many exciting performances and events as we celebrated our nation’s Bicentennial. He went on to serve for 32 years in the National Guard including a 2005 deployment to Iraq with the 42nd Infantry Division Band. Myruski early on developed a love of music in high school playing the clarinet. He graduated from Orange County Community College, granted his Bachelors from University of Houston and then attended SUNY Binghamton for his Masters.

Once he completed his education, Myruski taught music to inmates at the Eastern Correctional Facility Napanoch, New York and currently teaches as a music teacher for the Warwick Valley Central School System. It was during his time at Napanoch that he was recruited into the 199th New York Army National Guard Band.

Myruski is deeply involved in his community and believes that service in the New York Guard will be a continuation of a lifetime of service to our military. He currently lives in the Town of Greenville with his wife Fern and they have one daughter Alyssa.

PV2 Hondo enlisted on November 7, 2016 with the desire to participate in Veterans Day programs and has been actively practicing and performing with the 89th Army Band ever since. Hondo began playing the piano at the age of six and is now an accomplished flutist. He is currently attending the Adelphi University majoring in Anthropology.

Hondo views his service in the New York Guard as one of giving back to his community and developing his skills as a musician. The “General’s Own” 89th Army Band is the official band of the New York State Guard, a unit of the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

Above: CPT Roy Coates, Commander of the 89th Army Band, welcomes PV2 Tatsuya Hondo (left) and (right) SFC Paul Myruski, NY Army National Guard (retired), will be joining the ranks of the New York Guard and the 89th New York Guard Band.
Westchester Resident earns New York Guard Meritorious Service Award Medal

By: SPC (NY) Richard Mayfield, & CPT(NY) Mark Getman

CAMP SMITH TRAINING SITE, CORTLAND MANOR, NEW YORK – On 03 December 2016, Somers resident, Paul Green, a Warrant Officer (WO1) in the New York Guard, was awarded the New York State Medal for Meritorious Service Award from the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs for his heroic actions responding to a dangerous and potentially life threatening auto accident in the Town of Somers.

On 11 June 2014, Green, who is also a volunteer member of the Somers Fire Department, responded to a motor vehicle accident with multiple personal injuries reported. Upon arriving at the scene, Green assessed the situation and immediately began rendering assistance to the passengers. At the time of the incident smoke was emanating from multiple points of the car and passengers had sustained serious injuries. Green was able to stabilize the first passenger and remove him from the car preventing further injury.

After extricating the first passenger Green found another victim who was in respiratory distress and non-responsive. WO1 Green, along with fellow firefighter Kevin McDonald log-rolled the victim on her side and Green performed several fingers sweeps removing large blood clots from the victim. These procedures allowed the victim to return to normal respiration and allowed her to be transferred to Westchester Emergency Medical Services. The incident commander Captain Jonathan Mackey stated, “that all victims...are alive due today in part due to the efforts of Firefighter Paul Green.”

WO1 Green credited his training as a nurse, emergency medical technician, firefighter and New York Guard member for having the skills necessary to assist those in harm’s way. Green went on to say, “You need to train as if someone’s life depends on it because it will”.

Green who has been a member of the New York Guard for the past five years is currently a Warrant Officer and Licensed Practical Nurse assigned to the New York Guard’s 244th Medical Clinic. As a vital member of the 244th Medical Clinic and the New York Guard, WO1 Green renders invaluable service not only to his fellow soldiers but to the people of the State of New York. Green currently lives in Somers with his wife of 21 years Leslie and their daughter.
88th Brigade Commemorates The Battle of Fredericksburg

By: SPC(NY) Edward Shevlin, Photos by SPC (NY) Charles Garelick

“Your soldier’s heart almost stood still as he watched those sons of Erin fearlessly rush to their deaths. The brilliant assault on Marve’s Heights of their Irish brigade was beyond description. We forgot they were fighting us and cheer after cheer at their fearlessness went up all along our lines!” ~Major General George Pickett, CSA

One hundred and fifty-four years after the fateful Civil War battle at Marve’s Heights, near Fredericksburg Virginia, the 88th Brigade of the New York Guard held their annual Commemoration of the Battle of Fredericksburg on 10 December 2016, at the Irish Brigade Monument in Calvary Cemetery, Queens, New York. The Veteran Corps of Artillery, a long time supporter of the 88th Brigade in commemorating the Battle of Fredericksburg, once again played an essential role in honoring those who gave their greatest effort and those who gave their lives to the cause of freedom on 13 December, 1862.

On the day that the Irish Brigade of the Union Army joined the Order of Battle at Fredericksburg, they, like many of the other units of the Union Army were both battle-hardened and somewhat fatigued, having fought valiantly in the Peninsular Campaign in July of 1862 where after one particularly brutal engagement, Brigadier Thomas Francis Meagher had this to say in his report to General E.V. Sumner, 2nd Corps Commander, “In the mean while the Eighty-eighth were thrown forward to the left of the Sixty-ninth, and their rapid and impetuous movement had the effect of outflanking the enemy and perfecting the success which the Sixty-ninth had already to so important an extent achieved.
The oblique line thus formed by these two regiments was maintained with decisive resolution until the enemy fell back from the range of fire.” Following this series of battles on the Virginia Peninsula, the Irish Brigade found themselves embroiled in the Battle of Antietam in September (where the 88th took 104 casualties from their original 302) of that year, where they were once again distinguished by their bravery and discipline. So fiercely had they fought between July and September of 1862, that their green battle flags had to be sent back to New York City to be repaired as they were in complete tatters and thus, unrecognizable. The flags were promised for return to the brigade on 15 December 1862.

With their beloved green banners still two days from delivery, BG Thomas Francis Meagher ordered that all members of the brigade should place a sprig of boxwood on their covers before marching into battle to distinguish them from other Union soldiers. Another feature which was unique to the Irish Brigade was that of their weaponry, the Irish Brigade carried the U.S. Musket 1842, a smoothbore .69 caliber weapon which they loaded with buck and ball, a cartridge consisting of one .69 caliber ball, accompanied by three smaller balls, which essentially turned this musket into a shotgun, a devastating weapon at close range. Thus equipped the Irish Brigade began their march towards Marye’s Heights, bristling with Confederate Artillery and well-entrenched infantry. The newest regiment of the Irish Brigade, the 116th Pennsylvania Volunteers marched to the left of the 88th with the 69th to the right of the 88th. The 63rd New York and the 28th Massachusetts, with their battle flag still intact, filled out the right flank of the formation respectively. With nearly a mile of open ground to cover on their advance upon the Confederate positions atop the hill, General Meagher’s boys began trotting towards their foes.
Unwavering in the face of withering fire from the enemy, the Irish Brigade needed to get very close to the enemy works in order to bring their smoothbore muskets to bear, and thus began a brisk double-time up the slope. With airbursts of artillery shells above them and fusillades of rifled muskets before them, the fog of war or, copious amounts of gun smoke, obscured somewhat their position upon the battlefield, allowing them to continue their advance towards the enemy positions, which were manned by none other than “Cobb’s Legion”, a regiment of the Confederate Irish Brigade hailing from Georgia. Pushing to within fifty yards of the Confederate position the Union soldiers were repelled to the cheers of their fellow Irishmen behind the wall at the top of the hill. However, these were not the cheers with which one taunts an opponent, but cheers in salute of a fellow soldier’s bravery. Their attack having been repulsed, the Irish Brigade made their way back to their lines to lick their wounds and tally their losses. The Georgians had cut the Irishmen to pieces. Of the approximately 1,400 men who started up the hill, 545 became casualties.

Because such bravery and commitment must never be forgotten, members of the New York Guard gather each year to salute their forebears, the soldiers of the US Army’s Irish Brigade at the monument dedicated in their name in Calvary Cemetery here in New York City. This year’s ceremonies of 10 December 2016 began with a Mass of Remembrance in the cemetery’s chapel, followed by a parade to the Irish Brigade Monument from the chapel which was led by bagpipers and drummers from the 88th BDE and the VCA with an assist from Pipe Major Emeritus John McManus of the County Tyrone Pipe and Drum Band. Upon arriving at the monument, wreaths were placed by COL. George DeSimone, Acting Commander of the New York Guard, COL. James Whalen, Commanding VCA, and LTC Raymond Lamboy, Commander of the 88th BDE. With all standing at attention, the Ceremonial Firing Squad of the VCA fired salutes, after which the Bugler played Taps.

There is a slogan arched across the bottom of the Irish Brigade’s Battle Flag in the language of the old country, Ireland, it reads:

*Riamh Nar Druid Ó Spairn Lánn
Who Never Ran from the Clash of Spears*

The testimonies of soldiers from both sides of the Battle of Fredericksburg bear out the truth of this statement.
For Your Information (FYI)

Deadline for Items Needing Board Consideration
Suspense: 1 August 2017

Guidelines:
1. No more than one page.
2. Must be present.
3. Must be active/current SGAUS member.

Format: Items not submitted by the suspense and format below will not be considered.
- Subject:
- Presenter:
- Issue:
- Points of concern: (bullets, narratives not accepted)
- Recommendation(s):

Send to: kenneth.takasaki@sgaus.org

Have an article for the SGAUS Times?
Suspense: 30 July 2017

Guidelines:
1. No more than 3 pages double spaced in Microsoft Word only. PDF documents will be returned.
2. Pictures with captions. Low resolution photos are not recommended and may not be used.
3. Author information to include all contact information.
4. Approved by your SDF Commander

SDF/State Guard Newsletters:
Does your State Defense Force/State Guard have a State Newsletter? Send it to SGAUS and we will post it on the SGAUS website.

Send to: kenneth.takasaki@sgaus.org
**14th Battalion Commo Team Conducts MERNEX**

*By:* SPC (NY) Charles Garelick

**Successful Drill Shows New York Guard Commo Team Is Ready for Action**

GARDEN CITY, NY – On Saturday, 21 January 2017 members of the New York Guard’s 88th Brigade, 14th Battalion Commo Team conducted a MERNEX (Military Emergency Radio Network Exercise) to maintain and enhance their proficiency and readiness in MERN operations. The exercise concentrated on the Commo Team’s ability to install, operate and transmit voice messages and the primary exercise objective of passing digital messaging over HF radios from both a fixed station and deployed mobile stations in the field.

Immediately after morning colors, a safety briefing and action plan of the exercise was conducted, individual duties were assigned to the team members and MERNEX operation begun.

Two mobile stations of the 14th Battalion Commo Team were established in the parking field of the 1st Marine Corps District Base in Garden City, New York. The exercise at both mobile field stations was led by SFC Richard Martino, S6 Chief Signal NCO acting as instructor. Members of the 14th Battalion Commo Team operating the mobile field units included SSG Fantini, SGT Cruz, SPC Morelli, SPC Bilskii, SPC Hersenfeld and PFC Strack.
14th Battalion Commo Team Conducts MERNEX Cont.

By: SPC (NY) Charles Garelick

After the installation and setup of the mobile units were completed, the operators immediately began to successfully establish voice communications with both the fixed and mobile stations. SITREPs were sent and received by all stations. The degree of reception from the participating stations varied from weak to loud and clear. Following the initial voice communications section of the exercise, the operators began passing digital transmissions with the participating stations. SITREPs via digital transmission were successfully established with all stations reporting in. The ability to pass and relay digital message traffic between stations, when previous voice communication proved to be intermittent, was successful and established the value of having a secondary High Frequency (HF) communication system available with operators fully knowledgeable in its use.

After the successful MERNRX was completed, and all stations and equipment were stowed and prepared for future use, SFC Martino conducted a debriefing of the exercise with the Commo Team. They discussed and reviewed the exercise in preparation for future exercises and for readiness to deploy and operate the MERN mobile and fixed units for future New York Guard missions.

The Military Emergency Radio Network (MERN) was established to provide the ability for New York Guard units to communicate effectively during disaster response and its assigned missions. The Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS), which is a program operated jointly by the United States Army and United States Air Force with a mission objective to assist, and provide local, national and international communications in support of United States Military and the New York Guard, is staffed by volunteer civilian Amateur Radio Operators and active duty military personnel. MARS works hand-in-hand with MERNS to assist in maintaining a robust emergency communications network.
To promote interoperability with MARS, the 88th Brigade also conducts operations out of the Air Force MARS MEOC-Mobile Emergency Operations Center. This unit can deploy to any location and has the ability to be set up and become operational in a short period of time to facilitate mission communications. The mobile MERN Units maintain two forms of power supply, a gas-powered generator and solar panels which provide dual electric systems. State-of-the art HF / VHF radio and computers and all equipment necessary to conduct field operations are also contained in the Air Force MARS MEOC. The proud “parent” of the Air Force MARS MEOC is the 88th Brigade’s own SFC Martino, who designed and maintains it. SFC Martino is also the Air Force MARS Region 2 Emergency Coordinator for both New York and New Jersey.

Additional stations participating in the 21 January MERNX included a fixed station at the Staten Island Armory, which was operated by 1LT Arbeeny, 88th Brigade HQ S6 Signal Officer and a mobile field station located in Rochester, which was operated by members of the 10th Brigade, New York Guard. Also participating in the exercise were three United States Air Force MARS mobile stations operated by members of the United States Air Force MARS, who were located in Oneida County, White Plains and Syracuse, New York. The operator of the station in Oneida County who participated in the MERNEX holds the position of National Air Force Emergency Coordinator.
OHIO MILITARY RESERVE CONDUCTS GOOD WILL CHILD IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

By: OC Ted Berry, Public Information Officer

(MIDDLETOWN, OHIO) Over forty soldiers from A Company, 2nd BN, 4th CSSB, Ohio Military Reserve set up a temporary command response center on 18, MAR 2017 at Rosa Parks Elementary School. Fortunately, the purpose of the temporary command center was not for disaster response and relief rather a training exercise that provided Child ID Cards to residents. Thanks to the support of Middletown Schools, Soldiers of A Company were able to practice setting up a response center, however, this time for the purpose of giving back to the community on a much lighter and fun result. Soldiers provided Child ID kits, photographs for the kit, and fingerprints of children during the afternoon. Ohio Military Reserve provided the kits free of charge to the public.

Children and parents were also able to meet local fireman and tour an emergency response vehicle provided by the Middletown Fire Department. Food was also provided to the community by members of the A Company volunteer network.

One parent summed the event up by saying “Wow! All I can say is that I feel safe knowing that in case something bad happens that these soldiers are here to help.” She further stated, “Events like this make my son realize that soldiers are here to help us and not to be afraid.”

A Company prides its self on its community outreach as well as its collaboration with local emergency response teams as they train together to ensure a seamless response to disasters. Future A Company training exercises include joint search and rescue training with area EMA CERT teams as well as other outreach events that will include the Middletown Balloon Festival.

Job well done!
CSM WESLEY FUGITT NAMED BRIGADE COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

BY 2 LT James P. Trakas, Public Affairs Officer

(COLUMBUS, OHIO) COL Richard J. Vasquez, Brigade Commander, has appointed CSM Wesley Fugitt as Brigade Command Sergeant Major. CSM Fugitt replaces CSM Richard Bachus who has been reassigned to the 3rd Medical Detachment. Fugitt is a 20 year U.S. Army Ranger Veteran and most recently was assigned to the Ohio Military Reserve Training Academy, where he trained new recruits as part of their Basic Entry Level Training and Officer Candidates for their leadership studies.

Fugitt also was awarded the Ohio Lifesaving Medal for his civilian work. In October of 2016, CSM Fugitt was off duty as a corrections officer for Richland County, Ohio when he observed a female who had lost consciousness. Taking immediate action, CSM Fugitt helped to review the female, who had overdosed on drugs, called for an ambulance, and was able to revive the unresponsive female, saving her life. His actions also lead to the arrest of drug dealers in the vicinity.

COL Vasquez’s leadership team consists of: COL A.J. Woodward, Deputy Brigade Commander; LTC Gary L. Baker, Executive Officer, CSM Fugitt, Brigade Command Sergeant Major. LTC Charles Defer serves as Acting Commander of the 1st BN; LTC Richard White, Commander, 2nd BN, LTC Karen Thomas, 3rd Medical Detachment, and LTC Deano McNeil as Commandant of the Training Academy.
JAG Training academy LOCKED AND LOADED for annual conference

COMMITTEE leadership PREPARED FOR third year of JAG training excellence

The SGAUS JAG Training Committee is capitalizing on its string of successful annual Training Academies by expanding its frequency to include a Training academy that corresponds with the SGAUS 2017 Annual conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in September 2017. State Guard JAG’s from multiple states, will converge upon the Embassy Suites for a MILOPS lectures and a rigorous trial advocacy skills practicum. Highly respected guest lecturers will talk on a variety of legal topics, including Cyber-Security and Anti-Terrorism. CLE credit is offered for most courses, but is not guaranteed for all attendees.

Beginning in 2016, SGAUS implemented a JAG Skills Qualification Program which is available to all State Guard JAGs who are active members of SGAUS. To become JAG skills certified, the participant must successfully complete all ten on-line training modules that are currently offered through the SGAUS PME Academy. Next, the participant must attend no less than 4 hours of MILOPS training that is offered at a SGAUS sanctioned event, such as the mid-year or annual conferences. Finally, the participant must demonstrate proficiency in a mock trial advocacy practicum, which are also offered at sanctioned SGAUS events. Successful candidates will be awarded a JAG Skills Qualification Certificate. As an alternative, JAG’s with documented prior Federal experience will be grandfathered into the Program.

All active SGAUS members who are also State Guard JAG’s are encouraged to earn their SGAUS JAG Skills Certificate. The JAG Skills Qualification Program point of contact is CPT (TX) Michael Parker, who can be reached at mrp@parkerllp.com, and Michael.r.parker@txsg.state.tx.us. CPT Parker can also be reached at his Ft. Worth, TX office: 817-442-9500. There is no charge for the on-line training modules, and the fee for attending the one-day JAG Training Academy is just $50. JAG Academy attendees are responsible for their own transportation and lodging. Becoming JAG Skills Certified and attending the mid-year for annual conferences are the best possible ways for State Guard JAG’s to prove their value as force multipliers and to network with JAG’s from other states.
(COLUMBUS, OHIO) The State Guard Association of Ohio (SGAOH) met on 06 MAY 17 at Haubrich Armory for its Annual Spring Meeting. The Association sponsors a Spring Meeting and a meeting at its Annual Training Exercise in the fall. The organization originated as the “Ohio Military Reserve Officers Association” in 1960 and has been affiliated with SGAUS since Ohio transitioned its force into a true State Defense Force in 2009.

SGAOH serves as a social service organization for Soldiers and their families and seeks to expand its ability to serve through an aggressive fundraising appeal to Ohio Foundations and Not For Profit Organizations who support military charities. Ohio’s top 100 employers all maintain foundations, and SGAOH is embarking upon a fundraising appeal to support Soldier needs such as: chow at MUTAs, uniforms and equipment for the all volunteer force, family services while Soldiers are deployed, recruitment and retention needs. Also discussed was establishing a GoFundMe account for the same purpose.

The Association is also sponsoring a marksmanship competition between its Organizations to foster competitive comradery as well as sharpen skills. The competition is not associated with the Ohio Military Reserve and will not take place on State of Ohio property. A popular idea since the transition of OHMR from a military police unit to military emergency management civil support and sustainment brigade. The Association is also selling polo shirts and t-shirts for the benefit of all OHMR Soldiers and plans to donate shirts to incoming recruits.

SGT Robert Althoff, the Treasurer of SGAOH and PVT Carlos Shelby, a Board Member, established the idea of raffling off an AR-15 style Ruger AR-556, which sold out and was a popular draw. Ohio State Representative David Leland (D-Columbus) provided the keynote address on military and preparedness themes in state government.

What is the Veterans Choice Program?

If you are already enrolled in VA health care, the Choice Program allows you to receive health care within your community. Using this program does NOT impact your existing VA health care, or any other VA benefit.

On April 19, 2017, President Trump signed a law that removes the August, 7, 2017, expiration date and allows VA to utilize funding dedicated to the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) until it is exhausted. The VCP is a critical program that increases access to care for Veterans by authorizing millions of appointments for Veterans in the community.

For more information ... https://www.va.gov/opd/choiceact/
Improving Unit Partnership

During the April 9, 2017 regular scheduled drill, COL Edward L. Vaughan, 156th Airlift Wing Commander and COL(PR) Jesus Delgado, 1st Air Base Group Commander signed a Memorandum of Understanding solidifying the working relationship between the Puerto Rico Air National Guard and the Puerto Rico Air State Guard.

"Our partnership with the Puerto Rico Air State Guard is stronger today than ever." said Vaughan. "In every way the 1st Air Base Group has been able to help us, they've done an outstanding job. Their dedication to our community and the 156th Airlift Wing is vital to our mission readiness. While State Guard Airmen work side by side the 156th AW Airmen on our regular scheduled drills, there were legal hurdles to mutual aid that weren't solved. This MOU resolves a lot of those issues and shows our commitment to the outstanding relationship between the 156th AW and the 1st ABG, now and for years to come."

COL(PR) Delgado said "For all of us in the 1st Air Base Group, signing this MOU is the culmination of years of efforts to formalize our relationship with the 156th AW. This is a historic milestone, and the beginning of a new era of partnership and joint work amongst us. Thanks to COL Vaughan, COL Figueroa, and all the 156th AW leadership and Airmen for believing and trusting in the integrity and capabilities of the 1st ABG's Airmen."

For more information ... http://sgaus.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/156AW-and-1AB-MOU.pdf
U.S. Congressman Hugh Thompson “Tom” Rice Jr. joins South Carolina State Guard.

MAJ GEN Tom Mullikin, Commander of the South Carolina State Guard (SCSG), administered the oath of office to U.S. Congressman Hugh Thompson “Tom” Rice Jr. who was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel on April 3, 2017 in the office of South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster. Prior to the sweating-in, Gov. McMaster said “The SC State Guard represents one more part of the strength and leadership of our state The collaboration between the State and National Guard Is very important. It's working and it has been proven.”

[Pictured L-R are Brig Gen (P) R Van McCarty, Deputy Adjutant General - Army, SC National Guard, MG Mullikin, Gov. McMaster, Congressman (LTC) Rice, and COL Charles Muse a retired US Marine Corps Colonel who today commands the SCSG's 3rd Brigade.]

We'll have more. In the meantime, please visit http://www.sg.sc.gov/ for information about how you too may become a member of the historic SC State Guard. "Professionals serving South Carolina."
The SGAUS Chaplain School will commence in Myrtle Beach, SC, 21-24 September, 2017. There are eight 2 hour training sessions planned beginning Thursday, 21 September with a meet and greet at 1400 hours. This is an exciting time to be part of SGAUS, especially for Chaplains.

Our mission is to provide Support for the Living, Care for the Injured and Honor for the Dead. We accomplish this mission by training at the same level as our counterparts on active and reserve duty. Chaplains are being challenged as never before so the profile of future Chaplains is evolving to meet the demands of an ever-changing environment. Therefore, our objective is to be both theologically as well as psychologically trained and prepared. Our medical professionals have succeeded by healing the mind and body but not the soul. Until recently it was overlooked. The metaphysical combination of mind, body and spirit has to work in tandem for us to be fully functional. This has changed our view of training. We must attain and keep high standards to meet our future challenges.

SGAUS can and will lead the way of our nation in preparing and molding future Chaplains to meet and excel at any challenge. In that context, we will offer a variety of courses that will enhance Chaplain skill, knowledge and ability. A host of outstanding professionals from around the country will be teaching the classes this year. The following list of courses can be available at the Myrtle Beach, SC meeting. We invite all SGAUS Chaplains attending the annual conference to vote on courses you would like presented and in addition offer additional suggestions by contacting CPT Bill Griffin at william.griffin@sg.sc.gov. Courses include but are not limited to:


If you are unable to attend this year's Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach we would still like to hear from you and to have your email address. We are developing a national data base. We would prefer additional information about all the Chaplains in each State Guard or Defense Force. The information would be used to develop meaningful training and assist in creating a standard for Chaplains across the U.S. This confidential data would include:

- Number of Chaplains in each state
- Reporting Structure and duties
- Frequency of Chaplain training
- Requirements to be a Chaplain - i.e., DD2088 / M.Div. or Equivalent
- Years of Pastoral Experience
- Do any have certification in counseling

Your response and participation would be greatly appreciated in helping to plan, train, and structure future meetings and develop meaningful courses. Our Motto: SGAUS Chaplains are second to none.

Login for more information …
https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/chaplain-academy/
On March 25, 2017, the all-volunteer Fourth Regiment (4th REGT) of the Tennessee State Guard (TNSG) participated in Operation Vigilant Guard and Annual Training 2017 (AT2017). Operation Vigilant Guard was a Joint Reception Staging and Onward Integration (JRSOI) exercise hosted by the Tennessee Army National Guard’s (TNARNG) 30th Troop Command (30th TC), based in Tullahoma, Tennessee. The Operation was in support of the Georgia and Kentucky Army National Guard’s response to a simulated category 5 hurricane.

The 4th REGT mobilized and deployed two embedded, four-person Mission Ready Package (MRP) teams, on March 25, 2017, as part of Operation Vigilant Guard. Team Moccasin Alpha was stationed with the 30th TC’s Headquarters in Tullahoma (30th TC HHQ). Team Moccasin Bravo was embedded with the 30th TC’s JRSOI team at the Catoosa Volunteer Training Site (Catoosa VTS). The 4th REGT’s MRP Teams deployed with personally owned uniforms, meals, HF/VHF radios, equipment and antennas at no cost to the citizens of the State of Tennessee. The MRP Teams performed all assigned tasks and transmitted/received 100% of assigned/received messages without incident. Team Moccasin Bravo transmitted 38 digital messages via HF that included eight (8) WAVE Troop Roster .xlsx attachments via Winlink Pactor. This roster data covered more than 220 TNARNG, KYARNG and GAARNG troops. These messages and attachments were all received by Team Moccasin Alpha at the 30th TC’s HHQ. The teams were also able to send and receive image data via .pdf file attachments.
The remainder of the 4th Regiment’s service-members were directing and evaluating the AT2017 Full Scale Exercise (FSE) for the entire Tennessee State Guard. AT2017 was held at the Smyrna Volunteer Training Site (Smyrna VTS). AT2017 was planned in coordination with Operation Vigilant Guard to prepare the TNSG for the TNARNG’s upcoming Tennessee Maneuvers 2017 (TNMAN2017) in June. The TNSG is expecting to deploy communication MRP Teams across the State as part of TNMAN2017.

The 4th REGT was tasked this year with planning and executing a FSE planned under the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) National Planning Scenario Six (Natural Disaster, hurricane) for AT2017. AT2017 contained disaster response, FSE Incident/Area Command, JRSOI and Search and Rescue elements. These are all part of the TNSG METL. The 4th REGT’s AT2017 Planning Team was responsible for creating all elements of the FSE; including the Exercise Plan, Controller/Evaluator Handbook, Controller and Player Handbooks, Participant Feedback Forms, Incident Personnel Performance Rating, After-Action Report and Improvement Plan.

The FSE scenarios were derivatively based on the aftereffects of a Category 5 hurricane making landfall along the Georgia coastline and moving northwest into and across Tennessee. The exercise planning team created three realistic training simulations, situated across the State’s three primary regions, that tested the viability of the Tennessee State Guard’s METL with their companion DHS Target Capabilities. In addition to the FSE, player teams were responsible for deploying MRP teams to the field to conduct tactical VHF/HF communications, monitor and log convoy data and conduct a simulate search and rescue operation.

AT2017 provided each TNSG unit with an opportunity to explore their current signal operating instructions, plans, roles and responsibilities in the event that an Incident Command/Area Command needed to be established within their Area of Operation (“AO”). While several areas for improvement were identified, the overall play demonstrated that the EXPLAN was viable and that the Tennessee State Guard is prepared to manage an ICS FSE efficiently and effectively.

This exercise built upon the successes and lessons learned from Tennessee Maneuvers 2016. The Tennessee State Guard has been working diligently to better integrate with the TNARNG through relationships such as 4th REGT’s work with the TNARNG 30th Troop Command.
3rd Regiment, Tennessee State Guard is Ready for Incident Communications

By MAJ (TN) Alan W. Bagley

After more than three years of intensive training in emergency management and communications policies and procedures, the 3rd Regiment of the Tennessee State Guard has adopted the slogan, “We are Ready!”

“The promise I made the Regiment was that when they could demonstrate capabilities to successfully accomplish our mission we would hang a sign over the door that states, ‘We are Ready!’” said 3rd Regiment Commander, Colonel Tony Shipley. “The performance of this regiment during Vigilant Guard 2017 demonstrated that the 3rd is ready to deploy and serve effectively whenever we are called. We are ready.”

Preparing for natural and man-made disasters is a primary training requirement among emergency response agencies and military organizations tasked with state defense operations. Operating in a structured environment, using standardized command principles, and coordinating among multiple agencies is paramount to the successful operation. As all emergency management professionals know, timely and effective communications is key to having a positive outcome.

The 3rd Regiment training program was developed by Major Theodore E. Shelton, Jr. and Captain Marc L. Rednour of the Operations and Training Section, in conjunction with communicators CSM Johnny M. Essary, CSM D. Scott Caudill and Captain Lee Harrison. The training paradigm is based on breaking large tasks down into small manageable units that can be effectively explained, taught and learned. Soldiers learn best through repetitive acts based on understandable reasoning.

Training at regimental and battalion drills involved standardized FEMA Incident Command System training along with ongoing communications practice. Support and assistance to soldiers encouraged all to seek the FCC Amateur Radio General license. Practice networks operate weekly and include digital training with FLDIGI and WINLINK to enhance the capability to transfer vital data in multiple and redundant formats. Integrating ICS knowledge with All Hazards Communications Leader (COMML) training built competency allowing the soldiers the ability to perform at a professional level.
Having achieved this level of capability, the training continues. Through FEMA National Incident Management Training available through online courses, regiment personnel are required to attain the SGAUS BASIC MEMS qualification and encouraged to seek more advanced individual skill-sets through local and state EMA training. Battalion and Regiment leaders urge soldiers to study further and participate in disaster exercises to earn SENIOR and MASTER badges and to pursue higher levels of FCC Amateur Radio licensure.

The TNSG Annual Training 2017 disaster exercise, Operation Vigilant Guard 2017, simulated a multistate disaster. Mobile Radio Package (MRP) teams were deployed into the field to assess, report, and search. Integrating search and rescue skills and using imbedded field medical personnel, these MRP teams participated in search and recovery of downed aircraft in a realistic functional exercise.

Command military elements integrated with other agencies based upon a multi-agency command center format. ICS principles and military training were blended to effectuate effective command guidance and coordination of the field teams. Utilizing the standard ICS ‘forms’ proved to be an essential asset to smoothly coordinate the command component of the exercise and demonstrate that the Regiment had trained in the exact way it would expect to react in a real-world event. It was evident that the Third Regiment’s determination and training had paid off as they integrated with non-military agencies in the planning and execution of the exercise.

Combining all these mastered skills into a functional skill set proved that the preparation and training worked. The exercise after-action brief declared “The Third Regiment is ready!”

A member of a 3rd Regiment Mobile Radio Package reconnaissance team, 1SG(TN) Michael L. Seals performs emergency triage on a “casualty” from a simulated helicopter crash during Exercise Vigilant Guard 2017 at the National Guard Training Site at Smyrna, TN. (Photo by SGT(TN) Rhonda Beffre)
Texas State Guard perform community service at Wings over Houston Air Show

HOUSTON- As citizen-guardsmen, the Texas State Guard is known for its volunteerism and putting others first, with support to the Wings over Houston Air Show at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base, Houston, Oct. 22-23, 2016, a prime example of serving in their own communities.

For 32 years members from the 8th Regiment, Texas State Guard, have provided event organizers with logistical support. This year, volunteers provided information and directions to a record-breaking 50,000 visitors.

“Because of our participation at the air show, many Texans got to see firsthand a well-trained Texas State Guard, as we assisted the thousands of visitors. Our troops demonstrated professionalism and courtesy as they guided visitors to the many air show venues,” said Col. Edwin Grantham, Commander, 8th Regiment. “Wings over Houston gives the Texas State Guard a real-world opportunity to apply our communications and logistical skills; which are necessary skills when we are called upon to assist our fellow Texans in an emergency.”

For one volunteer this annual air show remains a favorite community service project.

“It always exciting to see the planes and talk to all the visitors and introduce them to the Texas State Guard,” said Staff Sgt. Troy Charleville, 3rd Battalion, 8th Regiment.

During a ceremony at the air show, Col. Grantham and Command Sgt. Maj. John Marshall, 8th Regiment Senior Enlisted Advisor, presented a regimental challenge coin to Col. Richard “Dick” Cole, the last surviving member of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders and co-pilot to Gen. Doolittle during the famous raid on Tokyo during World War II.

“It was a privilege to meet such a legendary pilot and hear his firsthand account of such a pivotal event in the war. There was not enough time in the day to hear about his service to our country,” said Marshall. “It is something I won’t forget.”

According to event organizers, the Wings over Houston Air Show is one of the largest in the United States. For 2016, the main attraction was the U.S. Navy Blue Angels. The event also showcased vintage World War II aircraft.
Texas State Guard members from across the state spent a day at Camp Mabry for the annual training event Saturday afternoon. The training consists of shelter management operations, web-based emergency operations, evacuation tracking procedures, emergency communications and disaster district coordination support. The training activities are designed to strengthen emergency response capabilities.

“This Texas State Guard Annual Training prepares our soldiers, airmen and members of the maritime regiment to local emergency operations centers run by local officials, with the opening of shelters, registration and tracking of storm evacuees, conducting emergency communications and conducting ground search and rescue, in the event of a natural disaster,” Col. David Erinakes, Chief Public Affairs Officer for the Texas State Guard said. The Texas State Guard has been called to state active duty for hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and wildfire disasters in recent years. The volunteer military agency was created to respond to any natural disaster in Texas.

Watch the video at ... https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPVhtn3PfgY

Texas State Guard remodeled headquarters building

Texas Military Department Maj Gen. John F. Nichols Texas Adjutant General, right, and Texas State Guard Maj Gen. Gerald “Jake” Betty, commander of the Texas State Guard conduct a ribbon cutting for the newly remodeled headquarters building at Camp Mabry, in Austin, Texas, Jan. 25, 2017. The renovation increased the Texas State Guard’s ability to better utilize the building’s square footage for training and missions. The Texas State Guard is comprised of more than 1,800 volunteers organized into four components – Army, Air, Medical and Maritime – with individual units assigned throughout the state. (U.S. Army National Guard Sgt. Elizabeth Pena)

The project, which began in April 2015 was state funded and cost $2.4 million. For more information, go to ... https://tmd.texas.gov/texas-state-guard-hosts-ribbon-cutting-for-remodeled-headquarters-building
Medical Academy of SGAUS
By MAY(IN) Julian Ungar MD PhD

SGAUS would like to thank Dr(BG-TX,R) David Cohen for his willingness to serve as SGAUS Medical Academy Chair. Dr. Cohen comes to SGAUS with a wealth of experience. BG(TX-R) Cohen is a cardiothoracic surgeon, Adjunct Professor of Surgery at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and a member of the Bexar County Medical Society. For more information, please see his bio ... BIO

Health & Wellness Bulletin
The Medical Academy of SGAUS is pleased to announce a quarterly Health and Wellness Bulletin for all members of SGAUS.

The Bulletin will be devoted to matters related to health and wellness for soldiers serving in State Defense Forces nationwide. Topics will include the management of heat exhaustion, other tips when on training exercises, such as common poisonous leaves and toxins, other animals encountered in the field (such as identifying poisonous snakes) and common disease affecting older guard members such as hypertension, diabetes and obesity.

The academy welcomes contributions from colleagues in medicine nursing and emergency responders, focused on the above topics. If you know of health professionals who might be interested in contributing or subscribing please contact MAJ Ungar-Sargon MD PhD, editor at Julian.Ungar@igr.in.gov

Login for more information and to view the current issue ...
https://sgaus.org/sgaus-academy/medical-academy/

Contact the Department of the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operation Center anytime by calling (800) 626-3317. You will be immediately referred to a local Casualty Assistance Center, who will report the death to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to stop retired pay and initiate the survivor benefit process. When reporting the death, please provide as much of the information below as you have:
- Full Name
- Next of Kin
- Social Security Number and/or service number
- Circumstances surrounding the death
- Copy of death certificate
- Retired rank
- Copy of the Statement of Service Last DD Form 214)

How to Report the Death of a Retired Soldier
More than 160 members of the Virginia Defense Force conduct hands-on training to improve their individual skills in the areas of interoperable communications, incident management, traffic control and staff operations and planning April 1, 2017, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. Communications support, operations center augmentation and security assistance are some of the many different missions sets the VDF provides as the all-volunteer auxiliary to the Virginia National Guard authorized by the Code of Virginia. Those mission sets take advantage of the wide variety of public safety, military and civilian skills VDF members provide. For more information ... https://www.facebook.com/pg/VaDefenseForce/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1389604501109760
Vermont State Guard welcomes home the Vermont Air National Guard

We here at the Vermont State Guard had the pleasure of welcoming home 300 deployed service members from the Vermont Air National Guard, the return of our brothers and sisters was bittersweet and heartwarming! Welcome home! SFC. Emery (VSG)

SGAUS has partnered with Rothco, the world's foremost supplier of military, tactical, outdoor clothing and gear. We have increased our store offerings from 68 to 1,375 items. Check us out at the SGAUS and/or Rothco store on line at www.sgaus.org
Washington State Guard Partners with Confederated Colville Tribes for ICS Training

SGT R. August, 2nd INF BN, 1st INF BDE, WSG CSM J. Brewer, 2nd INF BDE, WSG

In January 2017 the Washington State Guard (WSG) and the Confederated Colville Tribes (CCT) jointly sponsored the ICS-300 course, Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents. This class built upon a relationship established the previous year, when soldiers from the 2nd IN BDE, WSG, participated in a disaster table-top exercise held by the Tribes. Conducted at the National Guard Readiness Center in Spokane on the last weekend in January, twenty-one students completed the course. The graduates included five soldiers from the 2nd INF BDE, WSG, six members of the Medical Lake Fire Department, wild land fire fighters from the Washington Department of Natural Resources as well as from two federal land management agencies, and both state and federal law enforcement personnel.

Continuing after this success, over the first weekend in March the WSG and the CCT sponsored ICS-400, Advanced Incident Command System, at the Spokane Readiness Center. Four 2nd BDE soldiers completed this training as well, accompanied by fifteen other students. This class also included fire and law enforcement students from the same agencies as before, with the addition this time of four firefighters from the Idaho Department of Lands.

WSG Soldiers lead breakout exercises during the /CS-400 course taught by SGT August.

There was a side benefit from this interagency training, over and above the certifications received. Personnel from multiple agencies, who may end up working together during wild land fires and other disasters, developed a personal connection to and a shared experience with other emergency management personnel. Not least among these benefits is that other emergency responders developed a greater knowledge of the role and capabilities of the Washington State Guard.
Washington State Guard called into active state service.

Governor Inslee declares emergency proclamation --- “I also hereby order into active state service the organized militia of Washington state to include the National Guard and the State Guard, or such part thereof as may be necessary in the opinion of the adjutant general, to perform such duties as directed by competent authority of the Washington Military Department in addressing this event,” reads Inslee’s proclamation. “In addition, the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division, is instructed to coordinate all incident related assistance to the affected areas.” For more information, go to ...

http://www.columbiabasinherald.com/article/20170321/ARTICLE/170329983

Pentagon to Open Online Exchange Shopping to Vets in 2017

A Defense Department retail board has given the green light to a plan to open online exchange shopping to all honorably discharged veterans, with hopes of starting the program on Veterans Day in 2017.

The move, originally proposed by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service in 2014, was approved by the Executive Resale Board early this month. The board unanimously voted to ask the Pentagon to update its policy regarding patronage rules.

Pentagon officials confirmed that the proposal is still under consideration.

The board’s decision was announced in an Aug. 12 email newsletter from the American Logistics Association, which lobbies on behalf of companies that do business with the exchange and commissary systems.

Opening the Exchange to the about 20 million honorably discharged U.S. veterans comes with a strong business case, Exchange officials have said.

The move could produce between $226 million to $1.13 billion in annual sales, according to the 2014 proposal. It could bring as much as $108 million annually in support for MWR programs, which rely on exchange dividends for the bulk of their funding across the services, it says.

However, opening commissary shopping to honorably discharged veterans isn't included in the proposal.