

Bluegrass Guard

Vol. 27, Issue 1 Jan/Feb 2024

Serving the men and women of Kentucky's Army and Air National Guard

TOP
GUARD

2023

**Resolute
Sentinal**
p. 12



:Fitness Corner:

**Commit to a
better diet**
p. 6

AROUND THE GUARD



ON THE COVER - The Kentucky National Guard was awarded this bronze falcon trophy for being recognized as the best prepared National Guard during this year's Association of the United States Army conference held in Washington, D.C., in October. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane)



R&R - The top 37 recruiters with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion who made mission or went over their mission goals were awarded with a full-sized Louisville Slugger bat with their name engraved on the bat head during an award ceremony held at the Galt House Hotel Dec. 16, 2023. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane)



149th MEB - Col. J.B. Richmond relinquished command of the 149th MEB to incoming commander, Col. Brandye Williams, during a ceremony held on Dec. 2, 2023, at the Richmond armory. (Photo by Sgt. Joy Himmelsbach)



138th FAB - Army Capt. Logan Forrest received the MacArthur Award Nov. 17, 2023. The award is given annually to 28 company-grade officers of all three Army components who represent the ideals for which Gen. MacArthur stood: duty, honor, country. (Courtesy photo)



63RD TAB - CW5 David Mattox, B Co., 351st ASB, made his final flight on Friday, Nov. 17, 2023. He will retire at the end of the month with an astounding 43 years of service. His first flight was on Feb. 3, 1986, and since then, he amassed 4,693.6 flight hours. (Photo by Milt Spalding)



75th TC - This year's Soldier of the year went to Spc. Jackie Zheng with the 307th Maintenance Company. Zheng competed with over 20 other competitors during this year's Best Warrior Competition at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, Ky. (Photo by Capt. Cody Stagner)



123rd Airlift Wing - Air Force Master Sgt. Jason Newby, left, flight service center and equipment supervisor for the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, and Senior Airman Elijah Lamastus, readiness and training non-commissioned officer for the 123rd Medical Group Detachment 1, sound the horn to start the University of Louisville-Virginia Tech football game at L&N Credit Union Stadium in Louisville, Ky., Nov. 4, 2023. (Photo by Phil Speck)



238th RTI - Several Soldiers from 1/238th made the trip to Fort Sill, Oklahoma (home of the King of Battle) this week to attend the TY24 Field Artillery RTI Synch. Along with meeting and greeting members of the field artillery subject matter expert cell, and other FA RTIs, the Soldiers took some time to visit some landmarks around Fort Sill. (Courtesy photo)

IN THIS EDITION

- 7 Infantry wins Kerwin Award
- 10 AUSA honors Kentucky as Best Guard in the country
- 18 In the Spotlight: Top Air Guard Photo



BLUEGRASS GUARD

100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601
Phone: 502-607-1713/1898
ky.ng.mil

COMMAND STAFF

State Commander in Chief
Gov. Andy Beshear
The Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. Haldane B. Lamberton
Assistant Adjutant General, Air
Brig. Gen. Davis J. Mounkes
Assistant Adjutant General, Army
Brig. Gen. Brian Wertzler
Chief of Staff, Air
Brig. Gen. Mary S. Decker
State Command Chief Warrant Officer
Chief Warrant Officer Ricky Skelton
State Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Withers
State Command Chief Master Sergeant
Command Chief Master Sgt. James Tongate

STAFF

State Public Affairs Officer
Lt. Col. Carla Raisler
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Det. Commander
Maj. Michael Reinersman
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Officer
Lt. Col. Dale Greer
Editor
Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane
Copy Editor
Capt. Cody Stagner
Graphic Designers
Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane
Sgt. Destini Keene

Contributors

123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Bluegrass Guard is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. The contents of The Bluegrass Guard are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Departments of the Army or Air Force.

The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs Office.

The Bluegrass Guard is distributed free to all members of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard, retirees of the Kentucky National Guard and to other interested persons by request.

Guard members and their Families are encouraged to submit articles meant to inform, educate or entertain Bluegrass Guard readers. Circulation: 11,500

Please report any corrections to:
Bluegrass Guard
100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601
KYNG.PAO@mail.mil

A WORD FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL



Across our entire Kentucky National Guard force structure, we've been recognized this past calendar year as never before.

First, the 123rd Airlift Wing was recognized by the Secretary of the Air Force with its 20th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for excellence. Only the most exceptional units are chosen from all components of the Air Force to receive this recognition based on their service. Our 123rd AW clearly performs above and apart from similar units. The service must include the performance of exceptionally meritorious service, the accomplishment of a specific outstanding achievement of national or international significance, combat operations against an armed enemy of the United States, or military operations involving conflict with or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force. Qualifying for this recognition is highly challenging, as the award is usually granted to only the top five percent of units. It's a significant honor for our Airmen to receive such recognition, a distinction that many Air Force veterans never experience.

Building on this momentum, the Kentucky National Guard achieved another unprecedented milestone when it was introduced as the recipient of the National Guard Command of the Year Award for 2023 by the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA). The AUSA had never recognized any National Guard entity in such a capacity. This recognition was based on our performance and commitment to readiness. I believe this acknowledgement directly reflects our always-ready stance and preparations we made to respond to the previous year's tornadoes and floods in the Commonwealth, where both Army and Air components of our KYNG were called upon multiple times to assist our fellow Kentuckians.

Similarly, the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regiment, was also recognized by the AUSA with the 2023 General Walter T. Kerwin, Jr., Readiness Award. This award was presented on behalf of the National Guard Association of the U.S. (NGAUS), AUSA, and the Reserve Officers Association (ROA). This is the second time for awarding this battalion with the Kerwin Award. Most recently, elements of

“ I believe this acknowledgement directly reflects our always-ready stance and preparations we made to respond to the previous year's tornadoes and floods in the Commonwealth. ”

the 1-149th were simultaneously deployed to Kosovo as part of Operation Joint Guardian and Djibouti as part of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa. Associated with this recognition, the battalion also received the 2023 Major General Milton A. Reckord Trophy for the highest training and readiness as determined by NGAUS during their annual conference.

Andy Beshear, our Governor, has said more than once this Commonwealth has the best State National Guard in the country. I believe this statement is true and refers to our response to Commonwealth incidents like floods, tornadoes, and a pandemic, as well as domestic deployments supporting Customs and Border Protection along the southwest border and various operational deployments worldwide.

By the previously mentioned recognition to the Airmen and Soldiers of the KYNG, we've given him some credibility behind his statements.

In the Kentucky National Guard, we are fortunate to have high-quality Soldiers and Airmen, whose motivation and dedication set us apart. Unlike many organizations, we benefit from having individuals who are not only eager to contribute but also committed to improving our organization. Their hard work and dedication are the driving forces behind our progress, establishing the Kentucky National Guard as a distinguished and exemplary force.

MAJ. GEN. HAL LAMBERTON ★ ★



GUARD SOLDIERS HONORED WITH GOVERNOR'S OUTSTANDING UNIT CITATION FOR SOUTHWEST BORDER SUPPORT

By Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane,
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs Office

Governor Andy Beshear honored Soldiers from seven Kentucky National Guard units who served along the southwest border since 2020 at the Capitol Rotunda, Oct. 26.

Representatives from each unit received the Governors Outstanding Unit Citations for their service.

They represented the more than 750 Soldiers who have supported civilian

law enforcement agencies along the southwest border.

During the ceremony, Gov. Beshear thanked the Soldiers for their service to the Commonwealth and added that the nation is safer because of their efforts while deployed.

"Border security is national security, and you all have been there to serve our nation in a mission where we needed you.

For that, I am grateful. Your Commonwealth is grateful, but your country is also grateful," Beshear said.

He added, "Your work has made it easier for Customs and Border Patrol agents to carry out their law enforcement duties."

For those that have been along the border putting in the work, like Army Maj. Nathaniel Brown, commander for Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 376th Aviation, getting the recognition



from the governor was impactful.

"Getting recognized by the governor is significant, especially for all the Soldiers that have sacrificed time away from home in order to support this mission," he said. Brown has been deployed along the southwest border three times in the past ten years, but two of those times were within the last three years.



SCAN QR CODE FOR FULL STORY



LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

The Bluegrass Guard values opinions

To comment, keep remarks under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:

Mail The Bluegrass Guard
KYNG Public Affairs
100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601

E-Mail KYNG.PAO@mail.mil

• • • •

We reserve the right to edit letters for tone, length, clarity, and factual accuracy.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Don't miss an issue

All change of address requests should be made by the unit clerk using IPPSA for all current Army or Air National Guardsmen. The Bluegrass Guard is mailed out via alert roster addresses at the unit level.

Army Retiree address changes should be made through Personnel Services Branch at 502-607-1497 or email benjamin.martinez9.mil@army.mil.

Air Retirees should request changes through retired Chief Master Sgt. James Turpin at jturpin1945@gmail.com.



USE YOUR PHONE TO SCAN FOR LINKS
TO ALL OUR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

FITNESS CORNER

NUTRITION IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE!

BY SGT. DESTINI KEENE



I TEND TO ENJOY MY FAVORITE FOODS IN MODERATION TO STAY ON TRACK FOR MY PERSONAL FITNESS GOALS. YOU CAN MAKE UP A MISSED WORK-OUT, BUT *IT IS HARD TO OUT-TRAIN A BAD DIET.*



Photo by Andy Dickson



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane

New Year, New You!
Develop and maintain healthy habits:

- Eat lean protein
- Choose whole grains
- Snack on fruits and vegetables

KENTUCKY INFANTRY WINS NATIONAL AWARD FOR READINESS

Courtesy photo

By Milt Spalding, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs Office

The Kentucky National Guard's 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry was recently honored with the 2023 General Walter T. Kerwin, Jr. Readiness Award. The unit received the award at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) national meeting and exposition Oct. 9 in Washington.

This is the second time the battalion had received the award. The "Mountain Warriors" first received it in 2013. The award is presented by the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) and the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) and the Reserve Officers Association (ROA). The battalion was also the recipient of the 2023 Maj. Gen. Milton A. Reckord Trophy which secured their entry for the Kerwin Award.

With its footprint spread across southeast Kentucky, the 1-149th produces "tough and resilient Soldiers who take pride in their heritage and service to the Commonwealth and nation," said Col. Jason P. Penn, commander of the 75th Troop Command.

"Readiness is the foundation that allows units in the 75th Troop Command to provide manned, trained, and equipped forces that can support our nation's National Defense Strategy when called upon," said Penn, a Barbourville native and former leader of the Mountain Warrior battalion.

"The fact that the 1-149th won the Walter T. Kerwin, Jr. Readiness Award for outstanding Army National Guard readiness speaks volumes to the Soldiers and leadership

of the Mountain Warriors and their desire to support and defend this nation. They are an outstanding unit and deserve all accolades presented to them," Penn said.

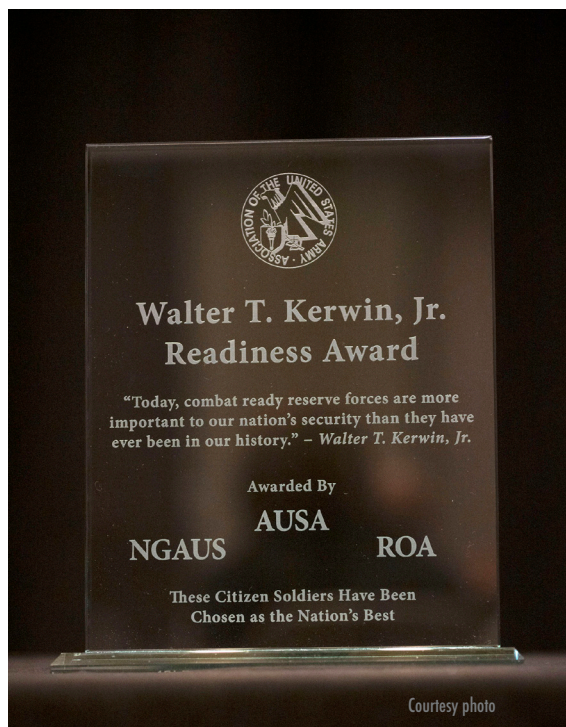
The battalion's most recent assignments were its 2021-2022 dual-deployments to Kosovo and Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, in support of Operation Joint Guardian and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), respectively.

In Kosovo, approximately 200 Mountain Warriors from Headquarters and Headquarters Company in Barbourville, Springfield-based Delta Company, and Ravenna-based Charlie Company, served side-by-side with NATO partners to help maintain peace and stability in the Eastern European region.

Another 170 Soldiers from Hopkinsville-based Bravo Company along with scouts, snipers and mortars teams from Detachment 1, Headquarters and Headquarters Company out of Somerset, deployed to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"The Kerwin Award recognizes the Soldiers' hard work and their contribution to the battalion's success. While the battalion-level command team may physically receive the award, it's truly a

testament to the dedication of our individual units. We couldn't be prouder of our Mountain Warriors over these past few years," said Hughes.



Courtesy photo

SCAN HERE TO READ
FULL STORY





KENTUCKY AND PUERTO RICO NATIONAL GUARD DETACHMENTS EXECUTE JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE

By Airman 1st Class Sharymel Montalvo,
156th Wing Public Affairs

SALINAS, Puerto Rico – Airmen assigned to the Puerto Rico Air National Guard's 156th Medical Group, Detachment 1, partnered with the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Medical Group, Detachment 1, and the Puerto Rico Army National Guard to conduct a collective training exercise focused on implementing the National Guard CBRN Response Enterprise Information Management System at Camp Santiago Joint Training Center here Aug. 10.

The new information system is geared to improve and accelerate data collection from search and extraction teams in emergency events.

During the training, those teams used the Android Team Awareness Kit and Mobile Field Kit software to pinpoint and send real-time information to a medical element managing NGCIMS about sensor readings, simulated victims and obstacles while searching a large rubble pile scenario.

"From requesting equipment to tracking in real-time incidents that are occurring, or even the total number of patients that we manage, we can input

that data into the system, and all pertinent areas have access to that information," said Lt. Col. Sonia Ortiz Flores, commander of the 156th MDG, Det 1.

During the exercise, the 123rd MDG, Det 1 brought a new inflatable tent system, which is more time efficient, easy to set up and less hazardous to deploy than previous tents.

This allowed Airmen with the 156th MDG, Det 1 to get hands-on experience with that new tent system prior to receiving their equipment.

"Bringing our new ZUMRO tents and showing off the setup versus all the manpower that is required with the current tents, has been a fantastic training event for everyone," said Lt. Col. Tiffany Hubbard, commander of the 123rd MDG, Det 1. "Having this exchange, where we do the same mission, and we're able to see how others do it, offers insight on how to improve and gain

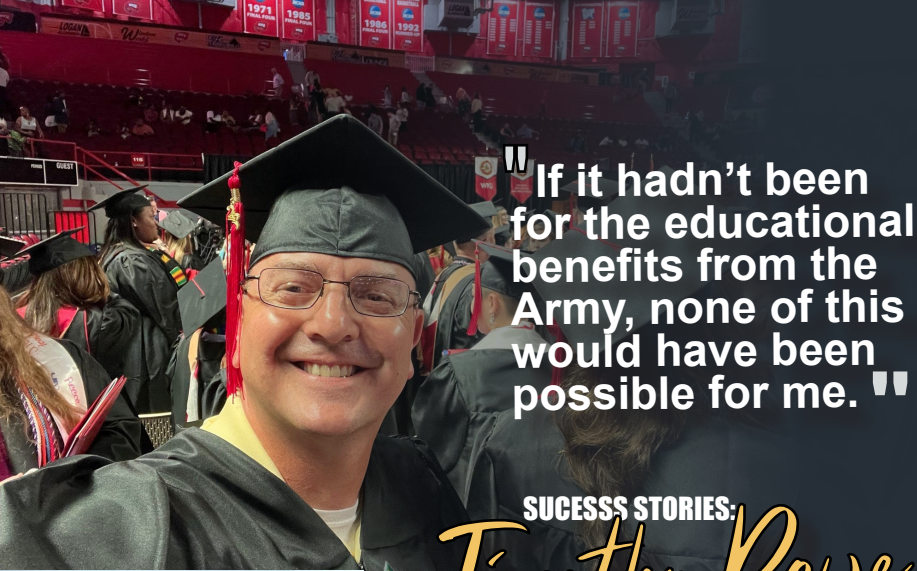
knowledge to make the mission more complete."

"Training allowed the participants to create reports, requests for assistance and track expendable equipment all with the push of a couple of buttons, learning to utilize the new NGCIMS tools to bolster the mission they already do.



SCAN HERE TO READ FULL STORY





"If it hadn't been for the educational benefits from the Army, none of this would have been possible for me."

SUCCESS STORIES:

Timothy Rowe



National Guard member graduates using ArmyIgnitED

By Andy Dickson, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs Office

Citizen Soldiers must balance many parts in life to be able to be successful and obtain their goals; they must attend drill, work a civilian job, make time for family, and focus on military professional education.

On top of those tasks, taking advantage of educational benefits is on the list that many Soldiers and Airmen have, yet they struggle to find time to even apply for benefits.

For the Army, one of the programs to help streamline the process is ArmyIgnitED, an Army enterprise portal to request financial assistance for classroom and online learning courses.

Previously, Soldiers needed to go to Army Education Centers to use a paper-based system to apply for benefits online to include Tuition Assistance and Credentialing Assistance.

For Master Sgt. Timothy Rowe, a full-time supply sergeant with the 75th Troop Command, that meant working with the Kentucky National Guard's Education Center to learn about the website.

After being in the Guard for 25 years, Rowe decided it was time to earn his bachelor's degree.

"It's not easy being an AGR (active-guard reserve) Soldier and trying to go to school at the same time," said Rowe. "So, I did what a lot of students are doing today, I started taking classes in the evening hours at Kentucky Community and Technical College in Bowling Green in the fall of 2017 for a few semesters using the tuition assistance to pay for my classes."

When Rowe was promoted to master sergeant and moved to Louisville, he continued his classes online until he graduated in May 2023.

"I graduated from WKU with a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies with an emphasis on sociology and behavioral science with zero money out of my pocket," said Rowe.

ignited

Powered by Army

ARMYIGNITED IS THE ARMY'S ENTERPRISE VOLUNTARY EDUCATION PORTAL THAT ALLOWS ELIGIBLE SOLDIERS, CADETS AND ARMY CIVILIANS TO REQUEST FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CLASSROOM AND ONLINE LEARNING COURSES ANYTIME AND FROM ANYWHERE. (www.armyignited.army.mil)



TUITION ASSISTANCE



CREDENTIALING ASSISTANCE



CIVILIAN TRAINING



CADET SCHOLARSHIP



(Photo by Dale Greer)

KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD SELECTED AS TOP COMMAND

By Tech. Sgt. Joshua Horton,
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Kentucky National Guard has been awarded the 2023 Association of the United States Army's trophy for best National Guard command.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Haldane Lamberton, Kentucky's adjutant general, said the award reinforces what he's always known about the Kentucky National Guard.

"What I am certain of is the quality of Soldiers, Airmen and leaders we have in the Kentucky National Guard," Lamberton said. "The response by our folks in operational environments, inside and outside of the continental United States, or simply in our communities, causes me to be sincerely proud to be one of you."

U.S. Air Force Col. Bruce Bancroft, commander of the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, told his Airmen the award reflected their commitment to duty.

"Your benchmark performance across the Commonwealth and across the combatant commands



has been nothing short of phenomenal," he said. "You are the recognized standard against which others are measured, and I'm incredibly proud of your dedication to serve the citizens of this great nation. No one does it better."

The Association of the United States Army is a nonprofit educational and professional development association.



Col. Bruce Bancroft, 123rd Airlift Wing commander, pins a streamer to the unit colors during a ceremony at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base in Louisville, Ky., Oct. 14, 2023. The streamer signifies the unit's selection for its 20th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, continuing its legacy as one of the most decorated organizations in U.S. Air Force history. (Photos by Tech. Sgt. Joshua Horton)

GOV. BESHEAR HONORS KY. AIR GUARD AS 123RD AIRLIFT WING EARNS 20TH OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD, MERITORIOUS UNIT AWARD

By Dale Greer,
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear praised the men and women of the 123rd Airlift Wing for superior performance during a ceremony here Oct. 14 to honor one of the top wings in the U.S. Air Force.

As the primary operational unit of the Kentucky Air National Guard, the wing received its 20th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for excellence in a broad spectrum of missions around the world — a rare achievement. The wing also accepted its first Meritorious Unit Award during the ceremony, for providing key support during the evacuation of civilians from Afghanistan in 2021.

"We're back here once again to celebrate the 123rd Airlift Wing as you continue your streak of being one of the most decorated

units in the United States Air Force," Beshear told an audience of more than 500 Airmen in a hangar at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base. "This comes as no surprise. Over the last nearly four years, I have seen our National Guard at work on the front lines, battling a once-in-a-hundred-year pandemic, helping respond to deadly tornadoes in the west in 2021, and then helping rescue our people



from flooding in the east in 2022. "I believe our Guard and other first responders, especially in the course of that flooding, showed us the best emergency response to a natural disaster that this country has ever seen. Based on your and other efforts, 1,400 Kentuckians were rescued in a 48-hour period. That's 1,400 of our friends, our family members, our neighbors that are alive because of your excellence."

Beshear said the wing's latest achievements continue a long legacy of service, and are rightfully being recognized with another Outstanding Unit Award. That honor is bestowed by the secretary of the Air Force to units that display exceptionally meritorious service of national or international significance, including combat operations against an armed enemy of the United States. The latest AFOUA is the Louisville-based wing's 20th overall, and its eighth consecutive such honor.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO
READ FULL STORY



KENTUCKY AIR GUARD'S SPECIAL TACTICS PLAYS KEY ROLE FOR RESOLUTE SENTINEL IN PERU

By Phil Speck, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Four members of the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron played a key role in Resolute Sentinel 23, a multi-national exercise in Peru to enhance readiness, cooperation and interoperability between partner nations.

The training, held in July, involved both U.S. active-duty and Reserve Components, as well as Peruvian forces, all working together to address security challenges and humanitarian crises, said Tech. Sgt. Phil Trojanowski, a combat controller with the 123rd STS.

His unit was tasked with providing safety oversight for a Forward Area Refueling Point while working alongside Peruvian special operations forces.

"The exercise went really well," Trojanowski said. "They learned from our tactics, techniques and procedures, incorporating them in their mission-planning and mission-execution processes, and we enhanced our understanding of theirs."

The two special operations units compared and contrasted different ideologies, and both parties learned something new, he said.

"The guys that you're working with are professionals, and they know what they're doing. You can always learn from them if you're willing to. It was a great experience for us."



LEFT: Air Force Special Warfare operators participate in a casualty evacuation training scenario with U.S. Army and Peruvian special operations forces during Resolute Sentinel 23 in Peru, July 20, 2023. The exercise aims to improve readiness of U.S. and partner-nation military and interagency personnel.

L



U.S. Air Force operators assigned to the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron conduct a casualty evacuation training scenario with the U.S. Army's 7th Special Forces Group, Peru's Defensa y Operaciones Especiales and other Special Operations Forces assets during exercise Resolute Sentinel 23 in Peru, July 20, 2023. Resolute Sentinel improves readiness of U.S. and partner nation military and interagency personnel through joint defense interoperability training, engineering projects and knowledge exchanges. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Chris Hibben)

RIGHT: U.S. Air Force operators assigned to the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron conduct a casualty evacuation training scenario with the U.S. Army's 7th Special Forces Group, Peru's Defensa y Operaciones Especiales and other Special Operations Forces assets during exercise Resolute Sentinel 23 in Peru, July 20, 2023. Resolute Sentinel improves readiness of U.S. and partner nation military and interagency personnel through joint defense interoperability training, engineering projects and knowledge exchanges. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Chris Hibben)



A QUICK LOOK INTO

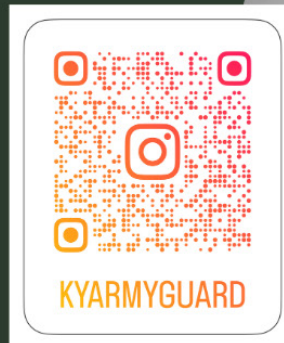
KENTUCKY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SOCIAL MEDIA

What have we made happen? →

FOLLOWER COUNT

INSTAGRAM	3,657
FACEBOOK	36,346

SPC Hardesty



SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW COUNTER

INSTAGRAM

→ 1.4M VIEWS

"How to Fix a Broken Heart"

→ 15K VIEWS

NSYNC New Recruit

→ 6,115 VIEWS

"Have You Talked with a Recruiter Today?"

FACEBOOK

→ 292K VIEWS

"Have A Great Guard Day"

→ 132K VIEWS

Drill Sergeants at Fort Jackson

→ 186K VIEWS

Enlistments of the Week



SGT Taylor



Reminder

LIKE & FOLLOW
KENTUCKY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



SGT Berry





WHAT MY PROMOTION MEANS TO ME...

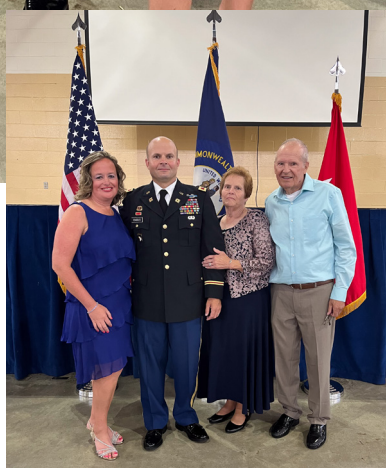
Col. Steven E. Engels
Logistics Management Officer, G4

Promotion to the rank of colonel represents a pinnacle achievement in my career to this point. It fills me with gratitude, pride, humbleness, and fond reflection of all my brothers and sisters in our profession of arms who I have been privileged to serve with over the last 27 years. I know my granddad would be proud, as he always told me I would achieve this rank one day. I did not believe him those many years ago, but I am humbled now knowing he was right.

"I did not believe him those many years ago, but I am humbled now knowing he was right."

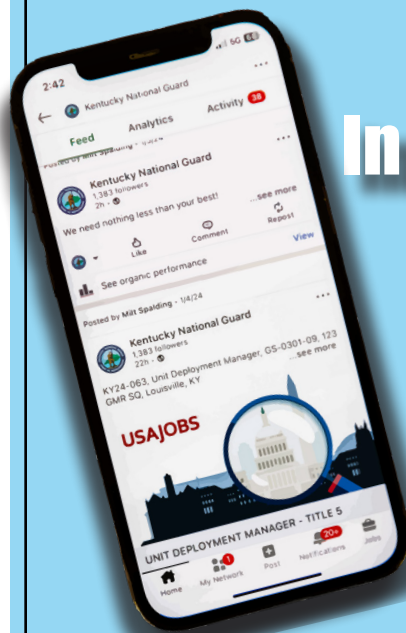
our Nation. As I realize the magnitude of trust and leadership this prestigious rank holds, I commit to give my all to the Soldiers who make this organization what it is. Our collective responsibility is to fight and win our nation's wars, wow, what a huge responsibility. "Always ready, always there," Fight as Kentuckians!

Thank you to all our senior leaders and special thanks to my mentors, COL (R) Terry Orange, COL (R) William Denny, and COL (R) Jim Covany for their confidence and faith in me through the years. Finally, a loving thank you goes to my wife, Jessica, and my mom and dad.



The KYARNG is a tremendous organization with incredibly talented Soldiers across all ranks who I am proud and privileged to serve with. I want to thank each and everyone of you for your unwavering service to our Commonwealth and

Linked in



In need of
employment

or just
want a change
in work
environment?

**Follow us on LinkedIn
for job postings as an
Active Guard Reserve
(AGR) Soldier,/Airman or
as a Technician .**



KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD **YOUTH CAMP**



***“It’s a joy to
connect with
military youth
and provide
resources that
nurture their
growth into
young adults”***

**-Ms. Natalie Shaner,
Military and Family Services, Child and Youth
Services coordinator**



(Photos by Capt. Cody Stagner)

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO READ
MORE ON THE YOUTH CAMP**



LEADERSHIP PROFILE:

DRERUP RECOGNIZED BY SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE FOR LEADERSHIP

By Capt. Cody Stagner, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Kentucky Army National Guard Capt. Sarah Drerup was recognized on December 5, 2023, in a ceremony at the Recruiting and Retention Battalion Headquarters for her accomplishments during her deployment in 2022.

Lt. Col. Jason Mendez, commander of the R&R Battalion, hosted the event where Drerup received recognition from U.S. Army General Christopher G. Cavoli, Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

"We were very proud and grateful that Capt. Drerup volunteered for this mission," said Mendez, commander of the R&R Battalion and former commander of the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regiment. "She wasn't a part of the infantry battalion, but she sought us out when she saw there was a need. For those of you who work with her, you know her professionalism and her true care for Soldiers is very genuine."

Drerup was recognized for her leadership while deployed to Kosovo with the Mountain Warriors in support of Operation Joint Guardian.

"Operation Joint Guardian was such a unique and rewarding mission," said Drerup, the current sexual assault response coordinator for the 1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery Regiment. "I am so thankful for the opportunity to serve with the 1-149th and the chance to contribute positively to so many people's lives."

As call-sign "Kilo 20," she commanded a Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) consisting of three sub-teams and nine personnel and was responsible for weekly planning and execution of Soldier and



Capt. Sarah Drerup, greets Sokol Haliti, the mayor of Viti, Kosovo, while deployed in support of Operation Joint Guardian, Oct. 18, 2022. (courtesy photo)



U.S. Army National Guard Capt. Sarah Drerup receives the Supreme Allied Commander Europe's Recognition Award from Lt. Col. Jason Mendez during a ceremony at the Kentucky National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion Headquarters in Frankfort, Kentucky, Dec. 5, 2023. (Photo by Capt. Cody Stagner)



senior-leader engagements with community leaders.

"I have to give credit to Delta Company and my hard-working liaison monitoring team, K20," said Drerup.

"Each Soldier on our team wanted to make a positive impact on the lives of the people of Klokot and Viti—our municipalities—and I know their service will have long-lasting, beneficial effects to the people of Kosovo."

Her team conducted more than 500 independent patrols, drove more than 100,000 kilometers, and participated in more than 40 community events purposed to build relationships and foster conflict prevention in the region of Kosovo.

Drerup was nominated by Hungarian Army Maj. Gen. Ferenc Kajari, commander of the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

According to Kajari, Drerup's outstanding performance in leadership played a key role in supporting Kosovo's Regional Command—East in maintaining a safe and secure environment and ensuring freedom of movement for all people in Kosovo.



SCAN HERE TO READ FULL STORY



(Photo by Capt. Cody Stagner)



Phil Speck, superintendent of the 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, was named Air National Guard Civilian Photographer of the Year in the 2022 Air National Guard media contest for a collection of photos, including this one depicting security forces training at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., on May 18, 2022. Speck is an Air Reserve Technician.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



PHOTO BY PHIL SPECK

Q: WHAT IS THE **MFAST** PROGRAM?

A: The Military Family Assistance Trust (MFAST) Fund offers assistance to Kentucky Guardsmen facing financial hardship due to deployment, catastrophic events, or adoption.

Q: Who can apply for...

Emergency Assistance?

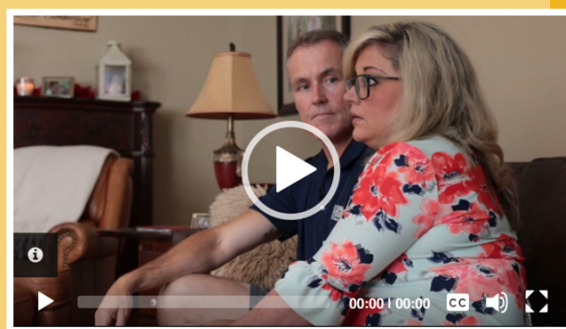
- Must be a KY resident
 - Must be a KYNG/Reserve member or
 - Regular member of US Armed Forces deployed OCONUS up to 180 days post mobilization
- NOTE: Service member or Spouse may apply
1x per fiscal year
NOTE: Funds must be used as a last resort

Adoption Assistance?

- Must be a Kentucky resident
 - Must be a Guardsman in good standing
- NOTE: Benefit provides reimbursement of up to \$7,000 in fees for the adoption of a child (other than the child of a spouse)



Click on the QR Code to watch how the MFAST program Supported Lt. Col. John Harvey and his wife, Miranda, bring home their newest member of their family.



Scan this QR code to read about the journey of Master Sgt. Michael Meredith and wife, Maritza, and discover their valuable insights for navigating a successful adoption with the MFAST program.



IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS EXPERIENCING HARDSHIP, PLEASE VISIT THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS AT DMA.KY.GOV



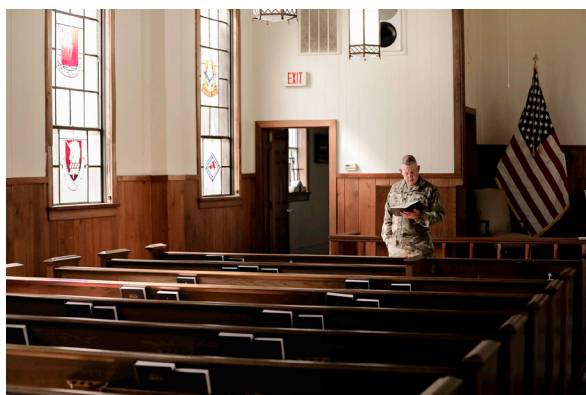
KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD CHAPLAIN PROVIDES SUPPORT AT CYBERSECURITY TRAINING EVENT

Story by 1st Sgt. Mireille Merilice, Oklahoma National Guard,
photos by Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Reno, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Col. William Draper, chaplain with the Kentucky National Guard, provided spiritual guidance and counseling services during the Cyber Shield 2023 training exercise held at the Professional Education Center in Little Rock, Arkansas, June 2-16.

The demand for cybersecurity experts continues to surge, along with the stress of evolving threats and technology. In recognition for holistic support, Draper has taken a proactive approach to ensure the well-being of its cyber warriors during this year's event.

"My role is to ensure all service members and DOD officials have the opportunity to practice their faith during the exercise,"



Draper said. "If service members would like to see me, it's a confidential conversation. I can provide various religious services or counseling." The cybersecurity training event, which brings together professionals from various branches, agencies and

organizations, aims to bolster participants' skills and knowledge in combating cyber threats. The inclusion of religious support services within the event signifies a broader recognition of the multidimensional challenges faced by cybersecurity personnel.

"I've supported Cyber Shield since 2014," Draper added. "The biggest challenge of the event [for service members] is being away from home. It's not the mission, they'll do great and be successful, but it's the things at home that will challenge them the most."

Draper's role extended beyond conducting religious services; he maintained an active presence throughout the exercise and focused on ensuring that attendees focused stress management and resilience-building techniques.

"As a chaplain, if I can be there to provide some comfort or some peace that is part of what I will do," Draper said.

SCAN HERE TO READ FULL STORY



FROM THE CHAPLAIN

LIFE SUPPORT

Chaplain (Col.) Bill Draper

State Chaplain

KYARNG

502-607-1729

william.c.draper6.mil@army.mil

Chaplain (Maj.) Eric Honeycutt

Brigade Support Chaplain

KYARNG

502-607-1232

james.e.honeycutt.mil@army.mil

By Chaplain (Maj.) Eric Honeycutt,
63rd Theater Aviation Brigade

As we enter a new year, start with New Year's Most of these resolutions last long. However, is a great way to start fresh and up for success. We can use a guiding clarity on what we want to achieve, stay motivated and focused, and hold ourselves accountable which helps us time and prioritize our tasks. not have to be perfect; it can the year progresses.

The important thing is to ing point and to begin taking achieve your goals. However, unsure of what the future holds. 16:9 says, "The heart of man way, but the LORD establishes Scripture assures me that no 2024 brings into my life, that it is the Lord who directs my will strengthen me and help a variety of troubles and

many people resolutions. lutions do not making plans to set yourself plan for pro-

manage our A plan does be adjusted as

have a start-action to we are also Proverbs plans his his steps." matter what ultimately steps. He me through difficulties.

Even with all the plans you make, this year may bring many challenges that make it hard to stay focused on your goals. During these times, it is important to remember you are not alone and that there are resources available to you and your family. One great resource is your unit chaplain. If you need someone to talk to, they are there to listen, give spiritual guidance, counseling, and can connect you with other available resources.

Proverbs 16:9

**A man's heart deviseth his way:
but the LORD directeth his steps.**

CHAPLAIN TATE SAYS...



THE FIRST STEP TO COMPLETING THE JOURNEY, IS EXACTLY THAT...

...THE FIRST STEP. STAY THE COURSE, GIVE YOURSELF SOME GRACE, CELEBRATE THE LITTLE VICTORIES, AND ADAPT TO CHANGES ALONG THE WAY. THE STRUGGLE MAY BE REAL, BUT THE GOAL IS WORTH IT.

PROVERBS 16:9



TO READ THE FULL VERSION OF THESE STORIES, SCAN QR CODE OR GO TO KY.NG.MIL



Air Guard civil engineer team takes second place in Air Force competition



By Senior Airman Madison Beichler,
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Two civil engineers from the Kentucky Air National Guard helped their team earn second place in the Air Force Civil Engineer Readiness Challenge, held April 24-28 at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

Staff Sgts. Cathy Chasteen and Tristen Baxter, both assigned to Kentucky's 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron, were among a group of Air Guardsmen from a dozen units who comprised an Air Guard team at the prestigious competition. They competed against seven other teams representing Air Force Reserve Command, Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Global Strike Command, Air Force District of Washington, Air Combat Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa, and Pacific Air Forces.

The competition judged each 41-person team's capabilities in a variety of areas like power production; heating, ventilation and air conditioning; pavement and equipment; water and fuels; pest management; operations; electrical; structures; firefighting; explosive ordnance disposal; and emergency management—all supervised by a civil engineer officer.

The Air Guard team differed from other teams due to its unique multi-unit make-up. Despite limited preparation time, they still secured an impressive second-place finish, underscoring the strength of their diversity and exemplifying the concept of multi-capable Airmen, Baxter said.

"We had a pest management task but no pest management people," Baxter explained. "The Guard does not employ that position. But we were able to work together, and we actually won that task with the highest score."

"Some people on our team found out they were coming two days before," he added. "The team that beat us had been practicing for two months prior, and we were only 20 points away from completely winning."

Kentucky Honor Guard helps put to rest forgotten Medal of Honor recipient

By Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane,
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Honor Guard Soldiers from the Kentucky National Guard were on hand to help honor a Medal of Honor recipient whose grave had gone unmarked and almost forgotten for the past 148 years at Highland Cemetery Nov. 4.

U.S. Army Sgt. John F. Rowalt, of Bellville, Ohio, had served during the American Indian War before contracting smallpox, dying at the age of 28 in Cincinnati and buried at the nearby Kentucky cemetery.

The Honor Guard Soldiers, who regularly perform services for fallen military members, found this one a little more meaningful due to the background of Rowalt and the fact he was nearly forgotten for so long.

"It's definitely something special for us," said Army Sgt. Scott Zelensky, northern Kentucky area coordinator for the Honor Guard. "It's not something we get to do every day, especially for a Medal of Honor recipient, but at the end of the day, we do the same job as normal. We provide the same honors to

that veteran."

"One of our sayings is that we provide the second highest honor to those who knew the first, and I think today would be a perfect example of that," he added.

Representing Rowalt's family was his great niece, Fran Dankovic, of Lexington, Ohio. She was glad to be the one to represent her uncle and was humbled with the amount of support shown to her and her family.

"This is awesome," she said. "I'm so grateful to everyone who helped put this together and to the ones that showed up. I was nervous yesterday thinking about it but being here today has been great."

During the ceremony, Dankovic was presented a folded flag in honor of her late great uncle in honor of his sacrifice to his nation by Capt. Mitchell Hagen with the KYNG Honor Guard.

After the ceremony, Dankovic was emotional and taken aback from her experience.

"I'm at a loss for words," she said. "This was a lot more than I expected. I'm just so honored by all this."

According to Carl Hunnell, research historian and journalist, Rowalt was 19-years-old when he earned the Medal of Honor. As a private serving in Company L with the 8th United States Cavalry Regiment, his unit got into a fight at Lynx Creek in the Arizona Territory during the Apache Wars October 14, 1869. It was during that battle that Rowalt distinguish ed himself earning the Medal of Honor for "gallantry and action with Indians" according to the citation.





Bridging Two Worlds: Kentucky ESGR hosts civic leaders to improve lives of citizen-Soldiers

By Capt. Cody Stagner,
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Haldane B. Lamberton, Kentucky's adjutant general, and retired Brig. Gen. Mike Richie, the Kentucky ESGR committee's state chairman, addressed business and civic leaders during the 2023 Leadership KY Conference hosted in Frankfort on Dec. 14, 2023.

Their dual purpose was to highlight the Kentucky National Guard's roles and express the importance of supporting troops.

"The Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians who work with us number about 8,600," said Lamberton. "Of those, about 2,000 of them are full-time. The rest are what we refer to as part time Guardsmen or drill status Guardsmen. They're the folks who work in your communities and may be summoned to your businesses and organizations. Then, on the weekend, they are called to do their military responsibilities."

He emphasized the value of employing citizen-soldiers in their communities and the crucial support these Soldiers need from employers while on duty.

Lamberton also spoke to the group about the Kentucky National Guard's State Partnership Program and the extension of influence their employees may have on the world stage.

Kentucky Guard honors late pilot held prisoner during World War II

By Dale Greer, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs



There can be little doubt that the spirit of U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jack Henry Owen is alive and well today, nearly 11 years after the former World War II bomber pilot passed away at the age of 92.

On Nov. 13, the adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard presented his family with a posthumous Prisoner of War Medal here, during a ceremony held in Owen's long-time family home. Owen, who retired from military service in 1972 after more than 24 years with the Kentucky Air National Guard, spent 21 months as a prisoner of the German military during World War II. He was not awarded a POW Medal at the time because the honor did not exist until 1985.

Assigned to the Eighth Air Force on July 25, 1943, Owen was piloting a B-17 Flying Fortress over Hamburg, Germany, when the aircraft took hostile fire. He and his crewmen parachuted to the ground but were captured by enemy forces, and Owen remained a POW for the duration of the war.

"The Eighth Air Force suffered the most casualties of any command in World War II — and that's Army, Navy or Marines," said U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. David Mounkes, the Kentucky National Guard's current adjutant general for Air. "Daylight strategic bombing was a dangerous, dangerous mission. But it had to be done."

"I've deployed my entire career, and have logged combat hours over Iraq and Afghanistan," Mounkes told more than a dozen of Owen's family and friends during the ceremony.



Armory named after NCO who served decades in the Guard

By Andy Dickson,
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Kentucky Army National Guard leadership, veterans, and family of Alpha Co. 1-149th Infantry Battalion gathered at the National Guard Armory in Harlan, Kentucky, for the renaming and dedication of the armory on Sept. 21, 2023.

The name change from the Harlan National Guard Armory to the 1st Sgt. Ottis W. Capps National Guard Armory was in honor of a first sergeant who dedicated decades of his career and life to making the armory a community

gathering area and a home to infantry Soldiers.

1st Sgt. Ottis Capps served the battalion since 1967 when he first enlisted and then served in a full-time administrative role as readiness, supply, training, and maintenance NCO for 30 years at the Harlan armory.

The master of ceremonies, Command Sgt. Maj. Gordon Hinkle, a retired senior enlisted leader for the 1-149th who served with Capps, shared how he influenced his career even when he progressed to the position of command sergeant major.

"I worked in Harlan on a daily basis, and during that time, 1st Sgt. Capps taught me what leadership was all about," said Hinkle.

Northern Kentucky University opens doors for Guardsmen

By Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane,
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Leaders from the Kentucky National Guard met with Highland Heights-based Northern Kentucky University (NKU) leadership on Sept. 27 to formalize a partnership that will enable Citizen-Soldiers a smoother path to graduation.

Kentucky's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Hal Lamberton, was joined by NKU's interim president, Bonita Brown, in signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

With the signing of the MOU, Kentucky Guard Service members will have streamlined access to educational support through the NKU Veterans Resource Station (VRS).

"The MOU signing between NKU and the Kentucky National Guard is a historical event signifying our commitment to the uniqueness of them being a Citizen-Soldier and a college student," said Rusty Mardis, coordinator of the VRS. "The MOU symbolizes NKU's dedication to our Kentucky National Guard students and aids them to be successful in college, career and life."

"It's going to benefit the men and the women who are part of the Kentucky National Guard. So, as we enter this relationship, it's the proverbial win-win for everybody," said Lamberton.





100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601
Phone: (502) 607-1000
ky.ng.mil

KENTUCKY ENLISTMENT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

KEEP ROLL UP

Through Dec. 31

91

Enlistments

79

KEEP RECRUITERS

9

REPEAT RECRUITERS

712

KEEP REFERRALS



- Dalton Bahr
- Gabe Denney
- Luke Skinner
- Caleb Snandon
- Nicholas Whitaker
- Chawng Hminngliana

2

Enlistments



**TOP
RECRUITERS**

- Eric Sheaks
- Bryson Mills
- Timothy Pulliam

3

Enlistments

FY23 ROLL UP

66

KEEP ENLISTMENTS

4

REPEAT RECRUITERS

61

KEEP RECRUITERS

511

KEEP REFERRALS