

THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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Ky. maintenance group receives top NGB honor

By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

The Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Maintenance Group was recognized for exceptional performance last month when it was named the 2003 Air National Guard Outstanding Medium Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Year.

The group also was selected as the National Guard Bureau's

nominee for the 2003 Air Force Maintenance Effectiveness Award for medium-sized aircraft.

The unit, commanded by Col. Howard Hunt, distinguished itself by providing superior aircraft maintenance at home and abroad from Oct. 1, 2002 through Sept. 30, 2003.

During this period, the 123rd Maintenance Group was federally activated in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, just months after completing a yearlong mobilization in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

In bestowing the award during a ceremony held on base May 15, the National Guard Bureau's Col. Elliot Worcester called the 123rd "one of this nation's best Air National Guard Units."

"The presentations this morning reflect the services and the sacrifices that you have all made in order to protect our freedom and to bring that freedom to others around the world," he told the crowd of about 500 unit members who gathered for the ceremony in the Fuel Cell Hangar.

"The efforts put forth by the members of the maintenance group in support of this wing's operational mission are noteworthy. From ensuring full mission accomplishment in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom to supporting the community with programs like the Combined Federal Campaign and Special Olympics, you've proven yourselves to be warriors and patriots.

"Col. Hunt provided command leadership and an expeditionary maintenance group, and the maintainers of the 123rd Maintenance Group performed the highest quality of maintenance in deployed locations and at home. You have proven that you have a winning attitude, and I congratulate all of you for winning this outstanding aircraft maintenance unit award," said Colonel Worcester, who is director of logisites for the Air National Guard.

During the award period, the 123rd Maintenance Group deployed 51 personnel and associated equipment to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in support of four C-130s. It also deployed 113 troops and equipment to the Central Command Area of Responsibility in support of six C-130s. Meanwhile, the group's remaining personnel supported Air Mobility Command missions from Louisville.

The combined operations resulted in the generation of 3,196 sorties and 7,821 hours of flight, according to the award citation.

Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, also congratulated the members of the 123rd Maintenance Group, and he expressed his appreciation for the hard work of everyone in the wing.

The colonel, who recently returned from a five-month deployment to Kuwait, told the audience that his experiences there commanding the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing have only reinforced his belief that "nobody does airlift any better than the 123rd."

"I've always been proud to be a part of this wing," he continued, "but the things we've done over the past couple of years and the way we stack up against other units makes me even more proud."



Senior Airman Philip Speck/KyANG

Senior Airman Lee Stanley and Tech. Sgt. Carl Shaffer, both members of the 123rd Maintenance Group, replace a nutplate on a C-130 Hercules here. The group just won a top NGB honor.

Don't be tempted by shortcuts in procedure, professionalism, performance

I have many good memories of riding bikes while growing up. It afforded an expansion of independence that was supplanted only by my driver's license.

The way to almost anywhere out of my old neighborhood would mean a trip past Mr. Scott's house, which was situated on the corner of a "T" intersection.

Although sidewalks bordered his front yard on either side, a telephone pole and a mailbox right on the corner made negotiating the turn at speed quite a challenge — and speed was important.

More often than not, we would cut a clean swath across his yard and never have to break pace.

It was a shortcut used by everyone, and by midsummer, every summer, there was a well-worn, bare path grooved into the yard.

If Mr. Scott minded he never said so; maybe it was because his four kids were among the chief abusers of the lawn.

Anyway, I never gave it much thought until years later when the balance of my attention was turned more toward tending a lawn than riding across one.

It occurred to me that Mr. Scott must have reseeded every fall after most of the bikes were retired for the winter, because every spring a new stand of grass replaced the bare path left from the summer before.

Spring, however, brought out the bikes



Col. Mark Kraus
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

again with riders returning to old habits. By midsummer the cycle had repeated.

Seems like a small thing, but our shortcut cost Mr. Scott a good deal of extra work and probably some aggravation (not to mention having a racing stripe across his otherwise immaculate lawn for half the year).

Some shortcuts, though, can be much more serious and have wider-reaching consequences.

The prison guards at Abu Ghraib in Iraq (and perhaps others in their chain of com-

mand) took shortcuts in their professionalism, procedure and performance of duty in dealing with prisoners under their care.

Human rights issues aside for a moment, their actions — whether thoughtlessly carried out or carefully calculated — have squandered a tremendous amount of progress in the Global War on Terror.

The depth of goodwill erased by the accounts of prisoner abuse is beyond accurate assessment and will likely hamper our effort to stabilize that region of the globe for years.

Hitting closer to home is the incident in which members of this unit brought unauthorized weapons home from Iraq.

The who, when, why, what and how are still being looked into, and there are, no doubt, a thousand excuses — but not one good reason this took place at all.

This much is sure: Liberties were taken, shortcuts were made and the costs for all of us have yet to be tallied.

The lesson for each of us, when tempted to take shortcuts in procedure, in professionalism or in performance of duty, is DON'T!

Shortcuts always come with a price, rarely save enough time or talent to be worthwhile and usually involve "wearing out someone else's grass."

Let's be careful not to put others or ourselves at risk to pay a price for corners we decide to cut.

We owe it to each other to be responsible and considerate in everything we do.

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19 Kentucky airmen receive medals in May

Rosa presented with Bronze Star for service in OEF

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

Hundreds of members of the 123rd Airlift Wing packed into the Fuel Cell Hangar on May 15 to see 19 fellow Guardsmen receive medals for their service to their country, state and community.

Among the recipients was Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa, a combat controller from the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, who was awarded the Bronze Star Medal by Maj. Gen. Donald Storm, adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard.

Sergeant Rosa was honored for his service in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, where he was directly responsible for the safety and security of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

His duties included orchestrating 26 close-air support sorties for overhead security of the president's motorcade and air travel.

Sergeant Rosa's aviation expertise and leadership set the standard for all special tactics troops in country, according to his award citation.

Being selected for the security detail was quite an honor, said Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

"It's a testament to his technical expertise and professionalism," Colonel Kraus said.

"While certainly a reflection on Jon and his ability, on a wider scope it also reflects on all the accomplishments of the special tactics squadron and their unique role in the war on terror.

"If you ask any of those folks, including Sergeant Rosa, they'd just say they were doing their job, but it's more than that."

Colonel Kraus also expressed his appreciation for the exceptional performance of 18 other members of Kentucky Air Guard who were presented with medals during the ceremony.

Most of the 18 airmen were honored for their service in either Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom or both.



Senior Airman Phillip Speck/KyANG

Maj. Gen. Donald Storm, adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard, pins the Bronze Star Medal on Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa here May 15 for his service in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant Rosa served as a body guard to the country's president, Hamid Karzai, for three months in 2003.

Other medal recipients

Meritorious Service Medal

—Lt. Col. Neil Mullaney
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

Air Medal

—Staff Sgt. Joshua Haney
123rd Special Tactics Sq.

Air Force Commendation Medal

—Senior Master Sgt. Howard Rutledge
123rd Logistics Readiness Sq.
(First oak leaf cluster)
—Master Sgt. John Bowling
123rd Maintenance Sq.
—Master Sgt. Troy Ciukaj
123rd Maintenance Sq.
—Master Sgt. Gary Dunlap
123rd Maintenance Sq.
—Master Sgt. Don Fox
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
—Master Sgt. Tim Holaday
123rd Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Donald Overstreet
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
—Master Sgt. Anthony Pickman
123rd Logistics Readiness Sq.
—Master Sgt. Pete Rendon
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
—Tech. Sgt. Morgan Bramer
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
(First oak leaf cluster)
—Tech. Sgt. Curtis Hall
123rd Maintenance Sq.
—Tech. Sgt. Steve Hatfield
123rd Maintenance Sq.
(First oak leaf cluster)
—Tech. Sgt. Ron Thomas
123rd Maintenance Sq.
—Staff Sgt. Larry Burba
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.
—Staff Sergeant Tracy Willen
123rd Logistics Readiness Sq.
—Senior Airman Jeremie Wheatley
123rd Maintenance Sq.

New fitness standards for ANG troops released

By Capt. Kristin Knuteson
Wing Fitness Program Manager

The Air National Guard announced details of a new fitness program in April, making only minor changes to the previous fitness test that was unveiled last year.

Among the changes:

—Test results will be calculated using a point-based system.

—The abdominal circumference location for female measurements has been revised.

—Females will perform full-body push-ups.

—The push-up test will be a one-minute, timed test.

—A 1 1/2-mile run may be performed instead of the step test as long as members meet certain criteria.

The components to be evaluated for a unit member's score are aerobic fitness (50 points), abdominal circumference (30 points), push-ups (10 points) and crunches (10 points).

Total points earned will be divided by the possible points to provide a final score.

Composite scores give fitness levels as follows:

90 or higher = Excellent

75 - 89.99 = Good

70 - 74.99 = Marginal

69.99 or lower = Poor

Those who rate "excellent" or "good" will test once per calendar year.

Members who are "marginal" will retest in six months.

Those who rate "poor" will be enrolled in the Fitness Improvement Program and



Senior Airman Phillip Speck/KyANG

Capt. Kristin Knuteson, the wing's fitness program manager, briefs unit fitness program managers on the newly released physical fitness standards. The new evaluation process will provide unit members with a numerical score based on their performance in aerobic fitness tests, muscular assessment tests and body composition measurements.

will retest no later than six months after their previous test.

The 1 1/2-mile run or the three-minute step test will evaluate aerobic fitness.

Body composition will be determined by waist circumference, and a muscular assessment will be evaluated by the one-minute timed push-up test and the one-minute timed crunch test. Flexibility will be assessed with the sit- and-reach test, but it is not part of

the composite score.

A fitness age will still be provided for the member's knowledge; however, the Air National Guard score will determine whether a member meets the required standard.

Testing for unit fitness program managers and fitness assessment monitors will begin this month.

For more information, contact your unit fitness program manager.

MPF troops receive 24 Achievement Medals since 9-11

By Staff Sgt. Mark Flener
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

Since Sept. 11, 2001, members of the wing's Military Personnel Flight have received 24 Air Force Achievement Medals for their hard work and dedication to duty.

Lt. Col. Dawn Muller, the flight's commander, said the unit is comprised of exceptional airmen who often work well beyond the confines of a normal duty day.

Personnel specialists can, for example, report for duty as early as 3 a.m. and work well into the night when preparing units for deployments or in-processing,

Colonel Muller said.

"When you process people, you're talking about working all hours of the day and night," she added.

Chief Master Sgt. Elizabeth Green, chief of personnel, said it was especially remarkable that the airmen received the honors for their performance during a time when the unit's workload quadrupled.

"We live under pressure," she said, referring to the numerous deployments of Kentucky Air Guard members in support of the Global War on Terror, Operation Iraqi Freedom and other U.S. military operations around the globe.

Honor guard performs with strength, dignity

Team seeks new members

By Senior Airman Wendy Haight
123rd Airlift Wing Honor Guard Member

Grieving family members huddle close as members of the 123rd Airlift Wing Honor Guard pay respect to fallen soldiers and airmen who have given the ultimate sacrifice to pave the path of freedom Americans enjoy every day.

Despite the anguish and despair of the moment — underscored by the graves surrounding us — there is strength and dignity — symbols of the honored profession of arms for which these soldiers and airmen sacrificed their lives.

Amidst the tears and poignant words of farewell, an honor guard team executes ceremonial movements with pride and precision, from the presentation of the American flag to the teary-eyed widow to the 21-gun salute, fired in perfect succession so that it sounds like three shots instead of 21.

As gunfire echoes across rolling hills of Kentucky, feelings shift from the sorrow and grief of loss to the pride and dignity of a fallen airman's accomplishments. More importantly, it becomes apparent to all in attendance that the service stands side-by-side with its people and their families till the end.

This time-honored ceremony remains the core function of the Honor Guard, a 20-person team assigned to the 123rd Airlift Wing here. While other local events capture the imagination of many Honor Guard members, including the dedication of the Veterans' Memorial on Louisville's riverfront, virtually every ceremonial guardsman will tell you there's something truly special — and very important about



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Members of the KyANG Color Guard perform at an awards ceremony earlier this year. The team currently has 20 members but is seeking new participants. The 123rd Honor Guard and Color Guard participates in events ranging from funeral proceedings and memorial dedications to parades and commencement ceremonies.

the memorial services they conduct.

The ceremonial image of Honor Guard members reflects dignity, honor and a strong representation of the values on which the military was founded, said Chief Master Sgt. Sheila Atwell, commander of the 123rd Honor Guard.

"Our team maintains the highest standard of discipline and appearance," she said. "I feel we present a positive attitude and a lasting image of the military members that have come and gone. We are all very proud to be a member of this team, and work hard to show that to all who witness what we do.

"It's an image that's well honored from the beginning of the establishment of the Honor Guard. Most of the unit's men and women — 90 percent — are traditional guardsmen who volunteer their free time to pay a final respect to the soldiers who have sealed our freedoms."

The requirements to become a ceremonial guardsman go much further than image alone, said Senior Master Sgt. Ronnie Holliman, superintendent of the wing's 123rd Services Flight.

Being an Honor Guard member means having pride, respect, honor, dignity and loyalty in addition to a sharp, well-groomed image, she said.

Many choose the Honor Guard from the beginning of their careers, some even before. They say the time-honored tradition is something in which to take ultimate pride.

"I feel that being in the honor guard is a great privilege — and the first word I think of is pride," said Staff Sgt. Cutty Parker of the 123rd Honor Guard. "It takes a special person to be a part of the team, someone who has pride and excellence, someone who exemplifies the three core values of the Air Force."

Besides preserving the tradition of military funerals, the Honor Guard also supports a variety of Color Guard events on base and in the local community.

The purpose of the Color Guard is to represent the United States, the Commonwealth, the Air Force and the Kentucky Air National Guard by presenting the colors of the United States, Kentucky and the U.S. Air Force.

KyANG Honor Guard members attend numerous events, including memorial dedications, parades, graduation and commencement ceremonies, and other events as requested by the community.

The 123rd Honor Guard currently has 20 members and is seeking more individuals to participate in the program, Sergeant Parker said.

In order to qualify, applicants must be interviewed, attend a one-week training class and receive an evaluation. After participants complete the process, they are eligible to perform in ceremonies.

The guardsmen practice quarterly through the year. Each practice lasts approximately four hours and is held in the Base Annex. During the summer months, the Color Guard participates in approximately 30 events; in the off-season, the team is involved in about 15 Color Guard functions.

For more information, contact Sergeant Parker at ext. 4620 option 5, or via e-mail at cutty.parker@kyloui.ang.af.mil.

MDS completes inspection

Cargo Courier Staff Report

The 123rd Medical Squadron successfully completed a Health Services Inspection here April 25.

The inspection, conducted by the Air Force Inspector General from Kirkland Air Force Base, N.M., covered such areas as medical readiness, training, medical operations and leadership.

The squadron's airmen worked exceptionally hard to complete the inspection, said Lt. Col. Diana Shoop, chief of health care support services.

"They are extremely dedicated to the mission and ready for any challenge,"

Colonel Shoop said. "The responsibilities of a unit our size are incredible."

An HSI inspection, which is conducted at Air Guard bases every four to five years, is no small chore.

"Passing one of the toughest Headquarters Air Force inspections is definitely something to be proud of," the colonel said.

The inspectors identified two exceptional areas on base, the Drug Demand and Reduction Program, and the Food Safety Program.

The inspectors noted that they were "two of the best inspected" programs they'd ever seen, she said.

Awareness can prevent suicides

"Suicide is a long-term solution to a short-term problem."

I first heard that phrase nearly 20 years ago when a chaplain was giving the annual suicide-awareness briefing to our unit.

I like the way he framed the issue because most suicidal people want to live, but they aren't able to see alternatives to the situations they're facing at the time.

Most often, suicidal people are temporarily overwhelmed with real-life events, including relationship difficulties, separation, divorce, significant loss, pending legal actions and problems at work.

Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide during a particularly painful personal crisis.

Most people decide to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but suicidal people often perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel a total loss of control.

People with a history of depression may also be vulnerable to thoughts about suicide.

Here are some potential indicators that a person is having suicidal thoughts:

— They may talk about suicide and death, or express that they have no reason to live.

— They may withdraw from friends or social activities.

— They may prepare for their planned

death by making final arrangements.

— They may give away their possessions.

— They may take unnecessary risks or engage in reckless, impulsive behavior.

If you recognize any of these signs in another person, here are some tips to be helpful:

— Show interest and support. Ask directly if the person is thinking about suicide.

— Be willing to listen. Allow for expression of feelings. Accept the feelings without judgment.

— Don't dare the person to do it.

— Don't ask "why." This encourages defensiveness.

— Don't act shocked.

This creates distance.

— Offer hope that alternatives are available. Don't offer glib reassurance—it only proves you don't understand.

— Take action! Remove means!

If you feel you might be suicidal, or you know someone who is, get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

For information or to seek help, contact the wing chaplain at (502) 648-2399 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at (800) 784-2433.

*Maj. Fred Ehrmann
Wing Chaplain*

KyANG unit profile

123rd Special Tactics Squadron

Leadership

Maj. Jeremy J.C. Shoop has commanded the unit since November 1996.



Mission

The squadron is a rapidly deployable special forces unit capable of employment into combat by any means available in the military.

The unit conducts special reconnaissance of assault zone sites; operates terminal airfield objectives; provides combat search and rescue, personnel recovery and battlefield trauma care; and establishes secure command-and-control communications.

Personnel

The squadron has 52 members; nearly half serve full time.

Global engagement

Members of the special tactics squadron were mobilized soon after the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. The airmen deployed to various parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Iraq, Kuwait and Djibouti. Many of their missions and deployment locations remain classified.

Several unit members recently received high-level decorations for gallantry in action.

Last Randolph T-38A simulator shut down

By Bob Hieronymus
12th Flying Training Wing

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — After 26 years of training thousands of pilots, the last full-motion T-38A Talon simulators here was retired.

The once state-of-the-art equipment is being replaced by virtual reality trainers designed to reproduce the cockpit of the new T-38C aircraft.

Ron Hamada, now a training manager at the Air Education and Training Command's directorate of operations, was involved in the installation of the first full-motion T-38A simulators in 1978.

"They were top-of-the-line, state-of-the-art systems then," Mr. Hamada said. "They replaced an earlier, nonmotion link trainer that lacked the desired realism."

To properly copy the aircraft, the old T-38A simulator had cockpits for the instructor and student pilot, each equipped with all the analog gauges and controls found in the real aircraft.

The simulator controller sat at a console about 40 feet away where he or she observed the mission and controlled training through a custom computer and work station.

A television system in front of each cockpit gave visual images of what would be visible outside the cockpit.

As the mission progressed, the whole cockpit moved in response to the program and the student's stick inputs.

Hydraulic cylinders, powered by a 75-horsepower engine and drawing from a 500-gallon oil storage tank in another room, moved the cockpit's platform.

Each piston was capable of quickly extending as much as 56 inches.

The complexity of the system posed many operational and maintenance challenges, said Joe Rippke, 12th Operations Support Squadron's ground training flight program manager.

"When the system worked, which was most of the time, it was great," he said. "But when the valves malfunctioned, the ride could get wild."

The new trainers are based on virtual reality concepts.

The student is given a 180-degree image around and above the front of the cockpit.

As the student "maneuvers" the trainer, the visual images respond graphically to what the aircraft would be doing.

The simulator operator sits behind the student and can talk over the student's shoulder, which allows a degree of instructor-student feedback not possible in the old system.

But the underlying reason for the change is the fact that the new trainer is similar to the new T-38 aircraft.

The new aircraft features improved avionics and support systems, Mr. Rippke said. This makes it closer in design to F-15E Strike Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon and F/A-22 Raptor cockpits.

"A training system has to prepare the pilots for the aircraft they'll fly," Mr. Rippke said.

"The old full-motion simulators don't present the new cockpit and, in the final analysis, the motion part of the training environment was exciting, but wasn't necessary to accomplish the training goals. So this is the time to make the change."

The new trainers are a lot smaller and are controlled by a personal computer capable of sophisticated animations to add realism



Javier Garcia/USAF

The T-38C Talon trainer's "glass cockpit" features the same digital instrument displays that are found in the new T-38C aircraft. The simulator also allows virtual reality views of realistic flight environments. Two simulators will be operational for 16 hours a day to meet student demand.

and training options.

The instructor can even inject a "wingman" into the scenario to add the challenges of formation flying.

The cost of operating and maintaining the new equipment is much less than the old systems, Mr. Rippke said.

The conversion to T-38C aircraft here will be completed by August, so this is an opportune time to install the new trainers, Mr. Rippke said.

"We will have two operational flight trainers and one unit training device on line and expect to keep them running 16 hours a day to meet the student load," he added.

Airmen's access to pay information gets easier

ARLINGTON, Va. — Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials announced May 12 that Airmen can receive personal identification numbers for myPay through their official Air Force e-mail accounts.

Airmen can expect to receive a new or updated PIN within two hours of requesting it on the myPay Web site.

The e-mail PIN delivery process is a simpler, faster alternative to the direct mail and in-person request methods previously available, DFAS officials said.

This capability is especially timely as more people are

realizing the benefits of accessing myPay from remote and deployed sites.

Customers can view, print and save leave and earnings statements, make adjustments to federal and state tax withholdings, update bank account and electronic transfers and change address information, all on-line at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

The Web site is available to all servicemembers, military retirees and annuitants, and Departments of Defense and Energy civilian employees.

Unit members can vote prior to deploying

Members of the Kentucky Air Guard who expect to be deployed in November can easily register to vote and cast an absentee ballot through the U.S. Mail with the help of a federal Web site.

Those who are not registered to vote can complete a Federal Post Card Application and mail it to the state in which they vote.

The cards, which also can be used to request an absentee voting ballot, are available online at the Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site — <http://www.fvap.gov>.

The deadline for voter registration applications is Aug. 15.

Absentee voting ballots are due in their respective states no later than Oct. 11.

Memorial run



Photo courtesy of Senior Master Sgt. Tom DeSchane

Eight members of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron ran the Kentucky Derby Festival's Mini Marathon in May in honor of the unit's fallen airmen, Tech. Sgts. Chris Matero and Martin Tracy. Both were killed during a training mission in September 2002, when the MC-130 they were aboard crashed in Puerto Rico. Matero and Tracy, who served as combat controllers, were avid runners.

Five of the unit members, Senior Master Sgt. Tom DeSchane, Master Sgt. Bill Sprake, Tech. Sgt. Keary Miller, Staff Sgt. Tony Cortese and Staff Sgt. Mason Hoyt, ran the entire 26.2-mile marathon, while 2nd Lt. Sean McLane, Tech. Sgt. Danny Page and Tech. Sgt. Chris Phebus ran the half marathon.

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