

THE CARGO COURIER

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

Vol. XXXIV, No. 2 • Feb. 9, 2019

Decker takes command of 123rd MSG

By Master Sgt. Phil Speck
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

With scores of friends, family and colleagues present, Col. Mary Decker took charge of the 123rd Mission Support Group during a change-of-command ceremony here Jan. 5.

Presiding over the event was Col. David Mounkes, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, who formally passed the group guidon to Decker after praising her predecessor, Col. Patrick Pritchard, who has been named wing vice commander.

“Col. Pat Pritchard has led the 123rd Mission Support Group for two years in an absolutely successful manner,” Mounkes said. “I think most would, without hesitation, agree when I say that Pat has the right mix of skills and gifts to be a leader’s leader, and that the Mission Support Group will miss him as he moves on.

“To replace Pat, we had to find the right person — somebody with an incredibly wide and long resume, with the right experience and proven performance. We’ve done that with Col. Mary Decker.”

Decker enlisted in the Air Force in 1987 and was assigned to Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, where she served as a security specialist. In 1991, she joined the Kentucky Air National Guard and was assigned to the 123rd Security Forces Squadron.

Following graduation from McKendree University, she received her commission in September 2001 and became the wing’s budget officer. Decker then went on to become comptroller and, later, commander of the 123rd Security Forces Squadron.

As a security forces commander, she deployed to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in support of Hurricane Katrina and to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, as the chief of Force Protection in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

After her command positions, she became executive officer for The Adjutant General of Kentucky, Maj. Gen. Edward Tonini. Following that assignment at the state level, she returned to the wing as commander of the



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/KyANG

Col. Mary Decker (right) assumes command of the 123rd Mission Support Group as she accepts the unit’s guidon from Col. David Mounkes, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, during a change-of-command ceremony here Jan 5. Decker replaces Col. Patrick Pritchard, who has been named vice commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

123rd Communications Flight.

Decker then left the Kentucky Air National Guard to work at the Air National Guard Readiness Center at Joint-Base Andrews, Maryland, where she would become comptroller and, later, commander of the 192nd Support Squadron.

Most recently she served as the senior executive officer for the director of the Air National Guard before returning to the Kentucky Air National Guard to take her current post.

“To the personnel of the 123rd Mission Support Group, I’m very excited and honored to be your commander,” Decker said. “Over the years, I have visited many units and can tell you without a doubt, you are an outstanding group of talented professionals. The best example is your most recent deployment, where more

than 153 Mission Support Group personnel, both full-time and part-time, deployed.”

Before Decker closed, she thanked retired Col. Robert H. Williams III, a former mission support group commander.

“Thank you for being here today and thank you for your mentorship over the years,” Decker said. “I don’t know if I’d be here today if it weren’t for you sitting down with me when I was a young staff sergeant and discussing commissioning opportunities.”

The Mission Support Group is the wing’s largest and most diverse group, with more than 400 Airmen who provide base fire protection, security and force protection, civil engineering, disaster preparedness, communications, personnel, dining, lodging and information technology services.

Ehrman named to USAFE-AFAFRICA post

123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Chaplain James F. "Fred" Ehrman has been named Air National Guard assistant to the command chaplain, United States Air Forces Europe and Air Forces Africa.

Ehrman, who most recently served as chaplain for the 123rd Airlift Wing, also was promoted to the rank of colonel during a ceremony in the Base Annex here Jan. 5.

In his new role, Ehrman advises USAFE-AFAFRICA and Air National Guard leadership on all matters that pertain to religious freedom, accommodation, morale and activities related to the Air Guard Chaplain Corps.

He also oversees integration of ANG chaplains into USAFE-AFAFRICA missions, exercises and theater security packages, including military-to-military and key leader engagements.

Lastly, Ehrman serves as command chaplain, providing spiritual support to five combatant commands, nine major operating bases or wings and more than 80 geographically separated units.

Ehrman began his military career in 1984 after graduating from Davidson College in the Army ROTC program. He served four years on active duty as an intelligence officer before transferring to the Army Reserve to attend graduate school at the University of Texas in Austin.

He then transferred to the Air Force Reserve while completing a doctorate in German literature. He was commissioned in the Air Force Reserve as a chaplain candidate in 1996 and into the active-duty chaplaincy in 1999, serving at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

Ehrman joined the Kentucky Air National Guard in 2002 and served the Louisville-based 123rd Airlift Wing for 16 years.



Master Sgt. Vicky Spesard/KyANG

Chaplain Fred Erhman is promoted to the rank of colonel with the help of family members during a ceremony here Jan. 5. Erhman, who previously served as chaplain at the 123rd Airlift Wing, is now Air National Guard assistant to the chaplain, U.S. Air Forces Europe and Air Forces Africa.

This Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of The Cargo Courier are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard. All photographs are Air National Guard photographs unless otherwise indicated.

We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Our office is located in Room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building, 1101 Grade Lane, Louisville, KY 40213.

Wing Commander.....Col. David Mounkes
 Joint Force HQ Chief of Public Affairs.....Lt. Col. Dale Greer
 Wing Public Affairs Officer.....Maj. Allison Stephens
 Staff Writer.....Master Sgt. Philip Speck
 Staff Writer.....Master Sgt. Vicky Spesard
 Staff Writer.....Master Sgt. Austin Shaffner
 Staff Writer.....Staff Sgt. Joshua Horton
 Staff Writer.....Airman 1st Class Chloe Ochs

Phone: (502) 413-4089 • Email: allen.d.greer.mil@mail.mil

Visit our public website for expanded online content — www.123aw.ang.af.mil • Follow us on Facebook — www.facebook.com/123AWKY