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123rd Services named best in the ANG

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

The Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Services Flight has won a prestigious award recognizing its food services as the best in the Air National Guard.

The Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth W. Disney Award of Excellence was bestowed on the unit May 19 by the National Restaurant Association during the Military Foodservice Awards, held in Chicago.

Master Sgt. Jennifer Thiery, superintendent of services for the 123rd Force Support Squadron, said she was extremely proud of her Airmen, who also finished third in the Disney completion in 2016.

"They worked incredibly hard to win in 2016," Thiery said. "When the team just barely missed the mark, they showed even more dedication and determination to ensure we were the best this year. They never wavered and showed the inspectors what we are made of — the best services airmen in the ANG."

The flight was evaluated in five categories:

kitchen operations, serving and dining, training of personnel and readiness, sanitation and repair maintenance, and management.

In addition to managing food services at home station, the unit was highly engaged in field operations during the past year, Thiery said. The flight provided more than 2,400 meals for a communication exercise in Florida and supported a joint medical training exercise in Western Kentucky where nearly 5,000 meals were served. Its members also provided training on the Disaster Relief Mobile Kitchen Trailer to three other Air Guard units and supported the Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C., preparing more than 21,000 meals to feed 3,600 Army and Air Force support personnel.

The unit was equally busy providing community support, executing 173 honor and color guard details that required more than 14,000 miles of travel.

In addition to providing food services, honor guard details, and management of the wing fitness and lodging programs, the flight operates a Fatality Search and Recovery Team that was recently lauded by the National Guard Bureau as one of the top two in the nation.

"We have seen tremendous growth in our personnel and mission," said Capt. Jonathan Fairbanks, officer-in-charge of the 123rd Services Flight. "For me, it all boils down to attitude. As the flight commander for the past five years, I have seen our skill set improve, but I always say what sets us apart is the Kentucky attitude — doing business with a smile, and showing our customers that we care about supporting them."

The Kentucky Air National Guard last won the Disney honor in 1998, when it was named the John L. Hennessy Award. It was renamed in 2000 for the late Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth W. Disney, former services superintendent at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tennessee.

According to the Hennessy Travelers Association, an organization that recognizes the best food services in the Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserves, the Disney Award program "was established to promote excellence in guest service and meal quality, and inspire high morale, motivation, mission support, and a professional image through pride and spirited competition."



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/Kentucky Air National Guard

Members of the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Services Flight accept the Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth W. Disney Award of Excellence during the Military Foodservice Awards held May 19 in Chicago.

Hourigan wins top safety award

By 1st Lt. James W. Killen
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The United States Air Force presented its highest award for aviation safety to Maj. John T. Hourigan, a C-130 pilot in the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Operations Support Squadron, during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., May 18.

Hourigan earned the 2016 Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy for preventing a catastrophic, in-flight mishap that would have resulted in the loss of aircraft and crew if not for his decisive action on July 16, 2016.

According to the citation, Hourigan's aircraft began vibrating so violently that crewmembers could not read the instruments or engine gauges. In addition, the sound from the vibration prevented crewmembers from talking to one another through the in-flight communications system.

To make matters worse, Hourigan and his flight crew were executing a maneuver that had them positioned in a 60-degree bank and only 500 feet above the ground.

"It was the first time I have ever been truly scared in the aircraft," Hourigan said. "I would describe it as a moment of shock."

Col. David Mounkes, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, praised Hourigan for his decisive action during the event.

"There is not a single pilot in the world who does not dread the type of malfunction J.T. and his crew faced," Mounkes said. "The quick thinking, skill and situational awareness of J.T. and his crew saved lives, and we could not be more proud of them."

In a matter of moments, Hourigan and his crew were able to diagnose the malfunction, take the number-two engine offline, and request to execute an emergency "engine out" landing at Owensboro-Davies Airport, in Owensboro, Kentucky.

"When we got the number two shut down and



Andy Morataya/U.S. Air Force

Maj. John T. Hourigan, a C-130 pilot in the 123rd Operations Support Squadron, receives the 2016 Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy from Gen. Stephen Wilson, Air Force vice chief of staff, during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., May 18.

pulled out of the problem, I asked the crew if they were okay, and my flight engineer said, 'Just climb,'" Hourigan said.

"I looked down and we were only 250 feet off the ground."

The Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy is awarded for outstanding airmanship by an aircrew member who exhibits extraordinary skill, alertness, ingenuity or proficiency in averting or minimizing the seriousness of a flight mishap.

The citation said Hourigan "relied on extraordinary airmanship and resource-management skills, ingenuity and a deep knowledge of the airframe to quickly determine the source of the crippling vibration, implement corrective action and execute an engine-out landing that saved the

lives of all six crewmembers and helped identify a previously unknown propeller issue that affects the airworthiness of C-130H aircraft worldwide."

The incident sparked a world-wide safety investigation and resulted in changes that will reduce the possibility of the same failure impacting another C-130H.

"For the 60th time, we are privileged to attend this ceremony and recognize the accomplishments of an outstanding pilot," said Koren Kolligian II, the nephew of the Airman for whom the honor is named, during the award presentation in Washington.

"Every year we meet remarkable pilots, spend time with them and their families, sharing stories and creating memories."

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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.

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