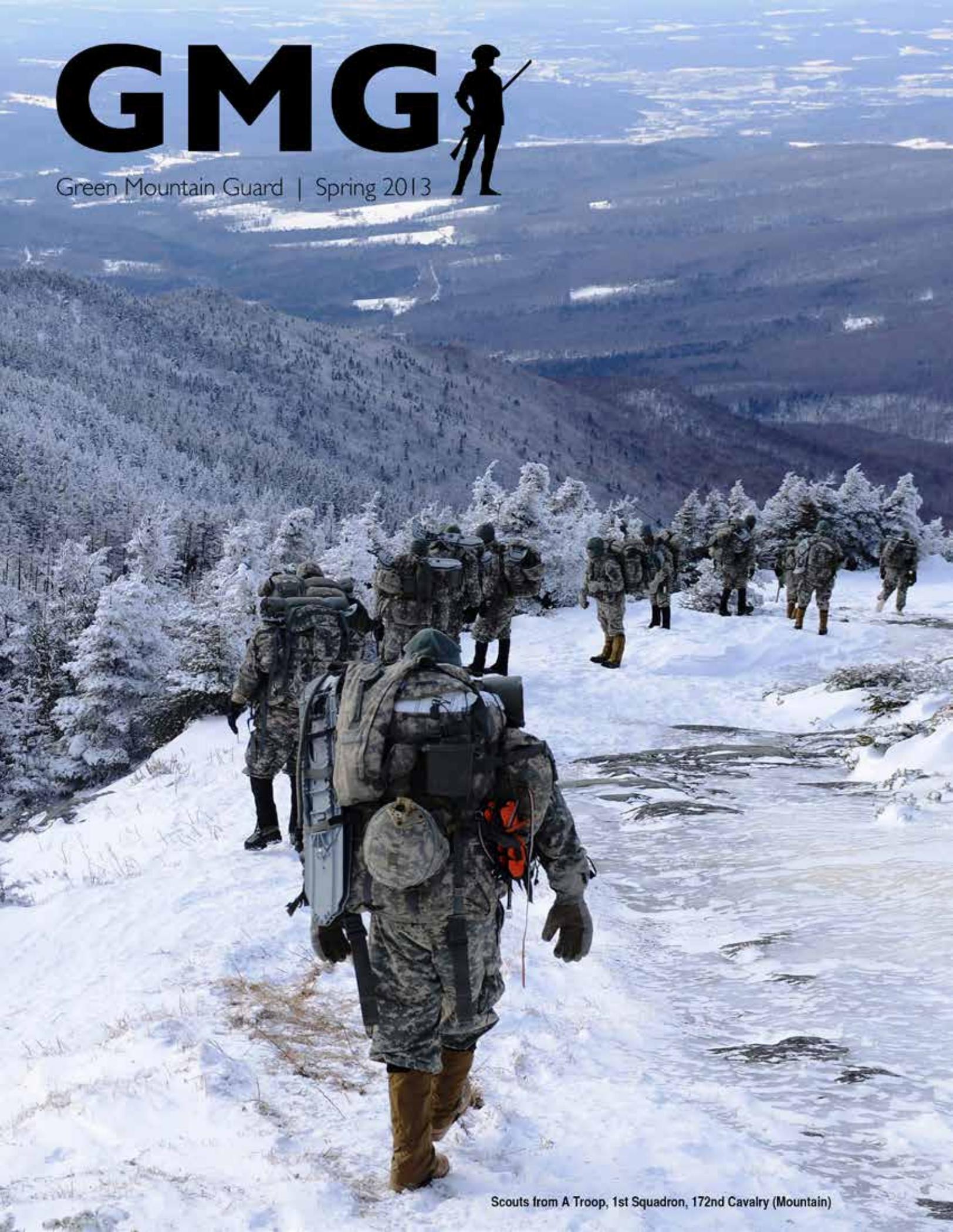


GMG



Green Mountain Guard | Spring 2013



Scouts from A Troop, 1st Squadron, 172nd Cavalry (Mountain)

From The Adjutant General

Maj. Gen. Steven Cray

March 1st was a very proud day for me and my family. I am honored and privileged to be the 23rd Adjutant General of the Vermont National Guard. As I assume my duties I look forward to getting out and meeting with soldiers and airmen to gain their insight and thoughts about the future of our great organization.

The Green Mountain Boys have a long history of honor and tradition and as we move forward to the future, I intend to lead with those traits in mind. My vision for the VTNG starts with our soldiers and airmen and their families and communities. There are few States left in the Union that have families and communities who are so close to their military community.

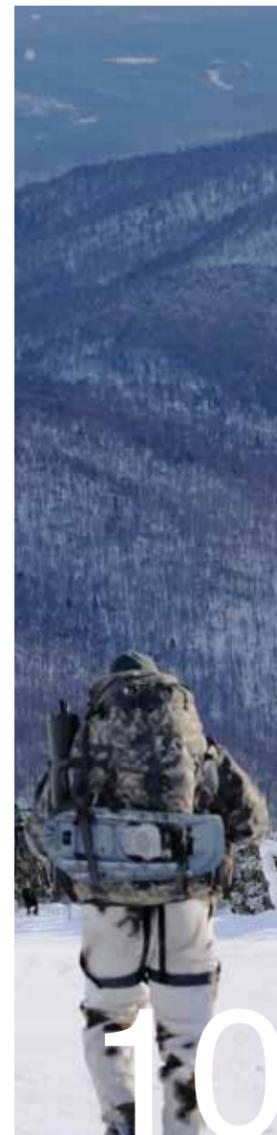
I have long said our strength is in our families. The safety and security of not only our members and their families, but of our future, is paramount in my vision for the way ahead. My son Spencer is also a Green Mountain boy, so, not only do I know what it means to be a member of the Guard, but I also know what it is like to be a proud parent of those who serve.

As we work through national budget issues that will affect all of us, we need to ensure our state and our nation that we are able to respond with the best equipment and the best Soldiers and Airmen we can provide. This is a task that will not come easily, but we will work together and control what we can.

We have some very exciting times ahead for us as well. We will learn more on how we open up more career fields to women. We will soon learn about the future of the Air National Guard and if the USAF is selecting the 158th Fighter Wing to be an operational base for the F-35. We have the best mountaineering expertise in the nation. We have outstanding cyber capabilities and we must capitalize our efforts on all these skill sets and increase our focus on the future.

My new Deputy, Col. Mike Heston, and I will ensure strong support and advocacy for our Veterans. We will also be engaging senior leaders of the Air and Army Guard in a top down review of priorities to ensure fiscally responsible decision making. We also believe that we need to empower our junior leaders and we need to continue to develop their initiative and service. We will make sure that our Guard Family is as strong as our home family and everyone is instilled with professional and personal integrity and that from the top down, everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

I look forward to getting the hard work done with the very best Soldiers and Airmen in the Nation.



10



18



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Cover: Scouts with Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 172nd Cavalry Regiment, Vermont Army National Guard, tested their resiliency with cold weather and mountaineering training, where the temperature was 0 degrees and steadily falling at Jay Peak, Vt., Jan. 26, 2013 (Photo by Sgt. Nathan Rivard)



Volume 14, Number 4

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Features

- 4 Change of Command: Maj. Gen. Steven Cray assumes command of the Vermont National Guard
- 10 Cavalry scouts challenge Jay Peak
- 12 Heroes within the Vermont National Guard
- 18 Flight Doc surpasses 1,000 hours in the F-16
- 20 Mobile Engagement Team
- 25 Get on target with marksmanship
- 26 International Interoperability, several countries visit AMWS
- 28 PTAE assists 158th Security Forces Services

Columns

- 2 From The Adjutant General
- 6 Commander
- 7 Leadership
- 8 Chaplain
- 8 Family Readiness
- 9 Recruiting

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dan DiPietro

Congratulations Maj. Gen. Steve Cray

Maj. Gen Steven A. Cray assumed command of the Vermont National Guard as the incoming Adjutant General, Friday, March 1, 2013, during a ceremony at Camp Johnson in Colchester. Cray has served over 30 years in the Vermont Air National Guard as a pilot and most recently as the Assistant Adjutant General – Air.

Cray is a longtime Vermont resident, and joined the Vermont Air National Guard as a student at the University of Vermont. His son, Senior Airman Spencer Cray, also serves in the Vermont Air National Guard as a Crew Chief.

Cray's wife Lisa, son, Spencer, and daughter, Lauren, pinned his rank of Maj. Gen. during the ceremony.

Vermont's Adjutant General is selected by a unique process as an elected position by the state legislature. The position is voted on by the members of the house and Senate at the beginning of each biennium.



Maj. Gen. Steven Cray's new rank was pinned on by his wife Lisa, son, Spencer, and daughter, Lauren, at a Change of Command ceremony, March 1, 2013. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dan DiPietro)

The Green Mountain Boy flag is passed from Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin to Maj. Gen. Steven Cray during his Change of Command ceremony at Camp Johnson, March 1, 2013. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dan DiPietro)



Maj. Gen. Steven Cray assumed command of the Vermont National Guard in a ceremony at Camp Johnson March 1, 2013. Maj. Gen. Cray was elected as TAG by the Vermont Legislature in late February. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dan DiPietro)

Commander

Col. David Baczewski, 158th Fighter Wing Commander

Tomorrow's Leaders Need Today's Mentors

As we undergo a process to revitalize the mentorship program in the 158th Fighter Wing, I feel it important to share some of my thoughts in this area. The title of this article is borrowed from a speech by the Secretary of the Air Force, Michael B. Donley, during a Leadership Forum at the College of William & Mary. Secretary Donley went on to state that mentorship plays an important role in shaping leaders of character, discipline and vision. It represents an investment - one where we may not know the impact until many years later.

Each year we recruit and accept new members to the Vermont Air National Guard, and we have no way of knowing which will become our leaders of the future. What we do know, however, is that every Airman who joins our team makes valuable contributions to our national security - and as leaders, we must ensure those contributions are as effective and efficient as possible. This requires mentoring and asking fundamental questions about our force, such as: "Did we prepare them adequately for the work we asked them to do -- did we provide them the right training and education for their immediate jobs?" and, "Did we give them trained and experienced leaders?"

A mentor is defined as, "a trusted counselor or guide." Mentoring, therefore, is a relationship in which a person with greater experience and wisdom guides another person to develop both personally and professionally.

Mentoring helps prepare people for the increased responsibilities they will assume as they progress in their careers. Mentoring is not a promotion enhancement program. Mentoring is an ongoing process and not confined to formal feedback. It is a professional development program designed to help each individual reach his or her maximum potential. In particular, mentoring is part of a professional relationship because it fosters free communication by subordinates with superiors concerning their careers, performance, duties and missions.

Mentoring covers a wide range of areas, such as career guidance, technical and professional development, and leadership. It also includes knowledge of the ethics of our military and the understanding of our core values.

Mentorship is a journey - one that requires time, effort and dedication from our leadership. As we prepare our Airmen for the future, we must prepare them to assume the lead. We need to dedicate ourselves to meaningful mentorship, the kind of mentorship that deepens our bench of professionals for generations to come. After all, today's junior officers and enlisted are tomorrow's leaders, and they will grade our work.



Leadership

Lt. Col. David Foster, 86th Troop Command

Leadership is a topic that has been written about and analyzed time and again. We hear it repeatedly in our military environment, and for good reason. Solid leadership is unquestionably the center piece of any effective, successful military organization.

By now, most of us should know the common definition of leadership; "The process in which an individual influences the group of individuals to attain a common goal". The goal is attained by mutual cooperation and cohesive behaviour. A leader infuses a sense of positivity and directs others to reach the specified goal.

For some, leadership comes naturally; for others, it is something that needs to be developed and refined on a constant basis. History gives us plenty examples of both... In 1941, Great Britain stood alone against Nazi Germany. One of its few offensive options was raids by commando units against the Norwegian and French coastlines. The newly formed commando units were comprised of hand selected soldiers with proven leadership capabilities and previous combat experience. One story goes as follows:

"Lt. Forester, the leader of 4 Troop was felled by a German bullet while assaulting the enemy position. Now the only officer left was the Norwegian, Martin Linge. Without hesitation he assumed command of 4 Troop. The men knew him well enough to recognize a real leader, and they followed him without hesitation in a second assault. As he dashed round the corner of a building, a bullet pierced his chest and he fell dead. 4 Troop now seemed leaderless, but the hour found the man, one 'Knocker' White, of the Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Although a soldier with considerable experience he was only a full corporal, and there were certainly those present who outranked him. But, while

the loss of their officers had numbed some of the NCOs, in White it had merely stoked up a sort of fighting fury. Finding that nobly else was doing anything positive he began to rap out an order or two, and finding himself being unquestioningly obeyed, he took charge."¹

Corporal White's natural and spontaneous leadership arose out of a dire combat situation. I am sure many of us know, or have heard of somebody like Corporal White from our many deployments overseas or working amongst our units. But for others, strong leadership is something that develops with time, and that is OK, the Army as well as Corporate America recognizes this. At all levels of command (both private and public sectors) leadership training and personal improvement are constantly emphasized, taught, and emphasized again.

From my experiences, it is not necessarily the raw leadership traits that make one person a better leader than the next person. Rather, it is who that person is as an individual and how they conduct their life. I look at key attributes such as one's integrity, intellect, confidence, and the ability to trust in others. You can't talk of a good leader without talking of their character. In my opinion, they are inseparable.

"A leader is a man who can adapt principles to circumstances"

-General George S. Patton

¹ Commando, Peter Young. Ballentines Illustrated History of WWII. Pg. 70



Chaplain

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dale Pepper, JFHQ Senior Army Chaplain

I would like to start out by introducing myself. I am CH (LTC) Dale Pepper and I am your State Chaplain.

I am an ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches, USA. I live in Pennsylvania with my wife. I have over 25 years in the U.S. Army National Guard with duty assignments as a Battalion Chaplain, Brigade Chaplain and on Division Staff.

As I settle into this assignment as your State Chaplain and as part of the Unit Ministry Team (UMT), I see the start of the New Year with many challenges both physically, mentality and spirituality. On the physical side of the house, I see much support in the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), Field Training Exercises (FTXs), Command Post Exercises (CPX) and the ramp up to Annual Training. This leads to the mentality ability of the Leaders, NCOs and the soldiers to plan and execute the mission.

You are all well trained in your skill/military occupational specialty (MOS) to plan and execute the mission. The spiritual side would be a two-fold. The first would be from you, the soldier and your family,

friends and other soldiers. As you face the challenges of this fast tempo with your physical fitness, professional training, and spiritual well-being, you become technically and tactically proficient. You plan and train to get the mission accomplished.

The second is for me and my unit ministry teams to coordinate the delivery of tailored spiritual development programs and products to enhance the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of the Officer, NCO, soldiers and family members of the units, thereby strengthening Army resiliency. The latter topic is for another time.

My Chaplain Assistant, Master Sgt. Gerard Mascola, and I look forward to seeing you as I make my rounds around the State and during your training. "Pro Deo Et Patria—For God and Country."



Family Readiness

Capt. Erika Procopio

Region 1 Conference

This year Region 1 Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Vermont leaders from the Military Family Programs met at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center in Southbridge, Ma. It was a time for the different areas of Family Programs from each of the states to meet. Although there had always been a lot of talk, this conference was the first of its kind for the New England states.

The conference was held 06-09 Nov 2012 right after Super storm Sandy hit the east coast and a Northeastern storm front followed. Although six inches of snow fell at the conference center, we all were focused on our mission of providing the best possible resources to Military Service Members and the Families we all support.

Each state brought the section coordinators that are common to Family Programs across the six New England states. The sections represented were, State Family Program Directors, Family Assistance Coordinators, Yellow Ribbon Program Managers (Army and Air), Child and Youth Coordinators,

and Wing Family Program coordinators. Some states have more sections like the Survivor Outreach Specialist, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, and Outreach Specialist. Discussions were lead by the senior members from the sections represented from all of the states. It was to focus on changing contracts, requirements from NGB, and how best to provide support to Service Members and their families with the talk of looming budget cuts. Contract and Program managers from NGB visited and made the most of meeting with members on their teams and the State Family Program Directors. These meetings helped to understand the relationships between the contractors and the services they provide.

Collaboration and sharing of best practices were desired by all. Vermont greatly appreciated the opportunity to attend the Region 1 Conference. All the participants felt a yearly gathering of team chiefs

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across the Family Programs provided a forum where strategic plans and the future could be discussed with an understanding of where we have been and where Family Programs will need to go in the future. Best practices were shared with the group. Items from the dangers and usages of various Social Media, to toolbox books to hand to company commanders, to

creating teams of volunteers to assist with the many areas where support is asked from Family Program staff.

All participating members agreed the conference was worthwhile and tentatively scheduled it for the same time, same place next year. Rhode Island volunteered to host as long as they could utilize the Southbridge Hotel and Conference center.

Recruiting and Retention

Lt. Col. Patrick Kirby

The Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) was established in 2004 to reduce training pipeline losses by introducing new enlisted Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers to the military environment which increases Soldier adjustment to Basic (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT). The RSP incorporates instruction to ensure that each Soldier is medically, administratively and physically prepared to complete the rigors of BCT and AIT.

Since instituting the RSP, the ARNG has experienced years of sustained at-training loss improvement and has the lowest loss rate of the three Army components. The loss rate in the Training Pipeline has been reduced by over 10 percent since the RSP implementation. In 2012 the VTARNG shipped 226 Soldiers to BCT/AIT and graduated 201 which is an 89 percent success rate. Vermont was ranked number four in the nation in 2012.

RSP Mission Statement -

The VTARNG RSP continually prepares Warriors administratively, mentally, and physically from initial contracting at MEPS, through Basic Combat Training (B.C.T.), Advanced Individual Training (A.I.T.), and Battle Handover (BHO), then to the units with the goal of decreasing the training pipeline loss percentages while providing qualified Soldiers to the VTARNG.

Did you know that at the time this article was written there were 214 Warriors in the Recruit Sustainment Program?

These Warriors belong to the various units of the VTARNG where they are learning Basic Army Skills before shipping out to complete BCT and AIT. Vermont has been leading the way when it comes to sending quality Warriors out to training; this has been shown by VT being number one in the country for Distinguished Honor Graduates, Honor Graduates, High PT Scores and Expert Weapon Qualifications.

There can be up to 120 Warriors drilling at any given month, with as many as 220 participating in the RSP. The RSP has an open door policy when it comes to the units spending time with their new Warriors. All we ask is that the unit notifies the RSP of the date and time they would like to meet with their Warriors and how long they would like to spend with the Warrior. As seen in the past, Warriors who receive a visit from a member of their unit on a drill weekend can and will increase the Warrior's desire to succeed as they want to make his/her unit proud.



Recruiting Battalion Commander, Lt.Col. Patrick Kirby enjoying the Orange County Choppers National Guard Patriot Chopper at an event at Green Mountain Harley in Essex, Feb. 27, 2013. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Wolfenbarger)

Cavalry scouts challenge Jay Peak

Sgt. Nathan Rivard, 172PAD



JAY PEAK, Vt. - When some skiers started heading down the mountain to end their cold day, the mountain soldiers were just getting theirs started. Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 172nd Cavalry Regiment tested their resiliency with cold weather and mountaineering training at Jay Peak, Vt., when the temperature was 0 degrees and steadily falling.

"We are the premiere mountain organization in the guard, so it's one of our primary missions to operate in the mountainous terrain, especially in the cold weather environment," said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Progen, Platoon Sergeant of 1st Platoon.

The weather on the frozen mountain would show how well the soldiers could operate as a cavalry scout unit in the harsh winter conditions. When the soldiers arrived at the top of Jay Peak, they put on snowshoes, or crampons.

The crampon is an attachment for the

boot with metal spurs that allows for better traction for the decent down the mountain toward their objectives.

"We are focused on some of our validation tasks that are coming up this summer at annual training during XCTC, Exportable Combat Training Capability, at Fort Drum. So we are out here focusing on platoon level training doing a zone recon, area recon, and emplacing a platoon-level screen line," said Capt. Matt Wignall, commander Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 172nd Cavalry Regiment.

"This is some of the most challenging terrain. I mean, it's terrain on par with stuff you'd see in Afghanistan, and you throw in the cold weather and snow aspect, and it just complicates it and it makes that reconnaissance mission just that much harder. So teaching the guys to survive these conditions and to thrive in these conditions and maintain the upper hand on the enemy by being the organization better suited for this environment really does it for us," said Wignall.

Jay Peak has had 163 inches, or roughly 13-and-a-half feet of snowfall so far this winter. A foot of snow fell in the last week alone.

The high amounts of snow, an elevation over 3,700 feet, cold temperatures and extreme wind make this mountain survival training challenging to say the least.

"As a mountain brigade, cold weather operations are arguably more important or more significant than actually negotiating mountains. They're both critical skills, unique skills to the Army, and training in this cold weather environment is a challenge," said Wignall.

"Scouts are going to be reporting traffic ability of some of the routes, which are some of the ski trails here on the mountain. They've got a few key checkpoints that they are going to report enemy activity and the ability to maneuver other forces through this terrain, really the bread and butter of what a reconnaissance unit does. We're terrain based more than anything today trying to

understand complexity."

To most of the soldiers, the weather was just a laughing point and didn't faze them, and some even preferred it.

"I would do extreme cold, we fight like we train, or train like we fight rather. I like to be in a higher elevation, colder, better prepared," said Pfc. Chad Carpenter from Newport. "I like just operating and finding all the formations we have to do at different levels. We do a lot of COMMS, communication. It's good to be on communication on the platoon level and the troop level. I love that kind of stuff, just working on the platoon level."

The soldiers carried out their missions and spent the night in the winter environment with nothing more than what they carried on their backs.

Spc. Alfred Bolduc said it best with laughter, "enjoy the day, hopefully enjoy the night and don't freeze."

Recognizing heroes within the Vermont National Guard

By Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco and Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison

Sometimes a mundane drill weekend or car trip can turn into an opportunity to make a difference in our community. For several members of the Vermont National Guard recently this has been the case.

During a ceremony at the Green Mountain Armory in Colchester, Vermont Air National Guard members, Tech. Sgt. William Carroll and Senior Airman Martin Wagner, both Radio Troops with Comm. Flight, were operating the public address system. It was a warm August afternoon, and one of the speakers on the platform began to sweat profusely, left the stage and took a knee.

At that time the two Airmen knew that they had to take action. They assisted the gentleman out of public view and called 911.

"We tried to quietly escort him away without interrupting the ceremony," said Carroll.

Neither Airman has a medical background beyond "self aid and buddy care, same as everybody else learns," said Carroll.

The two sat with the man and got him water while waiting for the ambulance to arrive to take him to the hospital.

Did they feel like heroes for having provided assistance, outside of their regular duties? No. "It's normal for guard members to look after each other," said Carroll.



Maj. Amy Denis poses with Vermont State Trooper Todd Ambroz, also a VTARNG Sergeant First Class, after receiving the Vermont Medal of Merit Feb. 3, 2013 for her heroism while assisting civilians in distress following a motor vehicle accident. After witnessing the accident, Maj. Denis made her way to the scene on foot, crossing traffic on I-89 and provided medical aid in an effort to save those involved.

The Vermont State Police does not encourage people to put themselves at risk by crossing the interstate.

Warning signs of Stroke:

Sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg- especially on one side of the body.

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Use **FAST** to remember the warning signs:

FACE:ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS:Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH:Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?

TIME:If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

information from the National Stroke Association

Icy roads and horrible weather brought Tech. Sgt. Amanda Betts upon traffic at a stand-still on her way to work early one morning.

As a member of the medical group in the Vermont Air National Guard for nine years, Betts pulled her vehicle over to get a look at what had brought the traffic to a halt.

"Sure enough, maybe 8 or 10 cars ahead of me there was a head-on collision. Normally the first thing I check is to see if there are EMTs or rescue workers on scene and to offer help," said Betts

Not seeing any rescue vehicles on scene, Betts hit the on-star button in her car to alert them to an accident in the area. Then out of her trunk she grabbed her jump bag which contained bleeding control items and gloves.

Betts was able to survey the scene, determining that there were only two injured drivers, one from each vehicle. One of the injured had sustained a head laceration which Betts was able to bandage and get under control.

While the other was complaining of neck pain, Betts directed immobilization of her head and neck until rescue workers arrived.

"I'm glad that I was there and able to offer care and support."

Signs of Heart Attack

Warning signs:

Discomfort or pain in the center of the chest. Discomfort in the arm(s), back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of breath.

Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

Heart attacks are not always sudden or intense. Many start slowly, with only mild pain or discomfort. You may not be sure what's wrong- even if you've had a heart attack. Each heart attack can have different signs. When in doubt, check it out.

Minutes matter! Don't wait more than a few minutes to call 9-1-1

Information from the National Institutes of Health

Heat Exhaustion

Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion may develop suddenly, or over time, especially with prolonged periods of exercise. Possible heat exhaustion symptoms include:

Cool, moist skin with goose bumps when in the heat

Heavy sweating

Faintness

Dizziness

Fatigue

Weak, rapid pulse

Low blood pressure upon standing

Muscle cramps

Nausea

Headache

If you think you are experiencing heat exhaustion:

Stop all activity and rest

Move to a cooler place

Drink cool water or sports drinks

Contact your doctor if your signs or symptoms worsen or if they don't improve within one hour.

Seek immediate medical attention if your body temperature reaches 104 F or higher.

Information from MayoClinic.com

January Drill weekend began normally but things changed rapidly as Pfc. Orion Robbins began feeling ill. Staff Sgt. Brian Irwin recognized the signs, "I've seen a lot of people having heart attacks, and that's what I saw," said Irwin.

Both Irwin and Robbins are medics in HHC 3-172, and were drilling at Camp Ethan Allen Firing Range. An ambulance was called and Robbins was transported to Fletcher Allen.

On the way from Jericho to Burlington, Irwin was following the ambulance carrying his soldier in his car. The ambulance pulled to the side of the road. Irwin knew this was not a good sign. He jumped out of his vehicle and threw open the ambulance doors.

Having been a medic in the Vermont Army National Guard for 13 years and a volunteer EMT for 15 years, he knew that what he was seeing was not a good sign.

The paramedic invited him on board to help.

"I saw what she was doing and jumped in," Irwin said.

IN AND AROUND: VTARNG

RIGHT: Sgt. Joshua LaCasse, Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Smith and Staff Sgt. Jesse Downs of the CST pose with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Heritage Flight hanger in South Burlington, during his three-day visit to Vermont last fall. The CST supported the US State Department as the CBRNE lead of their security detail during the visit. (Photo courtesy of Capt. Casey Cote)



BELOW: Medics Spc. Josh Bolduc and Spc. Destiny Charlebois practice rescuing a simulated car accident victim, 1st Lt. Jo Speaker at the 2013 Medical Symposium held at the University of Vermont, Jan. 6. The annual Symposium offers an opportunity for Medics to renew their National Registry EMT, necessary to hold the 68W MOS. (Photo by Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco)



ABOVE: Members of the 15th Civil Support Team decontaminate a simulated casualty as part of their external evaluation by U.S. Army North at Waterbury, Vt., Feb. 7, 2013. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)



Left: Vermont Army National Guard Col. John Boyd, a 1988 alumni of Norwich University, dropped the puck for the Norwich Men's hockey game Saturday, Feb. 2, 2013 as part of Military Appreciation Day. (Photo by Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco)

IN AND AROUND: VTANG



LEFT: High Dynamic Range photo of the new Security Forces building at the 158th Fighter Wing. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Jon Alderman)

BELOW: An F-16 takes off at the International Airport in South Burlington, Vt. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Jon Alderman)



ABOVE: Vermont Air National Guard Maj. Kate Irish, an alumni of Norwich University, dropped the puck at the Norwich Women's hockey game Saturday, Feb. 2, 2013, as part of Military Appreciation Day. (Photo by Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco)



LEFT: Tech. Sgt. Marc Ziegler of the 158th Fighter Wing is interviewed by Public Affairs as part of a production about how Civil Engineers respond to snow storm scenarios to prepare the flightline for safe working conditions at the South Burlington Int'l Airport, Vt. (National Guard photo by Airman 1st Class Jon Alderman)

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt., Jan. 4, 2013 – When back in August people began telling Air Force Col. Donald Majercik, a flight surgeon here at the Vermont Air National Guard, that he was 20 hours short of 1,000 flight hours he didn't think too much about it. But as time marched closer to his February 2013 retirement, Majercik began to view the 1,000 hours as a goal.

"I wanted to do something special before I left the Guard," he said.

True to his word, Majercik hit the 1,000-hour milestone on Nov. 29, 2012. Returning from the blue skies with his long-time flying partner and friend, Air Force Lt. Col. Terry Moultrou, the flight surgeon met both his goal and an unexpected group of admirers.

While he had been in the air a coworker on the ground had contacted people, like Wing Commander Air Force Col. David Baczewski, retired former Wing Commander Air Force Col. Phil Murdock, retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Richard Kinney, and many others. They all came to witness the auspicious moment of his return. Most importantly, Majercik's wife was standing in front of the crowd waving an American flag.

While Majercik said he was surprised by the welcome back, at the same time he was filled with a sense of accomplishment in the belief that he is the first flight surgeon to have completed 1,000 hours in an F-16

Fighting Falcon aircraft. It takes dedication to put that much time into flying.

"The 1,000 hours of flying time represents only a small fraction of the time that it takes to reach that goal," Majercik said. "Each hour of flying requires four to five hours of additional time and effort in order to accomplish that flight."

Flight surgeons are required to log flight hours as part of their aerospace medicine practice. Most, however, do not amass the overwhelming number of hours that Majercik has under his military belt, especially in an F-16.

Flight surgeons do not have to be pilots but Majercik is also an avid pilot in his civilian life so he often was able to fly the F-16, not just ride in it.

"We've been flying together for a long time," Moultrou said of Majercik. "I've been here since the early 1980s when we flew the F-4s, and I remember when he was the only flight surgeon the base had. He carried that responsibility all by himself for a long time."

Majercik joined the Vermont Air National Guard when he was an intern in surgery and the Vietnam War was in full swing. He knew it was likely he would be asked to serve in the military in one way or another, and was introduced to the National Guard by William Fagan, who was serving in the Vermont Army National Guard at the time.

For Majercik, the Vermont Air National Guard has given him an amazing legacy. And now he's given the VTANG a legacy as well.

"This achievement is important to the 158 Fighter Wing because it represents a milestone not reached by any other unit," he said. "Over the years, the base has set the benchmark for excellence in all of its endeavors. Its performance in inspections, in theater, and at home has been nothing short of outstanding. Throughout my career I have been privileged to be a part of this."

As his service in the military comes to a close, Majercik said he feels like he can leave knowing he's accomplished something few ever will.

But it isn't without sadness that he says goodbye to his brothers and sisters.

"The best thing about being a flight surgeon here for more than 40 years is all the wonderful people I've had the opportunity to know," Majercik said.

"The second best thing is flying the F-16s. The future is bright for the 158th, and as time goes on, I hope to maintain close contact with all of those that are making it so strong. It has and always will be a significant part of my life."



Lt. Col. Terry Moultrou and Col. Donald "Doc" Majercik, both with the Vermont Air National Guard return from a training flight to the Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, VT.



Col. Donald "Doc" Majercik, State Flight Surgeon with the Vermont Air National Guard is congratulated by his wife Patricia Nolan and numerous colleagues and friends for surpassing 1,000 hours of flying time in the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

Flight Doc Surpasses 1000 F-16 Hours



Story by Air Force Senior Airman Victoria Greenia
Photography & Layout by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison

Military Engagement Team

By 1st Lt. Konrad Stawicki

The VTARNG Military Engagement Team (MET) visited Dakar, Senegal in September of 2012 beginning initial discussions on the MET concept and how to best integrate the knowledge and capabilities of the VTARNG with the Senegalese military. Senegal had just finished its rainy season which had caused flooding throughout the capital city and the surrounding area. The effects could still be seen along the roadside as the team traveled to the Senegalese Army Base in Thies. Program development was discussed and a common enthusiasm for the program was shared by all present from both countries. The event was attended by representatives from the VTARNG Joint Force Headquarters, Garrison Support Command, the appointed MET Commander and Project Officer as well as senior representatives from the Senegalese Army, Air Force and Navy. Later in the year the team will continue to develop, including interested officers and Soldiers from all Commands throughout the state.



Vermont has been selected as one of 12 states to have a pilot MET training event in Training Year 2013, building partner capabilities and enduring partnerships worldwide. The pilot year is designed to establish the MET concept for future addition to other National Guard states. The intent for our team is to develop a strong working relationship where VTARNG Soldiers understand the social, religious and cultural aspects of Senegal while also understanding how their military plays into emergencies and disaster management. This knowledge, along with continuous input from Senegal, will be developed into a bilateral training program. The MET will be funded an additional AT period as well as some online course material to support the 21-30 day mission.

The MET will be aided in language and culture familiarization through a specially designed program at Norwich University Applied Research Institute (NUARI). The currently established program will include 4 collegiate courses covering 12 credit hours of specially created material that will enhance the knowledge base of any Soldier that attends. These courses can be put towards a Bachelors degree in Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis. The first phase will cover basic introduction to Senegalese culture and history prior to the first mission. This training will alleviate some of the culture and language barriers that occur when conducting

training in another country. The second phase will cover an introduction to Wolof and French for both the spoken and written form. The hope will be that this program will be open to any interested Soldier or officer that wants to improve their understanding of Senegal and the languages spoken there.

Vermont's Military Engagement Team is looking forward to the continued interaction with Senegal in order to provide the most beneficial training possible. This additional training will build on the existing relationship between the State of Vermont and Senegal. Look for additional information and MET opportunities to be announced over the next year as the program grows. The program is open to NCOs and officers and is not MOS specific. If you are interested or would like more information, contact 1st Lt. Konrad Stawicki at either (802) 829-9604 or konrad.stawicki@us.army.mil.



Administrators Gather to Learn

By Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco, 172 PAD

Recently Unit Administrators and Readiness NCOs in the 86th Brigade gathered at Norwich University for a workshop.

These workshops are held quarterly in an effort to keep administrators current on information needed to do their jobs.

Topics covered vary with each session. Master Sgt. Cindy Gilstrap, Brigade Senior Human Resource NCO, selects information to be covered based on where they feel soldiers need training and also on feedback from Soldiers and what they feel is needed to help them accomplish their jobs. Some items covered at the November 14 event included Retirement, Family Care Plans, Awards submissions and NGB 22s among other topics.



“There is so much to cover, and lots of new Admin NCOs. These workshops provide a consistent source of information,” said Gilstrap. “Beforehand, we ask, ‘what do you need,’ so presentations are tailored to what Admin NCOs feel they need to make their job easier.”

The Workshops are put on by the 86th Brigade, but are open to UAs throughout the state.

“The information is not Brigade specific, but because we are so large, the training is helpful to keep current,” said Gilstrap.

“We decided as a Brigade S1 section that quarterly trainings would be helpful and needed. It also gets us together to socialize and give the Admin personnel in the field a chance to ask questions and let us know how things are going,” said Gilstrap.

Staff Sgt. John Kidder, who has been an administrator since 2007 and has attended workshops in the past said that the most helpful information he has received came in the form of a disk that he was able to take with him containing information from the JAG.

“It was really helpful to reference later,” said Kidder.

Staff Sgt. Terri Mumley has also been to similar workshops in the past but, “it’s great for new UAs, it shows what the job entails,” she said.

While this particular event was held in Northfield, upcoming quarterly workshops will be held in various locations around the state to help accommodate Brigade Soldiers based from Bennington to the Northeast Kingdom.

ARE YOU READY?

by Sgt. Ashley J. Hayes, HHC, 86 IBCT

Though seemingly tedious at times, the Soldier Readiness Checks are an essential portion of the overall plans for the Vermont Army National Guard. Each Soldier must be ready to succeed in the mission.

A team of civilians and military personnel at Fort Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vt, worked diligently to process Soldiers from the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) through SRC. The last unit went through Saturday.

As the Administrative Noncommissioned Officer In Charge for Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 86th IBCT (Mtn.) Army Master Sgt. Cindy Gilstrap, is experienced when it comes to understanding the SRC process. She and her team have worked tirelessly over a period of four months to accomplish their goal of making sure every Soldier in the Brigade made it through the process successfully.

The main purpose of SRC is to check administrative, medical, and dental readiness, said Gilstrap.

“You’re not going to deploy if you’re not medically ready.”

This includes following up with Soldiers who have medical profiles.

Gilstrap explained that the SRC was planned a year in advance, and specific dates were planned for each unit to process through. This was helpful to the battalions, who were given more latitude to decide how SRC would work best for them.

“We put a lot in their hands, but we also were here with the frame.”

Not only does SRC offer administrative and medical checks, but it also allows face time with each Soldier. Mrs. Angela Wells, the family readiness support assistant for the 86 IBCT (Mtn.) viewed SRC as a positive process.

“I like it because I get to see everyone,” said Wells.

Face time with every Soldier can be

very time consuming. With each successive unit however, the process got a little easier. “I think that with each [unit that came through] we evolved,” said Gilstrap. “We have lessons learned in every single [unit we process] and we always will. We have a pretty smooth running machine now even with medical and dental.”

The SRC team came very close to their goal of processing every single Soldier, said Gilstrap. “In the end what makes [the process] really good is that everybody all of a sudden becomes a team, and they are like, ‘okay, we’re going to accomplish this’.” Almost 2,000 Soldiers were processed through SRC over the past four months. With all the practice, the team will be well prepared next year when readiness checks are started again.



Soldiers wait in line at a station during a recent medical SRC at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho. Months of preparation and planning is involved in the SRC process to ensure that each Soldier completes the process successfully. (Photo by Capt. Chris Gookin)

VTANG Civil Engineers to go in-theatre

Story by Senior Airman Victoria Greenia

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. - The Civil Engineering Squadron at the Vermont Air National Guard (VTANG) is back in the deployment mindset. Soon they will be traveling to an air base in Afghanistan to maintain, repair, and construct the airfield and utilities associated with it.

Maj. Keith Hodsden, commander of the 158th Civil Engineer Squadron, will deploy and assume command over both VTANG personnel and airmen from nine other guard units. The 158th CES will be the lead unit.

“Much of our job will involve maintenance and repair of existing facilities. The largest construction projects will be designed and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Our engineering officers will work directly with them to ensure designs meet Air Force standards and that we will be able to maintain those facilities when they are completed.”

This will be Hodsden’s first deployment to the CENTCOM area of responsibility, and he said he was looking forward to the challenge of commanding a group of nearly 100 men and women who will be tasked with making the base livable for all military



U.S Air Force Maj. Keith Hodsden from the 158th Civil Engineering Squadron and U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Thomas Drew, The Adjutant General for the state of Vermont display the Green Mountain Boy flag during a deployment ceremony at the Vermont Air National Guard Base, South Burlington, Vt., Nov. 3, 2012. Members of the Vermont Air National Guard were honored in a ceremony prior to deploying. (Photo by Airman 1st Class John Alderman)



U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Thomas Drew, the Adjutant General for the state of Vermont, hands out miniature Green Mountain Boy flags during a deployment ceremony at the Vermont Air National Guard Base, South Burlington, Vt., Nov. 3, 2012. Members of the Vermont Air National Guard were honored in a ceremony prior to deploying. (Photo by Airman 1st Class John Alderman)

personnel. Civil engineers make sure the airfield is adequate for aircraft launch and recovery, but are also the people who make sure electricity, plumbing, heat, and shelters are available for the entire base.

Other than personal gear and individual weapons, the squadron will not be taking any VTANG equipment. However, Senior Master Sgt. Peter Noble, an engineering superintendent scheduled to go to Afghanistan, said the squadron’s biggest asset isn’t something that will be carried-on.

“Being in the National Guard means that we all have civilian jobs and outside skills that we can also draw on for support during missions,” he said. “I have seen how our airmen often use knowledge acquired outside the military to get a job done.”

Hodsden agreed and said that was part of their contingency engineering training; they understand how to innovate in a deployed location without the ideal equipment. “In an austere environment, our men and women have demonstrated the ability to produce exceptional solutions despite resource limitations.”

Get on Target With Marksmanship

Story and Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Victoria Greenia

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. - As the airman awkwardly pointed the .22 pistol toward the target on the range, Tech. Sgt. Andrew Hale carefully instructed her on correct body mechanics. The two were practicing with pistols at the Lamoille firing range on a chilly fall day.

“Wrap your hands around it, thumbs touching. Cup your fingers in the front to help hold the weight, and have your arms straight out. Straight arms improve accuracy.”

Hale is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Vermont Air National Guard’s Marksmanship Training Unit. The MTU is described by 1st Lt. Christopher Bean, the MTU officer-in-charge (pictured below), as an under-utilized program available to train VTANG members to effectively use firearms. In the past it was a popular event but interest has slowly fizzled out, said Bean.

He and Hale intend to not just revive participation but “take it to the next level.”

He said that marksmanship is an important skill for every VTANG member to have.

Vermont’s finicky temperatures somewhat dictate where the MTU meets for practice – in the nicer months they use local outdoor ranges. In the winter months coming up, however, they will be meeting indoors at the Sportsman’s Club of Franklin County every Monday night from 5:30-9 (there is a fee involved to use the range). At the practices, experienced marksmen demonstrate and instruct people who are willing to learn.

“Only sixty percent of the people preparing to go to Afghanistan are passing the weapons qualification,” Bean said. “Think about this; our people are about to enter a warzone, and only around half can accurately shoot.”

Airmen may think they are doing their part to go and practice shooting by themselves. However, Bean said if people practice on their own without proper instruction they may train themselves to shoot incorrectly.

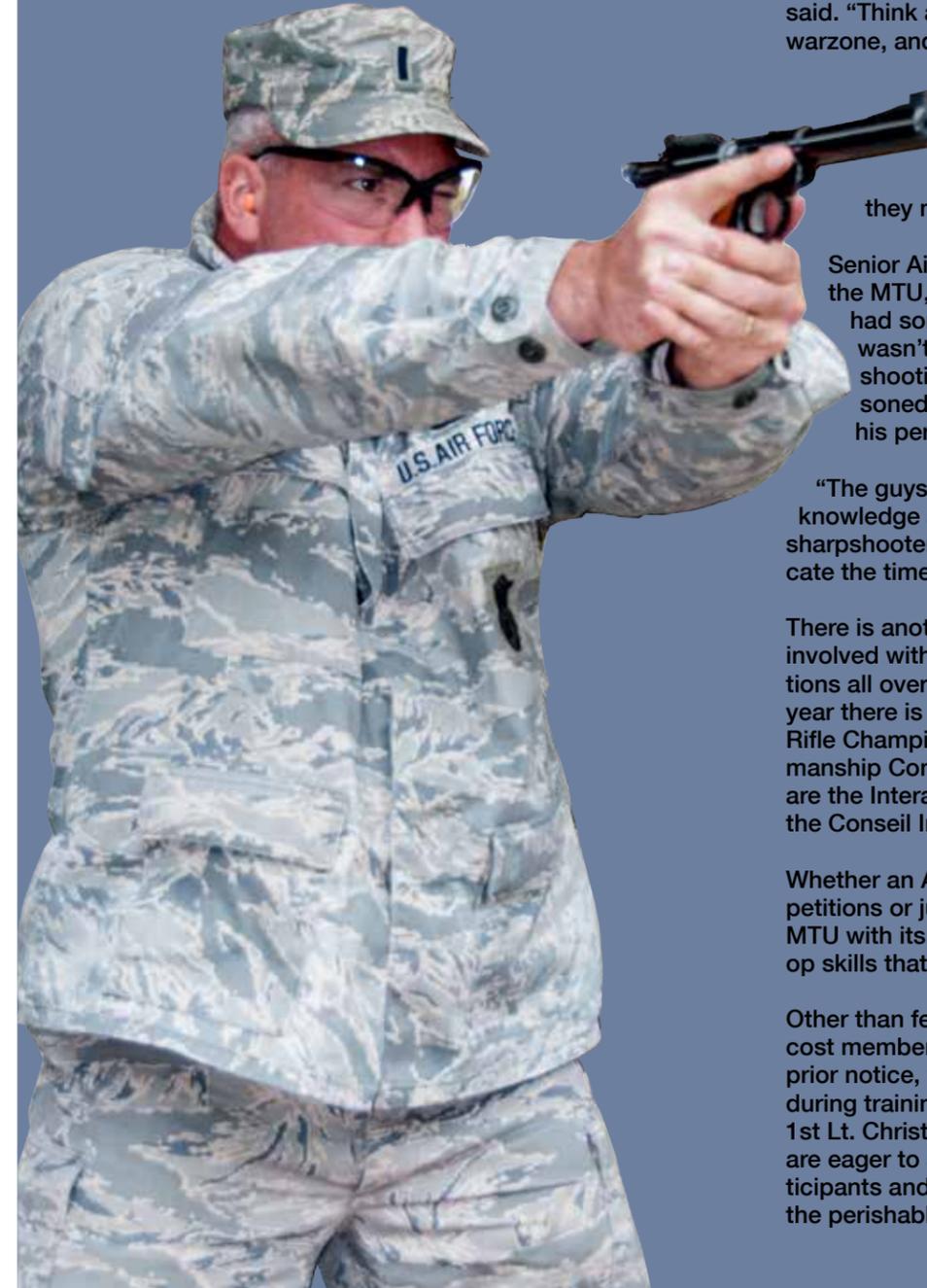
Senior Airman Sean Hamel, a regular participant of the MTU, is the first to admit that when he joined he had some bad habits to overcome. For instance, he wasn’t focusing with his dominant eye and he was shooting with the wrong hand. But the more seasoned airmen gave critical advice which improved his performance.

“The guys running the program have a wealth of knowledge and are eager to help. They aren’t looking for sharpshooters; they want anyone who is willing to dedicate the time to perfecting his or her skills.”

There is another bonus to the program: Airmen who get involved with the MTU are opened to a host of competitions all over the U.S. and even in other countries. Each year there is the Adjutant General’s Match, Interservice Rifle Championships in Quantico, Va., the Combat Marksmanship Competition, and many more. Overseas, there are the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers and the Conseil International du Sport Militaire.

Whether an Airman wants to conquer one of these competitions or just improve his or her firing accuracy, the MTU with its veteran marksmen can help an airman develop skills that every military member should have.

Other than fees for using the ranges, the program doesn’t cost members anything but time and dedication. With prior notice, weapons and ammunition can be provided during training. People interested should contact either 1st Lt. Christopher Bean or Tech. Sgt. Andrew Hale. Both are eager to see the Marksmanship Program grow in participants and see VTANG member succeed in mastering the perishable skill of marksmanship.



International Interoperability

By 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard, 172 PAD

JERICHO, Vt. — During the past year, the Army Mountain Warfare School at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site has been working with mountain forces from several different countries in order to share perspectives and experiences each of the countries has.

“The AMWS routinely conducts information exchanges with foreign nations’ mountain forces. In the past year alone we have worked with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Macedonia, and Saudi Arabia,” said Major Justin Davis, the U.S. Army Mountain Warfare School Commander

“In each case, nations benefit from the shared perspective on what matters and what works in the mountains. Each of us has recent mountain warfare experience,” said Davis

The experience that the United States and Macedonia have in common is that gained from Operation Enduring Freedom.

“The other countries we have worked with recently all have issues along their mountainous borders that they must address to maintain order and security,” said Davis.



1st Sgt. Jared Smith, AMWS Senior NCO, conducts a safety brief July 18th, for Uzbek soldiers at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site before they begin their climb at the high angle firing point as part of familiarization course offered to them. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)

In May, eight Kazakhstani soldiers, both officers and non-commissioned officers from the Independent Mountain Warfare Battalion located near Teraz, Kazakhstan, came to the Army Mountain Warfare School (AMWS) near Jericho, Vermont, in hopes of taking away an understanding of all the components required to conduct military mountaineer training.

The soldiers were able to do just that, according to Lt. Col. Askhat Abduvaitov, Commander of the Kazakhstani battalion, who said, “The information exchange and combined activities were very high quality, we learned new things and were engaged with new experiences. In case of any need in the future, these people that visited here will be able to work together with American units as they are more interoperable now, tremendous experience for our young state and our young army.”

The engagements are meant to be beneficial to both countries involved. The Vermont Army National Guard and the Kazakhstani Army will have an increased ability to interoperate once they better understand how each other work.

United States Army Central Command or ARCENT, is working with partners in their area of responsibility. Through information exchanges like the one held at the Army Mountain Warfare School, both countries build capacity and mutual understanding that increases the potential for interoperability. In times of crisis, natural disaster, or any acts of violence, ARCENT has a place to go in Kazakhstan where there is an already existing relationship.

“That potentially could make our mission much easier to accomplish,” said Maj. Brian Brandt, Kazakstan Desk Office of Strategy and Effects, International Military Affairs, United States Army Central Command.

ARCENT is a component of Central Command. It is composed of reserve and active component soldiers and a staff of over 500 personnel which is responsible for the day to day planning of CENTCOM ground forces

Several Countries Visit AMWS

operations. They also monitor Theater Security Cooperation activities in their 20 country Area of Operations (AOR). CENTCOM is one of ten combatant commands around the world and is responsible for the Middle East, South and Central Asia. Kazakhstan is one of the countries within CENTCOM’s area of responsibility.

The AMWS receives requests from large commands like ARCENT, Special Operations Command, and foreign militaries to visit the school and observe mountain warfare operations. In this case, ARCENT received the initial request via CENTCOM from Kazakhstan during an annual Military to Military planning conference to conduct a mountain warfare information exchange. ARCENT contacted AMWS to conduct the event due to the school’s established reputation as THE eminent authority on mountain operations with a vast amount of tactical experience gained in an operational theater.

“The Kazakhstan Army has identified an issue in the mountainous region of their international borders and are seeking ways to better prepare their military to operate in these areas,” said Davis.

Though they seem enthusiastic, the Kazakhstani’s have not accurately defined the future of their Mountain Warfare Battalion. It remains to be heard, whether the battalion will serve as a training center for other forces inside or outside Kazakhstan.

“It was the goal of this engagement to help them (the leadership of the Kazakhstani Mountain Battalion) internalize what it takes to create a similar mountain warfare operations school,” said Brandt.

The AMWS has provided ARCENT with the mountain warfare expertise needed to work with the Kazakhstani’s mountain forces since 2007, and both have been working toward trying to establish a training center for the Kazakhstani Army similar to what the Army National Guard administers in Jericho, Vermont.

“For the AMWS this is a unique

opportunity to exchange information with a foreign mountain unit. This relationship has broadened our perspective of mountain warfare, and provided us access to another part of the world,” said Davis.

The AMWS has vast experience working with many foreign militaries. These information exchanges bring new ideas that help shape U.S. forces and foreign militaries alike. Through information exchanges, like the one with Kazakhstani soldiers held in May this year, we are able to mutually build capacity to conduct operations in mountainous terrain, strengthen international relationships, and help deter aggression throughout the world.



Staff Sgt. Bradley Cormier an AMWS instructor, assists a Uzbek soldier on July 18th, detach his safety harness from the ballet line after rappelling down a cliff face as part of a familiarization course offered to the foreign soldiers, at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site located in Jericho, Vt. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)

PTAE assists 158th Security Forces Services

By Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco, 172 PAD

Airmen and Soldiers recently spent time together at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site. Members of 158th Security Forces Services were on the range qualifying for an upcoming deployment. But there were Soldiers on the range too. Vermont Army National Guard instructors were requested to assist the Air Guard instructors to improve the instructor to student ratio.

“This is something we’d like to see more of in the future. We’d like to see more joint cooperation. The idea is to keep different specializations working together in the state,” said Capt. Scott Mathewson, VTARNG range OIC.

With the OPTEMPO of both services since 9-11, joint training efforts like this one “have not been a priority of the J3 shop,” said Mathewson. “Assets are here for both parties to use, and we’d like to strengthen that relationship.”

Being able to use qualified instructors from both services, in cases like this one, benefits both the instructors and the trainees. Instructors have more opportunities to use their skills, and the trainees benefit from the better student to instructor ratio, and get more individualized attention on the range.

Sgt 1st Class Jesse Smith, a member of the 15th CST was one of the instructors who volunteered to help train the Airmen.

“Any time I can get a chance to teach marksmanship it’s great,” said Smith.

Whether he’s teaching Soldiers or Airman, Smith is happy to help service members improve their marksmanship.

“Soldiers and Airmen, it’s all the same. It can be challenging. For people who don’t shoot often, to bring them back to basic fundamentals was key,” said Smith.

“It’s about learning from each other,” said Mathewson. “Assets are here for both parties to use.”

According to Mathewson, there will hopefully be a lot more joint training efforts in the future.

“We’d like to develop a greater cooperation between the two (services) so we are able to operate successfully as a team within the state,” said Mathewson.



Staff Sgt. Michael Lemire instructs an Airman on the importance of trigger squeeze at Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho. Instructors from the Army National Guard were called upon to assist the Air Guard to help increase the instructor to student ratio on the range. (Photo by Sgt. Elizabeth Pacheco)

Active Shooter Awareness:

What Would You Do?

by Maj. Randall Gates, State Antiterrorism Officer

The Vermont Army National Guard continuously develops methods and procedures to ensure the safety of its uniformed and civilian workforce at Camp Johnson and other Guard facilities throughout the state. The recent shooting event at the Newtown, Connecticut elementary school forces us to examine our preparation for a similar event. This article is meant to help develop an awareness of an Active Shooter event and it is an important responsibility to remain vigilant by understanding different warning signs.

A potential Active Shooter may be a current or former employee associated with the Vermont National Guard. The shooter may be a Soldier or Airmen suffering from some degree of mental illness or under the influence of drugs or alcohol or at “the end of their rope” from multiple stressors in their lives. A shooter could also be someone with no current or past affiliation with our organization and has just decided to use us and our location to make a statement. An active shooter incident is when one or more subjects participate in a shooting spree, either random or systematic, with the intent to continuously harm others. An event like this is unpredictable and evolves rapidly. Victims are generally targets of opportunity. Usually direct action by law enforcement is required to end an active shooter event.

It is important to understand that some of our coworkers may be suffering from stress we do not understand or clearly see. Indicators of potential violent behavior by a coworker may include increased use of alcohol or drugs, an unexplained increase in absenteeism or vague physical complaints. A noted withdrawal, increased severe mood swings and increased talk about personal problems can also be additional signs to look for. Finally, an increase in unsolicited comments about violence,

firearms and other dangerous weapons or violent crimes is definitely a warning sign to catch.

Workers caught in an active shooter event can do three things to help ensure their safety: Evacuate, hide or take action. Evacuating is the preferred response if possible and involves finding a safe route out of your building. Leave your belongings behind when you leave and keep your hands visible in case law enforcement has already arrived. Hiding in place should be done in areas that are out of the shooter’s view. Lock your office door, place heavy objects against the door, turn off lights and close shades. Silence anything that could make a sound such as a radio, a TV or your cell phone. Taking action is a last resort answer only when life is in imminent danger. This action requires commitment to incapacitate the shooter.

Knowing our coworkers helps us identify potential problems. Supervisors should especially be attuned to knowing and reacting to the warning signs already enumerated. The State Antiterrorism Officer has developed an Active Shooter Awareness class with the intent to teach every worker on Camp Johnson in the February to April 2013 timeframe. Your leadership will announce course dates and when you should attend. If you have any questions, please contact Major Randall Gates at 338-3350.

Pomerleau Dedicates Military Ball To Vermont Guardsman

Story by Senior Airman Victoria Greenia, Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jim Greene

BURLINGTON, Vt. - On the first of December 1,200 Vermont Air and Army National Guard members filed into the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, Vt. Hosted by Mr. Antonio Pomerleau, a local philanthropist, each service member was able to enjoy dinner and dancing at the 2012 military ball in appreciation of their service.

Dim chandelier lights casted a comforting glow over tables and chairs that were swathed in luxurious burgundy and gold cloth. Visual and mouth-watering treats adorned each table; a large vase was a centerpiece on each, brimming with white delicate flowers. A plate with a generous slice of multi-layered chocolate cake lay in front of each seat, challenging even the most strong-willed to wait until dinner was done. Such sharp contrast to the training lines and hangers of drill weekend, no detail was overlooked to ensure every attendee felt Mr. Pomerleau's generosity.

The turnout was so successful that hotel rooms spilled over to at least two other hotels. This was the largest military ball Vermont has ever had.

The benefactor wrote in an email that it was his understanding that his contributions for the lavish event were "the first time in history that an individual has thrown such a large party including all levels of the service." In fact, he wrote that he had insisted that everyone, regardless of rank, was invited. This was a way for him to express his appreciation of the men and women, and their families, in Vermont who serve their state and country.

As a token of thanks, Maj. General Thomas Drew, the Vermont Adjutant General, made Pomerleau an Honorary Green Mountain Boy for "meritorious service and support to the Soldiers, Airmen, and Families of the Vermont National Guard."

This isn't the first time Pomerleau has dedicated his time and money in showing support of Vermont's military men and women. For several years he's been putting on Christmas parties for their families. He wrote, "I have given many family and children parties in years past for families of those serving. At my first party there were 600 children and parents, the second year it grew to 1,200 and the third year I had space for 1,800 and 2,200 showed up!"

He wrote it was the least he could do for the people serving their country.

Pomerleau never had the opportunity to serve his country in a military capacity due to lingering injuries from a childhood accident. In World War II he tried to "sneak through" enlistment, but was turned away by doctors. He did the next best thing: Auxiliary patrol and night posts where he would "report any planes flying in the area." Now he serves by sponsoring events for service members and their families.

"I think soldiers and their [spouses] are appreciative to have someone besides the Army doing something for them," Pomerleau wrote. "That, to me, is very important!"

During the open commencement of the ball, Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin summed it up when he said, "Everytime Pomerleau puts on an event like this for the Vermont military, he is saying thank you on behalf of the state of Vermont."

