

DMAVA Highlights

29 September 2016

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177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, airman takes the blood pressure of a homeless veteran during Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill Sept. 23, 2016. (NJDMAVA-PA photo by Mark C. Olsen)



Senior Airmen Jennifer Heller, right, and Melissa Seel, both aerospace medical technicians with the 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, check a homeless veteran's blood pressure during Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill Sept. 23, 2016. and recovery.

Pfc. Jeannerie Lopez, left, 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, and Spc. Jerry Thach, 328th Military Police Company, New Jersey Army National Guard, cook sausages during Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill Sept. 23, 2016



Maj. Lisa Robinson, left, clinical nurse, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, gives a homeless veteran a flu shot during Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill Sept. 23, 2016.

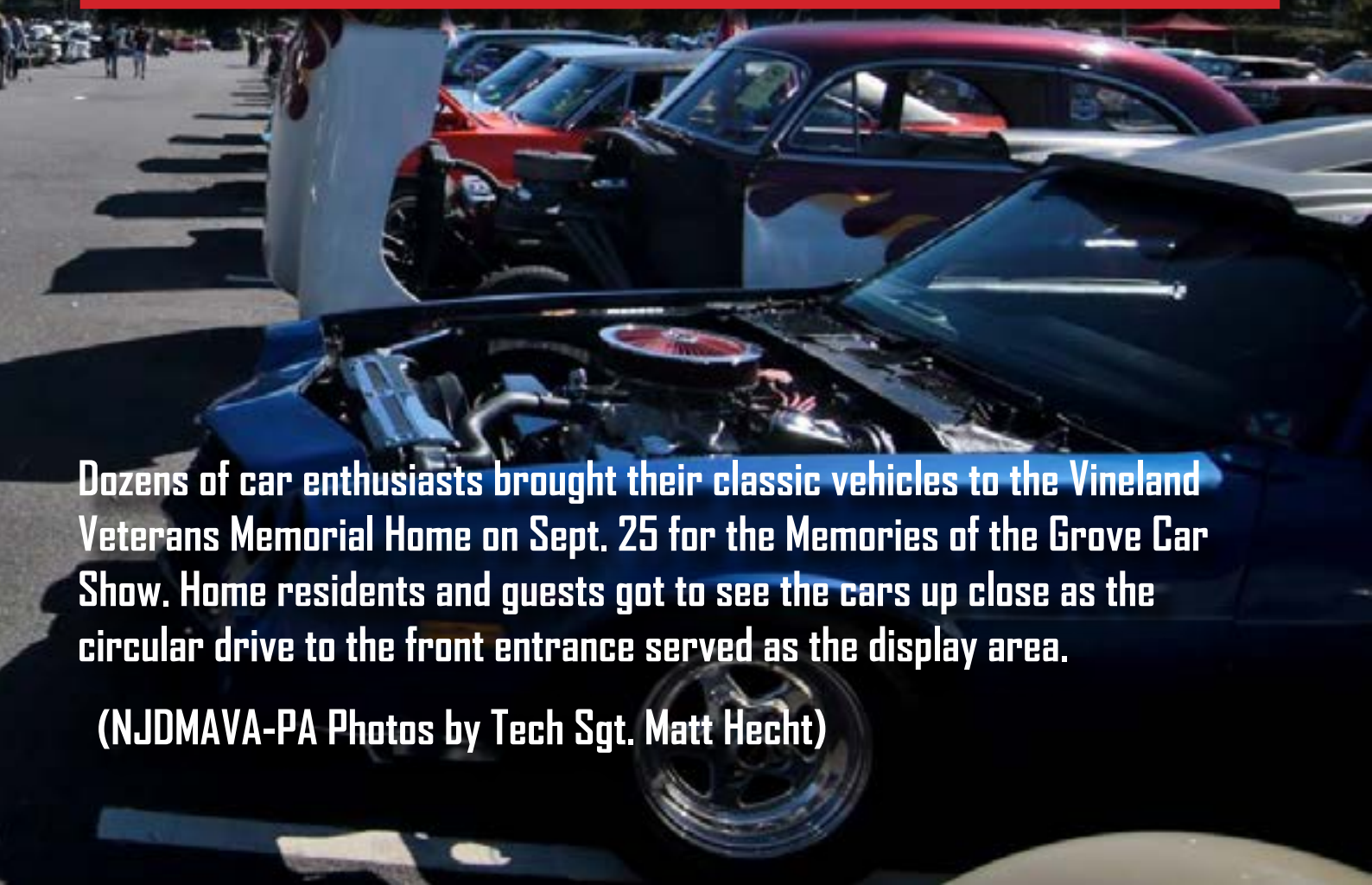


STAND DOWN 2016

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs along with New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and the Stand Down of South Jersey Committee, Inc. co-hosted Stand Down 2016 at the National Guard Armory in Cherry Hill to provide more than 200 homeless veterans with access to healthcare, mental health screening, substance abuse counseling, social services - food stamps and unemployment, legal services, religious counseling, a hot meal, a haircut and winter clothing on Sept. 23, 2016. Since 1996, the South Jersey Stand Down has served as a catalyst that enables homeless veterans to re-enter mainstream society. Stand Down is a military term referring to exhausted combat units that were removed from the battlefield to a place of security and safety for rest and recovery. Today, Stand Downs are grass roots, community-based intervention programs to help veterans' battle life on the streets. (NJDMAVA-PA Photos by Mark C. Olsen)

"MEMORIES OF THE GROVE" CAR SHOW





Dozens of car enthusiasts brought their classic vehicles to the Vineland Veterans Memorial Home on Sept. 25 for the Memories of the Grove Car Show. Home residents and guests got to see the cars up close as the circular drive to the front entrance served as the display area.

(NJDMAVA-PA Photos by Tech Sgt. Matt Hecht)

SQUAD DESIGNATED MARKSMEN COURSE

Story and photos by By Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Woolley, NJDMAVA-PA

The New Jersey Army National Guard's recent Squad Designated Marksman class featured some students from out of town – way out of town.

Ten Soldiers from the storied 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, N.C. were part of the 23-member class that seeks to develop shooters able to engage the enemy beyond the range expected of most troops.

"Graduates of the course go back to their units and fill the role between the average shooter – who shoots 300 meters – and the sniper – who engages targets at 600 meters and beyond," said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Sams, the course manager. "We are training Soldiers who give commanders additional tactical options."

Although a number of active-duty and

National Guard installations offer the Squad Designated Marksmanship course, Sams said the 82nd Airborne troops ended up at the New Jersey course, which is run by the 1st Battalion of the 254th Training Regiment, because of connections made by a paratrooper who attended a leadership course led by the National Guard unit, which is based in Sea Girt.

The Soldiers from the airborne unit joined 13 other New Jersey National Guard Soldiers for the two week course that was designed to both build confidence in their ability to take longer shots with the M-16 rifle and to master the M-14 Enhanced Battle Rifle, which has a longer effective range. The Soldiers graduated from the course on Sept. 24.

Sgt. Nicholas Teigen, 22, of Spokane, Wash. said the training will help him become a better marksmanship trainer for the seven Soldiers he leads as a squad leader in Delta Company of the 2nd Battalion of the

airborne division's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

"This is the first time I've been to a National Guard Course. I'm very impressed with the cadre. Everything is based off the student. They absolutely take the time to teach you the correct way – the tips and tricks," Teigen said.

One of his fellow paratroopers, Spc. Dalton Gentry, 21, of Devine, Texas, whose assigned weapon is normally the Squad Automatic Weapon – a machine gun -- said the course built his confidence in hitting distant targets.

"I learned a lot. I wasn't all that great of a shot when I got here. They taught me the fundamentals. If I was doing something wrong, they explained it to me instead of yelling, Gentry said. "This was the best shooting I've ever done in the military."



Pfc. Jacob Goss of the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division fires from the kneeling position on a firing range at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on Sept. 22. Goss was one of 10 82nd Airborne Soldiers who recently completed the New Jersey Army National Guard's Squad Designated Marksmanship course.



Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division make sight adjustments to the M-14 Enhanced Battle Rifle on a firing range at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on Sept. 22. Ten 82nd Airborne Division Soldiers recently completed the New Jersey Army National Guard's Squad Designated Marksmanship course.

Pfc. Jacob Goss of the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division shows a diagram used to make sight adjustments when attempting to hit long-distance targets on a firing range at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on Sept. 22. Goss was one of 10 Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division who recently completed the New Jersey Army National Guard's Squad Designated Marksmanship course.





EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS

Educators from Gateway Regional High School and Atlantic County Community College flew into Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to tour the Joint Training and Training Development Center on Sept. 27, 2016. The educators were given a hands-on tour of the JT2DC's 133,000 square foot facility where they learned about the simulations systems that the JT2DC uses to train soldiers for deployment.

(NJ DMAVA-PA photos by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Young)



THE HARD ROAD TO BECOMING FIRST

Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th Wing Public Affairs

If it seems like 1st Lt. Justin Sheppard has been in military schools for a lot of his 12-year career, it's because he has.

But the leadership of the New Jersey's 108th Wing believes Sheppard's unique background - which includes two Army military occupational specialties and four Air Force specialty codes - made him the first Airman selected for the elite 140th Cyber Operation's Squadron when it was created in July 2015.

Because the Air Force relies heavily on advanced computer and software systems, it must also rely on cyber operations to keep and maintain those systems safe from hackers and potential threats. Consequently, the cyber system operations specialists design, install and support these systems to ensure they are operating properly and are secure from outside intrusion.

Sheppard, who also holds an information technology degree and a master's in business was a perfect fit.

"As that first person in the unit, I wanted to be the first one done with training so that I can come back and impart that knowledge to everybody else that comes into the unit," said Sheppard. "That was my goal."

But completing that goal came with personal sacrifices that began several years earlier.

Sheppard began his military career in 2004 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where he met his future wife, Janette, during basic training. After Janette completed her advance individual training as a supply specialist and reported to her New Jersey Army National Guard unit, she returned to South Carolina while Justin completed his advance training. They married and moved to Indiana.

Two years later, Justin reclassified as a signal support specialist and began his second military school and the separation from his family began.

Looking for a more technical career in the military, the Sheppard's decided to move to Janette's home state and join the New Jersey Air National Guard. In December 2007, the Sheppard's joined the 108th Wing

and Janette's Army specialty transferred directly to the Air Force's specialty in logistics. Justin wasn't as lucky and not wanting to spend too much time away from his family, chose aerial porter, which has a shorter technical school period.

Assigned to the 108th Contingency Response Group, Justin also assisted with computers and IT matters in addition to his regular duties, and that's how he ended up attending his fourth school. He applied for a full time position with the 108th Communication Flight in 2010 and was sent to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi for six months to retrain as a client systems specialist.

Sometime later, the CRG received a slot for an officer. Having impressed his leadership with his technical skills, and hard work, he was offered the position, but that also meant more time away from his wife and his son.

So away he went to the nine-and-a-half week officer training school to get commissioned and then another 10 months of airfield operations officer's training. What made that separation more difficult was Janette was working on her master's degree in social work and was pregnant with their second child.

Unfortunately, the CRG's mission was short lived as the unit was stood down and personnel within the unit were reassigned to other units within the Wing. When he had accepted the CRG position, he had left a full-time position for a traditional one and now he needed to find a new assignment.

"It was very difficult time for me," said Sheppard. "I had invested a lot of time and effort into the CRG. I almost decided to get out at that point because they didn't have anywhere else to put me. I was the only airfield ops officer in New Jersey at that time. So I was going to have to retrain no matter what I did and I already spent so much time away from the family and I didn't know that I wanted to retrain again."

But for the Sheppard's the decision for Justin to accept the cyber operations officer position made sense. Although it meant going away for to school for several months, the skills and knowledge acquired in that career field would be invaluable.



"We've always shared the burdens together," said Janette. "But it hasn't gotten easy. His departures don't only affect me, it also affects our children."

So after becoming the first person in the cyber unit's manning document, Justin attended undergraduate cyber training at Keesler, then cyber warfare operations, followed by a weapons systems course. All of that schooling culminated in a two week mission qualification training at the Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Maryland this past June.

This month, several cyber operations personnel will be returning from the same training that Justin completed. These Airmen will receive their mission qualification training in-house because Justin is certified for the instruction and certification process that completes their training. Other cyber operators will follow until the 140th becomes initial operation capable in October 2017. Then their missions and deployments will begin.

Time away from family will most certainly be a possibility.

"The time away from home gets harder and harder," said Justin. "Especially now, when my daughter is at that age where she is recognizing that I'm not there."

"We understand that our decisions are based on what is best for our family," said Janette.

"I'm very lucky that my wife is in the unit, so she understands," said Justin. "I feel like if I had somebody that wasn't, they probably wouldn't understand why I would have to keep going away for six months, six months, 10 months and then another 10 months. So yes, I'm lucky that she is supportive and understanding."

Yes, he is.

VETERANS AFFAIRS



RUN FOR THE FALLEN



Participants in the 2016 New Jersey Run for the Fallen were greeted on Sept. 25 at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt by the family of Staff Sgt. Frank Carvill, a New Jersey Army National Guard Soldier killed in Iraq in 2004. The runners were in the home-stretch of a three-day annual event that begins at the Cape May Lighthouse and ends more than 190 miles to the north

at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Holmdel, the location of the state's Gold Star Family Monument. Each mile is dedicated to a fallen New Jersey Hero and their Gold Star Family, and the run team stops at each Hero Marker to present a flag and personalized biographical card to waiting family members, friends and comrades. On the final run day, in addition to the stop at Carvill's Hero Marker,

runners also made stops in honor of four other New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers who died in combat in Iraq; Spc. Christopher Duffy, Sgt. Ryan Doltz, Sgt. Humberto Timoteo, as well as for Staff Sgt. Jorge Oliveria, who died in Afghanistan. (Photo by Kryn Westhoven, DMAVA-PA).



PRIDE NJ RIDE

VETERANS GATHERED AROUND AN AUDI R8 AT THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL IN HOLMDEL DURING THE THIRD ANNUAL PRIDE NJ RIDE. THE RIDE MATCHES VETERANS WITH OWNERS OF FAST CARS FOR A DAY OF DRIVING TO EVENTS ALONG THE JERSEY SHORE. (NJ DMAVA-PA PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS WAYNE WOOLLEY)

HELPFUL INFORMATION

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

PO Box 340
Trenton, NJ 08625-0340

1-888-8NJ-VETS(8387) or www.state.nj.us/military



Raymond L. Zawacki, Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs (609-530-7062)
Cheryl Henderson, Executive Secretarial Assistant (609-530-7045)
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Fax: 609-530-7191

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Veterans' Oral History Luncheon to be Held in Manasquan

The National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey (NGMMNJ) Center for US War Veterans Oral History Program will hold its annual luncheon at 11:00 a.m. on November 1, 2016 at the Manasquan Elks Lodge. The luncheon honors veterans who participated in the Veteran Oral History program over the previous year. At the luncheon each veteran will be presented with a ceremonial resolution commending them for their participation.

The Oral History Center has interviewed more than 550 veterans of World War II, Korea, the Cold War, Vietnam, Desert Storm/Shield, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and more since the program's inception in 2001. Copies of individually filmed interviews are given to the veteran participants, filed at the museum, and sent to the Library of Congress. As time and resources permit, summaries are then posted on the NGMMNJ website.

Veterans' interviews are vital historical primary sources and are continually accessed by scholars, journalists, book authors and documentary filmmakers around the world, as well as by other veterans and their families. They are an essential part of the American story and provide a vital contribution to its narrative.

Individuals interested in participating in the program may obtain an application by completing the form on the website, printing and mailing the form to the museum in Sea Girt, or contacting the museum.

Contact:

**Carol Fowler, Assistant Curator, Veteran Oral History Director,
National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey at Sea Girt
732-974-5966**

Carol.Fowler@dmava.nj.gov

nj.gov/military/museum/oralhistory.html



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