

DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



MARCH 24, 2011

Libya feels 'Jersey Thunder'

By Wayne Woolley, DMAVA/PA



The pattern over the past decade has been clear: when there's an order for American military presence anywhere in the world, the New Jersey National Guard soon gets the call.

So within a day of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates approving the use of force in Libya, the New Jersey Air Guard's 108th Wing launched an aircraft in support of the international response to the growing crisis.

The aircraft and "associated personnel" deployed from Joint Base-McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst at about 10:30 p.m. on March 19 in support of Operation Odyssey Dawn, said Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, the Adjutant General.

From a base in Europe, the plane and crew from New Jersey will support coalition aircraft conducting sequenced bombing strikes to protect Libyan civilians, enforce a no-fly zone and prevent the government of Col. Muammar Al-Qadhafi from removing rebel fighters from their stronghold in Benghazi.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the New Jersey National Guard has deployed Soldiers and Airmen in support of operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Horn of Africa, Cuba, Europe and the Sinai Peninsula.

Add Libya to the list.



Retired Sgt. 1st Class Dana Bowman, who lost both legs while performing a parachute exhibition during his time with the Golden Knights, parachutes into Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst to kick off National Guard Safety Day. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Donnelly, 444th MPAD.

Troops look skyward to kickoff Guard Safety Day

By Spc. Sherwood Goodenough, 444th MPAD

Thousands of feet above, four canopies popped into the pale blue distance behind a small airplane. Retired Sgt. 1st Class Dana Bowman and three members of the New Jersey Army National Guard parachute team rocketed towards the earth and then softly landed on the large "X" marked on the baseball field beside the Fort Dix gymnasium.

Bowman, a former Green Beret who lost both legs while performing a mid-air precision-parachute exhibition during his time with the Golden Knights, was among the parachutists who began the day's events making a lively pitch for safety.

Bowman, wowed the audience with his aerial acrobatics and his rousing, can-do message, and later explained that that while not all accidents are preventable all soldiers need to be vigilant in preparing for when things don't go as plans.

"Accidents happen. Sometimes they're inexplicable," Bowman said. "But it's imperative that we go over safety and always make contingency plans."

The daylong Adjutant General's 31st annual Safety Stand-Down at the on Joint base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, March 19 brought together more than 150 personnel from

around the state to attend training at the Timmerman Center.

In attendance were the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth; Chief of the Joint Staff, Brig. Gen. James J. Grant; major subordinate element commanders; command sergeants major; additional duty officers; and critical aviation assets.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael E. Lynch, the state safety officer, said the event was to reinforce the critical role safety preparedness plays in military life.

"It's really just to set some time aside to see how we do

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Free Earth-friendly program available to GIs

With the push to be more Earth friendly and the “Go Green” initiative going viral most recently, Trinity Solar is offering to provide free solar power systems to active military personnel and reservists who own their home and reside in New Jersey.

“It’s our way of saying ‘thank you,’” said Bill Granger, vice president of sales at Trinity Solar.

Through their special program coined, “Trinity Solar’s Military Give-back Program”, Trinity Solar will install the solar system on the service member’s home with minimal or even no out-of-pocket costs, said Granger.

In order to receive this beneficial program, a service member must meet the following requirements:

- Must have proof of their military status within an active or reserve component
- Must show proof of homeownership and the home must be located in New Jersey

- The home must receive direct, unobstructed sunlight from the hours of 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. (required for generating the electricity)

- Must be able to provide the last 12 months of electric bills and/or electricity usage from the utility company (required for system connection to the utility)

- Must be able to provide a property survey (required for permits)

To start the process, any interested customer should contact Trinity Solar, either by email or phone, to discuss the program in more detail. Trinity Solar will have designated program representatives available to discuss the program in detail, answer any questions, and schedule a site survey to size the system to the customer’s roof. Prior to the site survey, Trinity Solar will need copies of the customer’s electric usage so they can properly size the electrical requirements of the system. Once the system size is determined, an agreement will be sent to the customer and

a time scheduled to discuss the agreement and finalize any questions the customer has. After the customer understands all the benefits of the program and agrees to move forward with the installation, Trinity Solar will start the process of obtaining all state, utility, local and partner approvals/permits to install the system. Upon receipt of all approvals, Trinity Solar will install and connect the system to the service member’s home. From there, the system is guaranteed to operate for 20 years and the customer will receive all the electricity generated over this period for free. At the end of this guarantee, the system can be purchased by the customer for pennies on the dollar or, if the customer wishes, just have it removed from their home at no cost to them.

To contact Trinity Solar and apply for the program, call 732-780-3779 and ask the receptionist about details on the Military Give-Back Program, or visit Trinity Solar’s Web site at www.trinity-solar.com/contact-us.



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael V. Rigby, left, receives the colors of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team during the Change of Responsibility ceremony on March 20 in Lawrenceville. Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy D. Marvian, right, relinquished the position as the senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the largest Army Guard unit in the state to Rigby. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, DMAVA/PA



First Sgt. Terrence D. Taylor, left, Chief of Emergency Operations, Homeland Security Center of Excellence; receives his sergeant major stripes from his cousin Warrant Officer Derek Hailey, center, while Col. Kevin C. Hegarty, Joint Director, Military Support watches during a ceremony at the Center in Lawrenceville on March 21, 2011. Photo by Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA

DMAVA Highlights is published weekly by the Public Affairs Office of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, the National Guard, Veterans Affairs or the state of New Jersey. Letters may be sent to: NJDMAVA, DMAVA Highlights, Public Affairs Office, PO Box 340, Trenton NJ 08625-0340. e-mail at pao@njdmava.state.nj.us.

New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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Brig. Gen. James J. Grant – Director, Joint Staff
Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs
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Division of Pension, Benefits to implement new process April 1

The Division of Pensions and Benefits is implementing a significant change to the purchase of service credit and withdrawal application process for all members effective April 1.

Effective April 1, all requests to purchase service credit and/or pension withdrawals must be submitted online using the Purchase Application program and/or the Application for Withdrawal program of the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS).

Consequently, the application to purchase service credit and/or pension withdrawal will no longer be available as a printed form or on the Division of Pensions and Benefits' Web site. Paper applications received by mail as of April 1 will be returned to members with instructions to submit the requests using MBOS.

MBOS is a set of Internet applications that allow current-registered members secure access to their pension account information. In addition, MBOS provides members with fast and efficient methods for requesting purchase of service credit and/or pension account withdrawals.

New members should register to this free application, which requires registration at MyNewJersey and MBOS Web sites. Both of these Web sites are accessible at www.state.nj.us.

This requirement applies to all eligible members of the Public Employees' Retirement System; Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund; Police and Firemen's Retirement System; and State Police Retirement System who wish to purchase service credit and/or terminate their employment and choose to withdraw from their pension account.

Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay applications deadline extended

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSLSP) has been extended to April 8, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program guidelines.

The deadline extension is included in the continuing resolution recently signed by President Obama, which provides funding for federal government operations through April 8.

The RSLSP was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss Authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service in order to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

Outreach efforts including direct mail, engaging military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets, will continue through April 8.

To apply or to get more information on RSLSP, including submission requirements and service-specific links, go to <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>.

Trenton Devils invites you to Fan Appreciation Night

Trenton's local hockey team would like to invite all DMAVA employees and National Guard members, as well as friends and family to Fan Appreciation Night on April 1.

The Trenton Devils will host the Atlantic league-leading Reading Royals at the Sun National Bank Center and will have prizes, games, giveaway and other interactive entertainment throughout the entire game to show their appreciation of the fans support this season.

Tickets to the lower bowl sections of the rink are starting at \$6 per seat with advance purchase.

This offer will expire on March 31, so make your reservations early by calling the Devils ticket office at 609-599-9500 and ask for Brian, Megan or Jackie.

Sun National Bank Center is located at 81 Hamilton Avenue in Trenton, N.J.

Veterans Outreach Schedule



April 2

Vietnam Veterans Education Center
PNC Bank Art Center, Holmdel, NJ 07777
Outreach Event Only 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

April 7

New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home
524 North West Boulevard, Vineland, NJ 08360
Medal ceremony only in Auditorium starting at 1:30 p.m.

May 7

New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial
PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, NJ 07777
Outreach Event 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
NJ Vietnam Veterans Remembrance & medal ceremony 11 a.m.

May 21

American Legion Post No. 65
Lake Ave & Holly Street, Metuchen, NJ 08840
Outreach Event Only 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Recruit Sustainment Soldiers Pitch in for new beginnings

By Sgt. Bill Addison, 444th MPAD

Pfc. Hector De La Cruz joined the New Jersey Army National Guard for the chance to become a carpenter. He got his first opportunity far sooner than he expected.

De La Cruz was among 15 Soldiers from the Recruit Sustainment Program who spent their March 19 training day helping Coastal Habitat for Humanity build two homes in Asbury Park for deserving families.

The Pleasantville native enlisted as a combat engineer and said it felt good to volunteer, but it was also a chance to break free from the pre-enlistment training he would normally be doing.

"I never thought I'd do something like this, especially during a training weekend," he said.

For the new Soldiers, many of whom have yet to attend Basic Training, volunteer programs provide not only additional labor for a worthy cause, but are an opportunity to develop stronger ties to the communities they now serve.

"It instills that sense of pride in them. They get to come out and see why they joined, why they're training," said Sgt. 1st Class Marcus Alfinez, a

recruiter and cadre member for the RSP. "They're learning that community service is a big part of being in the National Guard, and of course that sense of accomplishment you get from it."

According to Loretta Jordan, volunteer coordinator with Coastal Habitat, Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Austin of the RSP coordinated the Soldier volunteer effort after learning about the charity through his mother.

"I said we would love to have the military come and volunteer with us," she said. "We're really happy with the work they're doing."

Pfc. Christopher Walaszek of Manchester said he also enjoyed the chance to give back, while gaining a short break from the grueling training the cadre normally have in store.

"I think it's a great opportunity to help out a great charity," he said. "It's nice to get off the base, away from the training. But the cadre will make us pay for it tomorrow," he joked.

Rhonda Bingham, the lucky recipient of one of the new homes, thanked the Soldiers, and Coastal Habitat for their generosity.

"This is a dream come true," said Bingham as she added her sweat equity to the project. It will be a new chapter of this



Sawdust flies as Pfc. Hector De La Cruz cuts out a window with a reciprocating saw while on assignment with the Recruit Sustain Program at a Habitat for Humanity project in Asbury Park on March 19. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, DMAVA/PA

single mom raising three children, as the past 14 years have been rough, leading to a happy

ending by turning the key in the front door sometime in May.

Troops look skyward to kickoff of Safety Day

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things, why we do things and to see how we can do them better," Lynch, said.

Rieth underscored the critical nature of the training in his opening statements.

"There are a lot of folks out there who want to kill American soldiers so we have to take care of our own and it all starts with safety," Rieth said. "Regard-

less of what we do, we all have a responsibility to safeguard our most precious resource and that's the folks in uniform."

In 2010 the New Jersey Army Guard drove over a million miles accident free, reporting no Class A, B or C incidents in 1,067,375 miles of travel in GSA or Non Tactical Vehicles.



Soldiers and Airmen of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard, march in Newark's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Photo by Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA.

‘Lunch is served’ in Jersey City



If you haven't been to the Jersey City Armory recently, here's a look at the new cafeteria. The yearlong project included a complete upgrade of the kitchen as well. The upgraded facilities are being used by Soldiers on weekend drill as well as various members of the public who use the facility during the week.

Senator to honor pioneering NJ women

In honor of Women's History Month, U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) would like to invite you to the Second Annual Women of Distinction Award Ceremony on Monday, March 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center in Middlesex County College.

New Jersey Air National Guard's commander, Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson will be one of the honorees for this ceremony.

The ceremony will highlight the many achievements that trailblazing women have made over the years to the state of New Jersey, and will honor seven pioneering women who have made incredible contributions in their fields of expertise.

Each woman will be receiving the "Evangeline Menendez Trailblazer Award" in honor of Menendez's mother who was an inspirational figure and role model in his life. The Senator's mother passed away from Alzheimer's disease in October 2009.

Middlesex County College is located at 2600 Woodbridge Avenue, Edison, N.J.

Space is limited to this free event, so please RSVP at <http://menendez.senate.gov/nj/events>. For any questions about this event, please call 973-645-5967.

NJJWV to host annual breakfast

The Department of New Jersey Jewish War Veterans will hold their 30th annual Legislative Breakfast on May 1, 2011 at 9 a.m. at Tinton Falls, N.J.

The event will honor Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and the volunteer service coordinators at the three state nursing homes and the two VA hospitals in New Jersey.

The breakfast event will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Tinton Falls, which is just off Garden State Parkway exit 105.

The cost for this event is \$22 per person.

Anyone interested in attending the event, please contact past department commander Robert Jacobs at 732-323-8680 or via E-mail at conrailbob2003@yahoo.com to make reservations.

Army 'Jazz Knights' Jersey bound West Point ensemble to perform

Bernardsville – The U.S. Army Jazz Knights will perform a free concert on Thursday, April 7, 2011 at 7 p.m. in the Bernards High School Performing Arts Center in Bernardsville. The Jazz Knights are one of four components of the United States Military Academy Band - the U.S. Army's oldest active band and the oldest unit at West Point, tracing its roots to the Revolutionary War.

Members of the group are graduates of some of America's most prestigious music schools and are recruited and selected through a competitive audition process specifically for service in the United States Military Academy Band at West Point.

Bringing over three decades of musical excellence to their audiences, the West Point Band's Jazz Knights present the best in big band favorites, popular music, and original compositions and arrangements for jazz ensemble.

As a part of their education mission, the Jazz Knights' visit to Bernardsville will include workshops for both the Bernardsville Middle School Jazz Ensemble and Bernards High School Jazz Ensemble.

Free tickets will be available beginning March 1 at Bernards High School, Bernardsville Middle School and outlets throughout Bernardsville, Bedminster and Basking Ridge or by e-mailing bh-sjazz@verizon.net.

Battleship NJ; calling all Vietnam War re-enactors

The Battleship New Jersey will host the inaugural Vietnam War Living History Day on Saturday, April 2 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

The event will feature Vietnam War re-enactors throughout the ship; military vehicles on the pier; presentations by Vietnam veterans in the officers' wardroom; and a barbeque from 12 p.m. - 3 p.m. on the fantail. The barbeque, featuring hot dogs, chicken and more, will be prepared and grilled by a local restaurant.

In addition, the festivities will also include bar service and the classic rock sounds of a premier classic-rock cover band from southern New Jersey.

Any Vietnam War re-enactors that participate in this event will receive a free tour of the Battleship and a free lunch at the barbeque.

Guests that day can enjoy all Vietnam Living History activities, with the exception of food and drink at the barbeque, at no additional cost. Guests can come aboard for a tour and experience these additional activities with any tour ticket.

Located on the Delaware River, along the Camden Waterfront across from the City of Philadelphia, the Battleship is open for guided and audio tours on Saturdays and Sundays from 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. through March.

The ship will open every day for tours beginning April 1.

For more information regarding the Battleship call 1-866-877-6262 ext. 203 or visit their Web site at www.battleshipnewjersey.org.

Re-enactors should call 1-866-877-6262 ext. 144 or email Jack Willard at j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org.