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DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS



Godspeed, Soldiers!



Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General of New Jersey, along with leadership from the New Jersey National Guard say good-bye to the Soldiers of the 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion as they depart from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 27. To view more photos of the 117th CSSB Soldier's departure, please visit our Facebook page by following this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#). Additional story on page 2. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA)

117th CSSB departs for year-long deployment to Afghanistan



Spc. Victor Lopez, III, second from left, and his father, Sgt. 1st Class Victor Lopez, Jr. second from right, are preparing to deploy together on a year-long deployment to Afghanistan with the 117th Combat Sustainment Support

Battalion. To view more photos of the 117th CSSB's farewell ceremony, please visit our Facebook page by following this link: [New Jersey National Guard](#). (Photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA)

Story by Sgt. Sherwood Goodenough, 444th MPAD

As the 69 deploying Soldiers of the 117th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion gathered with their families in West Trenton on Sunday during a farewell ceremony, they received high praise from their commander as they prepare to begin a yearlong mission in Afghanistan.

"I stand before you today to give testament that they are the greatest Soldiers that I have ever had the pleasure to serve with," said Lt. Col. Paul E. Rumberger III. "We will not forget our proud history or our rightful destiny as we unfurl our colors on the southern battlefields of Afghanistan for the very first time."

This is the first deployment for the 117th CSSB, which was created in 2001 to deal with the emerging need for specific expertise during a new era of persistent conflict.

The unit will travel first to Fort Hood, TX, to update their war-fighting skills. From Texas, they will travel to Kandahar Province where the unit will be the nerve cell for a logistics and sustainment operation that will provide everything from beans to bullets for a large section of Afghanistan. In addition, the unit will help retrograde equipment and personnel back to the United States as Operation Enduring Freedom winds down.

While this is the first mission for the unit, many Soldiers deploying are experienced war-

fighters with previous deployments.

"The mission is not going to be the same but the job is always the same," said Sgt. 1st Class Victor Lopez Jr., a platoon sergeant. A Philadelphia County Sheriff when not in uniform, Lopez is an Iraq war veteran.

As much as any Soldier, he's accustomed to the changes in the occasional disruptions to his family life and he's focused on a successful mission and a safe return. Furthermore, his son, Spc. Victor Lopez III is also deploying with the unit.

"We're ready to go and come back to our families – 69 leave and 69 come back," the senior Lopez said.

Brig. Gen. Michael Cunniff,

The Adjutant General, spoke of the strong binds that National Guard units have to their communities and the space they leave empty when the planes take their loved ones overseas to serve God and country.

"We're not just soldiers, we're citizens," Cunniff said. "We're fathers and brothers. We're mothers and sisters."

As a son traveling to serve with his father Spc. Lopez is excited to go and be a part of history and a part of winding down the mission in Afghanistan, although he realizes the extraordinary sacrifice they're asking his mother to make.

"There's not much you can say to her," he said. "I'm going to be alright. We're both going to be alright."

108th Wing Airmen depart on six-month tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108th WG/PA
JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – Amid family, friends, colleagues and senior leadership, the 108th Wing bid farewell to several Airmen from the 108th Force Support Squadron here March 29.

The 108th FSS Airmen will be deploying on a six-month tour to the Middle East in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Col. Kevin J. Keehn, 108th WG commander, thanked the families of the Airmen and reminded them of the family support available to them while their loved ones are deployed overseas.

“Thank you for letting us take them away from you for a little while,” said Keehn to the family members. “Don’t be bashful to call for help. We have a family support program here, people in your squadrons and at all levels that can help.”

In addition, Keehn asked the Airmen to look out after one another and thanked them for supporting this mission.

The 108th FSS Airmen will first depart to Virginia and then will fly Saturday to the Middle East to begin their mission.

During the six-month mission, the 108 FSS Airmen will be lodging and feeding all members on the base, working at the fitness center, and also providing off-duty recreational programs for all base personnel.



From left to right, Staff Sgts. Demetrius Reyes, Westampton; Levar Kinard, Mounty Holly; Senior Airmen Andre Jackson, Willingboro; Cristin Campos, Trenton; Tech. Sgt. David McDonald, Hainesport; Staff Sgt. Saywonza Cuevas, Orange; Airman 1st Class Paula Daniels, Easton, Pa; Senior Airmen Folami Shorter, Glassboro; and Darnell Holmes, Lumberton. To view more photos visit the 108th Wing's Facebook page by following this link: [108th Wing](#).



Family, friends and distinguished guests attend the graduation ceremony for the cadets of Class# 35 from the New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy at the Trenton War Memorial March 17. Approximately 100 cadets completed the 22-week residential program

at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. To view more photos from the graduation ceremony, visit our Facebook page by following this link: [New Jersey Youth ChalleNGe Academy Graduation](#). (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, NJDMAVA/PA)

Generous earth-friendly program available to NJ service members

Believing that solar energy is a powerful way to protect America's energy security, environment, and to grow the American economy while helping service members, Suntuity is offering to provide NO-UPFRONT-COSTS solar power systems to active military personnel and reservists who own their home and reside in New Jersey.

Through their special program coined, "Suntuity America Gives Back Program", Suntuity 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) and must be able to qualify for the lease program through a credit check.

Interested customers may contact Suntuity by e-mail or phone to discuss the program. Suntuity will have a design program representative available to discuss the program in detail and schedule a site survey to determine if customer meets the requirements for the program. Prior to the site survey, Suntuity will need a copy of customer's electric bill. After the customer understands all of the benefits and agrees to move forward with the installation, Suntuity will start the process of obtaining all state, utility, and local approvals to install the system. Upon receipt of all approvals, Suntuity will install and connect the system to your home.

Contact Sheila Holman at 609-414-6292 or via email at sheila.holman@suntuity.com for information about this program.

NGANJ 2012 annual conference

The National Guard Association of New Jersey invites you to the 2012 State Conference at the Seaview Resort and Spa at Gallopway, Apr. 27-29.

In addition, a professional development training course will be held there for any active NJNG officers.

The host command has put together a great program that will include a golf outing on April 27 at the Pines Course at Seaview. Cost information and registration for the golf event can be found at http://nganj.org/events_golfreg.htm.

Registration documents for both the conference and hotel rooms can be obtained by visiting their Website at www.nganj.org/events.htm or contacting the NGANJ by email at nganj@aol.com.

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Borough of Sea Girt: Thank You!

By Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley, DMAVA/PA

The borough of Sea Girt is putting more than just words behind a "Thank You" to military members this summer.

As part of "OPERATION: THANK YOU," admission to the borough beach will be free for all holders of military identification cards as well as their families. In passing a resolution on March 14 establishing the free beach access, the Borough Council also encouraged all businesses in the municipality to offer discounts to military members and their dependents.

The resolution also encouraged the rest of the Shore communities that don't offer free beach access to military members already to follow Sea Girt's lead.

Al Bunting, the borough administrator and retired Air National Guard colonel, said the measure made sense for a community that more than a decade ago was believed to be the first in the state to allow free beach access to military members.

Belmar: Military Appreciation Day

The Borough of Belmar, N.J. would like to invite you to their 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Day at their 5th Avenue Beach on Saturday, June 30, beginning at 10 a.m.

All active military personnel and their families will be entitled to a free beach pass, parking, lunch, music and more at the Taylor Pavilion in Belmar.

Pre-registration and proper military identification is required if planning to attend.

Please contact the Belmar recreation director, Tina Connelly, at 732-681-3700 ext. 211 or via email at recreation@belmar.com.

Taylor Pavilion is located 512 Ocean Avenue in Belmar.

Legacies of Valor exhibit at Veteran's Museum

New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Museum and Educational Center hosts an on-going exhibit entitled Legacies of Valor: The Roles Helicopters Played in Vietnam. This exhibit is on display through August 10.

The Vietnam Conflict is often called "The Helicopter War." Helicopters including Huey and Cobra models played important roles in every aspect of the conflict. The heavy reliance on helicopters changed the way the war was fought and how men and women experienced the conflict.

This exhibit explores the roles helicopters played during the Vietnam Conflict. The exhibit highlights the experiences of New Jersey Veterans.

Admission is free for veterans and active-duty military personnel. Adult admission is \$5; student and senior citizen admission is \$3. Children under 10 are admitted free.

Please visit their website at www.njvvmf.org for more information.

New Jersey National Guard saves energy with solar panels

By JoAnne Castagna, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District Public Affairs

In 2004, Master Sgt. Mark Rizzo's U.S. Army convoy was traveling north on a route in Baghdad, Iraq.

"I was in an armored Humvee with a driver, team leader and gunner when we were hit by a roadside bomb," said Rizzo. "Our vehicle shook and the driver moved the vehicle to the right of the road, which saved all of our lives."

The driver acted in a way that helped save the Soldiers from further attack. He could have easily panicked and ran off the road into a barrier or flipped the 13,000 pound vehicle.

Because the driver was trained at the "Battle Lab" and understood the capabilities of the vehicle, the driver reacted in a way that saved their lives and helped them get through their mission, said Rizzo.

Last spring, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, completed the construction of a solar power project to provide energy to the New Jersey Army National Guard Joint Training and Training Development Center, or more commonly known as the "Battle Lab".

The project is not only supporting a facility that is preparing Soldiers for battle and helping to save their lives, but saving the National Guard and taxpayers' considerable money and energy.

The Battle Lab is located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, a United States military facility that is located 18 miles southeast of Trenton, N.J.

The "Battle Lab" is a one of a kind, high profile, state-of-the-art facility where up to 20,000 military and related personnel from all armed forces agencies around the country come annually to be trained to prepare for battle.

"This is the battle up where Soldiers are trained for all types of missions, including stateside missions, like the rescue operations during Hurricane Katrina," said John Hastings, Energy Program Manager at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs who works with Rizzo, currently the Operations Sergeant with the lab.

The Soldiers are trained on a number of high tech training simulators that include live shooting ranges, actual mark ups of towns in Iraq, and vehicle roll over trainers, which was the training that saved the lives of Rizzo and his fellow Soldiers.

According to Hastings, this technology uses considerable energy. The lab uses 1,833,800 Kilowatts annually.

Two years ago, the New Jersey Army National Guard asked the Army Corps of Engineers if it could construct a solar power project so they could save energy and money, as they had done for them on previous solar power projects.

In May 2011 the Army Corps of Engineers completed the solar project with the assistance of contractor, P & S Construction of Lowell, Mass. The project consisted of a solar photovoltaic power panel array that is mounted on the roof of the Battle Lab's 128,000 square foot facility. There are three different roof structures ranging in height from 13 feet to 25 feet above the ground.

The new array covers approximately 71,000 square feet of the roof and was placed next to a pre-existing array that has been providing energy for the lab and was constructed by Sun Power



Corp of San Jose, Calif.

Panel arrays are composed of modules made up of several solar cells or photovoltaic cells that absorb sunlight that produce electricity. The larger the panel, the more electricity is produced.

Electricity in the form of direct current is produced by the panels, which is not directly usable energy for a building. Most buildings require alternating current at a higher voltage. To make usable building power, the solar panel's direct current is fed into an inverter that transforms it into alternating current at a higher voltage.

This alternating current power is then sent to the building's main transformers where it can be used by the building for its energy needs.

"This new array along with the pre-existing array is doubling the amount of energy that is being produced for the lab. Together they are providing nearly 30 percent of the lab's annual energy needs and saving the National Guard and taxpayers' approximately \$118,000 annually," said Jose Diaz, project manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

This project is also tied to the public power grid so that excess energy can be shared with the public.

In addition, the project is under the State of New Jersey's Solar Renewable Energy Certificate Program. Under this program, solar system owners that generate over 1,000 kilowatts of electricity per year that's connected to the public power grid, receive certificates.

These certificates are then publicly sold and traded to New Jersey businesses and individuals, enabling them to receive solar power benefits without building a solar power system themselves. The revenue is returned to the solar system owners.

The New Jersey National Guard expects to generate anywhere from \$100,000-140,000 annually in extra income from this facility and like they've done in the past, will reinvest this money to fund other energy reducing projects at other New Jersey Army National Guard locations.

Diaz said, "I enjoyed working on this project because it makes me feel a sense of pride knowing that these projects will reduce our dependency on foreign oil and will help our country to achieve energy independence, as well as the benefits to our environment."

HIGHLIGHTS



Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, Ray L. Zawacki, welcomes about 50 World War II Veterans, mostly from Sussex County, who traveled to the Trenton War Memorial for a tour and wreath laying ceremony March 24. The trip was sponsored by the Sussex County Elks. (Courtesy photo)



Amid family and friends, Joseph Kanuchok celebrates his 100th birthday March 25 at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park. Kanuchok, born March 25, 1912 in Pennsylvania, served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 at the European Theater during WWII and was honorably discharged as a corporal. For his longevity, Kanuchok was presented with framed birthday-wish letters from the governor's office and the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, by deputy commissioner of veterans affairs, Ray L. Zawacki, as well as a centenarian letter from President Obama. To view more photos of Joseph Kanuchok's birthday celebration, visit our DMAVA Facebook page by following this link: [New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs](#). (Photo by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, NJDMAVA/PA)



CHIEF OF THE JOINT STAFF, BRIG. GEN. JAMES J. GRANT COINS MEMBERS OF THE NJ YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY
Photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA/PA



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