GMG

Green Mountain Guard | Winter 2013

From The TAG

Maj. Gen. Steven Cray
The Adjutant General

As we ring in the New Year, we are also ringing in the very first edition of the digital Green Mountain Guard magazine! It's time we bring our means of communication into the 21st Century and this year we have done it. Our intention is to bring you more up to date information in a medium that can be accessed by our retirees and current Guard members and fit into our budget. I know that some of you like to receive this magazine in print; please know that you can find them on our website at vtguard.com specifically under resources and information. The magazine will download in PDF so you can view it at your leisure or print out photos and stories that you enjoy.

2014 will be a busy year for the Brigade and the support elements for JRTC. There is a lot of hard work going into training and preparation and everyone from the Soldiers, to ESGR, to Family Readiness and the community, your families, and your employers play a big role in the success of this exercise. The road to JRTC is paved by smaller training events such as Guerrier Nordique in March. Members of the AMWS and the Brigade will support the Museum of the United States Army, currently under construction at Ft. Belvoir, by showcasing light infantry and military mountaineering in the video production for the Museum. The Air Guard will continue planning for the arrival of the F-35 and participate in Sentry Savannah training at the Combat Readiness Training Center in Georgia. Community basing continues to grow as part of the success of the Total Force Integration and in January, we will welcome Col. Jackman and Col. Morgan as the new 158th Fighter Wing leadership.

The VTNG is also continuing to engage with our State Partners in Macedonia and Senegal and there are plans to execute another Western Accord mission. The VTNG Senior leadership has also been engaging the senior leaders in Macedonia and Senegal in tri-lateral discussions. The three countries will have an opportunity to learn from the experiences of the others. This year will be very exciting for our program and we look forward to bringing you more photos and videos of these engagements.

I am very proud of our Green Mountain Boys and their hard work and dedication that continues with this year's training plan. The strong community support is a direct reflection on our success. I want to thank our families and employers for their continued support as we enter the New Year.

The Green Mountain Guard is an authorized publication of the Vermont Army & Air National Guard. Views, opinions, or accounts expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Vermont Army or Air National Guard, or the Department of the Army or Air Force. Publication of material is the responsibility of the Vermont National Guard's Public Affairs Officer. The staff reserves the right to edit all material. Comments may be sent to public.affairs@vt.ngb.army.mil or at 802) 338-3479. Visit us on **vtguard.com** or our Facebook page at **facebook.com/VermontNationalGuard?ref=hl**

CONTENTS

staff

Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. Steven Cray

Editors
Maj. Christopher Gookin
Capt. Dyana Allen

Layout/Design
Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison

Staff writers/photographers
State Public Affairs Staff
172nd PAD
158th Fighter Wing PA

GMG
Green Mountain Guard | Winter 2013
Volume 14, Number 7

features

8 VTANG First Air National Guard Base to Receive F-35A

9 Satellite Non-Commissioned Officer Academy Training Returns to Vermont

12 Vermont Veteran Remembers World War II

16 Forged by Necessity, Strengthened by Resolve and Purpose: the National Guard Celebrates it's 377th Birthday

18 VTANG gets into the Holiday Spirit

20 World War II POW Recalls Wartime Experiences

24 HRF: Homeland & Response Forces

26 Vermont Wins Pistol Match

P V Look for these two logos throughout the magazine. Click on them to find links to addtional photos & videos!

IN & AROUND: **VTARNG**

RIGHT: U.S. Army National Guard Maj. Scott Tousignant pins Spc. Jennifer Gile with the Army Achievement Medal at the Regional Training Center, Camp Johnson, Vt., November 18, 2013. Gile participated in a Battle Hand-off that included 21 Soldiers moving onto their Units from the RSP.
(U. S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

BELOW: U.S. Army Spc. Adam R. Dimick, 131st Engineers, Vermont Army National Guard, removes chains from a bulldozer at Camp Johnson, Vt., November 13, 2003. Dimick is preparing the bulldozer to be unloaded from the lowboy semi-trailer.
(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

ABOVE: A Black Hawk helicopter takes off from the Army Aviation Support Facility, Burlington International Airport, Burlington, Vt., November 3, 2013. Members of the Vermont Army National Guard were participating in flight training during their drill weekend.
(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Nathan Rivard)

LEFT: U.S. Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Ryan Rosesco instructs students during a fixed ropes training course at the Ethan Allen Firing Range, Jericho, Vt., November 13, 2013. Rosesco is an instructor with the Army's Mountain Warfare School in Vermont. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

IN & AROUND: **VTANG**

LEFT: Members of the 158th Civil Engineering Squadron stand in formation during a welcome home ceremony, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt., December 8, 2013. The engineers spoke about their recent deployment to Afghanistan and were presented awards for outstanding achievements. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Airman Jeffrey Tatro)

BELOW: U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Corey Rivers poses for a photograph during training with the 158th Security Forces Squadron November 2, 2013 at the 158th Fight Wing, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt. Rivers participates in annual training with fellow airman to improve teamwork and weapon skills. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Jon Alderman)

ABOVE: U.S. Air Force MSgt. Andrea Peryea presents Lt. Col. Patricia Hartman with a shadow-box at the 158th Fighter Wing, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt., November 2, 2013. Hartman retired after 40 years of service, working first as an enlist-ed Amn in Security Forces and retiring as an Officer in the medical field. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Capt. Dyana Allen)

LEFT: U.S. Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Nick Curtis stands at attention during a Logistics Readiness Squadron open ranks inspection, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt., November 3, 2013. The inspection was a rehearsal for an upcoming rated inspection. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Jonathon Alderman)

Vermont Air National Guard

First Air Guard Base to receive F-35A

Written by Capt. Dyana Allen, State Public Affairs

BURLINGTON, Vermont - Maj. Gen. Steven Cray, Adjutant General of the Vermont National Guard announced that the United States Air Force has selected the 158th Fighter Wing in Burlington, Vt., as the first F35A Air National Guard Base.

Burlington Air Guard Station is expected to receive 18 F-35As, replacing the 18 F-16 fighting Falcons currently assigned to the 158th Fighter Wing. The F-35A is expected to arrive in 2020.

"Burlington Air Guard Station (AGS) was selected because it presents the best mix of infrastructure, airspace and overall cost to the Air Force," said Timothy Bridges, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations. "Burlington's airspace and ranges can also support projected F-35A operational training requirements and offers joint training opportunities with F-15Cs from Barnes AGS, the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, and CF-18s stationed at Canadian Forces Base Bagotville in Quebec."

Approximately 300 airmen on base on Tuesday gathered in a hanger while Cray thanked them for their professionalism and hard work. He spoke of the deployments around the world and of the assistance to the citizens of Vermont during Tropical Storm Irene. He spoke of the Vermont Air National Guard's Firefighting Unit who have assisted in saving lives many times both on and off the airport.

"Throughout that entire time, we've asked nothing more than for you to just do your job; to be proud of who you are as Green Mountain Boys; and to be proud of your mission," said Cray. "Today is a historic day for the United States Air Force, the Air National Guard and certainly, for the Vermont Air National Guard…This morning, I am pleased to announce, that the Secretary and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force have selected Burlington as the first Air National Guard Base for the F-35."

Cray was joined by Gov. Peter Shumlin, Senator Patrick Leahy, Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger, and Chairwoman of the South Burlington City Council Pam Mackenzie.

Shumlin spoke about how proud he was of the Vermont National Guard and how this announcement is a proud day for all Vermonters. He spoke about the VTANG and the response to the 9-11 terrorist attack in New York City in 2001.

"You make us proud. What this decision does today is affirm your commitment, affirm your greatness and give us the equipment that we will need to continue to protect our nation and our state. Congratulations! This is an endorsement of your dedication, your service, your hard-work, and your effectiveness in protecting the greatest democracy in the land."

When Leahy asked the Airmen if they were proud, he was responded to with loud cheers and applause. He spoke about his conversation with the Secretary of the Air Force and how they talked about the incredible record and the hard-working men and women of the Vermont Air National Guard.

"Vermont has done far more than its share over the decades in both the Army Guard and the Air. You have been called because you are the best," stated Leahy.

TOP: Vermont Governor, Peter Shumlin, addresses the media during a press conference, December 3, 2013 at the 158th Fighter Wing, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt. Shumlin was responding to the news that the United States Air Force announced that the 158th Fighter Wing would be the first Air National Guard Base to receive the F-35A. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by SrA Jon Alderman)

MIDDLE: U.S. Air Force Col. David Baczewski, Wing Commander for the Vermont Air National Guard, addresses the media, December 3, 2013 at the 158th Fighter Wing, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt. The United States Air Force announced that the 158th Fighter Wing would be the first Air National Guard Base to receive the F-35A. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by SrA Jon Alderman)

BOTTOM: U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Steven Cray, Vermont's Adjutant General, is congratulated by Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy, December 3, 2013 at the 158th Fighter Wing, Burlington International Airport, South Burlington, Vt. The United States Air Force announced that the 158th Fighter Wing would be the first Air National Guard Base to receive the F-35A. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by SrA Jon Alderman)

Satellite Non-Commissioned Officer Academy Training *Returns To Vermont*

Written by Staff Sgt. Victoria Greenia, 158FW

SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT - The Vermont Air National Guard recently completed the first phase of the Satellite Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) course. The course was offered on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for 12 weeks, senior NCO hopefuls have been attending classes held here at the Vermont Air Guard base.

"Having a majority of the course held at the home base is ideal for people who can't just leave their job to get NCO training," said Senior Master Sergeant Cynthia Fitzgerald, Lead Site Facilitator at the VTANG.

An added benefit, she noted, is that it puts many people in a school mind-set. This is becoming more important with the possible onset of a Community College of the Air Force requirement for promotion. The additional college classes that may be required can seem less daunting after completing this course; it allows them to see that they can be successful working full time and taking a class.

The course is broadcast across the country to Air National Guard Bases that are participating in the satellite course. The course is delivered through the Air National Guard's TEC TV. TEC TV provides high-definition broadcasts for virtual conferences, meetings, and workshops. Student's interaction with instructors and classmates is facilitated through microphones and virtual blackboards to communicate with their peers.

The final two and a half weeks of the course are spent in-house at McGhee Tyson Air Force Base's Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. The curriculum offered during the in-residence training focuses on public speaking, writing, dress and appearance, physical training, drill and ceremony and upon completion full residence credit is granted.

This course was briefly curtailed due to the three-week furlough that restricted military courses this fall, as a result of this a 104-hour course was compressed into an 80-hour course and VTANG airmen had intense nights in order to meet the course's gates and benchmarks.

"The test for the non-commissioned officer academy course has changed," Senior Master Sergeant Cynthia Fitzgerald, Lead Site Facilitator at the VTANG, said. "It's no longer a knowledge-based test. It's not just regurgitating information; it's applying the principles covered in the course."

Case studies and vignettes provided in the course material encourage potential senior NCOs to a process to identify, differentiate, determine, and predict issues to work through problems. Analyzing these scenarios can be difficult, Fitzgerald said.

The base education and training office intends to schedule the NCOA once a year in the fall and Airman Leadership School in the spring. Each class needs a minimum of eight people and can hold a maximum of 14. Technical sergeants and senior airmen interested in a boost to their Air Guard career by taking one of these classes can contact Senior Master Sgt. Louis Mossey, VTANG force development superintendent, for information.

McGHEE TYSON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Tenn. Students attending the Satellite Noncommissioned Officer Academy Class 13-9, from the 158th Fighter Wing, South Burlington, Vt. gathers at the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center here, Dec. 10, 2013. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Kurt Skoglund/Released)

Soldiers from the Garrison Support Command bow their heads during the invocation at the Non-commissioned Officer induction ceremony, Nov. 2, 2013 in Williston, Vt. All of the Soldiers were newly promoted to Sergeant and were officially welcomed as NCO's in the Vermont Army National Guard. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by: 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)

Lt. Col. David Foster congratulates Command Sgt. Major Raymond Meyers on his promotion at the Garrison Support Command NCO induction ceremony, Nov.2, 2013. Meyers was recently appointed at the Battalion Sergeant Major for the 86th Troop Command. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by: 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)

Command Sgt. Major Gus Klein congratulates Sgt. Joseph Galo, a Soldier with Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment after signing the Non-commissioned Officer Oath, Nov. 2, 2013 in Williston, Vt. The induction ceremony is held each year to welcome newly promoted Sergeant E-5's into the NCO ranks.

Soldiers from the Garrison Support Command raise their hands and recite the Non-commissioned Officer Creed during the NCO inductions ceremony, Nov. 2, 2013 at the Williston Armory. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by: 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rivard)

Sgt. 1st Class Derek Laferriere introduces two newly promoted Sergeants from 1st Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment (S&S) during the Garrison Support Command Non-commissioned Officer induction ceremony, Nov. 2, 2013.

Vermont Veteran Remembers
World War II

Written by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison, State Public Affairs

Glen Goodall was only 24 years old when he sailed into the Pacific as a Vermont National Guardsman aboard the USS President Coolidge in 1942. He served as a supply sergeant with the 172nd Infantry Regiment, 43rd Division, otherwise known as the "Red wings."

On Oct. 6, 1942, Goodall's division set sail from Fort Ord, Calif., aboard the USS Coolidge. The soldiers ate two meals a day, while keeping track of their barracks bags and rifles. After about 10 days, they ended up in New Caledonia and parked in the harbor for a few more days.

"Our first sights of combat we saw from our ship," Goodall recalled. "We saw another ship moored with a big hole straight through it and I thought, well that's not good."

The USS Coolidge set out again, arriving three days later at the New Hebrides Islands in the south Pacific on Oct. 26, 1942.

June 30, 1943: Members of the Vermont Army National Guard's 172nd Infantry, 43rd Infantry Division, climb ashore as part of the first wave of American troops to storm Rendova, in the Solomon Islands, during World War II. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy)

"We pulled into the harbor and were just about to land when all of a sudden, Errummp! Then Errummp! We had hit our own mines, two of them," Goodall said.

There were 5,000 men aboard when it hit the mines. An announcement was broadcast to everyone that they were going to abandon ship. The men were told to leave their baggage and rifles on their bunks; that they would return the following day to get them.

"We went over the ship on rope ladders. The funny thing, when we were at Fort Ord, they put everyone through a two-day course on using rope ladders. This doesn't sound like much, except you have to climb down it a certain way, otherwise it won't balance and it's a mess. Well, because of that little training that we got there, we knew how to go over the side of the ship," Goodall said.

"There were some boats there, but a lot of people swam to shore. I remember we were close to shore. I was in a boat and when I climbed out into the water, it was up to my knees and oil was everywhere. Maybe 30 minutes to an hour later, the ship just keeled over and disappeared."

Goodall and the rest of the division were stranded on the island for a few months waiting for another U.S. ship to bring them supplies.

"We didn't have a toothbrush. We didn't have a tent. We didn't have anything," Goodall recalled. "People on the island gave us what tents they could and we lived that way for several months. My job was to get supplies wherever I could get them, thank God for the Seabees and all the other people on the island."

"So the training continued," Goodall said, "because in the Army you either train to fight or you fight."

Once supplies arrived, they traveled onto Guadalcanal, where the 172nd was originally supposed to relieve the Marines before the Coolidge sank.

In May 1943, they were given orders to invade the New Georgia group of islands.

On June 30, the 172nd landed on Rendova, helping to capture it in only three days. Then they began island hopping: fighting first on Munda and then on to Arundel. Finally, after one of the bloodiest battles of the New Georgia Campaign, the Japanese were forced to evacuate the island and the U.S. forces took control.

After the New Georgia battles, the 172nd was awarded a resting period and was sent to New Zealand. There, they continued to train and perform maneuvers, but were also given time to relax and visit the sights. Goodall on the other hand, came down with malaria and ended up spending some time in the hospital.

In July 1943, the 172nd left New Zealand and headed to New Guinea to help maintain control of an airfield that had been occupied by U.S. troops since April. At the end of December, they were given orders to head to the Philippines. As part of the Luzon Campaign, fighting ensued for 175 days in the Philippines, with one of the toughest battles being the capture of Ipo Dam.

"We landed and our primary goal was to capture and take Ipo Dam because it was a major water supply for the Philippines," stated Goodall. "We had a lot of combat there; we lost 1,000 men and a lot of people were hurt."

"Then we (U.S.) dropped the atomic bombs. They came out with new orders, and we were sent into Japan as occupational forces," Goodall said.

Goodall's stay in Japan was a short one. Only there a few weeks, he was notified that he had enough points and was headed home.

On Oct. 6, 1945, three years to the day they set sail, the 172nd arrived back at Fort Ord, Calif.

"When we got in, everybody was running for a phone. They had these huge rooms loaded with phone booths and you'd go in and place your call," Goodall said.

Goodall went in and tried to call his wife,

Glen Goodall poses for a photo while serving in the Pacific during World War II. (Photo courtesy of the Goodall Family)

Esther. The operator told him that the lines were all busy, but that if he would sit and wait, he would call Goodall back when the lines cleared. Goodall sat all through the night, waiting to talk to his wife.

"We finally got to talk to each other for the first time in three years," Goodall said with a little chuckle and a smile.

While overseas, Goodall was able to write to Esther almost every day. At first, the mail service was not very good, but it eventually got to where it was only taking five to six days to receive letters. Ed Henry, the local postmaster in Montpelier, Vt., would call and let Esther know when a letter had come in from her husband. He would personally deliver the mail to her on his way home, even on Sundays.

Goodall traveled from Fort Ord, Calif., to Fort Devens, Mass., where he was out-processed and discharged from service. He went home to Montpelier, Vt., where he and his wife bought a home and raised their two children.

This past June, Goodall's son-in-law, Skip Lightsey, took him to Washington, D.C. There, Goodall had the opportunity to visit the World War II Memorial and meet up with long-time, family friend, Sen. Patrick Leahy.

"Glen Goodall has long been a friend of our family, and it was a special treat and a great honor to welcome him and his son-in-law, Skip, to the capitol for Glen's first visit. Glen's visit buoyed everyone who met him that day. It was a day I'll never forget. We all are so proud of, and grateful for, what he and the Greatest Generation have done for our country. The departing tribute to Glen that was organized by the city of Montpelier as he began his trip to Washington was also so fitting and memorable," said Leahy.

Glen Goodall and his wife, Esther, currently reside in Williamstown, Vt. They were married on Dec. 25, 1941, and are getting ready to celebrate their 72nd wedding anniversary.

TOP LEFT: Glen Goodall, a World War II veteran, poses with a copy of his official Army portrait at his home Nov. 4, 2013, in Williamstown, Vt. Goodall served with the 172nd Infantry Regiment, 43rd Infantry Division, Vermont Army National Guard during World War II. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

TOP RIGHT: Glen Goodall and Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy pose for a photo during a tour of the Capitol. In addition to the medals and commemoratives presented to Goodall, Leahy also presented him with a medallion of the Office of the President Pro Tempore – the Senate's highest constitutional officer, and an office that Leahy assumed a year ago. (Photo courtesy of the office of Sen. Patrick Leahy)

MIDDLE: Glen Goodall, a World War II veteran, speaks with U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jason Brace, Vermont Army National Guard, during an interview at his home Nov. 4, 2013, in Williamstown, Vt. Goodall served with the 172nd Infantry Regiment, 43rd Infantry Division, Vermont Army National Guard during World War II. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

BOTTOM: Glen Goodall, a veteran of the Vermont Army National Guard, poses for a photo while trying on his service coat Nov. 4, 2013, in Williamstown, Vt. Goodall was a supply sergeant, serving with the 172nd Infantry Regiment, 43rd Infantry Division during World War II. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

Forged by Necessity, Strengthened by Resolve and Purpose:

the National Guard celebrates its 377th birthday

Story By Bill Boehm, National Guard Bureau

The National Guard as the organized militia of the United States was born in Boston, Massachusetts on December 13, 1636. On that day,the Massachusetts General Court declared that the colony's existing militia companies were to be organized into three regiments: the North, South, and East regiments. Four Army National Guard units are descended from these original regiments, and are the oldest units in the United States military. They are the 101st Engineer Battalion, the 101st Field Artillery Regiment, the 181st Infantry Regiment, and the 182nd Infantry Regiment.

Citizen-soldiers assembled for military training on the Salem common in spring 1637 at the "First Muster" of a militia regiment. This event is commemorated by the Massachusetts National Guard every first Saturday in April. It is a harbinger of the spring throughout the Commonwealth and New England, alongside Patriots Day on April 15.

Living amidst a rugged landscape, and with the specter of disease and poor sanitation rampant, the populace of the Massachusetts Bay Colony realized their salvation lay in unity. Maintaining one common defense and a emphasizing a shared purpose to survive proved most critical. Once the colonists fulfilled that initial basic set of needs, they could then make the settlements thrive beyond the provision of essential wants.

England then offered no additional protections. Self-sufficiency proved instrumental. At this time in the early 17th century, other European nations could not be relied upon for any sort of protection since they pursued their own colonial aims elsewhere in North America.

Colony leaders taught the latest military tactics. Men in the regiments exercised per instructions and practiced to ensure proficiency in case some peril intervened. The nearby Pequot Indian tribe became the first threat in 1638, as they raided settlements in both Massachusetts and Connecticut. The effectiveness of militia training enabled the settlements to withstand these incursions. Self-defense established a measure of confidence to small villages. This common goal of stability, bonded through regular preparedness training, enabled colonists to provide defense to their own communities.

From those simple beginnings, the militia system grew among the other colonies along the East Coast. Continually functioning militias in Virginia, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maryland, and Rhode Island used their own local customs to defend their populations. Such expansion typified the rise of the original 13 colonies as a force with which the British crown had to reckon, as political and social conflict prompted the Declaration of Independence in July 1776.

By then, it was not just the threat of native populations that occupied militias, but also the threat of standing forces that exacted a range of hardships toward a population once wholly loyal to the Crown.

By the 19th Century, militias remained a local fixture. The term "National Guard" came to replace "militia," first prompted as a tribute to the Marquis de Lafayette's 1825 visit to the United States. Lafayette, General George Washington's trusted confidante, belonged to the "Guarde Nacional" in France, and as the nation grew, states assembled militias or defense forces that became known as National Guards, each representing the states and territories.

The National Guard still holds true in upholding the unique characteristics that enabled its success from the bleak Massachusetts frontier of the mid-17th century. Advances in transportation, communication, disease mitigation and other changes have made readiness and preparation central to a common defense. This in turn has prompted the institution of high standards of professionalism and diverse proficiency, which evolved over three centuries working in communities across the United States.

The National Guard of today consists of Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen that provide protection from natural disaster and other hazards, who train regularly to sharpen readiness skills in the name of benefitting their local communities. It has also developed into an active, ready force deploying to faraway countries to protect the national interests of the United States abroad. That unique dual-status posture remains constant.

But the Guard's core remains that of a community institution, whose primary concern is to provide ready and trained forces for times of crisis. One recent example of this took place on April 15, 2013 in Boston, when soldiers from the Massachusetts National Guard answered the call to action when two bombs detonated near the finish line of the Boston Marathon that afternoon.

Guard members present at the road race immediately responded those people impacted at the scene of the bombing. They provided aid to wounded spectators, and also lent necessary assistance to all branches of law enforcement in the bombing's aftermath along with their brethren from New York and Rhode Island. The Guard serves as an unbroken chain of service to community, state, and the United States of America, a light of assurance in the wake of traumatic events.

In September 2013, the united effort of National Guards from neighboring Wyoming and Utah helped steady the state of Colorado from some of its worst flooding in recorded history. In an ironic twist, this weather event occurred months after devastating wildfires stripped bare the forest landscapes of the Centennial State. Certainly, the presence of the Oklahoma National Guard exemplified the hallmark of neighbors helping neighbors around Moore, Oklahoma, after a catastrophic tornado touched down on May 20, 2013. Amid tragedy, local National Guard men and women provided a needed ray of hope.

These contemporary examples utilized sophisticated equipment, operated by men and women trained at the highest levels by polished instructors. Yet the principles of responding to peril remain consistent. Those simply assembled regiments enabled the Massachusetts Bay Colony to meet the challenges lying beyond the boundaries of their familiar communities. Just as those forces existed for those pioneer settlers, the forces that exist beyond the observable horizon still persist today. And as one country, we must be on watch for this presence.

In turning 377 years young, America's National Guard is always ready… always there

VTANG gets Into the Holiday Spirit

Written by Staff Sgt. Victoria Greenia, 158FW

Family is always important at the 158th Fighter Wing, but the holidays sometimes have a way to test even the closest of families. Recently, there has been more awareness of struggling Airmen's families purchasing gifts for their kids which has come to the attention of leadership. Individuals, Squadrons, or Units can now sponsor another Vermont Air National Guard member's family for the holidays. Gifts don't have to be expensive and the simple act of reaching out as a Wingman could help another Airman through tough times.

"We're all family and we're about supporting each other," said Tech. Sgt. Tammy Langlois, from the Maintenance Squadron who was an individual sponsor this year. "Everyone has a moment where they need help. Sometimes you need help, sometimes you can help. Later, people will pay it forward."

Unofficially termed the holiday gift wrap-around, the VTANG program is run through the Family Readiness Program (FRP). The FRP connects Airmen on base struggling to afford Christmas gifts for their families with donors, said Mary Bullis, the Manager of the FRP. Sponsors receive generic information like, the gender and age of the child or children they will be buying gifts for. The entire process is anonymous with only the employees at Family Readiness know who is in need. The gifts are delivered the week before Christmas.

"The Vermont Air National Guard is one big family and we really take pride in supporting our own," Bullis said. Those receiving the gifts are usually airmen whose chiefs or supervisors thought could use a hand this holiday. Bullis understands that military members are proud people, but hopes next season those who could use the help will feel more comfortable contacting the FRP directly.
This year five shops and two individuals volunteered to sponsor. The medical squadron was one of those shops.

"Sometimes we can serve together but our needs are different," said Capt. Terri Cote, an officer and participant in the holiday gift wrap-around with the Medical Group. "Nobody wants someone in their family to go through hardships or strife. This gives us an opportunity to be there for each other, and adds to everyone's sense of belonging."

Individuals, groups, squadrons or units who want to take part in the next holiday gift wrap-around have plenty of time to plan for it next year. For more information, contact Mary Bullis or the Family Readiness Program at the VTANG at 802-652-8035 or on facebook at Vermont Air National Guard Family Readiness.

Mary Bullis of the 158th Fighter Wing Family Readiness Program sits next to presents gathered at the Burlington International Airport December 7th, 2013. The presents are for a the Vermont Air National Guard holiday gift wrap program where Airmen support other Airmen by helping purchase gifts for families in need. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Victoria Greenia)

Korean War Awards Ceremony

Photography by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison, State Public Affairs

1. U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Steven Cray congratulates Mr. Fred Newhall during an awards ceremony being held at the state house in Montpelier, Vt., November 12, 2012.

2. Members of the Vermont Army and Air National Guard, post the colors during an awards ceremony in Montpelier, Vt., November 12, 2012. Thirty-seven Vermont Veterans were being honored in a ceremony, for their service to their county.

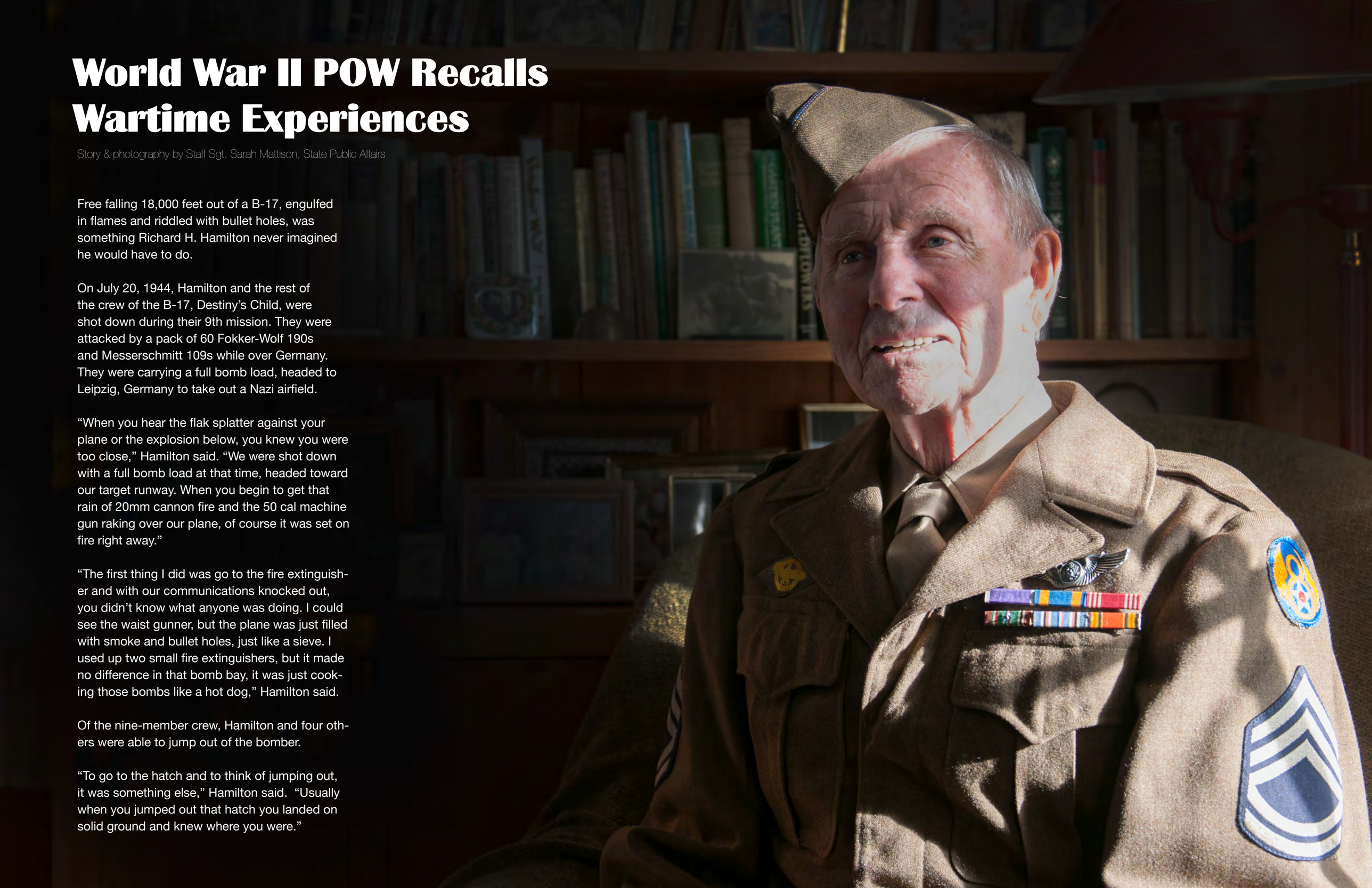
3. Mr. Bruce Cram accepts his medal from the Republic of Korea in honor of his fallen comrade, Lt. Francis W. Escott, Montpelier, Vt., November 12, 2012.

4. Mr. Wesley Chandler sits while waiting for the start of an awards ceremony being held at the state house in Montpelier, Vt., November 12, 2012. Mr. Chandler was one of 28 Vermonters to receive an award from the Republic of Korea, for his service during the Korean War.

5. Mr. Irving Paronto listens as names are called during an awards ceremony being held at the state house in Montpelier, Vt., November 12, 2012.

World War II POW Recalls Wartime Experiences

Story & photography by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison, State Public Affairs



Free falling 18,000 feet out of a B-17, engulfed in flames and riddled with bullet holes, was something Richard H. Hamilton never imagined he would have to do.

On July 20, 1944, Hamilton and the rest of the crew of the B-17, Destiny's Child, were shot down during their 9th mission. They were attacked by a pack of 60 Fokker-Wolf 190s and Messerschmitt 109s while over Germany. They were carrying a full bomb load, headed to Leipzig, Germany to take out a Nazi airfield.

"When you hear the flak splatter against your plane or the explosion below, you knew you were too close," Hamilton said. "We were shot down with a full bomb load at that time, headed toward our target runway. When you begin to get that rain of 20mm cannon fire and the 50 cal machine gun raking over our plane, of course it was set on fire right away."

"The first thing I did was go to the fire extinguisher and with our communications knocked out, you didn't know what anyone was doing. I could see the waist gunner, but the plane was just filled with smoke and bullet holes, just like a sieve. I used up two small fire extinguishers, but it made no difference in that bomb bay, it was just cooking those bombs like a hot dog," Hamilton said.

Of the nine-member crew, Hamilton and four others were able to jump out of the bomber.

"To go to the hatch and to think of jumping out, it was something else," Hamilton said. "Usually when you jumped out that hatch you landed on solid ground and knew where you were."

With all those planes in the air, I knew enough not to grab my shoot and pull it. I just drifted, spinning around like a rag doll until I spread my arms out, which stabilized my spinning. I then realized by angling my hands, I could turn. I went down until about 5,000 feet, then I pulled my ripcord," Hamilton recalled.

Hamilton was over Germany when his plane was shot down. He landed in the middle of a wheat field and rushed to pull in his shoot and get out of site.

"There was no place to put it (the shoot), no trees or bushes to hide in. Trying to keep it from being a white mass, I collected it in and tried to keep it out of sight." Hamilton said.

He started walking and it wasn't long before long that Hamilton reached the edge of a village. He spotted a woman through a window looking at him, but not giving it much thought.

"But then pretty soon the whole village came out with their guns, pitchforks and clubs," said Hamilton.

"They got me to put my hands over my head. There was a lot of talking and I didn't know what they were talking about. They pushed, prodded and jolted me. Every once in a while someone would hit me in the back of the head. We got almost down to the city hall and these two old guys approached me. They yelled something in German at me and then spit in my face," recalled Hamilton.

Hamilton was held prisoner overnight in a small municipal jail, before being turned over to the Nazi's the next day. He was then taken to a collecting point where he spotted his waist gunner, Winton "Bill" Blevins. Though they shared eye contact, they otherwise never acknowledged knowing each other.

Mr. Richard Hamilton poses with the crew from Destiny's Child. Photo courtesy of the Hamilton Family

Hamilton endured eight days of interrogation at Dulag Luft, refusing to give up any information to the Germans.

"Some of the interrogation was very casual and the guy was very pleasant," said Hamilton. "He had no German accent whatsoever and he knew a lot about the U.S. But then the next interrogator would be very stern, telling me that I wasn't going to leave until I told them what they wanted to know," Hamilton said.

"They had books full of information on all of the Air Force training bases in Texas. They knew the insignias in all these books. Its showed their intelligence wasn't bad," said Hamilton.

Eventually Hamilton was put into a boxcar and traveled by train to Stalag Luft 4. On arrival, Hamilton was lined up with other prisoners.

"They let us out and lined us up. Many of the German soldiers had police dogs on leashes and they were all charged up. We were lined up on the road, four-abreast, and there was a lot of shouting, commands, turmoil-like. They got us into position and ready to go four clicks to the prison camp," recalled Hamilton.

"When we were ready to go, they wanted us to go double-time, faster. Then they broke us into a run. The Soldiers on the outside would jab guys with their bayonets. That was the atmosphere we were heading toward the camp under," Hamilton said.

Unlike the prisoners that were brought to the camp on a flat deck wagon, Hamilton made it without having to endure any of the stabbings of the bayonets or bites from the military dogs.

"There were 35 guys that were in really bad shape. One man got off it (the wagon) and his pants were crimson with clotted blood from his leg, full of all of those little jabs. It was total chaos and confusion until we got to the prison camp," said Hamilton.

For seven months Hamilton was imprisoned at Stalag Luft 4 with 10,000 other men. He lived in a room with 22 men, living off of soup (usually hot broth) and bread. They were counted twice a day and were limited to a warning wire around the perimeter of the courtyard. If you went beyond the wire, you would be shot.

While there he met up with Wayne Austin. Another Vermonter that had been shot down and captured, they had met briefly while both being interrogated at Dulag Luft.

It was just such a treat for us both, we couldn't believe it," said Hamilton. "Being together was just like having a part of home."

Then one day, two German fighter planes began flying over the prison camp, appearing to display acrobatics in front of the prisoners.

"One of these planes just didn't pull out, it came barreling down and blew up in the pine forest and we just went nuts and cheered!" exclaimed Hamilton. "And then "whoosh" there was a rain of bullets down from the guard towers. They wanted to disperse us because we were getting so much pleasure out of it. It was a real moral builder for us," Hamilton said.

Hamilton endured living in the POW camp until February 6, 1945. With the Russians closing in and the sounds of explosions slowly moving closer, the Germans decided to abandon the prison and move the 10,000 prisoners to various destinations; some setting out on foot and others were taken to be put on a boat.

Hamilton along with 200 hundred other prisoners were forced into a 77 day road march with only the clothes on their back and a blanket to keep warm with at night.

"The first night it was spitting rain and snow. There was no shelter and we had to camp outside. Most other nights they would march us to where there would be a shelter or a barn," said Hamilton.

Hamilton eventually dropped to the back of the marching group due to illness.

"I joined 12-15 other fellows that were laying by the roadside. My feet had been frozen, blistered, and had turned black and yellow. When the healing process started three of my ten toenails wouldn't come off," said Hamilton. "To this day my toes and the bottom of my foot feel numb all the time."

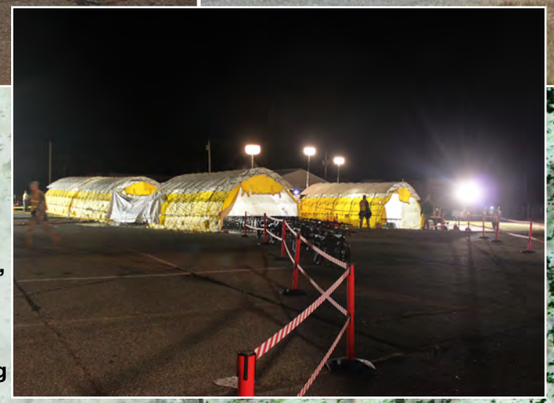
On April 24, 1945, two Russian Soldiers on horseback liberated Hamilton and the rest of the prisoners. The German Soldiers had slunk off into the night and left the POW's to fend for themselves. Telling the Russians that they were American, the POW's were allowed to wander freely and were not taken into custody. Hamilton was left to his own, wandering around Germany until he was able to stumble across the American lines. He returned to the United States on July 8, 1945, almost a year since the day he had been captured.

Hamilton returned home to Brattleboro, Vermont and married Joyce, his pre-war sweetheart within a month of returning home. There they raised four daughters and built a successful restaurant business.

Mr. Richard Hamilton poses for his official military portrait. Photo courtesy of the Hamilton Family

Mr. Richard Hamilton poses in his full dress uniform at his home in Brattleboro, Vt., November 20, 2013. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)

HRF HOMELAND & RESPONSE FORCES



Recently, HHC participated in Vigilant Guard Maine as an opportunity to train with other National Guard units, CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Packages (CERFPs), state and federal responders. Each collective training exercise is used as an opportunity to improve response time and build on the lessons learned from previous exercises.

The Department of Defense (DoD) established ten National Guard Homeland Response Forces (HRFs) in 2010, serving each FEMA Region across the United States.

As a key element of the new DoD CBRNE Consequence Management enterprise, HRFs compliment existing forces such as Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Teams (WMD-CSTs) and CERFPs.

Composed of 570 Soldiers and Airmen, HRFs are task organized into five critical specialty teams; Medical Team, Search and Extraction, Decontamination, CBRNE Assistance Support Element (CASE) and Command & Control.

HHC BSTB was given the privilege to establish the first CASE Element for FEMA Region 1. The structure of the CASE element requires Soldiers to receive additional training outside of their normal military mission in addition to completing one collective training exercise each year.

Evolved from the Incident Command Structure, Soldiers are required to take a series of courses and training each year to remain qualified.

Since establishing the first CASE in 2010, the Soldiers of HHC BSTB have already completed one External Validation, imposed by NGB to certify training and response time, and three collective training exercises with FEMA Region 1 HRF.

The VT CASE is scheduled to attend another External Validation October 2014. The commitment and sacrifices made by these Soldiers to take on this additional mission and still maintain their normal military focused training/schedule is a true pledge to duty, service and excellence."

1st Lt. Sarah Palhete
Vermont Security HRF OIC
HHC 86th BSTB

PHOTOS, LEFT TO RIGHT:

U. S. Army National Guard Pvt. Paul Fluerry conducts taping procedures on his battle buddy before entering the HOT Zone while, Spc. Cody Richards prepares his hydration system before donning his mask during Vigilant Guard 2014.

A medical tent is set up to facilitate patients after being decontaminated. They are escorted to medical teams for screening prior to being cleared.

Twenty-four hour operations are conducted at this tent, facilitating decontamination procedures.

VT CASE providing roving patrol in order to prevent cross contamination of civilians coming from the HOT ZONE and civilians entering the footprint.

Image of the rubble pile depicting the collaboration between military and civilian partnership

VT CASE Soldiers receive an influx of contaminated civilians from the rubble pile. The CASE element Soldiers prepare litters to assist ambulatory patients to DECON.

Photos provided by BSTB & HRF staff

Vermont Wins Pistol Match

Story and Photo courtesy of MSgt. Mitchell Clark, 158FW

The Vermont National Guard "B" Team, formed from members of the Vermont Army and Air National Guard, took home top team honors at the MAC-I Regional combat rifle and pistol matches. They accomplished this by beating out the Maine Guard, who came in second, and the Vermont Guard "A" Team who came in third.

Teams are built depending on how well an individual competes solo. Members SMSgt. James Noble, MSgt. Mitchell Clark, Staff Sgt. Michael Anderson and Army member Sgt. 1st Class Sean Myers made up the "B" team after earning excellent individual ratings during the previous day's shooting in both rifle and pistol. By creating them in this fashion the results are very strong and closely contested team competitions.

ANG members SMSgt. Claude Trahan, Staff Sgt. Leigh Jenks, Staff Sgt. William Maverick and SrA. Justin Bean made up the Vermont "A" Team and shot extremely well during the Patton Pistol Match. The Patton Match is shot immediately following a short run in full combat gear. The "A" Team fired an impressive 708 points winning the match. Their score, however, could not edge the "B" team out of the aggregate team competition and the "A" Team finished in third place overall.

Vermont's competitive combat program is well known and has been an example for others to follow for years. Therefore, expecting to see Vermont's "A" and "B" teams in the top two spots is not uncommon.

Also seen by all of the participants was a personal goodbye from Sgt. 1st Class Millard Butler, a member of the Army Small Arms Readiness Training Section for the past 34 years. Butler is a living legend within National Guard Marksmanship community and has National Pistol Trophy named in his honor that is presented each year at the Winston P. Wilson matches.

For more information on how to get involved in competitive marksmanship contact the State Marksmanship Coordinator (Army) or the Base Marksmanship Coordinator (Air).

U.S. Army National Guard Maj. Lenonard Poirier is awarded the Order of St. Maurice, the patron Saint of the Infantry branch, at Camp Johnson, Colchester, Vt., December 6, 2013. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sarah Mattison)