

# *The* TANKER TIMES

9/11: 20 YEARS LATER



Tower of Voices - Flight 93 National Memorial, Shanksville, Pa.  
Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover - Sept. 11, 2021



# The TANKER TIMES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

171 AIR REFUELING WING - PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

- 1 One Team, One Fight, One Year
- 2 The State of the Wing
- 6 171st ARW Receives Multiple Safety Awards
- 8 Stellar Performance: 171st ARW Inspected for Unit Effectiveness
- 10 171st ARW Refuels Navy E-2D Aircraft
- 18 171st ARW Supports COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts
- 19 171st ARW Change of Command
- 20 171st Member Awarded Major General Joseph A. Ahearn Enlisted Leadership Award
- 21 171st Air Refueling Wing Supports 59th Presidential Inauguration
- 26 Family Ties
- 28 171st ARW Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
- 30 171st ARW Aims for Excellence in National and State Marksmanship Competitions
- 33 171st ARW Hosts the 6th Annual Enlisted Development Program
- 34 FSRT: Fatality Search & Recovery Team
- 36 2021 Promotions
- 38 2021 Retirements
- 42 Public Affairs: Meet the Team

## FEATURED:



### 4 STREAMERS OF VALOR - THREADS OF THE 171ST

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

An in depth look at each streamer carried by the 171st ARW Guidon and its meaning to our wing.



### 12 EVOLVING OUR ABILITY TO SURVIVE AND OPERATE

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

MOPP up and see how the Air Force is changing the way we train for ATSO and who is ultimately responsible for the units overall effectiveness.



### 14 EDSALL

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

A feature story about the career path of Heather Edsall. From Active duty to Air National Guard, a Dental Technician became Nurse, and the face of the 171st TCCC program.



### 24 GENERATING JETS ON 9/11

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

When terrorists attacked, find out what Pennsylvania Air National Guardsmen did to fight back.



### 27 INSPIRATION THROUGH GENERATIONS

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Discover the driving force behind 1st Lt. Caleigh Reese's motivation to serve and how her mother helped pave the way.

This Department of Defense magazine is an authorized publication for members of the DoD. Contents of the Tanker Times are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the DoD, or the Pennsylvania National Guard.

**Editor-In-Chief** - Jodi Snyder

**Production Manager** - Shawn Monk

**Graphic Designers** - Bryan Hoover, Shawn Monk

**Copy Editors** - Bryan Hoover, Shawn Monk

**Layout Designer** - Bryan Hoover

171st Air Refueling Wing  
Pennsylvania Air National Guard  
412-776-7350

**Contributing Photographers** - Allyson Manners, Michael Fariss, Kyle Brooks, Zoe Wockenfuss, Bryan Hoover, Shawn Monk

**Journalists** - Jodi Snyder, Bryan Hoover, Kyle Brooks, Zoe Wockenfuss

Public Affairs Office  
300 Tanker Road  
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108-4205



**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Illustrated by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: December 21, 2021

As another year passes and we reflect on the accomplishments of the United States, we would be remiss if we did not consider the difficulties we all have faced. We have lost loved ones, dealt with separations, illness and more. It has been tough, but with unity, we have prevailed.

Unity is giving strength in numbers, supporting each other, and lifting each other up. At the 171st Air Refueling Wing, we take pride in how our comradery helps us excel in our missions and readiness.

This relentless dedication and collaborative spirit shone through when the base underwent the Unit Effectiveness Inspection where stellar performance was demonstrated, earning six inspector general coins, 25 team awards, and 12 individual awards.

Unity, support, and lifting each other up did not stop at the 171st though. We carried it with us wherever we went, just as our medical team and Airmen in services supported our community with COVID vaccination efforts and cared for the elderly in nursing facilities. We also distributed food and masks to our communities. When our civil engineers constructed new cabins for the Girl Scouts, support and unity were definitely present. And through all of this, the 171st, continued our mission of providing superior air refueling support.

Our commitment to uplifting others extends past our local communities and other states though. The 171st deployed to multiple countries throughout the Middle East and Africa this past year supporting training exercises, force readiness and humanitarian missions.

Working with other agencies and sister services, the 171st did this as a team, for our communities, our state and our country.

## Raymond L. Hyland Jr. - Commander



### TEAM 171st,

Whether training with our Army partners, securing our nation's capital, delivering vital vaccinations to our state citizens, or refueling in the skies of combat zones providing world-class aerial refueling in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the 171st Air Refueling Wing is ready to operate anywhere, anytime. There is great comfort in knowing that despite a worldwide pandemic surpassing its two-year mark, the Airmen of the 171st continue to impress by expertly executing our complex global reach mission. America remains the most dominant military power on the planet, but we are being challenged more than ever before. In order to respond, we must remain united and answer with agility while making smart choices.

During 2021, we increased our wing's readiness and our lethality by upholding the 171st standard. We effectively surpassed all performance measures in suicide prevention training, resilience and violence prevention training, and sexual assault prevention training. We effectively deployed 249 Airmen around the globe supporting our federal mission. We supported communities around the country by deploying Airmen as part of our state mission with an additional 50+

Airmen supporting the Capital Response (twice), the Presidential Inauguration, and at numerous long-term care facilities across Pennsylvania. Our responses, through both federal and state channels, continued throughout 2021 to deliver forces in times of need sending over 50 Airmen with less than a week's notice to New Jersey and New Mexico in support of Operation Allies Welcome to ensure the health and safety of the Afghan refugees.

Overall, our wing is stronger and more resilient than ever before. We are prepared to deter adversaries and defend our nation at a moment's notice.

### Resiliency

Developing and caring for our people is an enduring imperative. The issue of mental health has become increasingly prominent. Over the past year, our Wing's Resiliency Team has grown as have our resiliency training requirements. In the future months, our Resiliency Team will be moving to building 103 (above the gym) in order to provide support from one facility. We will continue to identify lines of effort that we can undertake to get after mental wellness and mental health so that you may remain ready. Ultimately, we want to provide our Airmen and leaders with the tools they need to better engage on these issues. We want every Airmen to know that if they ever have a problem, they can get help here. As part of our Integrated Resilience Programs, we have two directors of psychological Health— Ms. Julia Catanzarite and Mr. Matt Dalrymple. We have our airman & family readiness program manager—Ms. Deb Krall. Our sexual assault response coordinator is, Mr. Kirk Simpson. Master Sgt. Justine Hudak is our Equal Opportunity Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, and finally, Lt. Col. Jonathan Bell serves as our full-time Wing Chaplain.

### Mission

Our mission is dependent upon being a value-driven organization. Our Airmen live through our values and expect it

from each other. It is the foundation of who we are. Integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. There was no exception in 2021. Our Airmen volunteered to support Operation Allies Welcome, the Presidential Inauguration, assisted in long-term care facilities and vaccinated citizens across the state through Protect PA, and protected the National Capital Region. All of this on top of an Iron Package deployment, 24/7/365 Noble Eagle Alert, long term mobilization package approval, and the start of Reserve Component Period-07. Our Airmen have once again proven that we are experts in our fields and able to provide unmatched support to both the country and the commonwealth!

As a unit we flew 994 sorties, for a total of 3,711 hours, offloading over 9.97 million pounds of fuel. The 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron controlled over 65,000 aircraft through the skies without mishap. This state of readiness is directly contributable to the efforts of our Airmen. We did all of this while maintaining our impeccable safety record of over 287,000 hours without a Class A mishap. Our wing Airmen have embraced a forward-looking mindset that is able to achieve these lofty goals and for this I thank you.

2021 was not an easy time to be an Airmen at the 171st. 2021 was not an easy year for our unit or our nation. But, we persevered by adjusting work schedules and policies to maintain our readiness while executing the mission. You did all of this with a smile and the professionalism that our unit is known for. However, I would like to single out the Medical Group for their exceptional professionalism, volunteerism, hard work, and dedication during the global pandemic. They are part of every unit deployment, trip, sortie, and exercise that any of us participate in. To add the pandemic requirements and testing on top of all of their normal duties has given them an almost insurmountable task that they continue to beat every day. Please thank them when you see them.

We won't be any less busy in 2022. On top of the pandemic, we will be deploying yet another Iron Package at the same time that we are deploying yet another RCP and another group of Operation Allies Welcome deployers. We have an exercise in May and an inspection in August. If the pandemic allows it, we also hope to bring back the incentive and orientation flights in the spring.

### Promotions

Congratulations to all of the wing's Airmen who have been promoted this year! Your hard work, service, and future potential has been recognized by your Commanders and command staff. As leaders, we must continue to ensure that every Airmen has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and be a part of our shared missions. All leaders are expected and empowered to develop exceptional leaders into the future. As newly promoted Airmen, we look forward to working with you in your grade and to mentor you in your increased leadership role in the wing.

### Retirements

36 of our fellow Airmen have retired this year. We honor you and thank them for their service and commitment. The individuals on page 36 have had a profound impact on the lives and careers of many Airmen. I have the greatest respect for what they accomplished and how they have represented the 171st, the Air Force, and our nation. Simply put, we would not have been successful without these Airmen. I would like to thank their families as well for enduring the hardships that come along with being in this profession of arms. They too, serve this nation. Thank you to all of our retirees! You are always a member of Team Pittsburgh!

### Mission:

To enable global reach through superior air refueling expertise.  
To provide the best mission support in domestic and international operations in the USAF.

## Charles W. Wiley - 12th Command Chief



First and foremost, I want to thank you for all you have done throughout 2021 and thank you for what you will continue to do in 2022. Your steadfast service, commitment and sacrifices to the mission are commendable and I could not be more proud of you all.

I've always found it is important to recognize members for their accomplishments. Each member of our team has a unique story that depicts the road traveled. Along my road, there were wonderful mentors who pushed me until I reached more and more destinations. What is your final destination? I want you to know that, regardless of what career decision you make, I support you and my door is always open if you run into any barriers or just need someone to talk to. I will reiterate my challenge from last year; seek out and complete enlisted development opportunities every chance you get. Airman Leadership School, Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, Senior NCO Academy and the many other enlisted development courses offered by Air Mobility Command, National Guard Bureau and our three Pennsylvania Air National Guard Wings. These courses provide us with an incredible foundation to followership, personal development and leadership. To further expand on this foundation, look for leadership and mentorship opportunities that challenge you and take you out of your comfort zone. These traits are favored at any facet of your career.

Our enlisted force has continued

to persevere in the eye of the pandemic. As new challenges are presented everyday, you have found a way to get it done. You have been deemed "Effective". Excellent at your ability to perform. That is what AMC stated when they witnessed your feats of strength during the Unit Effectiveness Inspection. I cannot express my gratitude enough for the work you have done. Thank you for being adaptable, ready and resilient.

Once again, thank you for rising up to the challenges of 2021. I eagerly await the challenges of 2022 and what the year has to offer. I know we will get through them together. Please continue to take care of yourselves, your families and each other. As always, it is my honor and privilege serving as your command chief.

# Streamers of Valor

## Threads of the 171st Air Refueling Wing

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Photo by: Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss

Published: May 24, 2021

Symbolism is ever present in our society as Americans and longstanding within the military ranks. We use symbolism to represent our freedom with images of the Statue of Liberty and the American bald eagle. We pay homage to those who came before us with flags at almost every formal event to remind us of the great sacrifices made. Symbols are everywhere representing a little piece of the past, but we may not always know the story behind the symbols standing before us.

The 171st Air Refueling Wing has such symbols hanging from their organizational flags. You may have seen them dangling from the guidon wondering what meaning each holds. These bits of cloth are called campaign streamers. They are decorations attached to military flags to acknowledge specific achievements or events of a military unit. Each streamer usually is inscribed with a year or date and states the name of a particular battle or theater of war. The streamers awarded to Air Force units are equivalent to campaign medals given to individual airmen for contributions

to operations. Because the meaning behind receiving them is the same, the colors of the streamers match the original medal.

Streamers at the 171st date back as early as 1941 when the United States entered World War II. The earliest awarded were to the base's 146th Air Refueling Squadron and 147th Air Refueling Squadron when their service was recognized in support of the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater from 1941-1943. There's also the Algeria-French Morocco of 1942, Tunisia Air, Naples-Foggia of 1943, Sicily Air of 1943, Rome-Arno, Southern France of 1944, North Apennines of 1944 and PO Valley of 1945.

Then there is the Republic Vietnam Gallantry Cross awarded for service from April of 1966 to June of 1967 for providing support to south Vietnam. The ribbons continue to span into the nineties for Defense of Saudi Arabia from 1990-1991, Liberation and Defense of Kuwait in 1991, and also the Southwest Asia Cease-Fire.

In addition to these remembrances of acts of valor and bravery, bases may also be awarded streamers for superior service at home. The 171st has ten Air Force Outstanding Unit awards and three Governor Unit Citations.

In total, between squadrons and the wing, the 171st has *20 streamers*. These streamers are a bit of history serving as symbols. They will help us remember the sacrifice, bravery and patriotism of our predecessors. They serve as reminders of our past as we remain committed to our mission in the present. They remind us of the fabric of our nation as our story continues to unfold.

# 171 ARW RECEIVES MULTIPLE SAFETY AWARDS

Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder

Graphics by: Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

Published: February 2, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing was recognized by the Air National Guard for outstanding safety acts, achievements and sustained performance of individuals and teams to the occupational safety career field, Nov. 20, 2020.

The 171st ARW received 3 of 10 awards from the National Guard Bureau given to units and individuals annually across the country who exhibit superior performance within the safety community. Lt. Col. Ian Hurbanek, wing chief of safety, received the Safety Officer of the Year award. Staff Sgt. Patrick Olish received the Safety Noncommissioned Officer of the Year award. The 171st safety office received the Director of Safety Outstanding Achievement for Occupational Safety award.

“The 171st Air Refueling Wing Occupational Safety Office distinguished themselves as the top safety office out of 92 ANG Safety Offices for their unrelenting commitment to the promotion of Air Force Safety culture. From participating as key players in wing exercises such as active shooters, to ensuring work-center safety like their role in the development and testing of the KC-135 over-wing fall protection system, the 171 ARW safety office is the benchmark for excellence,” said Col. Mark Goodwill, commander of the 171st ARW.

Hurbanek, along with the wing safety office, identified and mitigated potential safety hazards and concerns by formalizing operating procedures. The safety office was also frequently embedded with the Civil Engineer Squadron as airmen and contractors completed \$35 million in hangar renovation projects at the installation. There were no mishaps during construction or base exercises during 2020.

“We have also had several exercises including active shooter exercises and ability to survive and operate exercises during that time frame, ensuring more than 1,000 people were safe,” reported Hurbanek.

As COVID-19 cases increased and physical distancing increased shift work on base, the safety office adjusted, so they could provide support to all service members throughout the day and night. During this time, they continued annual and spot inspections while minimizing person-to-person contact.

“As work schedules adjusted, we had to adjust as well. It was important to us to be available to address any safety concerns as they arose,” said Hurbanek.

Their efforts did not stop there.

When a new KC-135 over-wing fall protection system was installed on all the aircraft, the safety office led the development of the safety guidance to keep aircraft mechanics safe.

“We worked with subject matter experts from maintenance to develop and refine the process,” said David Sparkman, an occupational safety manager.



“(THEY) DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES AS THE TOP SAFETY OFFICE OUT OF 92 ANG SAFETY OFFICES”  
Col. Mark Goodwill



# UEI

## Stellar Performance!

### 171st ARW Inspected for Unit Effectiveness

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Published: May 25, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing recently welcomed inspectors to the base as a part of the Unit Effectiveness Inspection on March 13-17, 2021.

The UEI is a component of the Air Force's resourcefulness for continuous self-assessment. The inspection focuses on four major graded areas: executing the mission, managing resources, improving the unit, and leading people. The 171st was recognized for stellar performance by the Air Mobility Command earning six inspector general coins, 25 team awards, and 12 individual awards.

"The UEI results are in, and they confirm what Col. Hyland, Chief Wiley, and I already knew – we excel at performing our mission, developing airmen, and upholding readiness.

Our members' professionalism and attention to detail have helped make us one of the best units in the Air National Guard! Thank you for all you have done, and continue to do, for our commonwealth and our nation," said Col. Mark Goodwill, former commander of the 171st ARW and current Chief of Staff for the Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

Lt. Col. Gary McCullough, along with the wing inspector general's office, coordinates and develops annual wing inspections and readiness exercises to help improve and maintain the unit's overall ability to operate and respond to a variety of activities. Some of these exercises include emergency management, public health responses and the ability to survive and operate under attack.

"It's definitely a system of check and balances," said McCullough, the inspector general of the 171st ARW. "We're all on the same team trying to help each other like a second set of eyes."

The base's inspector general's office is responsible for conducting at least seven by-law inspections and 10 exercises annually for the wing. They are also responsible for multiple inspections within each individual squadron.

"We tailor the inspections and exercises to our current mission set at the 171st ARW," said McCullough.

Previously, there were more inspections on installations where outside inspectors would visit at different intervals, inspecting for that specific timeframe. The current inspection system allows for greater frequency of information collection and more opportunity to detect and diffuse issues with compliance allowing for more of a continuous improvement process.

"This is the new way forward. It really comes down to doing your job and doing it well," said McCullough.

Inspectors from the Air Combat Command Inspector General's office physically visit the installation every 48 to 60 months, but they are virtually inspecting the base's performance

**"We excel at performing our mission,"  
Col. Mark Goodwill**

during set benchmarks during that timeframe ensuring units are mission ready, efficient, compliant, and continually improving.

"My role is to manage, administer, plan and execute the wing commander's inspection program. Therefore, the IG staff helps everyone prepare for the UEI from start to finish," said McCullough.

While the wing inspector general's office coordinates many of the inspection functions, they are not alone in the process. They have help from experienced guardsmen. These individuals form the Wing Inspection Team. The WIT augments the inspector general's office by helping perform inspections. These individuals are subject matter experts within their career field who provide guidance to the inspector general on what evidence of compliance looks like.

"You need a strong motivated WIT. The WIT plays a critical role in the inspection process," said McCullough.

When a deficiency is discovered in a work section, a corrective action plan is developed to help fix the problem. While the point of an inspection is inherently compliance versus noncompliance, the inspector general's team looks for stellar performers too and acknowledges both individual performance and entire teams of people.

"The UEI will only help to make us better. The inspectors that come to us get to visit all bases. They have resources and information that can help us become even better, and we can incorporate their ideas onto our base," said McCullough.

Inspection programs and teams like the inspector general's office and WIT continue to help the 171st remain dedicated to its commitment to readiness and excellence.

# 171 ARW Refuels Navy E-2D Aircraft

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Allyson Manners**

Photo by: Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss

Published: February 4, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing has successfully completed another groundbreaking mission, this time refueling U.S. Navy E-2D Advanced Hawkeyes.

While this is not the first time these Navy planes have been refueled midair by the U.S. Air Force, the operation is relatively new, with this being the first mission of its kind done by the 171st.

The mission, requested by Air Mobility Command, was largely a success: it allowed boom operators and pilots from the 171st to partner with pilots from Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 126 Seahawks and ground controllers from USS Daniel Inouye as a joint team – not to mention the efforts put in by the maintainers to de-ice and prepare the aircraft for flight in near-zero temperatures.

What is the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye?

The E-2D Advanced Hawkeye is an all-weather, carrier-based Advanced Early Warning System aircraft, equipped with a command and control platform and radar system. After departing an aircraft carrier, the aircraft uses advanced electronic sensors, combined with some of the most advanced radar systems in the world, to survey the surrounding

sea and land.

Depending on the mission, the aircraft may be used to give early warning of enemy aircraft attacks, control the aircraft carrier's combat air patrol fighters, or detect enemy warships or forces. The model refueled on this mission, Delta, is the first E-2 model that was outfitted for aerial refueling during production. By adding this strategic capability, the aircraft can now complete seven-hour missions versus four hours, effectively doubling the distance of a Carrier Strike Group's reach.

That's how missions like this one can support Navy operations – how do they support the 171st?

"This was a good opportunity for us to refuel an aircraft we have never worked with before," said Master Sgt. Robert "Bo" Winovich, a boom operator and instructor assigned to the 171st. "We get the chance to work with Navy aircraft at deployed locations, but it's less often that

we get the opportunity for this training at home."

Navy aircraft aren't refueled straight through the traditional boom that's usually seen underneath a KC-135. Instead, they are refueled through an attachment to the boom called a drogue. Boom type refueling requires the boom operator to guide the probe into the receiver's receptacle to refuel, while with drogues, the receiver flies to meet the probe in the basket shaped drogue.

For this mission, Winovich not only refueled the E-2D, but also served as an instructor while Staff Sgt. Tanner Jackson operated the boom.

No additional certification is required to refuel Navy aircraft, so hands-on experience is the best way to train and prepare boom operators, increasing boom

operator's readiness for real-world missions. Because the aerial refueling capability is so new, with VAW 126 receiving their first E-2Ds in 2020, each refueling mission doubles as a training opportunity for all involved, making it that much more important.

Despite the mission involving both a new aircraft and a new team, all involved agreed it was a success.

"The E-2D is a unique type of receiver. It has close proximity to dangerous areas of aerial refueling, with the probe over the windscreen and propellers a close distance to the probe area," said Winovich. "Sgt. Jackson did an excellent job with the refueling, as did the receiver crew. The tanker pilots and staff did a good job planning and working with our Navy partners as well."

Because this was a rare mission for many involved, the 171st Operations Group took full advantage of the opportunity and invited Public Affairs on board to document the mission. The footage captured will be used to train other boom operators within the 171st and Air National Guard.

As the home of both an aircraft simulator and boom simulator, the 171st is already a prime location for training airmen from

the wing and across the country. Having boom operators and pilots experienced at refueling the E-2D, as well as other Navy aircraft, not only adds to the appeal of coming to Pittsburgh for military training – it makes us more mission ready than ever.

In an increasingly contested environment, it's critical that the service branches are able to work as one team. Joint training increases our unit readiness and interoperability, resulting in mission success at home or away. This unique mission underscores the importance of working as a joint force, and adds to our history as a premier refueling wing in the Air National Guard and U.S. Air Force.



# ATSO

Evolving Our Ability To Survive & Operate

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: July 8, 2021

Training in the Air Force is robust and encompasses a wide range of inherent capabilities and mission sets. Over the past 20 years, the Air Force has focused on sustained training and has set its sights on implementing new training to continue the legacy of being the strongest, fastest and most superior air power in the world.

One training the Air Force is reviewing is the ability to survive and operate (ATSO). In the past, Air Force installations completed training requirements for the ability to survive and operate in chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear-contaminated environments. During these exercises, installations simulated mobilizing some of their airmen. Airmen simulated out-processing for deployment and carried out missions as if they were in a hostile region somewhere else in the world responding to a variety of situations.

“We want people to have muscle memory (with training),” said Staff Sgt. Phillip Kapelewski, the 171st Air Refueling Wing installation emergency manager.

To prepare for this exercise, emergency managers from the Civil Engineer Squadron trained airmen from all work centers on proper donning and doffing of protective gear, map reading, post-attack reconnaissance search teams and much more. Now, some of these requirements are shifting to individual sections to ensure service members are even more prepared to do their unique jobs in chemical protective suits and gear.

“Supervisors are going to have to spend time during drill having airmen put on MOPP (mission-oriented protective posture) gear and show that they can perform their duties,” said Kapelewski.



Although many of these work-center-training changes are referencing an Air Force Instruction that is under re-write and does not yet exist, Kapelewski thinks we need to keep an open mind to the idea of updating our training strategies.

“We need to change our mindset. All of our adversaries require a different response. It’s never been a one-size-fits-all way of dealing with our enemies. We need to change our attitude and perspective,” said Kapelewski.

Although part of the training responsibility will move to individual career fields, emergency management will continue to provide training to airmen. By moving part of the training to individual career fields and work centers, CES will have even more time to spend providing detailed training to airmen.

“As things change (in the world), readiness is becoming more of a widespread thought process,” said Kapelewski.

As Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown described the current landscape of the Air Force and why change is necessary, he stated in his 2020 strategic approach that the Air Force needs to “accelerate change or lose”. The Air Force is demonstrating this commitment to change by updating training requirements and its approach to training.

As the 171st continues to change how service members are trained, they remain ready, no matter what lies ahead.

All of our adversaries  
require a different  
response

# EDSALL

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

Photos by: Senior Airman Ruben Rios - 514th Airlift Wing

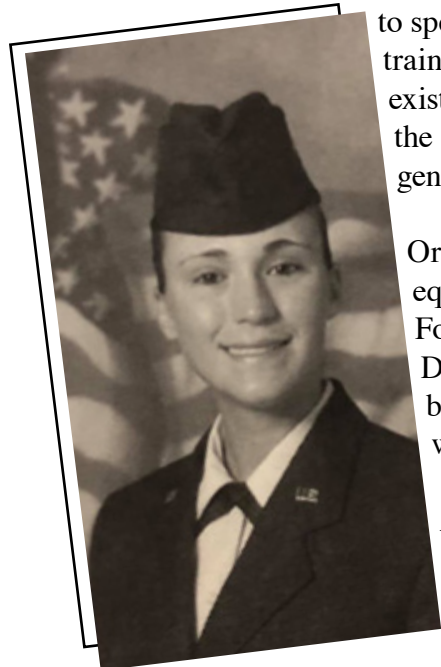
Published: December 30, 2021

**A**t the age of 18, it's extremely difficult to figure out what you want to do professionally. Most people finish high school and just move on to some form of additional education. That's exactly what Heather Edsall did. She graduated from Gateway School District in 1998 and went on to pursue a degree in Dental Hygiene. Her studies took her out to Montana where she continued her pursuit of the degree at Montana State University. Unfortunately, in 2001, the school consolidated its hygiene program forcing her into relocating to another campus. She needed a new plan. She opted to join the Air Force because of the tuition assistance program and the Montgomery G.I. bill. After signing her service obligation, career field choice and receiving her medical qualification, she traveled to Lackland Air Force Base to attend basic training in August 2001, completely unaware the entire world would change in just a few short weeks from 9/11.

For the first time in 60 years, a war was brought to our doorstep. In order to speed up the process of generating quality Airmen, the records of trainees were reviewed and if any higher educational background existed, those trainees would be tested accordingly. If they passed the career field test, they were reassigned. Fostering the next generation of Airmen quickly was of the utmost importance.

Originally, Edsall enlisted to be a precision measurement equipment laboratory specialist, but this was not to be. The Air Force found her education records and tested her against the Dental Technician career field. By early October 2001, Edsall had become an Airman, been reassigned as a Dental Technician and was on a flight to Yakota Air Base, Japan.

Airman Edsall served her three-year overseas tour before moving to Dover AFB, Delaware. At Dover, she would serve on a mission that changed her life.



Dover AFB is home to the Air Force Mortuary. This is where all of America's fallen heroes return to the United States before being reunited with their families.

Airmen from different career fields help fill the needs of the Air Force Mortuary to ensure service members are received with dignity and honor.

"It was kind of crazy, I could be cleaning teeth one minute, then the next thing you know they're saying, hey, you're heading to the morgue later today," said 1st Lt. Heather Edsall.

Initially, Edsall did not believe working in the morgue was for her, but then she met Chaplain David Sparks. Chaplain Sparks was the senior port mortuary chaplain at the Air Force Mortuary.

"Just when I felt this was not for me, he started talking about us, doing things to better this process for the families and us, doing things to uphold the respect for these people of our nation. I was just overcome with this the notion of being a part of something amazing," said Edsall.

The experiences she encountered while assigned to Dover would go on to shape Edsall's life in a new direction.



Edsall now wanted to save people. So, she joined the Pennsylvania Air National Guard at the 171st Air Refueling Wing. She completed a nursing degree, commissioned and was put in charge of the Self Aid Buddy Care program.

When the SABC program changed to the Tactical Combat Casualty Care training to ensure all U.S.



personnel were trained to the same standard in battlefield trauma care without any variations, Edsall knew she needed help in implementing the new program. She attended a training course so that she could be the subject matter expert for the installation. When she returned, she encountered her next obstacle.

She did not have the equipment to create an impactful training course for the 1,200 plus Airmen at the 171st, but what she did have was an abundance of support. She and her commanding officer developed a plan to use all expired medical supplies for training purposes in the TCCC program.

As the 171st TCCC program continued to grow, word spread about Edsall's innovation and success. Edsall has traveled to nearby installations in both New York and New Jersey not only to improve her abilities to educate but to help them push their TCCC programs further along.

The 171st is well on its way to meeting the requirement of 100% trained by April 2023 because of Edsall's hard work, which is in part a dedication to her work at Dover.

"It's not something you dream of," said Edsall, "but it is something profound."





**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Michael Fariss

Graphics by: Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

Published: June 9, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing supported COVID vaccination efforts at the installation and within the community.

More than half of all airmen at the 171st are either vaccinated or in progress for their COVID vaccine. Airmen from the medical squadron vaccinated service members at the installation and went into nursing care facilities to help vaccinate within the local community.

“There’s a lot of misinformation out there about what’s happening, but because of the vaccine we are becoming a stronger, healthier force,”

**We united with other units to ensure NO vaccines were wasted**

said Lt. Col. Joseph Sullivan, a medical administrative officer of the 171st Medical Group.

Each vial of a COVID vaccination has enough solution inside to vaccinate 10 people. The 171st made sure they scheduled enough people every time.

“We united with other units to ensure no vaccines were wasted. We did not want to waste a single dose,” said Sullivan.

Part of the Medical Squadron’s job was making sure people had all the information available before making the decision to vaccinate.

“Our medical folks did a great job,” said Senior Master Sgt. Paul Webster, an airman at the 171st. “They provided a ton of information, and I think it allowed everybody to make an informed decision.”

In addition to vaccinating service

NOTE: This article was published before the current guidance set forth by the Department of Defense.

members, the 171st Medical Squadron went into the community to vaccinate local community members in nursing care facilities.

“Medics (from the 171st) went out in a nursing assistant capacity to assist not only with general medical issues but also to provide immunizations to people,” said Sullivan.

Other members from the 171st Force Support Squadron went into nursing care facilities to provide assistance with daily care of our local community.

“Services went into nursing homes to help out anyway they could. They did laundry, helped in the kitchen —all kinds of clean-up work,” said Sullivan.

The 171st ARW continues to vaccinate service members and remains committed to assisting community members throughout all crises and remain ready to provide a full-spectrum of support.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD  
171ST AIR REFUELING WING  
CORAOPOLIS, PENNSYLVANIA

Published: May 6, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR THE TANKER TIMES 2021

WRITTEN BY: STAFF SGT. ZOE WOCKENFUSS

ILLUSTRATED BY: TECH. SGT. BRYAN HOOVER

SUBJECT: 171 ARW CHANGE OF COMMAND

1. The 171st Air Refueling Wing participated in a Change of Command ceremony where Colonel Raymond L. Hyland took command of the 171st May 6, 2021, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

2. Brigadier General Michael J. Regan, commander of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard officially passed the 171st guidon to Hyland making him wing commander. The guidon is a ceremonial flag that represents the unit and its squadrons.

a. “Hyland’s background in aviation and maintenance paired with his charisma and people skills will benefit him well as he takes on this new role as wing commander,” said Regan.

3. Hyland received his commission in 1989 after graduating as a distinguished graduate from the Air Force ROTC program at Kent State University, Ohio. His career encompasses active duty Air Force service prior to joining the Pennsylvania Air National Guard in 1999. Hyland is a command pilot with over 5,200 military flying hours. He has flown five different versions of the KC-135 throughout his 31 years of service to the nation and to the commonwealth.

4. Preceding Hyland was Colonel Mark A. Goodwill who served as commander since 2017 and had over 30 years of service at the 171st. Goodwill will be moving to a position at the Pennsylvania Air National Guard State Headquarters as the Chief of Staff for the Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

a. “It’s an honor and a privilege to be the commander of such a key base,” said Hyland. “I look forward to seeing what our Airmen will accomplish.”



RAYMOND L. HYLAND JR., Colonel, PAANG  
Commander, 171st Air Refueling Wing

# 171st Member Awarded Major General Joseph A. Ahearn Enlisted Leadership Award

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Photo provided by: Chief Master Sgt. Charles Stoyer

Published: February 2, 2021

The Air National Guard awarded a member of the 171st Air Refueling Wing with the **Major General Joseph A. Ahearn Enlisted Leadership Award**, Dec. 22, 2020.

Chief Master Sgt. Charles Stoyer of the Civil Engineer Squadron was honored with an award for superior performance. The Air National Guard Civil Engineer program annually recognizes outstanding performers. Those members then represent the ANG at the Air Force level for Civil Engineer awards.

“The 171st Civil Engineer Squadron has been extremely successful over the past several years, both in supporting the wing’s facilities and supporting our airmen. This success is directly correlated to Stoyer’s leadership,” said Major Jeremy Ketter, commander of the 171st CES.

Stoyer has been responsible for numerous construction project contracts on the base, resulting in facility upgrades that have improved the work center of nearly every section on the installation. He also supported the execution of \$2.2 million in facility operation and maintenance activities through the installation’s master cooperative agreement. Some of his contributions include environmentally friendly actions like replacing old water fountains with refillable water bottle stations and initiating the use of more energy-efficient LED lights on base.

“**Chief brings innovative solutions** that are crafted and supported by the experiences of his long and diverse career. I have been exceptionally blessed by the opportunity to work with Chief over the past several years and be a part of the improvements that he has encouraged among the wing’s enlisted corps,” said Ketter.

The enlisted leadership award is named after Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Ahearn who managed and led global construction projects as well as helped establish the Air Force’s first environmental compliance program. He was known as one of the top civil engineers in the Air Force.

“The amazing airmen that I get to work with is the real reason behind all of this,” said Stoyer. “I am honored to represent them, work toward fulfilling their needs and promote them every chance I can.”



# 171st Air Refueling Wing Supports 59th Presidential Inauguration

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Illustrated by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: February 7, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing supported the inauguration of President Joe Biden from Pennsylvania and in Washington, D.C., January 2021.

Airmen provided incident management support, food service support and ground transportation as part of combined national efforts for the inauguration.

“From exercising ATSO (Ability to Survive and Operate) drills on base to refueling aircraft in Southwest Asia, the 171st Air Refueling Wing respond to a full spectrum of operations. We stand ready to support at home and abroad anywhere, at any time,” said Col. Mark Goodwill, commander of the 171 ARW. “We are honored to have been called upon in support of the president’s inauguration.”

The Mobile Emergency Operation Center the 171st utilized throughout the inauguration is one of 15 in guard units throughout the country. The MEOC serves as a hub for cross-service, command and control communication synchronization. The 171st connected with five other MEOCs that were directly in the Washington, D.C. area for real-time updates. They also took the Army’s communication network and were easily able to plug into the 171st MEOC for a seamless communication network. Staff Sgt. Phillip Kapelewski along

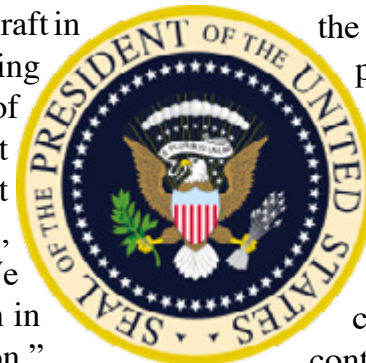
with Staff Sgt. Connor McKenzie, emergency managers at the 171st, brought these capabilities to the homeland response force.

“As events escalate, more communication and coordination is needed. We need to make sure our resources are readily available to be utilized and able to support ongoing operations to help the needs of civilian entities,” said Kapelewski.

In addition to the incident management support the 171st provided, other guardsmen provided food service support. Members of the Force Support Squadron deployed with a field kitchens on short notice as a contingency plan for food services of all Guardsmen supporting the inauguration. These Guardsmen coordinated the pickup and delivery of contracted meals distributing 200-1,200 meals daily from central distribution points for soldiers and airmen assigned to different locations.

Other guardsmen were assigned to Andrews Air Force Base. Vehicle operators from the Logistics Readiness Squadron supported ground transportation efforts there. These guardsmen were essential in supporting transportation of personnel and equipment.

No matter the situation or type of support needed, the 171st continues its tradition of remaining ready to support the nation at a moment’s notice.





# Join the 171st Today

The Air National Guard offers many of the same benefits as the active-duty Air Force. Members of the Air National Guard maintain a civilian career when they are not training or called to serve. They have the flexibility to train near home, with access to the same professional training as full-time service members. They receive a paycheck for all time spent drilling and deployed, as well as benefits and tuition assistance for both themselves and their families.

Recruiting: 877.249.5193

171.ARW.Recruiting@US.AF.MIL



# GENERATING JETS ON 9/11

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: Sept. 24, 2021

Twenty years ago, the world watched hundreds of fire fighters, medics and police officers rush into a war zone with one goal in mind, help as many people as possible reach safety. That day, nearly 500,000 tons of steel, glass and concrete crumbled into dust taking the lives of nearly 3,000 people. The world watched in horror at what was, at the time, presumably an accident, unfold into the deadliest terrorist attack in history on American soil. Since September 11th, American's honor those emergency responders who risked it all. However, while the emergency responders were rushing to help those caught in the attacks, the Air National Guard jumped into action to aide in protecting America.

At the time, the 171st was undergoing an aircraft upgrade. The installation was home to 21 aircraft designed for aerial refueling. The current model of the aircraft had analog items within the cockpit requiring a human navigator using a compass and sextant to manually track

the aircrafts position. This upgrade would eventually terminate the navigator career field within KC-135s. The upgrade, known as Pacer CRAG (Compass Radar and Global Positioning System), needed installed on the nearly 40-year-old jet. The upgrade introduced a digital navigation system capable of storing pre-planned flight coordinates and provided an auto pilot feature. Pilots no longer needed to rely on a human to navigate. In order to meet this upgrade, the 171st Maintenance Group had to remove the majority of the aircraft from service. At the time of 9/11, maintenance had nearly every cockpit pulled apart at various stages of the upgrade. Even with this major overhaul occurring, the installation was still capable of performing routine refueling missions; however, only two aircraft were serviceable for flying missions.

Unfortunately, not all pilots and booms were certified on the new Pacer CRAG system. So when disaster struck on 9/11, the 171st only

had two serviceable jets, one with the new navigation system, and one with the old. When the second plane struck New York City, the pro-superintendent of maintenance ordered the full-time staff to start putting the jets back together. He didn't care how close they were to completing the upgrade. His order was to establish as many serviceable aircraft as possible. The normal maintenance staffing at the 171st was enough to facilitate the everyday mission, but it was not enough to meet the request of the pro-super. Fortunately, the guard stood ready. "Just like the fire fighters and police response in New York City, I think every National Guardsmen just went to the base," said retired Lt. Col. Charles Tubbs, a pilot assigned to the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard during 9/11. "They didn't know what else to do maybe, but if they could get there, they came to the base ready to do something." Some left their families, others left school or even work. They knew that in America's time of need, there was only one place they should be.

The 171st would go on to support a plan called Security Control of Air Traffic and Air Navigation Aids. The plan was never officially launched by name and had not been tested since 1962, but it was designed to ground every commercial aircraft in U.S. airspace. Air National Guard units all over the United States were launched by the North American Aerospace Defense Command to take control over the country's airspace. U.S. Air Force F-16's, F-15's,

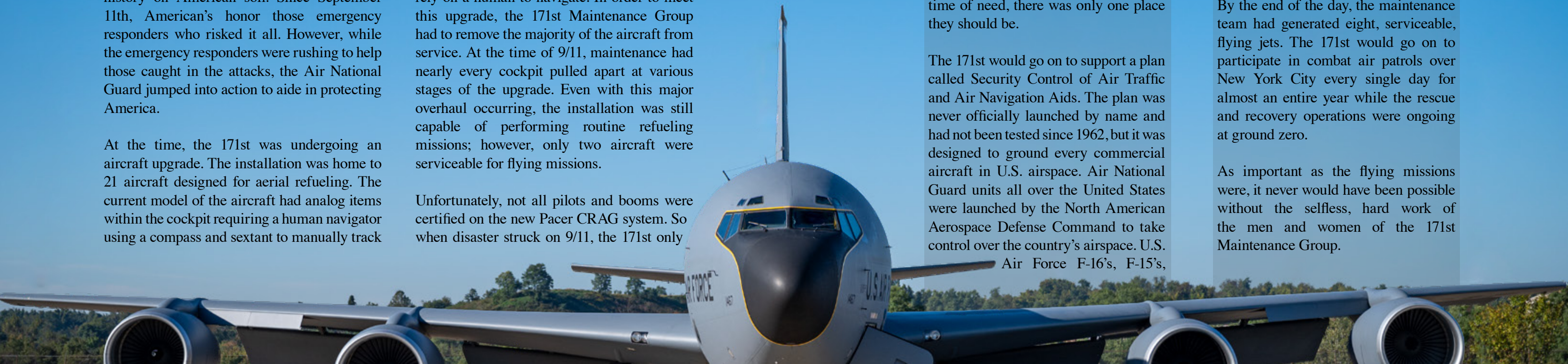
KC-135's, and KC-10's are just some of the aircraft from various components of the Department of Defense that spent the next 12 hours chasing down every single commercial aircraft that could be seen on radar.

Maintenance at the 171st did not know about SCATANA. They did not know there were fighter jets all over the country that needed fuel. Maintenance only knew they had six aircraft off the installation, 13 more unserviceable aircraft parked on the ramp, and America was in need.

"I just got to school at Penn State (New Kensington campus) and walked into the courtyard when I heard what happened," said Lt. Col. Brian Brock, current pilot and former Electrical Environmentalist at the 171st Air Refueling Wing. "I hurried over to a TV just in time to see the second plane hit the tower. I called the base and asked if I could come in."

By the end of the day, the maintenance team had generated eight, serviceable, flying jets. The 171st would go on to participate in combat air patrols over New York City every single day for almost an entire year while the rescue and recovery operations were ongoing at ground zero.

As important as the flying missions were, it never would have been possible without the selfless, hard work of the men and women of the 171st Maintenance Group.



# Family Ties

Parents are caregivers, taking care of their children's physical and emotional well-being. They provide guidance and support to their children, helping to shape and mold young adolescents into adults, and in some cases, service members.

This is how Staff Sgt. Tyler Sparkman, a machinist in the 171st Maintenance Squadron, discovered his call to serve.

"As a kid, I was out here (171st Air Refueling Wing) every family day. Dad would bring us out here all the time," said Tyler.

Tyler started his career in the Marines, and in 2016, he joined the Air National Guard.

"There was never any pressure to join," said Tyler. "It has almost been like a second home."

Now, Tyler serves alongside his father, Senior Master Sgt. David Sparkman, an occupational safety manager at the 171st ARW who has served in the Air National Guard for almost 30 years.

"It's a sense of pride for me," says David. "I've made friends over the years, and when you walk into a shop and someone tells you 'I met your son and he really helped me out', as a dad, that's special — seeing my son wear the same uniform as me," said David.

The relationship between a father and son is certainly special and the pride between parents and children is also reciprocal.

"Seeing everything my dad's done and being a part of that now, it's something I can't even describe," said Tyler. "I just can't find the words."

It is also natural as a parent to worry about your children. Luckily, the 171st has many airmen who have relatives serving together, providing a supportive environment in which airmen can develop.

"As a parent, you always worry about your children, but seeing your child develop and realizing all the guidance you gave actually did something is amazing," said David. "When he decided to join the guard, I felt my chest swell."

"There's just something about the guard, everyone is here for the same purpose. It's a common unity of understanding," said Tyler.

As the 171st continues to promote and foster cohesive, supportive teams, we also remain mission oriented, knowing our families are always behind us and in some cases, beside us.



**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Photo by: Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks

Published: June 6, 2021

In 1971, U.S. Congress designated Aug. 26th as Women's Equality Day. While this day was established to celebrate and recognize the importance of women's work and suffrage movement, it also stands as a reminder that we need to support each other. At the 171st Air Refueling Wing, this support is part of being an Airman. But what happens when the Airman is also your mother?

"It's an honor to be a woman serving in the military, and I feel privileged to be following in the footsteps of someone like my mother," said 1st Lt. Caleigh Reese, an aircraft maintenance officer.

Reese has been serving with her mother since 2012. Senior Master Sgt. Andrea Henry serves as the superintendent of the military personnel section in the Force Support Squadron at the 171st.

"She has over 30 years of experience. She's my sounding board, but she always stays on the line of helping me make a decision while letting me figure things out for myself," said Reese.

Being a strong Airman means knowing part of your duty is bettering yourself and those around you — not so different than one of the many roles of a mother.

"She has always been my role model. To watch her work and see the respect she has earned from other Airmen made me strive to work better and be better," said Reese.

Motivation can be a shared relationship though.

"We push each other. Helping each other along the way is something you can't describe," said Henry.

Helping to lift other women up is also a part of women's equality. "At times, it can be difficult as a mom of

two under the age of two, trying to balance work and life, but I feel so lucky to have great women at the 171st who have supported me and given me advice, including my mom," said Reese. "She has always supported me through not only my military career, but my entire life. It's such a unique experience, and it's definitely not something I take for granted."

While many women serve in the U.S. military today, there was a time when women were discouraged from joining the military.

"My mother always wanted to join, but her parents wouldn't let her join," said Henry. "I consider it a privilege to serve while watching my daughter grow into the woman she is — the daughter, mother, airman and officer she has grown to be."

Another part of women's equality is trying to leave things better for the next generation. Something Henry embraced for her own daughter.

"People will always say 'oh your daughter outranks you,' and I say, 'Yes, she does,' and I am very proud of that," said Henry. "I want her to achieve so much more than me. I want nothing but the best for her." As we celebrate this Women's Equality Day, we need to remember all the strong females in our nation's history and our own lives.

"As women, we follow the footsteps of those before us who pushed boundaries, and it is our job to continue breaking down more doors and more barriers," said Reese.

**Written by:  
Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Graphic by:  
Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks

Published:  
August 26, 2021



*Inspiration  
Through  
Generations*

# 171st Air Refueling Wing Observes Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Illustrated by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: June 6, 2021

The 171st Air Refueling Wing observed Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month with a mission to educate service members on prevention and intervention, April 2021.

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month is a nationally recognized campaign that takes place each April to raise awareness by focusing on creating cultures and environments that can help eliminate sexual assault.

“The 171st is committed to protecting our people. We are proud of our efforts and will continue to increase awareness,” said Col. Ray Hyland, commander of the 171st ARW.

The campaign at the 171st ARW was facilitated by Mr. Kirk Simpson, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program manager.

“We want prevention and awareness every month. Dedicating the month of April allows us to really focus and go above and beyond educating people. The more time you have is more time to bring people to you and more opportunities to spread the message,” said Simpson.

The 171st ARW provided informational marquees and fliers along with educational table exhibits that displayed different resources at the local, state and national levels. Simpson’s team created newsletters, briefings and videos to push awareness forward to the forefront of everyone’s minds.

“You want people to have this information as second nature,” said Simpson. “You get this through awareness by exposure. You get people to better recognize red flags and more awareness causes people to feel emboldened and empowered to step up and do the right thing.”

Along with the sexual assault prevention and response program manager, the base also utilizes volunteer victim advocates to bring awareness.

“The victim advocates play a vital role in planning and coordinating activities as well as training and answer questions. They are an invaluable asset to this office,” said Simpson.

Simpson also explained how his job is to be proactive. He related this proactive approach to unit cohesion.

“We need trust and loyalty to be effective,” said Simpson. “That comes from treating each other with dignity and respect.”



# SAPR

Help • Hope • Healing



**SARC**  
**Kirk Simpson**  
O: 412-776-7950  
C: 412-463-3314



**Dave Sparkman**  
O: 412-776-7377  
**ALT. SARC**

## Victim Advocates



**SSgt Shannon Kozikowski**  
O: 412-776-7451



**TSgt Laura Roncaglione**  
C: 814-720-2777



**LeAnna Taracido**  
O: 412 -776-7381



**MSgt Lisa Withrow**  
O: 412 -776 -7321

171 ARW  
**SAPR Hotline**  
.....  
You are not alone  
**412-580-2632**

DoD  
**Safe Helpline**  
.....  
Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community  
safehelpline.org | 877-995-5247



# 171 AIR REFUELING WING

# AIMS

# FOR EXCELLENCE

IN NATIONAL AND STATE MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITIONS

**Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder**

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: April 10, 2021

Each year, members from the 171st Air Refueling Wing compete in local, state and national shooting team competitions.

Competition within the military directly supports the readiness and well-being of all service members. By making individuals rise to their highest level of individual potential, competition allows guardsmen to demonstrate their peak performance.

“Competing on the marksmanship team pushes me to evolve my personal techniques in order to win for the team, and I owe it to my shooters to bring those more advanced techniques back to them,” said Staff Sgt. Nicholas Yackovich, a combat arms instructor at the 171st Security Forces Squadron.

The competitive shooting team of the Pennsylvania National Guard can be traced all the way back to 1846 when a few businesses put together a competition. Over time, more matches developed, leading us to today where there are three big competitions across the state of Pennsylvania in which soldiers and airmen alike can participate.

“Being a member on the team and competing with our fellow service members in the Army Guard is, in part, upholding a legacy and tradition in the profession of arms,” said Yackovich.

While healthy competition helps guardsmen boost their individual skill level, competitions also act as a way for tight-knit relationships to form, increasing morale and unit cohesion.

“Although it has been said that you only compete against yourself, to me, the base marksmanship team is much larger than an individual competition,” said Yackovich. “As a team, we dedicate ourselves to bettering our teammates. It is because of that culture within the team that we continue to succeed and excel.”

One of the competitions across the state is the Governor’s Twenty, which was established in 1968. This competition is awarded annually at the state-level to the top 20 shooters. There are four different matches in which participants test their marksmanship skills with different weapons: the 400-yard slow fire, combat rifle excellence in competition, 30-yard slow fire, and combat pistol excellence in competition.

Another competition in which guardsmen can participate is The Adjutant General’s Combined Arms Match. In this competition, individuals compete at a variety of individual and team events, including combat rifle and pistol events. Participants need to have at least a four-person team to compete against other units within the state.

Last, but certainly not least is the Marksmanship Advisory Council regional match. This match is designed to focus on battle marksmanship. For this competition, guardsmen from both the Army and Air National Guard across the state combine together to make one team to compete within the region.

In addition to these state and regional competitions, the 171st shooting team also participates in national matches. Some of those include the Winston P. Wilson and the U.S. Army Small Arms Championship.

“The team has been around far longer than I have,” said Yackovich who has been in security forces since 2016. “It would be nearly impossible for me to list all of the competitions that the team has competed in throughout its entirety,” said Yackovich.

While the number of matches in which the 171st Air Refueling Wing has competed is innumerable, their legacy of excellence in these competitions continues as many guardsmen have earned special awards in these matches.

“A few of our members have even paid their own way to the President’s Hundred match,” said Yackovich.

The President’s Hundred Match is where civilians and military members can compete to earn a President’s Hundred Tab in rifle or pistol competitions. The badge is awarded by the Civilian Marksmanship Program and is held in Camp Perry, Ohio. The event draws crowds from all over the U.S. Currently, two guardsmen from the 171st have earned the President’s Hundred Tab, Master Sgt. Eric Moskal and Chief Master Sgt. Edward Altmeyer.

As the 171st continues their commitment to excellence in training, instructors like Yackovich, remain dedicated to the craft.

“While I find a great deal of enjoyment, camaraderie and satisfaction out of competing, it is much bigger than myself,” said Yackovich.



# 171 ARW

## Hosts the 6th Annual Enlisted Development Program

**Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover**

Photo by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover

Published: Nov. 30, 2021

The Enlisted Development Program returned to the 171st from November 17th through the 19th, 2021. Previously, the course halted for public health related to the pandemic. The EDP helps provide all enlisted Airmen with the skills they need to be effective leaders.

Enlisted development in the Air Force ensures Airmen have the tools they need readily available and consists of three different tiers of professional military education (Airman Leadership School, Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy, Senior NCO Academy) that are spread out during an Airman’s career. The EDP helps bridge the gap between these different courses and takes a deeper dive into developing an Airman’s ability to perform in both written and verbal communications as well as leadership and supervision.

Tech. Sgt. Jacob Linsenbigler, the NCO in charge of Public Health within the Medical Group was an integral part in reviving the program. Along with a handful of other Guardsmen from the 171st, Linsenbigler attended a Leadership Development Program hosted by the 193rd Special Operations Wing in Harrisburg. He found the program extremely beneficial and wanted to bring it back to Pittsburgh. “It was a fantastic program, we wanted to bring it back home but tailor it in a manner that could benefit all of our enlisted force on base,” said Linsenbigler.

This is the 6th rendition of the EDP hosted at the 171st with five of their courses tailored towards the junior NCOs and one for the senior NCOs. This year, the course concentrated on increasing the trainee’s knowledge of force management, fiscal management and responsibility, career development strategies, administrative duties such as enlisted development report writing, award writing or counseling sessions and documentation, professionalism, supervisions skills, and soft skills for personnel management.

The EDP added a field trip this year to tour the Carnegie Mellon University, National Robotics Engineering Center. The tour connected Airmen with Mr. Jeff Legault, an Associate Director at the NREC who illustrated some of the projects previously designed. The theme of the tour stressed to Airmen that there is always a way to finish the mission. The NREC finds ways to automate processes and forces engineers to think outside of the box. “This tour was something we wanted to show to our junior NCOs that no matter what rank you are, innovation is a little idea coming from a person wishing to make a big difference. That is one of the overall qualities of a good leader,” said Linsenbigler.



# FSRT

Written by: Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks  
Published: Dec. 7, 2021

# U.S. AIR FORCE

The Air Force's core values are a common bond that unifies Airmen, a commitment and a guide for the way to serve your country and community.

These core values are embodied by the 171st Air Refueling Wing Fatality Search and Recovery Team.

The FSRT supports fatality search and recovery capabilities for the National Guard. Formed in 2008 after a series of events like Hurricane Katrina, the FSRT actively supports the Homeland Response Force, local authorities, and their community. The capabilities of FSRT are specifically tailored to augment and support other entities in any environment regardless of conditions.

Last year, the FSRT received the call to support a local mission in May 2020 for COVID operations locally in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. The FSRT was able to use the training provided to assist in safe decontamination of a nursing home.

"We are very lucky to have current FSRT members so dedicated to the mission," said Tech. Sgt. Kayla Stapf, a services specialist and FSRT member assigned to the 171st Force Support Squadron. "All of the team responded to the activation call within an hour."

"In short, we learned that whenever faced with the challenge of quickly gathering people and organizing gear, FSRT members rise to the challenge with flexibility and haste," said Stapf.

The team, consisting of 11 personnel, receives rigorous training in areas such as national incident management systems and hazardous material awareness and operations. Additionally, the group attends collective training exercises and evaluations annually. Team members are all trained with the ability to lead an FSRT if they are called individually to respond to a disaster.

"Training on such a heavy subject (fatalities) can be difficult at the end of the day. However, we are very lucky to have a team and leadership that support each other," said Stapf.

Collective training exercises are a critical part of readiness for the FSRT. These exercises are done with multiple teams from across the country. Teams benefit from the joint training environment and sharing operational knowledge or successes with each other. For example, the 171st FSRT may join forces with another FSRT from Florida to simulate a hurricane response. These collective exercises help the FSRT work alongside many other entities such as medical, decontamination and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response teams.

"Whenever you have a team that's dedicated, you're all there for each other, and we support each other through everything," said Stapf while describing the camaraderie of the team.

The 171st FSRT is the only military team in the state of Pennsylvania. Participating in the FSRT is only offered to members of the services flight. In addition to supporting the FSRT, members of the team are fully trained Services Specialists. Services Specialists perform duties such as managing force support programs like base dining, lodging and physical fitness.

The 171st FSRT is an exemplification of "service before self", or an Airman's professional duties taking precedence over personal desire. An Airman's strive for continual improvement of their service for greater accomplishment within themselves and their communities is a personification of "excellence in all we do".



# PROMOTIONS

## ENLISTED

Hannan, Diana	AMN	6-Jan-21
Hoover, Ashton	AMN	11-Apr-21
Kinney, Brayden	AMN	30-Jun-21
Leckey, Jayden	AMN	1-Dec-21
Baker, Sierra	A1C	27-Aug-21
Bell, Reed	A1C	15-Jun-21
Berardinelli, Scott	A1C	15-Jun-21
Byerly, Jesse	A1C	7-Aug-21
Dunn, Shane	A1C	16-Feb-21
Hagen, Spencer	A1C	8-Aug-21
Henzel, Nathan	A1C	1-Jun-21
Legin, Alexander	A1C	7-Aug-21
Maglicco, Jordan	A1C	14-Jul-21
Martsolf, Catherine	A1C	15-Jun-21
Miller, Donavin	A1C	13-Sep-21
Risher, Christopher	A1C	4-Nov-21
Sahady, Katelynn	A1C	30-Mar-21
Alexander, Ryan	SRA	2-Feb-21
Baker, Sylvester	SRA	16-Feb-21
Bashor, Dallas	SRA	26-Nov-21
Beam, Justin	SRA	26-Mar-21
Boyer, Stephanie	SRA	1-Sep-21
Brehm, Avery	SRA	16-Aug-21
Brown, Gillian	SRA	10-Aug-21
Burda, David	SRA	27-Aug-21
Callahan, James	SRA	12-Jan-21
Caruthers, Nadine	SRA	19-Oct-21
Clark, Patrick	SRA	23-Mar-21
Colavecchia, Marco	SRA	25-May-21
Conrad, Matthew	SRA	13-May-21
Cree, Scott	SRA	3-Sep-21
Crilley, Shawn	SRA	30-Sep-21
Daugherty, Connor	SRA	7-Dec-21
Davis, Ashley	SRA	21-Mar-21
Donnelly, Katelyn	SRA	11-Mar-21
Dugan, Liam	SRA	21-Apr-21
Felix, Matthew	SRA	23-Nov-21
Foster, Luke	SRA	25-May-21
Frutos, Caden	SRA	14-Mar-21
Good, Phillip	SRA	7-Aug-21
Grant, Jamiya	SRA	13-May-21
Gray, Carson	SRA	30-Sep-21
Gregg, George	SRA	29-Jul-21
Grenesko, Stephen	SRA	20-Oct-21
Hapach, Louis	SRA	8-Dec-21
Harayda, Isiah	SRA	25-May-21
Hays, Theresa	SRA	6-Oct-21
Hinchey, Conor	SRA	27-May-21
Hockenberry, Nathaniel	SRA	14-Oct-21
Hull, Matthew	SRA	16-Aug-21
Irwin, Taylor	SRA	20-Oct-21
Keast, Logan	SRA	14-Oct-21

Kriebel, Jacob	SRA	13-May-21
Lemashane, Quintin	SRA	19-Feb-21
Lukitsch, Andrew	SRA	8-Dec-21
Masneri, Theresa	SRA	26-Apr-21
Mcbride, Maura	SRA	25-May-21
Mcdade, Brian	SRA	8-Jan-21
Mcfall, Katelynn	SRA	25-Mar-21
Minney, Jacob	SRA	15-Nov-21
Molinaro, Dominic	SRA	16-Aug-21
Morgan, Brooke	SRA	7-Sep-21
Morris, Trenton	SRA	15-Nov-21
Neyman, Payton	SRA	28-Jul-21
Nissen, Shane	SRA	21-Apr-21
Poloka, Owen	SRA	27-Aug-21
Posterivo, Madison	SRA	19-Mar-21
Price, Savannah	SRA	28-Jul-21
Ramsdell, Matthew	SRA	26-Nov-21
Roberts, Connor	SRA	30-Sep-21
Rogalski, Nathan	SRA	31-Aug-21
Rose, Michael	SRA	9-Nov-21
Sanner, Isabella	SRA	19-Mar-21
Scarsella, Rebecca	SRA	8-Oct-21
Schoeneweis, Sevin	SRA	3-Aug-21
Schultz, Dalton	SRA	5-May-21
Shugars, Aiden	SRA	18-Nov-21
Slopek, Grant	SRA	16-Jul-21
Steininger, Blake	SRA	15-Jun-21
Stevick, Hunter	SRA	21-Apr-21
Taylor, Nicklas	SRA	14-Mar-21
Trunzo, Tyler	SRA	24-Jun-21
Wardman, Jordan	SRA	8-Dec-21
Wareham, Hannah	SRA	22-Jun-21
Webster, Everett	SRA	16-Sep-21
Wilkinson, Alexander	SRA	24-May-21
Aitken, Jared	SSGT	14-Jul-21
Allen, Jeremiah	SSGT	20-Aug-21
Amicone, Nicolas	SSGT	5-Mar-21
Babic, Danijel	SSGT	25-May-21
Brooks, Christopher	SSGT	25-May-21
Buckley, Jenna	SSGT	19-Feb-21
Campbell, Derek	SSGT	23-Nov-21
Cappetta, Patrick	SSGT	23-Nov-21
Carey, Jacob	SSGT	24-Sep-21
Carpin, Christopher	SSGT	21-Apr-21
Cecotti, Theodore	SSGT	15-Jun-21
Cloonan, Sean	SSGT	6-Apr-21
Colbert, Jared	SSGT	16-Feb-21
Cooper, Zachary	SSGT	16-Aug-21
Czerniak, Adam	SSGT	28-Jul-21
Darrigo, Nicholas	SSGT	14-Apr-21
Depodesta, Matthew	SSGT	28-Jul-21
Derrick, Richard	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Dixon, Clarissa	SSGT	30-Jun-21
Doran, Elizabeth	SSGT	22-Jun-21

Dunlap, Ryan	SSGT	16-Feb-21
Edgar, Ethan	SSGT	26-Mar-21
Fleming, Rachel	SSGT	16-Aug-21
Flowers, Dawson	SSGT	24-Sep-21
Gregor, Robert	SSGT	23-Nov-21
Haniotakis, Jenna	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Karpinsky, Natalie	SSGT	27-Sep-21
Lewis, Cheyenne	SSGT	22-Oct-21
Manuel, Nicholas	SSGT	15-Nov-21
Marsh, Jared	SSGT	24-Sep-21
Martin, Michael	SSGT	29-Nov-21
Mclaughlin, Michael	SSGT	8-Jan-21
Michael, Patrick	SSGT	28-Jul-21
Miller, Christian	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Miller, Greg	SSGT	16-Feb-21
Mugford, Matthew	SSGT	29-Jan-21
Niyonzigira, Hector	SSGT	9-Sep-21
Njambi, Ndirangu	SSGT	25-May-21
O'Connell, Catherine	SSGT	11-Apr-21
Oliver, Katlyn	SSGT	27-Aug-21
Olsen, Rebekah	SSGT	13-Apr-21
Oneal, Mikayla	SSGT	21-Apr-21
Orloski, Lucas	SSGT	24-Sep-21
Pahel, Nathan	SSGT	1-Jun-21
Palombo, Anthony	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Pfrogner, Ryan	SSGT	6-Oct-21
Powell, Nicholas	SSGT	4-Aug-21
Radcliffe, Justin	SSGT	11-May-21
Russell, Alexis	SSGT	25-Jun-21
Ruzewski, Robert	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Sabo, Michael	SSGT	31-Aug-21
Schnelbach, Jacob	SSGT	6-Oct-21
Severa, Michelle	SSGT	7-May-21
Shepley, Thomas	SSGT	8-Sep-21
Shinn, Kyle	SSGT	18-Feb-21
Sinwell, Noah	SSGT	6-Oct-21
Skone, Jerrad	SSGT	3-Mar-21
Stofferahn, Austin	SSGT	23-Nov-21
Stover, Andrew	SSGT	2-Jul-21
Sunday, Sarah	SSGT	14-Feb-21
Swearingen, Dakota	SSGT	25-Oct-21
Thomas, Wesley	SSGT	22-Jun-21
Venick, Nicole	SSGT	19-Oct-21
Waigand, Michael	SSGT	16-Aug-21
Walker, Chelsea	SSGT	10-Dec-21
Wardman, Justin	SSGT	14-Mar-21
Williams, Jeremy	SSGT	26-Mar-21
Wockenfuss, Zoe	SSGT	31-Mar-21
Yingling, Nathaniel	SSGT	13-May-21
Anderson, Mark	TSGT	18-Nov-21
Cecotti, Carter	TSGT	20-Apr-21
Davis, Mindy	TSGT	8-Nov-21
Demaio, Sarah	TSGT	23-Mar-21
Doran, Richard	TSGT	15-Mar-21

Dugan, Michael	TSGT	9-Nov-21
Fabus, Keith	TSGT	19-Oct-21
Foster, Daniel	TSGT	14-Oct-21
Fuller, Troy	TSGT	3-Mar-21
Gorby, Rosalyn	TSGT	25-Mar-21
Gothe, Lauren	TSGT	25-May-21
Grala, Matthew	TSGT	13-May-21
Haas, Errict	TSGT	23-Nov-21
Hasenflu, Robert	TSGT	7-Sep-21
Heckman, Jared	TSGT	29-Jan-21
Hoffman, Aleia	TSGT	22-Oct-21
Hollis, Kevin	TSGT	14-Mar-21
Jackson, Tanner	TSGT	16-Jul-21
Jacques, Alexander	TSGT	1-Mar-21
Kucel, Daniel	TSGT	26-Aug-21
Luketic, Emmett	TSGT	24-Jun-21
Massengill, Ronnice	TSGT	22-Apr-21
Mcbane, Erin	TSGT	2-Feb-21
Mccoy, Tiffani	TSGT	29-Jul-21
Mckenzie, William	TSGT	8-Jul-21
Mione, Vincent	TSGT	25-May-21
Mione, Vincent	TSGT	25-May-21
Norman, James	TSGT	21-Jan-21
Obusek, Kimberly	TSGT	7-May-21
Phillips, Vance	TSGT	8-Nov-21
Price, Nathan	TSGT	3-Aug-21
Radar, Tomas	TSGT	9-Sep-21
Reed, Tyler	TSGT	23-Apr-21
Rogalsky, Miranda	TSGT	25-May-21
Rogalsky, Miranda	TSGT	25-May-21
Sheppard, Christopher	TSGT	9-Sep-21
Sikovsek, John	TSGT	20-Aug-21
Smith, Mark	TSGT	12-Jan-21
Smith, Wyatt	TSGT	29-Jul-21
Terkay, Angela	TSGT	11-Apr-21
Washington, Kiera	TSGT	8-Nov-21
Balonga, David	MSGT	18-Jul-21
Bradley, Seth	MSGT	16-Jun-21
Davis, Michael	MSGT	16-Nov-21
Dermarsico, Kayla	MSGT	1-Oct-21
Duranko, Amanda	MSGT	11-Aug-21
Ewing, Margaret	MSGT	22-Oct-21
Fabus, Clarissa	MSGT	14-May-21
Ferringer, Clint	MSGT	20-Aug-21
Giandalia, Joseph	MSGT	22-Oct-21
Gudson, Jonathan	MSGT	20-Aug-21
Hennon, Justin	MSGT	23-Sep-21
Hoffman, Patrick	MSGT	20-Aug-21
Hudak, Justine	MSGT	23-Sep-21
Ladakos, Brittany	MSGT	23-Oct-21
Ladakos, Michael	MSGT	22-Oct-21
Lapearle, Christopher	MSGT	11-Apr-21
Linden, Timothy	MSGT	26-Jan-21
Lowmaster, Lee	MSGT	11-Apr-21

Madonna, James	MSGT	16-Aug-21
Meehan, Joseph	MSGT	10-Feb-21
Nordeen, Joshua	MSGT	18-Jun-21
Preston, John	MSGT	29-Nov-21
Remaley, Frank	MSGT	1-Oct-21
Shinsky, Benjamin	MSGT	4-Aug-21
Smith, Benjamin	MSGT	22-Jun-21
Songer, Samatha	MSGT	16-Apr-21
Spisak, Caleb	MSGT	13-Dec-21
Steimer, Joseph	MSGT	21-Jun-21
Synder, Jason	MSGT	29-Jan-21
Walendziewicz, David	MSGT	27-May-21
Wallace, Mark	MSGT	16-Aug-21
Williams, Brody	MSGT	22-Jun-21
Zielinske, Charles	MSGT	16-Apr-21
Albertson, Jamie	SMSGT	19-Feb-21
Gonzalez, Jessica	SMSGT	19-Feb-21
Lang, Christopher	SMSGT	20-Aug-21
Leydig, Maggie	SMSGT	12-May-21
Moskal, Eric	SMSGT	1-Oct-21
Rohanna, Jeremy	SMSGT	19-Feb-21
Ross, Christy	SMSGT	19-Feb-21
Wilson, Mark	SMSGT	6-Jan-21
Winovich, Robert	SMSGT	25-Feb-21
Cameron, Jeremy	CMSGT	1-Oct-21
Ressler, Robert	CMSGT	19-Feb-21
Sheets, Brian	CMSGT	29-Jan-21
Watson, Jacob	CMSGT	13-Dec-21
Webster, Paul	CMSGT	22-Oct-21

## OFFICER

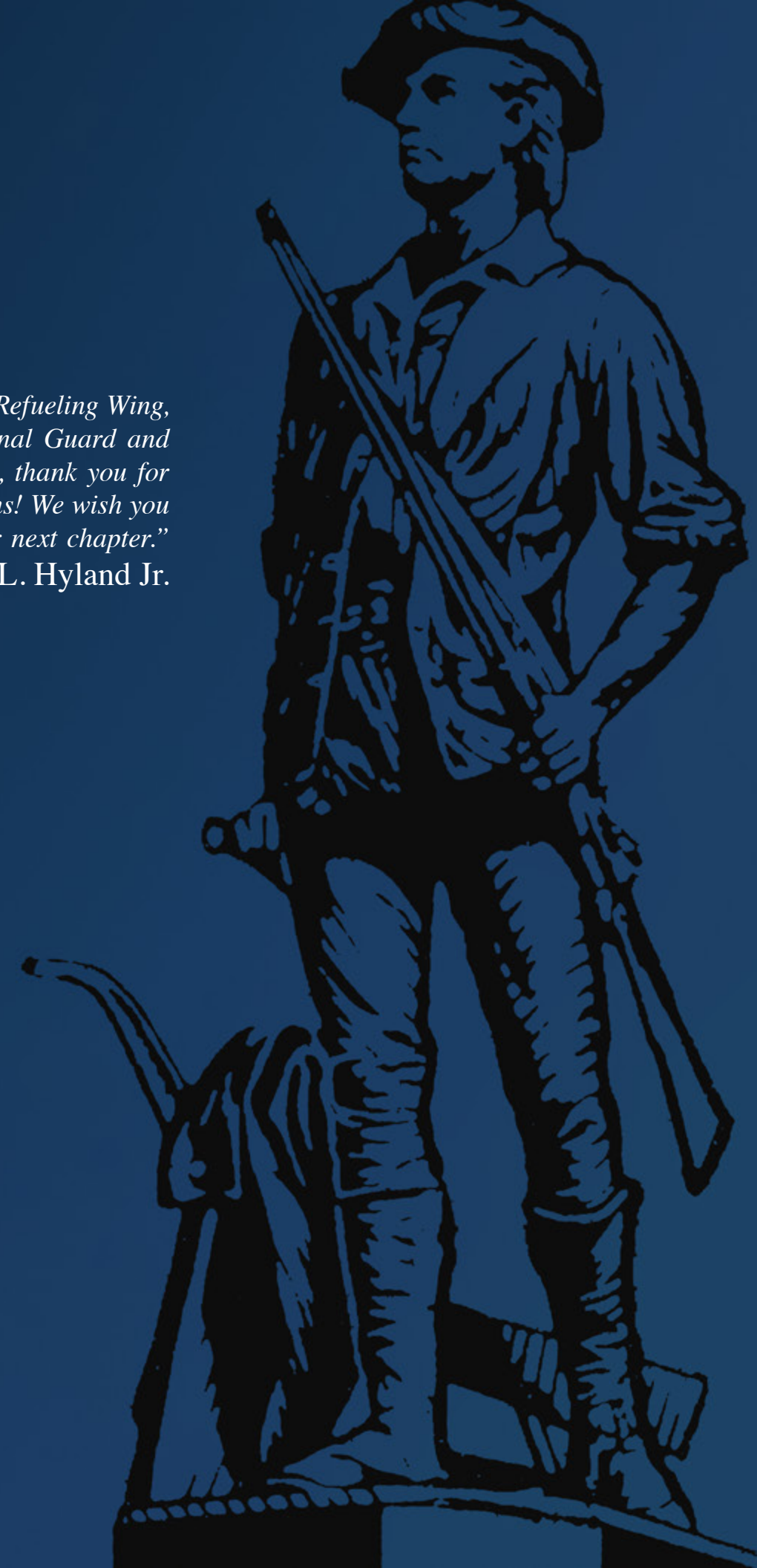
Moretti, Daniel	1ST LT	29-Sept-21
Mulvihill, Timothy	1ST LT	29-Sept-21
Owens, John	1ST LT	27-Apr-21
Pirinelli, James	1ST LT	27-Sept-21
Barard, Sean	CAPT	19-Nov-21
Dodds, Matthew	CAPT	2-Jun-21
Fairbanks, Daniel	CAPT	31-Aug-21
Fischer, Christopher	CAPT	25-Aug-21
Luciani, Anthony	CAPT	21-Sept-21
Melnick, Seth	CAPT	25-Aug-21
Wyant, Aimee	CAPT	30-Sept-21
Cornelius, Eric	MAJ	13-Oct-21
Higgins, John	MAJ	13-Jan-21
Hulse, Gretchen	MAJ	1-Apr-21
Pracht, Shanita	MAJ	1-Jan-21
Silvis, Jennifer	MAJ	1-Jun-21
Hutsler, Pauline	LT COL	2-Aug-21
Ketter, Jeremy	LT COL	5-Feb-21
Stockton, Dana	LT COL	1-Jul-21
Woodley, Joseph	LT COL	13-Oct-21
Wallace, Traci	COL	3-Aug-21
Wilson, Samuel	COL	14-Jul-21

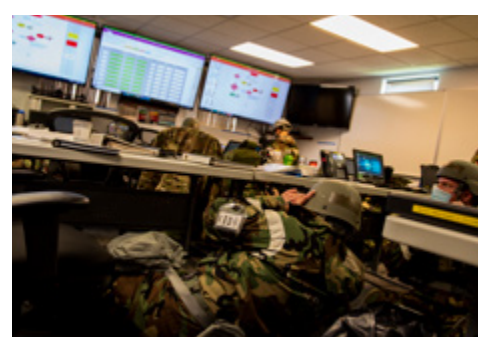
# RETIREMENTS

01/01/2021	SMSGT	ALAN SMITH
01/01/2021	MSGT	HOLLY JADLOCKI
01/20/2021	MSGT	FRANK PIPER
02/08/2021	MSGT	JASON COOK
02/19/2021	MSGT	DAVID MARTIN
04/01/2021	TSGT	JESSICA YONUSHONIS
04/04/2021	MSGT	PATRICK STUCKWISH
04/11/2021	LT COL	JOHN JOCHUM
05/10/2021	TSGT	RONALD MAYER
05/12/2021	CMSGT	BRIAN OLANDER
05/15/2021	LT COL	HILARY AYANRU
05/19/2021	TSGT	ELIZABETH ZEMBA
05/30/2021	MSGT	PAUL JACQUES
05/31/2021	CMSGT	ANDREW BAIR
06/01/2021	MSGT	BEN PARRISH
06/02/2021	TSGT	JOSEPH MANGINO
06/03/2021	TSGT	JAMES ZIGARELLA
06/11/2021	TSGT	NATHAN BREITENBACH
06/30/2021	SMSGT	TISHA YOUNG
07/01/2021	MSGT	ROGER MILLER
07/04/2021	LT COL	KENNAN PICHIRILO
07/05/2021	MSGT	MELVILLE VERMILLION
07/12/2021	TSGT	PHILLIP LIBERTO
07/31/2021	SMSGT	DAVID JANIGA
08/09/2021	MSGT	DAVID SHALLENBERGER
08/15/2021	TSGT	LOUIS WILSON
08/31/2021	MSGT	DANA THOMAS
09/10/2021	MSGT	TIMOTHY CRANE
09/30/2021	MSGT	RICHARD SANGRICCO
10/01/2021	CMSGT	CHARLES STOYER
11/01/2021	LT COL	RYAN SHERBONDY
11/05/2021	TSGT	EVAN CHRISTON
11/22/2021	TSGT	JEFFREY AXTON
11/30/2021	MSGT	EARL MORGAN
12/01/2021	SMSGT	ANDREA HENRY
12/01/2021	LT COL	JANET VANDYKE
12/06/2021	SSGT	BRAD MICHAELSON
12/15/2021	SMSGT	KARL VICKROY
12/31/2021	SMSGT	WILLIAM BUCHANAN

*“On behalf of the 171st Air Refueling Wing,  
the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and  
the United States Air Force, thank you for  
your service. Congratulations! We wish you  
nothing but the best in your next chapter.”*

Col. Raymond L. Hyland Jr.





# AFFAIRS PUBLIC

Engaging with a global audience requires captivating and informative communication. It's the job of a mass communication specialist to observe and document what will become the history of the Air Force. Public affairs is more than just capturing photos and videos. Experts work with commanders and media operations to inform the public with factual and timely information. Public affairs is more than just taking pictures; it's telling the story of the Air Force.

**Public Affairs Officer:** Capt. Jodi Snyder

**Superintendent/Public Affairs Operations Chief:** Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

**Public Affairs Craftsmen:**

Tech. Sgt. Michael Fariss, Tech. Sgt. Allyson Manners (Separated), Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover, Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks, Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss



Photo by: Senior Master Sgt. Jaime Albertson

## CAPTAIN JODI SNYDER

Capt. Jodi Snyder began her career at the 171st Air Refueling Wing in the Logistics Readiness Squadron after her enlistment in August 2003. She worked in supply as a maintenance liaison and then switched to equipment, obtaining the rank of technical sergeant. In 2015, she became a commissioned officer and joined the Public Affairs team. She has deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as well as NATO missions in both supply and public affairs roles. In 2020, Jodi obtained a doctorate in education with a concentration in special education from the University of Pittsburgh. She has been teaching for over 12 years and has a passion for helping students with special needs succeed. In addition to her love of service, she thoroughly enjoys traveling and leading one of the best teams - Public Affairs!



## SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT SHAWN MONK



Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk is the Operations Chief of Public Affairs. He joined the 171st when he was still in high school in 1998. He still considers it to be the best decision he has ever made. Shawn has been able to see many places since joining the unit, including Tennessee, Virginia, Washington D.C., Nebraska, Oregon, Germany, and all over the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He has always had a talent for the visual arts, from painting and drawing to digital graphic design, photography and video. Shawn has always enjoyed telling the story with images more than words. That lined up perfectly for him because his first job at the 171st was a graphic designer. Shawn had an opportunity to use a talent he already had while also serving his state and country. The National Guard eventually became like a second family

helping Shawn hone in and continue to develop the skills he already had. As his career progressed, Shawn expanded into photography and videography. During his career, the base multimedia shop merged with public affairs, which helped him develop a skillset for journalism, and community and media relations all while being guided by several great mentors. His proudest achievements are sharing his interest and knowledge of visual arts. Watching someone else display their pride in a unique creation is extremely rewarding to Shawn even if his influence was very small.

## Technical Sergeant Michael Fariss

Tech. Sgt. Michael Fariss is a photojournalist with the 171st Air Refueling Wing since joining the Air National Guard in 2014. He began his military career in the Army Reserves in 1987. He completed basic training at Fort Bliss, Texas and then advanced individual training as a combat field medic at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He trained at various bases throughout the eastern United States, including Fort Drum, New York and Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia. Prior to joining the Air National Guard, Mike served in the Air Force Reserves as a personnelist. He earned Distinguished Honor Graduate at his technical school at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi. Mike deployed to Anderson Air Force Base, Guam in 2019 and completed training at Fort Meade, Maryland and McGhee Tyson Air Force Base, Tennessee. He was born and raised in Pittsburgh, attended Central Catholic High School and earned a bachelors and masters degree from the University of Pittsburgh. In his civilian job, Mike has been teaching social studies for over 25 years. When he is not teaching or serving in the military, he enjoys spending time with his wife Susan and 12-year-old son Mark.



## Staff Sergeant Kyle Brooks

Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks is a drill status guardsman with the 171st Air Refueling Wing in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. During college, Kyle became interested in joining the military and had always aspired to serve the country. Ultimately in December of 2014, Kyle joined the 171st as a photojournalist with the base Public Affairs shop. Before joining the unit, Kyle had little knowledge of public affairs, and he would start his career as an airman basic. Kyle would go on to train at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, Fort Meade, Maryland, and McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tennessee. Following training, Kyle returned to the 171st in 2016 where he has published photos, written articles, and produced videos of activities around the base. Over the past seven years, Kyle has grown a great passion for public affairs and multimedia. In 2019, Kyle was promoted to the rank of staff sergeant and looks forward to following his aspirations to become a commissioned officer in the Air Force. Kyle's favorite part of the job is getting to highlight all the airmen at the 171st for the hard work they do and getting to work with an outstanding group of colleagues in the 171st Public Affairs shop. Kyle graduated with a bachelor's degree from Slippery Rock University, and he now works in the occupational health and safety field outside of the military. Outside of work, Kyle enjoys spending time with family, friends, and outdoor activities.



## TECHNICAL SERGEANT BRYAN HOOVER



Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover is the Broadcast Journalist in Public Affairs. He joined the 171st in 2017 after a four-year break in military service. He originally joined the Air Force in 2003 after graduating from East Allegheny High School. He had a great 10-year career on active duty as a fire fighter in Civil Engineer Squadron. Bryan has been stationed at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, Enrique Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, and Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, as well as two deployments to Al Dhafra AB and Al Udeid AB. After separating from the Air Force in 2013, he attended college where he graduated with high honors earning an Associate's Degree in Electrical Engineering Technology. When he is not at the wing, he is usually very busy always working on side projects. Most notable, he has been a disc jockey for over 20 years. After getting married and having kids, he transitioned his business towards high-end wedding entertainment. Bryan has been fortunate enough to perform across the U.S. and other countries but most of all, he enjoys being a part of someone's wedding. His claim to fame came back in 2007 when he performed at an official white house correspondents dinner after-party hosted by Claire Danes and Capital Magazine at the Newseum. Some of his Public Affairs photos and videos have been featured on Armed Forces Networks across the world, Discovery Channel, and many other local media outlets. He also organized the Pittsburgh Penguins team to autograph a 171st KC-135 aircraft in 2019.

## STAFF SERGEANT ZOE WOCKENFUSS



Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss started out as an active duty photojournalist in 2017. After completing technical school at Fort Meade, Maryland, she was stationed at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. While at Dover, she received Airman of the Quarter and was coined by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein. Alongside her supervisor, she was one of the first 9C operational support fliers and flew approximately 70 hours between the C-5M Super Galaxy and the C-17 Globemaster III. She covered the Air Force Association's Air, Space and Cyber Conference in National Harbor, Maryland and to Gulfport, Mississippi, for exercise Jersey Devil 19. Shortly after arriving at Dover Air Force Base, she deployed in support of Operation Faithful Patriot, which helped secure the southwest border of the United States. From that trip, she had work published on ABC, NBC, FOX and CNN. In May 2019, Zoe palace chased and came to the 171st Air Refueling Wing. Shortly after, she recieved a position as a temporary technician in January of this year. Even though Zoe loves her job in public affairs, she hopes to cross-train and become a boom operator and follow her dreams of flying. Some of her interests include hiking, kayaking, tattoos and spending time with her great dane "Lola."

