

# TENNESSEE GUARDIAN

FALL 2022 VOLUME 22 ISSUE 2

## ▶ ALLIED TRADES

### Craftsmen of the National Guard

*How this shop keeps  
us finely tuned and  
looking sharp!*





# TENNESSEE GUARDSMAN MAGAZINE

FROM THE EDITOR

LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS  
MANAGING EDITOR

When I was a young lieutenant and captain, I was given a lot of advice about how to lead and what priorities were the most important. Like now, we had many neat little phrases and buzzwords. But the one that always stuck with me most was "Mission First, People Always." Told to me often by Col. Patricia Jones, then the 168th Military Police Battalion executive officer and later the commander, the phrase was simple and concise yet broad. Nearly every decision I made was guided by it. It's a phrase I never forgot.

In this issue of the Tennessee Guardsman, we decided our focus would reflect that leadership phrase: "Mission First, People Always." We looked for stories and articles that really showcased our mission and the Soldiers and Airmen who make us successful. Without trained and enthusiastic men and women working hard and sacrificing on the front lines, behind the scenes, and everywhere in between, the Tennessee National Guard would not exist, let alone be the professional organization we are.

Our main feature this issue looks at the uncelebrated craftsmen in Smyrna, the Allied Trades. William Jones and Edgar Castro spent the day photographing and interviewing these talented Soldiers as they grinded, painted, and fabricated everything from field kitchen parts to motor pool signs. These talented Soldiers are hard at work keeping our vehicles running and gear in tip-top shape. In this issue we also write about the Perrys who are deployed together in Africa, the Air Guard's patrol course, Tennessee's first African-American female battalion commander, and many other stories about getting the mission done while taking care of each other.

We close out our magazine with a review of David McCullough's 1776, a masterful book about those who marched with Gen. George Washington during the tumultuous year of our nation's birth. Published in 2005, 1776 was written by a celebrated storyteller and historian who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2006. He believed that history, "is about who we are and what we stand for and is essential to our understanding of what our own role should be in our time." His work truly reflects the importance of people. Interestingly, McCullough wrote all his books on a typewriter he bought for 25 dollars in the 1960s. Unfortunately, he died on August 7th of this year. He was a true patriot who celebrated the American spirit, the very thing we protect and defend. So, as a small way to honor him, I wrote this letter on the same model typewriter McCullough used, a 1946 Royal KMM. He will be greatly missed.



ON THE COVER:  
Spc. Dustin Padilla working in the  
Combined Services Maintenance Shop.  
(Photo by retired  
Sgt. 1st Class Edgar  
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## To the Soldiers and Airmen of the Tennessee National Guard,

The history of the National Guard has always intrigued me, and after all these years, our motto, "Always Ready, Always There," is still relevant.

America's earliest militia unit traces its roots back to 1636, where these were primarily used for home defense. During the Revolutionary War, Minutemen made an indelible mark on the United States' military history by establishing the tradition of civilians mobilizing for state and national service with little notice. Following the Revolutionary War, representatives engaged in an intense debate at the 1787 Constitutional Convention over the militia's future. Federalists proposed a strong central government and argued for a nationally controlled militia. Anti-Federalists pushed for a weaker federal government and believed militias should remain under control of the states. The Constitution's Militia Clause represented a compromise by establishing the militia as a dual force, allowing governors to maintain control of their forces.

Today, the National Guard is still answering the call. In recent years, we have accomplished numerous missions for our state by responding to tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, a pandemic, and nationwide civil unrest. You did this all while still conducting annual training, building partnerships, and national level exercises as well as deploying to Cuba, Kosovo, the Middle East, the Pacific, and the U.S.-Mexico border.

Because of your hard work, the Tennessee National Guard now has a tremendous amount of experience in these missions, and it is your selfless service that gives the Guard its strength. I have always believed devoting yourself to a cause that will outlast you is one of life's greatest purposes. And being a member of the National Guard team helping others have a chance to live their best lives is an amazing privilege.

Now, I know our job is sometimes not easy. You put in countless extra hours to do it well and it can be discouraging at times. But I want to offer encouragement: you are doing great work and making a difference in the world. It is tough being a Guardsman and our work-life balance can be difficult. However, I encourage you to keep at it. Make sure to spend quality time on both and set aside time for self-care. But remember, the quantity of time you spend on things doesn't matter, you must spend quality time to make it meaningful.

Going forward, I challenge everyone to devote time daily towards your overall health. You can't help others if you don't take care of yourself. Make good nutritional choices, exercise, sleep, and develop personal goals. Here are a few things I recommend:

- Maintain your friendships and have a confidant you can talk too
- Keep physically and mentally fit - get regular exercise for your body and mind
- Keep a balanced diet and eat healthy
- Ask for help and accept it when offered
- Think of yourself as your own best friend; if you don't like yourself others won't either
- Set obtainable goals and reset them often
- Plan something to look forward to - a trip with your family, friends, church, or an outing to meet new people or celebrate a holiday

Please remember, you are the only one who can truly take care of you! Your family, your unit, your state, and your nation are counting on you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia M. Jones".

Col. Patricia "Patty" Jones  
U.S. Property and Fiscal Officer



## Tennessee Spearheads Program for Retired Warrant Officers

New program for the continued service of retired active-duty warrant officers.

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — In a first-of-its-kind program led by the Tennessee National Guard, warrant officers who have retired from the Active Duty Army can now join the National Guard and continue their service.

In 2021, the U.S. Army and National Guard Bureau updated their policies to allow the National Guard the necessary tools to recruit qualified retired active-duty warrant officers. These warrant officers will keep their retirement pay while also serving in the National Guard.

The process begins with Tennessee's Command Chief Warrant Officer identifying critical vacancies. The list of vacancies and corresponding career fields are then made available to all Military Personnel Management Offices of all U.S. Army commands in coordination with Human Resources Command and Military Personnel message updates.

Final approval for accession into the Tennessee Army National Guard is approved by Tennessee's Adjutant General under the advisement of the National Guard Bureau and the State Command Chief Warrant Officer.

Retired active duty warrant officers will be accepted into the Tennessee Army National Guard for an initial three-year tour. Continuation after the initial tour will be granted based on the needs of the state and the performance of the warrant officer.

Preferred ranks for accession are chief warrant officers 2 and 3. Members at the rank of chief warrant officer 4 will be accessed by exception and at the discretion of the State Command Chief Warrant Officer. This program will not apply to chief warrant officer 5s.

If interested in learning more about this program, please contact the office of Tennessee's Command Chief Warrant Officer at (615) 313-3011.

- Story by Lt. Col. Marty Malone



### 1-107th Returns from Africa

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** Nearly 35 Soldiers from the Tennessee National Guard's 1-107th Airfield Operations Battalion, headquartered in Tullahoma, returned home June 24-26, after a successful 10-month deployment to the Horn of Africa. The 107th deployed to Africa in August 2021, and conducted airfield operations in Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya. While supporting the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa, the guardsmen provided tactical air traffic control, maintained airfield runways and de-conflicted with host nation aviation authorities. (Photo by Senior Airman Dwane R. Young)



### 134th ARW Opens New Hanger

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** The Tennessee Air National Guard officially opened a new hangar during a ribbon cutting event on June 3, at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base. The ceremony was held in the 57,400 square-foot hangar alongside a KC-46 Pegasus that landed there in conjunction with a training mission. The Pegasus served as a fitting complement to the ceremony as the 134th ARW, an award-winning USAF unit, continues to contend for the next-generation in-flight refueler as a replacement for the units' aging KC-135 Stratotankers. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Kendra Owenby)



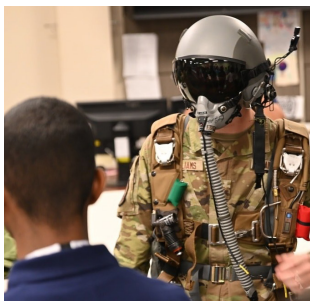
### 130th MP Company Case Colors

**RIPLEY, Tenn.** During a ceremony on Aug. 6, at the Ripley National Guard Armory, the 130th Military Police Company cased its colors after 17 years of service to the Tennessee Army National Guard. Organized in 2005, the company supported various domestic operations to include Hurricane Katrina support, Operation Jump Start on the Southwest Border, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2007, they deployed to Kosovo in support of KFOR9 and they deployed again in 2012 to Afghanistan supporting Joint Special Operations Command. They were one of nine "Guard" Military Police Companies in the National Guard. (Photo by Lt. Col. Darrin Haas)



### Female First for Shooting Competition

**TULLAHOMA, Tenn.** Staff Sgt. Celia Riffey, a military police Soldier with the 252nd Military Police Company and native of Sevierville, became the first female in Tennessee history to place first in the Tennessee National Guard's annual Adjutant General Rifle Match held from May 20-22. The three-day competition consisted of multiple graded events measuring the speed and accuracy of each marksman. On day three, as the competition concluded, scores were tallied, and Riffey was declared the overall top marksman. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Cordeiro)



### Students Get Air Base Tour

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** Students from the Organization of Black Aerospace Professionals were given a tour of the Memphis Air National Guard base in Memphis on June 14. Members of Tennessee's 164th Airlift Wing guided the students as they learned about various aircraft and met with Airmen to learn about their jobs. The OBAP provides opportunities in aerospace by supporting, transforming, educating and mentoring its members and communities. (Photo by Senior Airmen TraVonna Hawkins)





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### **OPERATION NIGHT HAMMER**

May 24, 2022 - Tennessee's 45th Civil Support Team and FBI agents work together during Operation Night Hammer, a training operation to identify Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive agents held in Tampa, Fla.

*PHOTO BY: SGT. N.W. HUERTAS*





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### **A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR SQUAD**

Aug. 6, 2022 - The 117th Military Police Battalion hosted their inaugural Harpers Ferry Competition in Catoosa, Georgia, to identify their best squad members. Competition included tasks to test the competitors skills and teamwork ability.

*PHOTO BY: SGT. SHEENA SCOTT*





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### **TAG RIFLE MATCH**

May 20, 2022 - Members of the Tennessee National Guard compete at the TAG Rifle Match. Soldiers and Airmen from across the state took part in the annual event held at the Volunteer Training Site in Tullahoma.

*PHOTO BY: SGT. 1ST CLASS TIMOTHY CORDEIRO*





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### REFUELING A PEGASUS

June 2, 2022 - A KC-46A Pegasus receives fuel from one of Tennessee's KC-135 Stratotankers during a sortie above East Tennessee. Tennessee is contending for the KC-46A as a replacement for the aging KC-135 Stratotankers.

PHOTO BY: STAFF SGT. JUSTIN LILLARD



# ▶ ALLIED TRADES

## Craftsmen of the National Guard

*How this shop keeps  
us finely tuned and  
looking sharp!*

STORY BY: RETIRED SGT. 1ST CLASS WILLIAM JONES

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Wells programs and operates computerized metal fabricating equipment as a shop chief at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. (Photo by retired Sgt. 1st Class Edgar Castro)





# Craftsmen of the National Guard



**Top:** Spc. Dustin Padilla prepares a replacement part for a field kitchen.

**Bottom:** Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Wells works on a part for military vehicles in the Combined Services Maintenance Shop. (Photos by retired Sgt 1st Class Edgar Castro)

**A**llied Trades, part of the Combined Services Maintenance Shop at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna, is staffed by Soldiers who can only be described as craftsmen. True artists in their trade: paint, metal, and wood are their canvases.

“Allied Trades has a very positive impact for our units in the Tennessee Army National Guard,” said Maj. Christopher Speiss, CSMS foreman. Allied Trades craft replacement parts for almost every piece of Army equipment that moves on the ground or flies in the air at no expense to the American taxpayer. These parts are made from scratch using templates provided by the Department of Defense.

“We have eight different shops: metal fabrication and welding, a body shop, a paint shop, a sand blasting bay, a machine shop, a wood shop, a canvas shop where we do canvas repair and sewing, and I also have a vinyl printing shop,” said Chief Warrant Office 2 Justin McLachlan, Allied





# Craftsmen of the National Guard

Trades Supervisor. “Our turnaround time is a couple of days; whereas the ordering system has a turnaround of a couple of months, so we can get vehicles up and running a lot faster than anyone else can.”

An Allied Trades Specialist is a single Army career field that lays the foundation for these Soldiers, but it is just the beginning as they learn each craft. Almost every Soldier who works in Allied Trades is a skilled welder, and according to McLachlan, experienced welders are hard to find. “We have a couple of people here who actually have an aerospace welding certification, so they can work on everything from a Blackhawk to the Space Shuttle.”

Spc. Dustin Padilla has worked at Allied Trades for just a few weeks. He is already working hard using what he learned in high school shop class and at Advanced Individual Training. He said he likes to weld, but it doesn’t stop there. He is learning about painting, carpentry, and machine work. He’s not the only person who brought their special skills to the Guard.

Sgt. Roger Harrington has worked for the Guard since 2017. “My dad was a certified welder, so I picked up some from him,” said Harrington. “I’ve always been into mechanics, fabrications, welding; stuff like that. So, when I was able to get this job it was perfect because it was something I enjoy not only on the Guard side but at home. It costs



Staff Sgt. Joshua Tidwell prepares to re-paint a generator to go back out into the field. He works at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. (Photo by retired Sgt 1st Class Edgar Castro)

about a thousand dollars to buy a sheet of aluminum and we can probably produce 15 to 20 radio mounts. It’s \$5,000 to buy a whole new kit that has the radio mount in it. We can have four or five done in a week opposed to months through the ordering system to send the parts to

us.”

Staff Sgt. Sean Fitzpatrick, a fabric worker, works alone surrounded by canvas. “We duplicate everything from seat covers, generator covers, Bradley covers, just about anything tan or green for the Army,” said Fitzpatrick. He has worked at Allied





Staff Sgt. Stephanie Licerio uses a grinder to make a new part for a Hum-vee. She works at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. (Photo by retired Sgt 1st Class Edgar Castro)

Trades since 2013 and learned his craft on the job from the craftsmen who came before him.

Another unsung hero of the Tennessee National Guard is Sgt. Larry Evans. He operates a large vinyl cutting printer. Evans' work is seen everywhere on signs in motor pools to reserved parking spot signs in front of armories. The signs are an inspectable item, because the size and style of the lettering are mandated by Army regulation.

Also mandated by Army regulation is the woodland camouflage pattern seen on everything from generators to Humvees to anything in the field. Staff Sgt. Joshua Tidwell

*"We duplicate everything from seat covers, generator covers, Bradley covers, just about anything tan or green for the Army."*

- Staff Sgt. Sean Fitzpatrick

has been in the National Guard for 13 years and he specializes in air-brush painting. From the civilian workforce, he brought knowledge of mixing paint and how to operate paint guns. He uses a template to paint the gear that comes through his shop.

Some equipment needs more extensive maintenance than a fresh coat of green and brown paint. They need precision parts made to make them serviceable again. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Wells is a machinist with over 10 years of experience, and he makes those precision parts. Wells is the embodiment of the axiom, "If you find a job you



# Craftsmen of the National Guard

Sgt. Larry Evans creates vinyl signs that are seen in motor pools and reserved parking spots at armories across the state. (Photo by retired Sgt 1st Class Edgar Castro)



love, you'll never work again." He said he works at one of the coolest places in the Guard. "We have probably the most capabilities in Tennessee, probably in most of the United States," said Wells. He operates computer numerically controlled systems that independently runs mills, plasma cutters, and lathes.

Staff Sgt. Stephanie Licerio is also in love with her job. She has worked in Allied Trades for three years and started out in automotive. She worked as a machinist for the last six months and "loves it all the way." She received her formal training at Fort Lee, Va., along with those in her career field, but she learned how to do her job from her peers.

Tennessee Soldiers brought their skills and passions to Allied Trades. Working as a team, they continually learn from one another in order to further hone those skills. The benefit is the Tennessee National Guard is better prepared to meet the demands of a growing state and the needs of the Army.



Maj. Christopher Speiss is the Combined Services Maintenance Shop foreman at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. (Photo by retired Sgt 1st Class Edgar Castro)



# FLOODING IN KENTUCKY

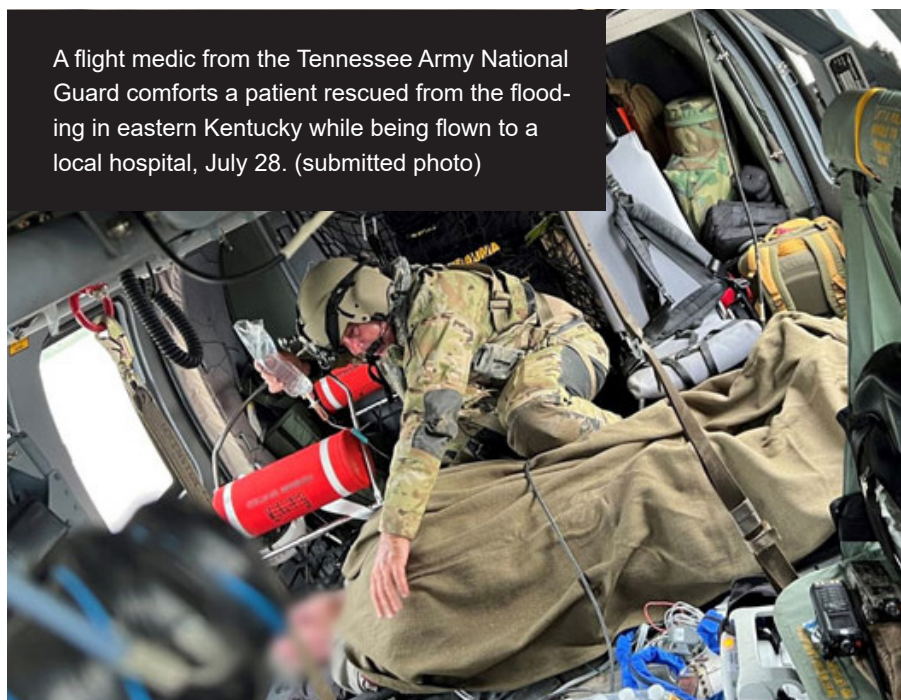
## Tennessee National Guard Aviators Assist Kentuckians

**PERRY COUNTY, Ky.** – Members of the Tennessee National Guard rescued flood victims following record rainfall that overwhelmed the North Fork River and the Kentucky River in rural Eastern Kentucky.

Following the onset of torrential rains, five UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters from the 1-230th Assault Helicopter Battalion in Nashville and Task Force Medevac in Knoxville, deployed to Eastern Kentucky to assist with rescue operations. From July 28–31, 20 aviators from the National Guard and eight members of the National Fire Department rescued 151 men, women and children and transported them to higher ground. Of those people, 27 were hoisted out of the rising flood waters of the North Fork River into a hovering helicopter. The 151 victims were taken to Hazard Airport or ARH Regional Medical Center.

“I’m very fortunate to work with professionals in Tennessee Army National Guard aviation, from the aircrew members, the support per-

A flight medic from the Tennessee Army National Guard comforts a patient rescued from the flooding in eastern Kentucky while being flown to a local hospital, July 28. (submitted photo)



sonnel, and our partners with the Nashville Fire Department.” said Col. Pat Wade, State Aviation Officer. “The recent response by this team and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and our Domestic Operations staff saved many lives in the aftermath of severe flooding in Eastern Kentucky.

I could not be more proud of our team and the skills and services they provide during emergency responses.”

Flight crews remained on standby pending further missions from the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency.

**- LT. COL. MARTY MALONE**



# BRIG. GEN. THOMAS CAUTHEN RETIRES

Brig. Gen. Thomas Cauthen Retires after 38 Years of Service



**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** – Brig. Gen. Thomas Cauthen retired from the Tennessee Air National Guard with 38 years of service to the state of Tennessee and the United States Air Force on Aug. 6, during a ceremony held at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville.

Cauthen joined the Tennessee

Air National Guard in 1984 to be something bigger than himself. He credits his dad for inspiring him to join.

“My Dad was a pilot and served in the 134th Fighter Interceptor Group, which later became the 134th Air Refueling Group, from 1958-1983,” said Cauthen. “I wanted

Brig. Gen. Thomas Cauthen (right) retired from the Tennessee Air National Guard with 38 years of service to the state of Tennessee and the United States Air Force at a retirement ceremony held at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Aug. 6. (Photo by Lt. Col. Marty Malone)



to serve my country and state and fly airplanes. Dad made it seem like so much fun and he really enjoyed the camaraderie with those he served alongside.”

Cauthen said he grew up playing sports and he “really enjoyed the team aspect of everyone working together for a common purpose.” He said that along the way he found being in the Air National Guard was not just being part of a team, but also part of a family.

Cauthen earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 1984 and earned his commission from the Air National Guard Academy of Military Science later the same year.

Throughout his career, he said there were several special events that took place along the way but commanding the 134th stood out the most.

“You spend your entire military career preparing for command and although I had previously served in squadron and group command assignments, there’s nothing that compares to the challenges and responsibility of Wing Command,” he said.

According to Cauthen, serving in the Air National Guard was a family tradition. It is also a tradition he wants to share with possible future Airmen.

“It’s a great way to serve your country and state; there are many specialties that pay high bonuses for enlisting, outstanding benefits



Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee’s Adjutant General, presents Brig. Gen. Thomas Cauthen with an award during Cauthen’s retirement ceremony held at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Aug. 6. Cauthen retired from the Tennessee Air National Guard with 38 years of service to the state of Tennessee. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Melissa Dearstone)

like free college tuition and low-cost health insurance,” said Cauthen. “You get to learn valuable skills that translate into high demand civilian jobs, and you’ll learn leadership skills that civilian employers desire. I can’t over-emphasize the sense of teamwork and serving a greater purpose.”

After retiring, he plans to spend more time with his family. He also wants to be more involved with the local community.

“I plan to do some volunteer work with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, get more involved with the East Tennessee

Military Affairs Council, play more golf, and do some General Aviation flying,” said Cauthen.

Throughout his career, Cauthen flew combat and support missions during Operations Desert Storm (Kuwait), Southern Watch (Iraq), Joint Forge (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Allied Force (Serbia), Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), Noble Eagle (homeland security), and Iraqi Freedom.

Cauthen lives in Jefferson City with his wife, Penny. They have two children and one grandchild.

**- RETIRED SGT. 1ST CLASS WILLIAM JONES**



# A TENNESSEE FIRST

## Tennessee Army National Guard Names First African American Female Battalion Commander

**SMYRNA, Tenn.** – In a historic change of command ceremony, the Tennessee Army National Guard appointed the first African American female battalion commander on Aug. 7.

Lt. Col. Andy Stafford, the previous commander of the 230th Special Troops Battalion, relinquished command to Lt. Col. Odessa K. Sam-Kpakra, at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site, making her the first African American female in the history of the Tennessee Army National Guard to command a battalion sized unit.

Sam-Kpakra joined the National Guard in 1992 and earned her commission in 1998 from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's ROTC program. In 2012, she transferred to the Tennessee National Guard where she deployed in 2013 to support Operation Enduring Freedom at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Most recently, Sam-Kpakra served as the Chief Supply Branch Officer



Lt. Col. Odessa K. Sam-Kpakra assumed command of the 230th Special Troops Battalion at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site on Aug. 7. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)

for National Guard Bureau. Her previous command positions include commander of Headquarters, Headquarters Company, (-) 29th Divisional Support Command and the 529th Quartermaster Detachment.

When asked why she joined the military, Sam-Kpakra credits her father and his selfless service to his community for her inspiration.

"Through his service, he found great meaning in life which brought





Lt. Col. Odessa K. Sam-Kpakra smiles with her family after she assumed command of the 230th Special Troops Battalion at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site on Aug. 7. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)

him profound joy,” said Sam-Kpakra. “He often told my siblings and me to be strong instruments for good in our communities whenever we could and bring meaningful change to the lives of those who need it. These valuable lifelong lessons remained with me and inspired me to join the greatest military in the world – the United States Army.”

Her story only begins there. Sam-Kpakra was born in Sierra Leone, West Africa, where she resided until she was 15 years old. Due to a rise in civil unrest in the area, her father relocated his family to America. She explained the decision was easy because her mother is American, making her and her siblings American by birth, so the initial transition was not difficult. Unfortunately, shortly after their relocation, her father passed away. Despite this tragedy, Sam-Kpakra prevailed and

continued on her path to success.

“After his death, I found purpose in my mission and committed wholeheartedly to an organization that provided me great opportunities to excel from my youth through my adulthood,” she said. “I continue to serve today, because I enjoy the impact of our work at home, in our local communities and abroad, as we protect the homeland and defend freedom.”

Sam-Kpakra's story is unique and inspirational not only to her family, but to young officers and other young adults seeking to follow in her footsteps.

“It is my hope to inspire men and women who look like me to pursue leadership roles and build on the Army's diversity and inclusion goals, in order to strengthen our organization,” said Sam-Kpakra.

When asked what advice she

would give to these young leaders, Sam-Kpakra said, “Success is when opportunity meets preparation, therefore it's important to always be prepared. To this end, I would tell junior officers of the importance to have a 5-year plan at a minimum and manage that plan closely.” She continues, “I would further advise them to complete their Professional Military Education and seek broadening assignments to complement key developmental positions. These assignments would further prepare officers for greater responsibility and provide even greater insight into their role and those around them.”

The Tennessee National Guard is proud to have such a distinguished leader to lead the men and women assigned to the 230th Special Troops Battalion.

“It is the pinnacle of a Lieutenant Colonel's career that offers an opportunity to interact with Soldiers directly once again and effect change at the ground level – this is why I serve,” said Sam-Kpakra.

In addition to her impressive military career, Sam-Kpakra has a remarkable civilian background. She is a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated. She has a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a master's degree in Business Administration. Sam-Kpakra and her husband, Joseph Abdulai, have two daughters, Nyanda and Saadya, and a son, JoeJoe.

**- CAPT. KEALY MORIARTY**



AIR GUARD

# AIRBASE DEFENSE

TENNESSEE AIR GUARD LEADS PATROL COURSE AHEAD OF  
THE MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE, DEFENDER FALCON 22



STORY BY CAPT. KEALY MORIARTY

Security Forces Airmen assigned to the 164th Airlift Wing with their Bulgarian counterparts during the two-week patrol course. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)





**LAVINIA, Tenn.** – Security Forces Airmen assigned to the 164th Airlift Wing hosted an annual two-week patrol course at Milan’s Volunteer Training Site, Aug. 6-20, to strengthen relations with their Bulgarian counterparts and reinforce airbase ground defense skills.

The course included participation from the Air National Guard, U.S. Air Force, and the Bulgarian Air Force.

“Joint training like this is very useful for us, it helps us bridge the language barrier and learn from one another,” said Bulgarian Forces Junior Sgt. Desi Stoyanova. “Additionally, we can use what we learned here in Tennessee and share it with our security forces back in Bulgaria.”

This course is structured in a fast-paced, crawl, walk, run format that concluded with a culminating field training exercise. It is designed to test each member in all leadership positions while challenging them both physically and mentally. The success of each member depends upon his or her ability to work as a team, overcome obstacles, and complete each assigned mission.

“When this course was first being developed, we wanted to expand upon force protection capabilities and integrate allied forces,” said Tennessee Air National Guard Master Sgt. John Hogue, the Patrol Course superintendent. “We designed it to reinforce those defense skills, enhance our ability to rapidly deploy, and continue building upon our long-lasting partnership with our Bulgarian counterparts.”

To maximize simulating realistic deployment scenarios, the class was broken down into two fire teams to form a 10-man squad. The leaders were tested on their ability to receive information, develop a movement plan, and communicate it. Leadership roles rotated every few days to test all participants on their abilities.





## AIR GUARD

“We have trained a lot in squad tactics, and I think this is the best training I’ve ever received,” said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Samantha Sheridan, a participant of the patrol course. “This kind of training allows security forces to not just stick to stateside operations but to embrace combat operations and become more lethal against any future threat. This course has really opened my eyes and I am excited to go back to my unit and effectively train those below me and prepare them for any future deployments.”

The course began with several training classes, led by both Tennessee Army and Air National Guard instructors, to prepare them for the field tactical exercise. The classes included patrol tactics, land navigation, survival skills, urban assault, squad maneuvers, combat lifesav-

ing, and troop leading procedures.

The field tactical exercise replicated a reconnaissance mission where the squad tactically maneuvered behind enemy lines while encountering numerous obstacles. It began with a designated squad member coordinating air transportation with assistance from the Tennessee Army National Guard’s 1-107th Air Operations Battalion. The squad navigated through harsh terrain to a landing zone and were airlifted by one UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter and crew. The 20-minute flight included several rotary-wing maneuvers to further simulate combat.

Both fire teams were inserted at their target location, regrouped, and began a night reconnaissance mission.

“The Blackhawk insertion really



added to the squad’s experience and helped immerse them in the mission at hand,” said Hogue. “It was great to be able to show these Airmen and Bulgarians what a real mission would look and feel like while demonstrating the partnership between the branches.”

Using just the dim light from the overcast clouds, the squad stealthily moved throughout the dense woodland terrain for nearly 10 hours. That was just the first day for the field exercise. By the end of the two-week course, the squad estimated they rucked over 60 miles.

“Although this course is not part of Defender Falcon, it does serve as an opportunity for our Airmen, both participants and instructors, as well as our Bulgarian counterparts to prepare for this large-scale exercise and future operations,” said Hogue.

**- CAPT. KEALY MORIARTY**



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Samantha Sheridan, a participant of the patrol course, maintains perimeter security during the two-week patrol course, Aug. 6-20, held in Lavinia. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)



THE TENNESSEE NATIONAL GUARD

PRESENTS

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The Tennessee National Guard has a new monthly podcast called *The 1796 Podcast*! This podcast is a source of news, information, and compelling stories for Tennesseans from all walks of life.

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HOSTED BY  
LT. COL. MARTY MALONE  
AND CAPT. TAYLOR HALL



# BROTHER AND SISTER IN ARMS

*Humboldt siblings, Specialists Jacob and Mahala Perry, deploy together to the Horn of Africa*

**DJIBOUTI, Africa** – When it was announced that the Tennessee National Guard's 268th Military Police Company, headquartered in Millington, were deploying to the Horn of Africa for a year starting in January 2022, Soldiers from across Tennessee eagerly volunteered to serve overseas with the 80-member company. Among those many volunteers

were two siblings from Humboldt, Specialists Jacob and Mahala Perry.

Graduates of Alamo's Crocket County High School, Jacob and Mahala saw the mission to the Horn of Africa as a chance to help others.

"I saw this as an opportunity to really do some good," said Mahala. "And I had to be a part of it."

So in the Fall of 2021, Jacob and

Mahala requested to deploy with the Millington unit.

"I was the first to volunteer, and when I called my family to let them know what I was doing, the first thing my brother said was 'can you get me on that list?'" said Mahala. "My mom was worried when I first told her, as most mothers do. But when she found out my brother was going too, she was a lot more comfortable with the idea of us going together."

At the time, Mahala was a member of the 251st Military Police Company in Lexington and Jacob was a member of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment's 1st Squadron.

"I found out about the possible deployment while in Louisiana helping with hurricane damage with the National Guard," said Mahala. "I knew deployments to Africa were uncommon, so I was like hey, why not! This would be my first overseas



Members of Tennessee's 268th Military Police Company fire at targets during a range training exercise at Fort Bliss, Texas on Jan. 31. (Photo by Staff Sgt. David Lietz)





Specialists Jacob and Mahala Perry, from Humboldt, are currently deployed to the Horn of Africa and stationed at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti, with the Tennessee National Guard's 268th Military Police Company. The brother and sister team are completing a year-long deployment and are scheduled to return to the United States in December. (submitted photo)

deployment and I was very excited to go especially knowing that my brother was with me."

In late Fall, the Perry's were selected for the 268th's mission. After joining the unit and completing training in Millington, they flew to Fort Bliss, Texas, on Jan. 10, for more advanced training. A month later, they departed for Djibouti, Africa, with the 268th.

Jacob and Mahala are currently serving in Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti,

as part of Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa. Along with 80 other Tennesseans, their main responsibility is to secure and defend the Chabelley Airfield. They also oversee contractors while assisting the task force to promote security and dissuade conflict.

"Having my brother here with me half-way across the world makes being gone a lot easier," said Mahala. "He's part of home. With this being my first deployment, I wouldn't have

it any other way than to get to share some of these experiences with him. Especially since he's the reason I joined in the first place. Family is very important to me."

Jacob is a combat medic who joined the Tennessee National Guard right after graduating high school in 2016. During the deployment he is not only responsible for the physical well-being of the Soldiers in his unit, but also servicemembers in units like the 1-183th Cavalry, Air Force personnel, and contractors working on the airfield.

"I have always wanted to join the military," said Jacob. "My family helped me decide on the Tennessee National Guard, and it was a great fit. I plan to become an Army flight medic and hopefully do a similar job in my civilian career."

This is his second deployment. In 2018 he deployed to Ukraine with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment as a part of a Joint Multinational Training Group, which reinforced and improved the defensive skills of Ukrainian Armed Forces.

"Being deployed with my sister almost feels like I never left home," said Jacob. "I don't get to see her as much as you would think, but we make time to visit during meals and at company functions."

Unfortunately, Jacob and Mahala often work at different times, so they don't get to see each other as much as they like.

"It's often hard to catch him," said Mahala. "But when our mom



## DEPLOYMENT

sends mail with just one of our names, we make time to see each other. With Jacob being a medic, he likes to make rounds at each post to make sure everyone is doing well, and I get to see him then. I also see him in line for meals and try to eat together whenever possible.”

Mahala is a military policeman, and this is her first deployment with the National Guard. She graduated high school in 2018 where she was a competitive cheerleader who performed for football and basketball games.

Enlisting in the National Guard after completing a semester of college, she wanted to use the Guard’s educational benefits to help pay for school.

“My brother was on his first deployment and I knew all the benefits he had gotten through the National Guard,” said Mahala. “It looked like a great option. Our mother also raised us both with a sense of patriotism, so it was only natural for my brother to want to serve his country and I eventually felt the same way.”

Mahala is currently a full-time student with the University of Tennessee at Martin. Studying Forensic Science with a minor in Psychology, she hopes to get a job with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation after graduating.

“My specialty as a military policeman is what helped me choose a degree in the Criminal Justice field,” said Mahala. “Before I de-



In Feb. 2022, Specialists Jacob and Mahala Perry departed for Djibouti, Africa, with Tennessee’s 268th Military Police Company.

cided on this career field, I was studying to become a physician’s assistant. I thought it was what I wanted to do with my life, but after going through training with the Guard, I knew what I really wanted to do.”

Mahala plans to serve for at least 20 years and retire from the Guard. “We have several family friends that served, either all the way through to retirement or just through their first contract,” she said. “All of them gave the same advice to retire with the Guard. Right now, I love being a military policeman, but there are other options out there that I may look into.”

Over the last few months being deployed with the 268th, Mahala

says she has grown personally and professionally. “This opportunity has allowed me to step up and enhance my leadership skills,” said Mahala. “My job here requires me to brief several high-ranking members of the military in all branches of service, which helps my public speaking as well as my confidence.”

For the last five months, Jacob and Mahala have been working hard in Djibouti and are looking forward to coming home to Tennessee this December.

“This is the best job I’ve ever had,” said Jacob. “And the Guard is the greatest decision I’ve ever made.”

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**



# AWARD FOR 134TH ARW

## Tennessee's 134th Air Refueling Wing Recognized with Stanley F. Newman Award

**LOUISVILLE, Tenn.** – The 134th Air Refueling Wing was awarded the 2022 Stanley F. Newman (Outstanding Unit) Award.

This award recognizes the most outstanding Air National Guard wing or group contributing to overall success of the Mobility Air Force Mission from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

This is the third time the 134th has been presented with the Stanley F. Newman Award, a feat accomplished for the first time in the Air National Guard. The Wing was previously awarded in 2016 and 2020, setting an unprecedented pace for recognition.

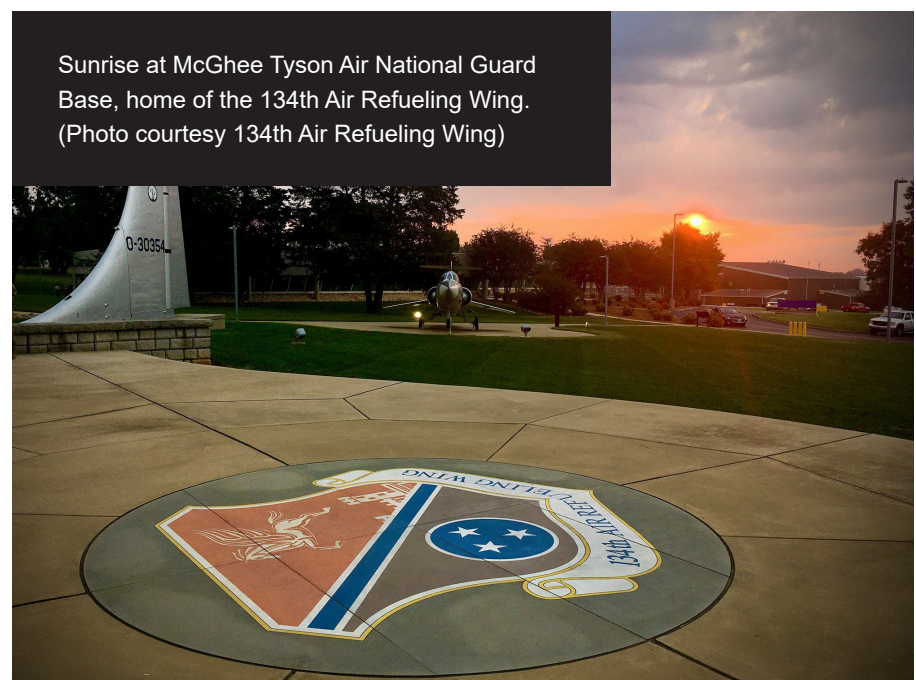
The award is named after Maj. Gen. Stanley F.H. Newman, who enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942. During his 41 years of service, he flew over 150 combat missions spanning World War II, Korean War and the Vietnam War. Some of Gen. Newman's accomplishments include

the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal and two Distinguished Flying Crosses.

"It is an honor to serve in the 134th Air Refueling Wing," said Col. Lee Hartley, commander of the 134th

Air Refueling Wing. I am extremely proud of our Airmen. They are the backbone of the mobility mission, and the reason for our success, both at home and abroad. The 134th Airmen are always "Volunteer Ready."

**- LT. COL. TRAVERS HURST**





# PUTTING ON THE AIR SHOW

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Tennessee's 134th Air Refueling Wing Hosts the Smoky Mountain Air Show in Knoxville



Airman 1st Class Alleyah Lynch from the 134th Security Forces Squadron stands guard in preparation for the Blue Angels to pass onto the flight line at the Smoky Mountain Air Show. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Teri Eicher)

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn.** – Air shows don't fly themselves; so who is in the cockpit?

The Tennessee Air National Guard's 134th Air Refueling Wing leadership selected an Emergency Operations Center structure as the way to conduct business for smooth

sailing, or rather flying, during the 2022 Smoky Mountain Air Show.

Emergency Operations Centers are a collection of people who act as the expert contact for support resources needed during incident responses.

"We're the brain, making sure

resources and tasks get put where they need to be," said Senior Master Sgt. Steven Breeden, the 134th Air Refueling Wing installation emergency manager. "We're using the EOC construct as it's the best system for communication."

The EOC's seats are filled by



emergency support function representatives, such as medical responders, fire protection specialists, security forces defenders, logisticians, food services experts, and others. They all sit together in the same room, instead of in their respective buildings across base.

“That’s really the main idea behind it, being able to talk face-to-face with other process owners to make things happen,” Breeden said. “Nonverbal communication is 80 percent of the conversation. You can get a lot person-to-person that you can’t get virtually.”

According to Breeden, EOCs are not normally stood up prior to an incident occurring, but it is the best system to process information and communicate effectively.



Staff Sgt. Dylan Burkhalter from the 134th Maintenance Group greets air show guests waiting to board the KC-135 Stratotanker. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Teri Eicher)



Senior Master Sgt. Steven Breeden, the emergency manager of the Smoky Mountain Air Show Emergency Operations Center, 134th Air Refueling Wing, briefs his team on EOC protocol at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base on Sept. 8. (Photo by Master Sgt. Nancy Goldberger)

EOCs are a phase of the Air Force Incident Management System, which is intended to protect installations and personnel, as well as prevent, mitigate, respond to, recover from incidents during both peace and wartime, according to Air Force Manual 10-2502.

AFIMS principles are driven by the National Institute Management System, which mandates federal departments and agencies use the same framework in order to communicate. This means everyone uses a similar numbering system for like-functions.

“The cool thing about an EOC is they’re uniform across the board,” Breeden explained. “You don’t need to know someone’s name to talk to the person you need. You just need to call and say, hey I need to talk to

your ESF 1, for example.”

When everyone speaks the same language, it avoids hang-ups that take precious time in emergencies.

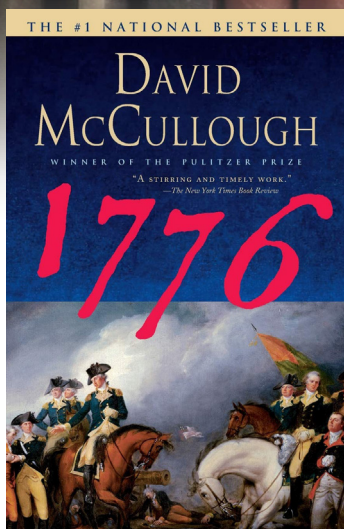
“I think there’s always a chance of an emergency, any day,” Breeden said. “If there was an incident, we wouldn’t really do anything different than what we do normally in an EOC. We just need to easily, effectively communicate from start to finish.”

Like the National Guard, the Smoky Mountain Air Show EOC is always ready, always there.

“We’re open as long as the air show is,” Breeden said. “We’re rigidly flexible as always, and ready to respond and recover from anything at the air show, not just emergencies.”

**- MASTER SGT. NANCY GOLDBERGER**





**1776**  
By David McCullough

Lt. Col. Darrin Haas Gives his Review of:

# 1776

**BY DAVID MCCULLOUGH**

In the summer and early fall of 2005, you could walk into nearly every office at Tennessee's Joint Forces Headquarters and find a copy of David McCullough's *1776*. Senior leaders talked about it constantly; during meetings, while working on projects, and in passing. Some made it required reading for their commanders and junior officers. If you didn't have a copy, then you listened to the audiobook. It became so popular, some of the staff hung paintings of Gen. George Washington in their office, the most popular being, "The Prayer at Valley Forge," by Arnold Friberg.

Interest in the book was for good reason—it's great. Written by the award-winning historian David McCullough, it is a masterful narrative focused mainly on the tumultuous year of our nation's birth – 1776. But it is not just another political or cultural history written about the American Revolution. It is a rich and detailed portrait of the leadership of Gen. George Washington and the challenges faced by the

Continental Army during the key battles of the period; Boston, New York, and Trenton.

Primarily focused on the time from the summer of 1775 to the winter of 1776-1777, the book opens in London on Oct. 26, 1775, with George III, the King of England, riding to Westminster to open Parliament. When he arrives, he addresses the House of Lords and the House of Commons speaking on his intent to destroy the American rebellion and restore order in the American colonies. The background McCullough provides on the British position, the news of which was not received by the colonies until New Year's Day, establishes the drama for the rest of the book set up in three main acts: the Siege of Boston, the Battle for New York, and the Continental Army's retreat across New Jersey and Pennsylvania culminating with the victory and Trenton.

Throughout the year, Washington and his Army met with trials and tribulations, crushing defeat, and in-



spired victory. It began with the British under siege in Boston and Gen. Washington trying to keep his Army together and expel the British from the city. Then, one of his officers, Henry Knox, a 25-year-old bookseller, came up with a plan to capture cannons from Fort Ticonderoga in New York and haul them to Boston over treacherous mountains during a grueling winter. Through pure tenacity, Knox and his team were successful. When the cannons arrived in Boston, Washington had them installed on Dorchester Heights at night, overlooking the city. When the morning arrived, the British found themselves at a gross disadvantage and evacuated.

Next, McCullough turns to the campaign for the control of New York, occurring primarily on Long Island, Manhattan, and Westchester County. After leaving Boston, the British chose to seize New York City for its strategic location as a major port and its ability to sever communications between New England and the rest of the colonies. From June through November, the Americans suffered a series of setbacks and defeats as they tried to defend the city. In the end, Washington had to retreat into New Jersey and then Pennsylvania to keep the Continental Army from being destroyed. This campaign is considered the lowest point in George Washington's military career.

McCullough's work climaxes with the Continental Army's long and painful retreat across New Jersey finishing with the American triumph at Trenton and Princeton. When Washington crossed the Delaware and the Continental Army defeated Hessian mercenaries in Trenton, it was the first sign of hope the American revolution received since the British evacuated Boston. It was a defining moment for Washington and the American Revolution.

Afterwards, McCullough summarizes the central theme of his work, which is to remember that the Revolution was a desperate struggle against impossible odds. McCullough writes that "often circumstance, storms, contrary winds, the oddities or strengths of individual character had made the difference." And it was Washington in command that held the Army, and the revolutionary cause, together.

Throughout the book, McCullough elegantly interweaves primary accounts and stories from participants at these historic events. He uses their voice and his elegant descriptions to immerse readers in this world and to fully understand the hardships, danger, and sacrifice these Soldiers endured and participants endured to bring about American independence.

In the hands of any other author, *1776* would not be as engag-

ing or enduring. As a Pulitzer Prize winning historian and master storyteller, McCullough is considered one of the finest historians in the United States. In 2006, President George W. Bush awarded McCullough the Presidential Medal of Freedom and said, "This chronicler of other times is one of the eminent Americans of our time."

He has written thirteen books, countless articles, and was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for his biographies of Presidents John Adams and Harry Truman which were adapted by HBO into a miniseries and TV film. *1776* was written as a companion to the John Adams biography. McCullough was also awarded two National Book Awards for *Mornings on Horseback*, about President Theodore Roosevelt's early life, and *Path Between the Seas*, about the creation of the Panama Canal. *Hamilton* author Ron Chernow once called McCullough, "both the name and the voice of American history."

Overall, McCullough's *1776* delivers a superbly researched and powerful narrative that could be called not just a riveting history book, but literature. To say it is well written and enjoyable would be a gross understatement. This is a must read for anyone interested in American history and leadership. I recommend *1776* to everyone.

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**





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