

# The TANKER TIMES

171ST AIR REFUELING WING, PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD  
2022



# The TANKER TIMES

A year in review journal the 171st Air Refueling Wing

2022 - Vol. 3

WWW.171ARW.ANG.AF.MIL

WING COMMANDER  
Col. Raymond L. Hyland Jr.

WING COMMAND CHIEF  
Chief Master Sgt. Charles W. Wiley

## WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
Capt. Jodi Snyder

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT &  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHIEF OF OPERATIONS  
Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

PUBLIC AFFAIRS CRAFTSMEN  
Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Tech. Sgt. Michael Fariss  
Tech. Sgt. Kyle Brooks  
Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss

WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
300 Tanker Road, Room 263  
Coraopolis, Pa 15108  
(412) 776-7350  
171.arw.public.affairs.org@us.af.mil



### ON THE COVER

Eight KC-135 "Stratotanker" aircraft, assigned to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, 171st Air Refueling Wing, taxi towards a runway to perform an "Elephant Walk" as part of a Nuclear Operational Readiness Exercise, May 14, 2022.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Tech. Sgt. Kyle Brooks

(All imagery in this journal is available on [www.dvidshub.net](http://www.dvidshub.net))

### FEATURES



#### 40 KEEP MOVING FORWARD

Written by: Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Tech. Sgt. Ronnice Massengill uses her upbringing in Homewood to help kids find their way in life and overcome oppressive challenges.



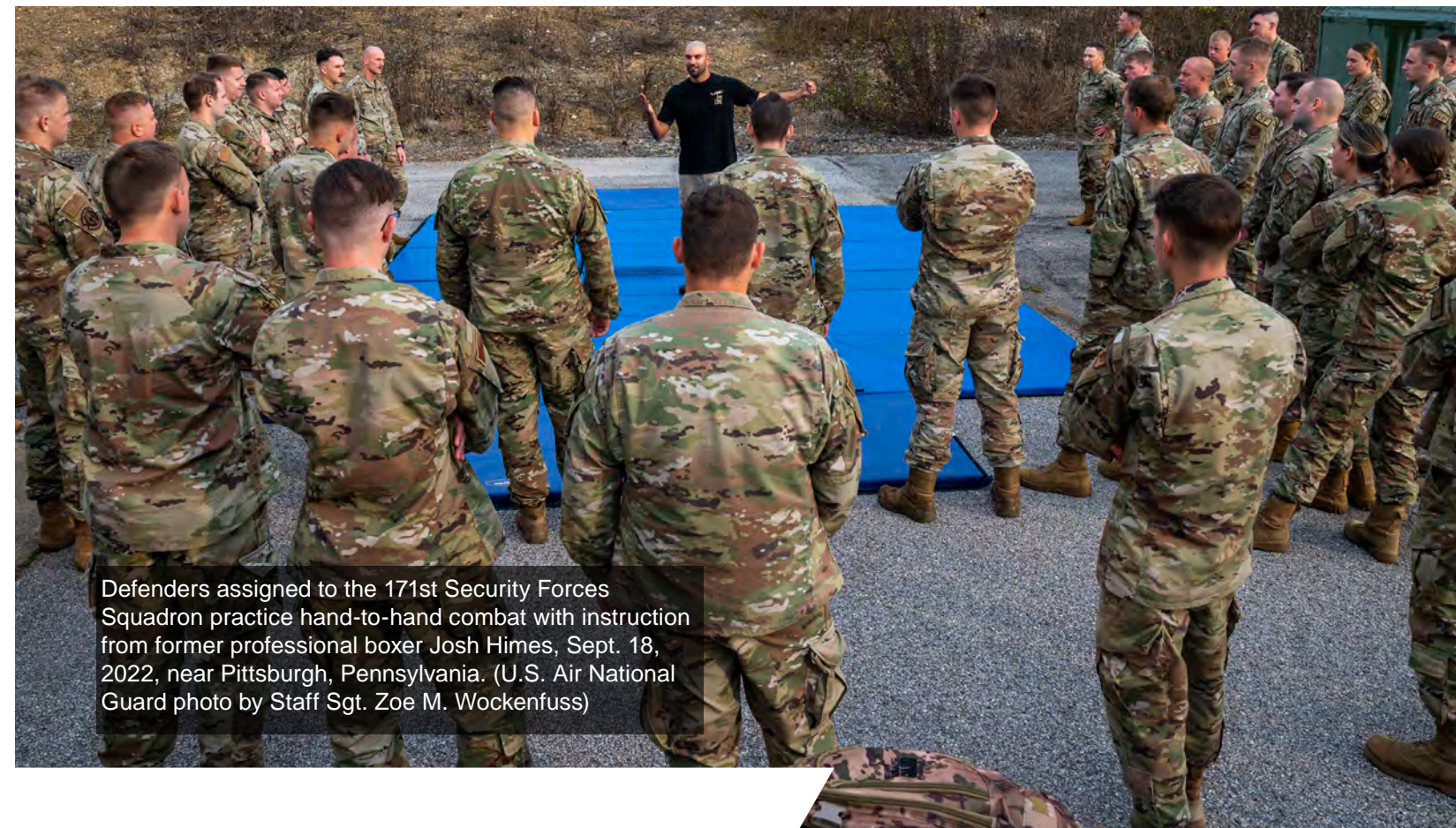
#### 44 FROM FRIENDS TO WINGMEN

Written by: Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss  
Two childhood friends split up to serve in the Air Force eventually returning home to Pittsburgh, Pa. to continue their service together as Guardsmen.



#### 48 FORTY-EIGHT YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Written by: Capt. Jodi Snyder  
A feature story about the impact Airmen & Family Readiness program coordinator Deborah Krall had on the 171st ARW over a 48 year career.



Defenders assigned to the 171st Security Forces Squadron practice hand-to-hand combat with instruction from former professional boxer Josh Himes, Sept. 18, 2022, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Zoe M. Wockenfuss)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

2   <b>The State of the Wing</b> Wing Commander and Command Chief illustrate the current status of the 171st ARW	24   <b>Hearing Our Airmen: ANG Command Chief Visits 171st ARW</b>
4   <b>The Groups</b> Commentarys from the 171st Group Commanders	28   <b>Strength Through Partnership: 171st ARW Partners with 157th Fighter Wing</b>
8   <b>Outstanding Unit Award</b>	30   <b>171st ARW Honored Local WW2 Veteran</b>
9   <b>Continuous Improvement</b>	33   <b>258th ATCS Attends NATO Exercise</b>
10   <b>171st certifies 911th Airlift Wing TCCC instructors</b>	36   <b>Operation Noble Defender</b>
14   <b>Another Successful Inspection at the 171st ARW</b>	40   <b>171st Keeps Low-on-Fuel Stealth Bomber Airborne</b>
18   <b>Building the Framework at Camp Paumalu for the Girl Scouts</b>	42   <b>New Resiliency Center Now Open at 171st ARW</b>
19   <b>Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</b> Commentarys from the Lt. Col. Lawrence Freedman	52   <b>Airmen Spotlight</b>
20   <b>258th ATCS Celebrates 25th Anniversary</b>	60   <b>2022 Outstanding Airmen of the Year</b>
22   <b>PA National Guard Hosts 1st of its kind Health &amp; Safety Event</b>	62   <b>2022 Promotions</b>
	64   <b>2022 Retirements</b>

### EDITORIAL

Chief Editor - Capt. Jodi Snyder  
Jodi.Snyder@us.af.mil

Associate Editor - Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Bryan.Hoover.5@us.af.mil

Associate Editor - Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk  
Shawn.Monk@us.af.mil

Contributing Writers - Tech. Sgt. Kyle Brooks, Zoe Wockenfuss, Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover,  
Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk, Lt. Col. Lawrence Freedman

### ART

Art Director - Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover, Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk  
Contributing Photographers - Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover, Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk,  
Tech. Sgt. Kyle Brooks, Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss



WWW.171ARW.ANG.AF.MIL

[www.facebook.com/171stAirRefuelingWing](https://www.facebook.com/171stAirRefuelingWing)

## Raymond L. Hyland Jr. - Commander



When I reflect on all of our accomplishments over the past year... such as sending out a deployment to CENTCOM and PACOM to meet national security requirements; providing support and personnel to Operations Allies Welcome (OAW/OAR); executing a Nuclear Operational Readiness Exercise (NORE); achieving a Nuclear Operational Readiness Inspection (NORI) passing grade; opening the first ever Resiliency Center on the installation; transitioning Airmen training to the Ready Airmen Training (RAT) and Multi-Capable Airman (MCA) training models; transitioning to a new USAF Force Generation (AFFORGEN) deployment model; executing the highest number of unfunded requests at \$3.4M, in our history; completing six by-law, 13 vertical and horizontal inspections, and 14 mission assurance exercises; creating more efficiencies in our Isochronal inspections; increasing individual medical readiness numbers above 80%; executing 3,165 flying hours

and 2,170+ simulator hours in FY22; and controlling over 65K aircraft without mishap in FY22... that's a lot to get done in one year.

None of it would have been possible without you. We have a proud heritage and tradition of delivering when called. Our mobility roots are established through example after example of support to Pennsylvania and to the Joint Force. Our mission is to enable global reach through superior aerial refueling. Our culture settles for nothing but the best. Trusting and empowering our Airmen has been the key to our history of success. Our Airmen are the best at what they do and are the foundational core of every one of our successes this year. Thank you and your families for your efforts, dedication, and sacrifices to our commonwealth and nation this past year.

As we reflect on our accomplishments, I would also like to highlight those that have gone before us. It was a year of visits and departures, challenges and achievements, and sadness and joy; all of which contributed to our long history. We had 36 of our fellow Airmen retire over the last year while gaining 58 new Airmen. We honor and thank them for their service and commitment to our nation and welcome our new members with open arms, as we prepare for what is next. And as we welcomed back 150+ retirees for lunch at the base in early December, we look forward to future events that include all members, past and present, that want to come reminisce, or just say hello.

This year marks our 75th anniversary for our base here in Pittsburgh and it will be no less challenging than those that have come before. We will remain steadfast and committed in our duties. We must adapt to fight and win in a contested and degraded environment. You will be asked to operate with new concepts, terms, tactics, techniques, and procedures. This upcoming year, I want each of you to ask how can we become more agile? How can we leverage existing and new technology to increase our capabilities? How can we provide the best possible training to for the future fight?

As the commander of Air Mobility Command, General Mike Minihan, said, "without air mobility, there is no meaningful maneuver." To address the next threat and adapt to the future environment, we will prioritize lines of effort which are focused on readiness, training, rapid global mobility, resiliency, modernization, innovation, and infrastructure. Although these priorities are designed for us, we deliberately confirm that we are aligned with the priorities that start from the national military strategy and work their way down through the Air Force, Air Mobility Command, and the Air National Guard. Our strategic plan and lines of effort provide a framework for how we organize, train, and equip our force.

The next fight will need highly trained and resilient Airmen. Our focus on RAT, the creation of MCA, and implementing Agile Combat Employment (ACE) will continue to grow. Like the generations of

Guardsmen before us, we will continue to always be ready to engage when the nation calls. The next fight will require Airmen who can accomplish multiple job disciplines, at skill and pace. We have begun planning our MCA training and will look to begin hands-on training soon, however, training, by itself will not get us through the next fight. Future missions will demand the resiliency of both you and your family. The base resiliency center will help accomplish this line of effort. It is a one stop shop, and should be able to meet, or help you find someone to meet, all of you and your family's resiliency needs. This year we will also see new construction at the shoppette to better serve you. You will also see several exercises in the coming year designed to test our ability to operate in a future fight. I have the utmost confidence that each of us will meet these challenges just as we have always have; expertly as a team!

Thank you for everything that you accomplished last year and for your hard work and dedication going forward. We will continue to ensure homeland defense, strategic deterrence, global strike, and rapid global mobility together as one team of Guardsmen, "Always Ready, Always There"; "Let's GO!"

Thank you for another outstanding year. Once again, you, the Guardsmen of the 171st Air Refueling Wing, have successfully deployed around the world in support of democracy.

You supported our local communities throughout Pennsylvania as well as the other 54 states and territories when called upon. You demonstrated an exceptional knowledge and skill during our Nuclear Operational Readiness Exercises and Inspections. Most importantly, you showed that we are not only capable of performing the mission, but we excel at it in every way possible.

As we move into 2023, you will be asked to continue along your path of excellence, and you will be challenged to achieve more. Our war fighting capabilities require us to consistently change and adapt as we look onward to new advisories. To accomplish this, the Air Force has implemented AFFORGEN. This model aims to reconstitute manpower, aircraft and equipment into force elements that train, deploy and recover as cohesive units throughout all phases of the mobilization cycle. In addition to new readiness requirements, you will be required to further your development as a Multi-Capable Airmen. This will increase the training required by adding skills beyond your unique Air Force Specialty Code functional areas.

In order to continue to excel, we need to have strong leadership at every level.

## Charles W. Wiley - 12th Command Chief



Mission success is based on leadership. Core leadership is about influence that allows Airmen to be the driving force on the actions and attitudes of others. We need every Airmen to realize that you are leaders, and you have influence. You have the ability to focus on these tasks at hand and you can continue to prove to the world that the 171st, team Pittsburgh, is always mission ready.

Finally, congratulations to all 2022 promotes and retirees. I also want to thank all of our family members. We recognize that behind all our accomplishments, you were quietly supporting our members at home. When we deployed around the world, you picked up the mission at home.

Thank you for everything you do.

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

**Vision:**  
To be the premier flying wing in the USAF. A unified team of Airmen who empower excellence, embrace innovation and embody the AF Core Values in everything we do.





## OPERATIONS

It seems every year is a busy year here in the Operations Group. 2022 was no different. Leadership wise we changed out four of six commanders starting with me. We congratulated Col. Jim Swanik on his retirement after 30+ years of service. He passed me one of the premier Operations Groups in the KC-135 community and I thank him for that. My move led to Lt. Col. John McCullough taking command of the 147th Air Refueling

Squadron. John was my Director of Operations for many years, and his award of command is well deserved. Next, Lt. Col. Tim Waugaman relinquished command of the 171st Operations Support Squadron to Lt. Col. Ian Hurbanek to be Group Air Operations Officer. With me continuing as a part timer, his knowledge and expertise is invaluable to keeping the group on track. We expect great things from Ian in his command and I can't think of anyone more qualified for the position. Lastly, Lt. Col. Brian Radford took command of the 146th ARS from Lt. Col. Scott Rushe. After two years of superior command leadership, Scott moved into the Inspector General and will be instrumental in preparing us for the next fight. Brian has led troops since his early days in the Army and I can think of no one else that I'd want to lead me into battle.

Our OPS tempo remained high all year long. We continuously supported the homeland defense mission with an alert tanker. We also provided tanker support combat air patrols in defense of the president. The year started by preparing and deploying a KC-135 and staff packages to INDO-PACOM. Our aircrew and support teams found themselves in every corner of the area of responsibility ensuring the Combatant Commands objectives were met. They made us proud. Currently we have another deployment to CENTCOM. As always, our airmen are setting the standard, executing the mission, and continuing the tradition of excellence that Pittsburgh is known for. In between these deployments, we managed to fit in a Nuclear Operational Readiness Exercise which we used as our dress rehearsal for the Nuclear Operational Readiness Inspection. Once again, we passed with flying colors with our OPS group wing inspection team receiving Air Material Command team and personal recognitions. Also, our aircrew received a team recognition from the WIT.

Not to be outdone, the 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron proved to be a leader in the air traffic community. Throughout the year, our Airmen augmented the Federal Aviation Administration Command Center and coordinated real time military/civilian operations and space launches. FAA leadership has nothing but good things to say about the support. The squadron also deployed radar and tower personnel to CENTCOM. Our Airmen went above and beyond by stepping into roles well above their positions and ensured the execution of over 60,000 hours of operation, 15,000 flying hours, and 40 million pounds of cargo were moved. Unit members also supported presidential operations in Israel by coordinating operations between the U.S. Secret Service, Israeli Defense Force, and air traffic control ensuring a successful visit for the leader of the free world.

These events just scratch the surface of the good things we do. Our men and women are eager to volunteer for any tasking that comes our way, and we expect even more success in 2023.

Colonel Troy Wing, Commander,  
171st Operations Group.



## MAINTENANCE

Let me get this out front, to the maintainers of the 171st Maintenance Group, thank you for a great year! Also, thank you for the years prior as well. 2022 was a great year; however, it was not our best, but better (hint: that is a good thing.) Allow me to explain. Some of you may already know why I chose to intentionally use the word "better", but many of you may not. There is a subtle but distinct differentiation.

2022 brought many changes, challenges, and accolades for the MXG. We welcomed a new Maintenance Squadron Commander, whom we are ecstatic to have, and has thus far executed his duties well, with no plan to slow the charge. Thank you for joining us Maj. James Barnett. Our Maintenance Operations Flight Senior Enlisted Leader, Chief Master Sgt. Brian Schaub, moved over to lead and share his diverse skills with the Equipment Maintenance Flight side of the house and leaves the MOF in a poised position for his successor. We hired and promoted from within to fill our Quality Assurance supervisor role with a hardworking, and well deserved, Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Spisak. This only covers the personnel at the top, which does not negate the importance of the other countless hirings, and 59 promotions earned by MXG members in 2022. Keep learning, growing, challenging and preparing yourself and your sections, for progression. Your best has yet to come. Things may not happen on your desired timeline and there will always be many obstacles trying to prevent you from reaching your goals in life, but do not become your own obstacle, be ready when that time comes.

While supporting our continually high ops tempo, the MXG excelled through 2022 with a nuclear operational readiness exercise and inspection, Operation ALLIES WELCOME, a reserve component period, and deployments to both INDO-PACOM and CENTCOM. All of this while continuing to prepare for our next iteration of airpower entailing Multi-Capable Airmen, Ready Airman Training, and Agile Combat Employment.

During all these deployments, while executing our missions, the reports back have been nothing short of spectacular! The professionalism, demeanor, technical knowledge, ownership, leadership, and performance stand high above your peers. You have surpassed our "best" and chosen to be "better" in everything you do.

You see, our best has a limit. The best you have ever done at something, doesn't necessarily mean you cannot improve. Continue striving to be better, better than the best, push the ceiling and never look back. You have embraced our core values, tackled the challenges within the profession of arms, and it shows. For example... in CENTCOM, our jets out flew the next closest by threefold! While in INDO-PACOM, we were the first unit to be 100% effective in executing the alert line on our watch. These are only a few examples of your accomplishments and are not to overshadow the excellent work at home station dealing with corrosion, upgrades, training, team spirit, exercises, and other temporary duty stations.

The culture of the Group is what you make it, and you have shown that you will settle for nothing less than being better. Please be proud of what you have accomplished, and what you will accomplish... I am. Thank you, Maintainers. I am proud to be a part your organization.

Colonel Jason Figley, Commander,  
171st Maintenance Group.





## MEDICAL

2022 was a very busy year for the Medical Group.

Last year the medical team provided 865 influenza vaccinations and a variety of other countless immunizations to our deployers. Our success in immunizations was through a combination of our Point of Distribution and “Shots on the go” initiatives. The MDG aided with the deployment of 335 individuals to missions globally and deployed 16% of our assigned medical personnel to both CONUS and OCONUS assignments. Additionally, the MDG managed 335 occupational health examinations and performed 192 annual flight physicals. The MDG participated in both the nuclear operational readiness exercise and inspection. Several members of the MDG were identified and recognized from the Inspector General for their outstanding performance. Our tactical combat casualty care program, under the leadership of Captain Heather Edsall, has been identified as a benchmark program by the U.S. Air Force. She has become the subject matter expert for this program assisting units globally with their course development.

This past year the MDG launched an interactive scheduling system. This system affords members the opportunity to schedule examinations that fit within their operational schedule. This system, in addition to our emphasis on readiness, has greatly improved or overall medical readiness. By the end of 2022, we have consistently remained, medically ready. This success is a combination of the extraordinary efforts of our small medical group, 61 assigned personnel, and each of you!

In 2023 the MDG priorities include further improving medical readiness for the wing, enhancing casualty care management for all assigned medical personnel, gaining a second critical care air transport team, and creating an innovative training branch. To accomplish these objectives, we are developing robust exercises for the wings upcoming large-scale readiness exercise to include casualty movement through our CCATT and the en-route patient staging system. This will include joint operations with both the Air Force Reserve Component, 911th Airlift Wing aircrew and medical teams, as well as a state-wide exercise involving the 111th MDG and the 193rd MDG and Operations Group. We have also solidified an out-of-phase innovative readiness training event in Tennessee for this summer. An IRT medical mission provides training opportunities for our service members while providing high-quality, no-cost healthcare to communities. We expect to render services including optometry, health exams, dental and public health education. This care will be delivered by credentialed healthcare medical personnel, and no one will be turned away. Finally, we will continue to increase our capabilities thanks to our relationships with Robert Morris University and Allegheny General Hospital.

In closing, thank you for another successful year! All of us at the MDG look forward to the challenges and opportunities 2023 will bring. We stand ready to support the wing and execute the mission with you!

Colonel Scott Coradi, Commander,  
171st Medical Group.



## MISSION SUPPORT

The 171st Mission Support Group operates as a jack of all trades and a master of all! It provides critical support to the Wing’s mission through a diverse set of missions including force support, civil engineer, security forces, logistics readiness, communications, and contracting. 2022 was a busy year, with competing priorities of deployments, home station readiness, base infrastructure, customer support, and security.

The Mission Support Contracting section was responsible for the execution of 46 FY22 contracts valued at \$17 million and managing a portfolio of 117 contracts for the wing. This portfolio includes the administration and execution of services, commodities, construction contracts, and managing a Government Purchase Card program with 46 cardholder accounts driving over 1,700 actions valued at \$823,000. This two-member shop led the way with the second highest execution rate among ANG bases nationwide. They also provided direction on a \$2 million fuel spill recovery and restoration effort. They leveraged a brand-new Air Force Architect & Engineering contract vehicle and were the first in the ANG to utilize it in support of a \$4.1 million military construction project to design and construct an entry control facility compatible with DoD, Air Force, and anti-terrorism/force protection requirements. Finally, they led the way in developing an invitation for bid process to award \$8 million in construction projects to repair failing and non-compliant infrastructure.

The Civil Engineering Squadron sent 48 craftsmen, firefighters and emergency managers to support Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Spartan Shield where they enabled 20 projects on 13 air bases. Members led efforts such as MQ-9 aerial damage concept of operations; advanced rapid airfield damage repair tactics, techniques, and procedures; renovation projects; HVAC and generator support; and emergency operations response capabilities. Additionally at home station, members conducted vital infrastructure work for the base, planning sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects and military construction projects totaling over \$15 million. They also spearheaded numerous emergency management and disaster preparedness meetings that enhanced interoperability with local, state, and federal entities. Finally, they supported four Pennsylvania domestic operations missions with emergency management capabilities, alongside PA Army National Guard members.

The Communications Flight deployed members to both the Central Command and Pacific Command areas of responsibility. During these deployments, they supported numerous radio and cyber security and systems administration requirements. One



and systems administration requirements. One member also supported Operation Allies Welcome refugee support. At home station, they completed a network architecture upgrade taking a two-tier collapsed core network to a three-tier network which included a technology refresh of 45 Cisco network switches and 20 Uninterruptible Powers Supplies across seven buildings, in 14 different communication rooms. This task also included the assignment of over 7,500 Internet Protol addresses. They also implemented a managed print service contract for the wing and geographically separated unit. This involved installation and network set up for 75 classified and unclassified printers. They provided critical mission support with installation of C4i system in Command Post, as well as a complete relocation of the Command Post complex to prepare for upcoming GASNT package. Finally, they provided Joint Incident Site Communications Capability team support for two Homeland Response Force Combined Trained events at Fort Indiantown Gap.

The Security Forces Squadron leaves 2022 behind with a global footprint. The Phoenix RAVEN section completed one mission securing 67 personnel and 150,000 pounds of vital equipment from Germany to Niger, Africa. The unit was tasked with conducting Detainee Movement Operations. This sensitive operation spanned 11 different countries and five separate theaters. 13 members deployed in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel, during which they were responsible for the security of \$2.3 billion worth of munitions, \$3.7 billion in aircraft and \$165 million in fuel. They also conducted over 13,000 vehicle inspections for explosives and contraband. The Squadron responded to the call at home as well. The unit was hand-selected to provide representation to the Air Force Security Forces Center, assisting in a complete re-write of Security Forces Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for combat operations in 21st century warfare, for 40,000 Defenders. The unit was tasked with one individual to supervise the Western Region of Pennsylvania during Operation VAX PA, where a joint Army/Air Force National Guard team was on call for three months to augment assisted living homes across the region in the event of a mass illness affecting the facilities work force. Finally, members deployed in support of Operation Allies Welcome, assisting in the safety, security and resettlement of thousands of Afghan refugees.

The Force Support Squadron deployed 14 members to Operation Inherent Resolve, and four members to Operation Allies Welcome where they oversaw command and control, in and out processing of personnel, lodging, and the security of Afghan Refugees. Additionally, an 11-person Fatality Search and Recovery Team and associated \$1.3 million equipment package remained on standby for relief efforts during Hurricane Ian. The FSRT also spent 24 combined days executing exercises and conducting training at an alternate location. The Services team supported the wing's training and ongoing missions by lodging 2,461 members and feeding 5,510 members during regularly scheduled

unit training assembly's, exercises, and an inspection. FSS also participated in their first combined home station readiness training with the 111th conducting operations at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Mississippi. The Military Personnel Section serviced 1,149 wing and geographically separated unit members on 175 reenlistments/extensions, 33 retirements, 200 promotions, issuance of 2,392 ID cards to service members, retirees, dependents, disabled veterans, and contractors. The Personnel Deployment Function processed 10 chalks of more than 300 members through nuclear readiness exercises and inspection; identifying and resolving hundreds of discrepancies prior to departure. The Installation Personnel Readiness Section processed over 110 passports and 15 Visas, completed over 200 DD Form 214s, deployed 182 deployers to 13 locations within six different areas of responsibility, and prepared/authenticated 2,730 contingency exercise deployment orders and 1500 North Atlantic Treaty Organization orders. The Human Resource Office - Remote maintained the wing's full-time manning at 90% for the entire year and managed the lowest number of vacancies in several years while decreasing the hiring timeline by an entire month. The Force Development Office processed education requirements for 18 Community College of the Air Force degrees and 138 members attending formal schools. The Airman & Family Readiness Office continued to work alongside local community organizations such as Veterans Leadership Program, USO, Operation Homefront, and March of Dimes to assist airman, veterans, and their families. They also developed an on base children's reading and playroom in partnership with local PBS channel WQED.

The Logistics Readiness Squadron supporting multiple aspects of the wing's mission requirements. 37% of the unit deployed in support of Central Command, Pacific Command, and Operation Allies Welcome requirements. They executed wing distinguished visitor support, collaborated with White House Staff and U.S. Secret Service for four presidential visits to our local area. Supply managed \$73.3 million in material management and equipment assets to provide unparalleled support to Maintenance and Operations Groups in support of Operation Noble Eagle. The petroleum, oils, and lubricants section supported the wing's dual mission roles and multiple alert lines by issuing over 35 million pounds of fuel. The log plans section processed 20 mobilization packages totaling just over 350 personnel to multiple Combatant Commands to include supporting Operations Allies Refuge & Allies Welcome. Air Terminal processed 25 chalks, 684 passengers and 325 short tons of cargo in support of operations, mobility exercises/inspections, and boom operators cargo check-rides. The Traffic Management Office processed over 62,000 pounds of inbound and 775,000 pounds of outbound cargo along with 272 passengers/deployers. Finally, Quality Assurance conducted 216 quality assessment audits ensuring personnel proficiency and adherence to established policy and procedures.

Colonel Traci Wallace, Commander,  
171st Mission Support Group.





The **Outstanding Unit Award** is awarded by the Secretary of the Air Force to numbered units that have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement that clearly sets the unit above and apart from similar units.

The 171st Air Refueling Wing has recently earned the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for meritorious service from Jan. 1, 2019, through Dec. 31, 2020.


This OUA is the 11th award of its kind given to the Pittsburgh-based Pennsylvania Air National Guard unit.

The 171st was recognized for many accomplishments during this period specifically due to its direct support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, United States Central Command, and United States Indo-Pacific Command with direct involvement in Operations Noble Eagle, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom’s Sentinel.

Some other recognitions within the award citation include the mobilization of nearly 250 people (a quarter of the unit) and moving 21.1 tons of cargo. Additionally, the units fleet of KC-135’s flew 5,500 combat missions, offloading over 21-million pounds of jet fuel to receiving aircraft.

Finally, a major contributor to receiving the award is the 171st superlative operational flight safety culture and leadership. The wing continued its 62 year, 283,000 flight hour record without a Class A mishap. Class A mishaps occur when there are more than two million dollars in damage to the aircraft, the aircraft is destroyed, or a member of the crew is killed or disabled. Because of this continued strive for excellence, the 171st was recognized as the best Air National Guard Safety Office and garnered the Safety Non-Commissioned Officer and Safety Officer of the year for 2020.

All people assigned or attached to the 171st for at least one day during the period for which a unit award was awarded, and who directly contributed to the mission and accomplishments of the unit, are authorized to wear the appropriate award ribbon on their uniforms.

 Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Published: February 5, 2022





# CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

✎ Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks Published: February 4, 2022

The 171st Air Refueling Wing recently hosted the first Lean Six Sigma Green Belt training session on base in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania Jan. 4-7, 2022.

LSSGB is a structured process for solving problems using Six Sigma principles. The training provided students with tools and an understanding to improve processes and minimize defects.

Some principles covered in the LSSGB training were building a team, defining and measuring a problem, analyzing data, implementing an improvement plan and sustaining the success of the plan. The LSSGB methodology was introduced in 2001 and has been a very successful process for military and civilian organizations.

Students were able to apply a hands-on LSSGB process to real projects from their organizations during the training. For example, some projects during this session were streamlining scheduling of medical physicals, reduction of wait times for drug testing and achieving a higher completion rate of ancillary training.

The training was open to all members of the 171st ARW, the Pennsylvania National Guard and members of the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. About 41 students in total attended the training of which 27 members were from the 171st ARW. Other organizations in attendance were the Pennsylvania Army Guard, the 193rd Special Operations Wing and the Pennsylvania Southwest Veterans' Center.

“The goal would be that we can take major graded areas, build continuity through streamline processes, and help us to be more efficient,” said Lt. Col. Ian Hurbanek, a process manager with the 171st Air Refueling Wing. “That efficiency helps build morale and production.”

Students worked through many different iterations of the LSSGB principles with feedback from the course trainers. Each iteration of the principle would become more refined. As the training progressed, eventually students would have a fully defined problem or improvement plan generated by the LSSGB principles and process.

“You’re always going to improve and that’s what the education and training was, to give you the overall theory and tools to execute,” said Lt. Col. Jason Figley, Commander of the 171st Maintenance Group, and a student of the LSSGB training.

“The tools that they give you, you could say are good for all leadership, managers and supervisors,” said Figley.

Guardsmen that are interested in the Six Sigma principles but want more beginner training may look to obtain the Six Sigma Yellow Belt training as an introduction to the Six Sigma fundamentals.

The 171st plans on future sessions of the LSSGB training for guardsmen who may have not attended this session but are still interested.




**171 ARW**  
CERTIFIES  
**911 AW**  
TCCC INSTRUCTORS



**The 911th reservists really made the classroom environment better. It was nice because it wasn't a guard versus reserves thing, it was just about saving lives.**

Senior Airman Madison Posterivo

 Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Published: March 16, 2022

The 171st Air Refueling Wing hosted 11 members from the 911th Airlift Wing Aerospace Evacuation Squadron in a Tactical Combat Casualty Care course on March 16, 2022. The 171st is well on its way to training all 171st Guardsmen in the All Service Members portion of TCCC by April 2023.

Pennsylvania Air National Guardsman, 1st Lt. Heather Edsall, an Emergency Trauma Nurse assigned to the 171st has been assigned by wing leadership to implement the program and train the entire membership base. The requirement came in the 2018 edition of DOD instruction 1322.24 "Medical Readiness Training" stating all service members, regardless of the department of military will complete TCCC training by the deadline established by their specific branch. The Department of the Air Force established an implementation plan which requires all Airmen to be trained by April of 2023.

171st TCCC instructor Senior Airman Madison Posterivo enjoyed having likeminded medically trained members in the class. "They provided really good examples (during the lecture) from their previous experiences and asked a lot of questions," said Posterivo. "They (911th reservists) really made the classroom environment better.

“ I thought it was nice to get down to the bread and butter of our AFSC and get back to the absolute basics. Today’s training was about total force.”

Capt. Ashley Stough  
911th Airlift Wing

It was nice because it wasn't a guard versus reserves thing, it was just about saving lives."

The 911th AES recognizes the challenge in front of them to train roughly 1200 members assigned to the 911th within 12 months. Capt. Ashley Stough, a flight nurse assigned to the 911th in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania reached out to Edsall for help. "Our wing is behind and we recognize that there is a lot we will need to accomplish to meet the deadline set by the Air Force," said Stough. Stough along with 10 other members from the 911th AES had their first experience in TCCC and found the course to be a breath of fresh air. "I thought it was nice to get down to the bread and butter of our AFSC (Air Force Specialty Code) and get back to the absolute basics," said Stough. "Today's training was about total force."

Stough and Edsall are in the process of implementing more joint classes between the two units including another train-the-trainer course this month and a Combat Life-Savers course during the 171st ARW exercise scheduled during the May 2022 regularly scheduled drill.

For more information about TCCC, check out [www.deployedmedicine.com](http://www.deployedmedicine.com) or follow the 171st ARW at [www.171arw.ang.af.mil](http://www.171arw.ang.af.mil).



Airmen, assigned to the 911th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserves, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, conduct practical evaluations on students during a TCCC class hosted by the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The U.S. Air Force required all service members to have tier 1 training of TCCC completed by 2023.

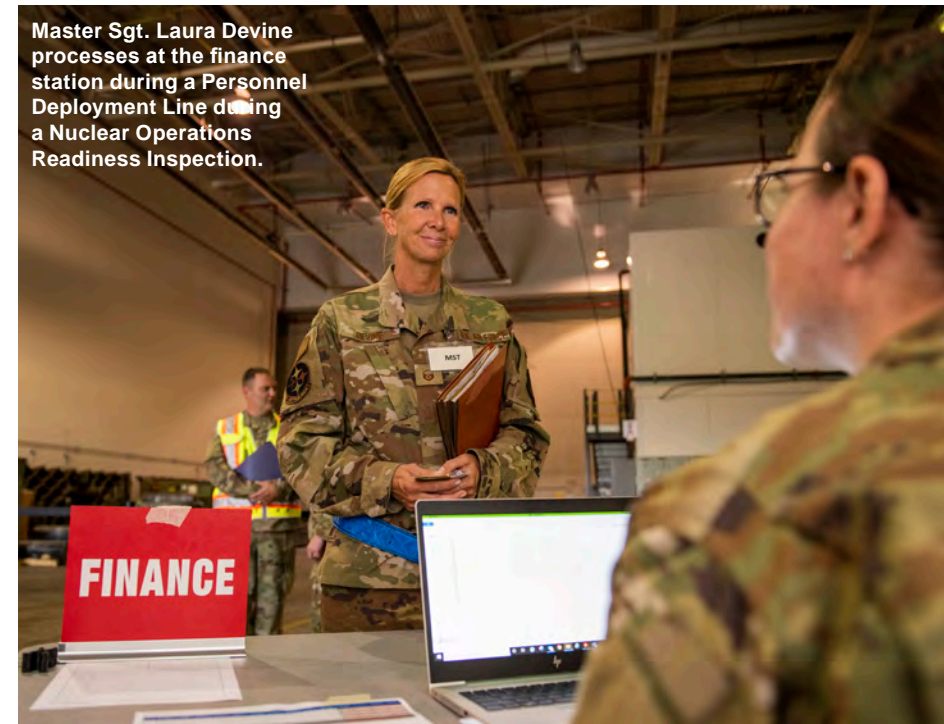


**ANOTHER  
SUCCESSFUL INSPECTION  
AT THE  
171<sup>ST</sup> AIR REFUELING WING**

The 171st Air Refueling Wing inspection team determined the base demonstrated an exceptionally high level of knowledge and skill during the Nuclear Operational Readiness Inspection on August 25 to August 28, 2022.

The NORI is a performance-based, readiness evaluation where the 171st was required to demonstrate nuclear operational capabilities in a time-constrained environment over multiple days.

“Our Inspector General and Wing Inspection Team worked very hard over the past two years to prepare for the NORI,” said Col. Raymond L. Hyland Jr., commander of the 171st. “Our Airmen didn’t just wake up ready for a NORI. Successful inspections are the result of many exercises and hard work over the course of many years.”



Master Sgt. Laura Devine processes at the finance station during a Personnel Deployment Line during a Nuclear Operations Readiness Inspection.

Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover



Four KC-135 aircraft returning to park after performing an elephant walk at Pittsburgh International Airport.

Tech. Sgt. Kyle Brooks



Our **Airmen** didn't just wake up ready for a NORI!

Col. Raymond L. Hyland Jr.

The inspection is also used to identify areas for improvement while certifying a unit for nuclear support. The three major graded areas are: generating aircraft, response to crisis, and mobilizing personnel and cargo to deployed locations.

In 2017, the 171st went through a certification process that granted the base's inspector general the authority to scrutinize the nuclear readiness mission. This allowed the 171st Wing Inspection Team to evaluate the program. Then, the 171st was inspected on their ability to accurately self-assess.

In addition to demonstrating readiness, this assessment showcased the importance of training for continuity. The base has gone through significant changeover in leadership and other roles between the 2017 and 2022 inspections.

“Our members proved that we are not only capable of performing and excelling at the mission, but that we are also really good at training our replacements,” said Hyland.

The 171st ARW continues to train to remain ‘always ready’.



Eight KC-135 aircraft performing an elephant walk at Pittsburgh International Airport

Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss

# PA National Guard Military Family Education Program (MFEP)

**Contact the  
State Education Office  
to learn more!  
Located on FTIG:  
BLDG 9-54.  
Walk-ins welcome!**

- ◆ MFEP Team: 717-861-9959
- ◆ Guidance Counselor: Kristi Carlsen  
717-861-6696
- ◆ PA Education Services Officer:  
Janet Hooper 717-861-2434



## **Military Family Education Program (MFEP)**

- ◆ An educational assistance grant for dependents (spouse or children), earned by Army and Air National Guard members for their commitment to and service in the Pennsylvania National Guard. The MFEP grant can be used for a degree granting curriculum or certificate granting curriculum, course of study or training programs required for entrance into a specific career as determined by PHEAA at an approved PHEAA institution of higher learning, including technology fee, for up to five academic years. The member can assign the entire benefit to one dependent or a portion of the benefit to more than one dependent.

### **How much can I get?**

Up to 100% of the flat in-state tuition rate for full-time students at a PA State school or equivalent at an approved school. Part-time grant is the tuition per credit or \$322 per credit, whichever amount is less plus a \$20.00 per credit technology fee

- ◆ The PA Guard Member can assign the entire benefit to one dependent or a portion of the benefit to more than one dependent.
- ◆ The member can assign the benefit to one or more dependents, up to 120 credits.

### **How Long are Dependents Eligible to Use MFEP?**

- ◆ A spouse can use the assigned MFEP benefit up to 6 years after the member's separation from the PA Guard.
- ◆ Children can use the assigned MFEP benefit before reaching 26 years of age.
- ◆ Failure to fulfill the entire 6-year MFEP service commitment with the Pennsylvania National Guard, will require repayment of the total MFEP award amount, plus interest.

### **MFEP contact information:**

- ◆ MFEP: 717-861-9959
- ◆ MFEP: ng.pa.paarng.list.jfhq-g1-mfep@army.mil



[pa.ng.mil/Education](http://pa.ng.mil/Education)

717-865-4529



# Building the Framework at Camp Paumalu for the Girl Scouts



Everyday people were coming up to me and thanking me for our labor. It was a very gratifying experience.

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Nicolia

by Tech. Sgt. Michael Fariss

by Master Sgt. James Michaels

Published: March 29, 2022

A joint force of 171st Airmen and Marine Reservists participating in Innovative Readiness Training demolished old buildings and constructed new cabins at Camp Paumalu, Hawaii from May through August 2021.

Innovative Readiness Training builds mutually beneficial civil-military partnerships between U.S. communities and the Department of Defense. This provides the military with high-quality, mission-essential training for active, guard and reserve members.

The IRT consisted of seven rotations. Guardsmen with the 171st deployed during the fourth rotation. Their primary focus was training activities supporting the construction of eight Girl Scout cabins, beam fabrication and installation, floor and roof installations and hurricane brace installation. The secondary focus included access road grading, maintenance of existing cabins and tree stump removal.

“This was a great opportunity for upgrade and proficiency training for the civil engineering structures and pavements and construction Airmen,” said Senior Master Sgt. Mark C. Nicolia, 171st ARW CE heavy repair superintendent.

The Airmen and Marines benefitted greatly from the joint-service collaboration, even those not working within their career fields.

“We were also able to work side by side with 12 Marine Corps reservists. It was great to see the two different services come together, work hand and hand without any issues and complete the tasking presented to us,” said Nicolia.

This IRT project provided the Girls Scouts of America a no-cost labor force that saved them \$2.2 million while providing 280 joint service members the valuable training needed to stay proficient in their respective career fields. Service members may not have the opportunity to complete this type of training during their typical unit training assemblies.

“What stood out to me the most was how grateful the Girl Scout leaders and other personnel at the camp were to us and our work,” said Nicolia. “Everyday people were coming up to me and thanking me for our labor. It was a very gratifying experience.”

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

When people hear about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives there is often a lot of eye rolling. There are a couple reasons for that. The first is that people, for reasons ranging from naïve to malicious, want to discredit the whole thing as tokenism. Many immediately see DEI as something that pushes aside qualified people in order to be politically correct. We need to challenge that notion from the get go. If we wish to be excellent in all we do, we need to tap the full potential of all of our members and that includes people we might have overlooked for any number of reasons. Involving, promoting and investing in a wider array of people is not tokenism. It is, it should be, meritocracy at its finest. We should recommit to developing the best within each Airman, not out of tokenism but because we want to be excellent.

The second problem is that DEI coming from the top down feels like a smack on the hand. People often feel as though someone is trying to make them feel guilty. They push back and discredit the whole initiative as some sort of reverse racism. We need to disabuse any notion of guilt. DEI for this base is not about grievance, it is not about guilt, and it's not even about fixing larger social issues or commenting on history. DEI is the current catchword for taking a hard look at all of our people and work hard to train, guide and promote the best of us as we should want to do in order to be mission effective.

The unique qualities we carry, our various ethnicities or other identities add texture to our shops. Different outlooks on life elevate us all with many prosocial benefits. These things speak to our souls and we are fortunate that the Air National Guard gives us a chance to learn from others. DEI is about our work and our mission. It is not about fixing society. It is a path to recognize the excellence in all of our people to be excellent in all that we do.



If we wish to be excellent in all we do, we need to tap the full potential of all of our members.

Lt. Col. Lawrence Freedman

by Lt. Col. Lawrence Freedman  
by Staff Sgt. Zoe Wockenfuss  
Published: April 14, 2022



# 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron Celebrates 25 Years

by Staff Sgt. Kyle Brooks  
Published: May 15, 2022

Illustrated by:  
Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk &  
Master Sgt. Bryan Hoover

The 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron is celebrating 25 years since its founding in Johnstown, Pennsylvania this May 2022.

In May of 1997, the 258th began relocating from the 114th Tactical Control Flight in State College, Pennsylvania, to their new home at the John Murtha Johnstown-Cambria County Airport. It was a busy year for the squadron, since all Air traffic control equipment and personnel all needed relocated.

The establishment of the new base came with unique challenges. Buildings were not fully constructed yet so Airmen had to work and live out of temporary buildings. Initial accommodations for the squadron were a temporary wooden shed on the



edge of the runway utilized as a control tower, and mobile-home type trailers serving as training and office facilities.

At the time, the Johnstown airfield was an uncontrolled area so Airmen were able to walk right into the airfield to maintain equipment.

In the year 2000, an air traffic control tower was constructed for Airmen to work in. The tower supports ATC controllers who communicate with aircraft movements both taking off and landing as well as all movements on the airport. The cost of the tower was \$4 million, with an additional \$1.4 million provided for air traffic control equipment and supporting systems. It wasn't until 2002,

“  
The legacy  
of excellence  
here is alive  
and well,  
”

Lt. Col. Frank Shoaf

that the 258th had the full building and infrastructure to occupy. Later, the 258th upgraded to become a RAPCON or radar approach control facility. This improved the capabilities for the 258th, including expanding ATC to approximately 12 airfields and 3952 square miles.

The events of 9/11 started a constant deployment rotation of personnel and air traffic control equipment from the 258th. The 258th has supported many major operations over the years including Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Night Stalker, and Inherent Resolve. Hundreds of Airmen from the 258th ATCS surpassed thousands of days deployed stateside and overseas to provide air traffic control services and equipment day in and day out, warranting its motto, victory over darkness.

Numerous members of the 258th ATCS have been awarded major command level awards within their career fields. Along with the success of individual Guardsmen, the 258th ATCS received a group merit when being awarded the D. Ray Hardin USAF Air Traffic Control Facility of the year in 2011 and 2019, along with the USAF Lima Site 85 Team of the year in 2019. Additionally, the 258th ATCS was awarded the Meritorious Unit Award in 2020 for its involvement in Operation Inherent Resolve.

The current staffing for the squadron is 34 full-time personnel, and 62 traditional (part-time) personnel and 16 Department of Defense title 5 civilians. The existing annual economic impact of the squadron's full-time personnel to the Greater Johnstown area is more than \$4.8 million.

“The legacy of excellence here is alive and well, the people here are amazing and make things happen, and to be a part of this organization makes me both humble and proud. Because of the people here, and this amazing legacy, the next 25 years will be very bright for the men and women of the 258th,” said Lt. Col. Frank Shoaf, Commander of the 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron.



# PA National Guard Hosts a First of its Kind Health and Safety Event



Brig. Gen. John Pippy

Maintaining a high level of safety is one of the National Guards' highest priorities

by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
by Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk  
Published: May 5, 2022

The 171st Air Refueling Wing in conjunction with the Pennsylvania National Guard hosted a joint, Army and Air Health and Safety event at the Pittsburgh-based Air National Guard installation on May 26, 2022. Members from western Pennsylvania Army Guardsmen spent the day alongside Air Guardsmen receiving health and safety training from various off-base entities spread throughout the 171st ARW dining facility.

The event was organized by LTC Deborah Fisher, the Pennsylvania Joint Forces Headquarters Safety and Occupational Health Manager and Lt. Col. Shaun McRoberts, the Chief of 171 ARW Safety and the Department of Military Veterans affairs State Safety Office. Fisher has hosted similar events at Fort Indiantown Gap but worked with McRoberts to bring this event style of health and safety to the western side of Pennsylvania.

All Guardsmen received a registration gift for their attendance. There were door prizes, multiple distracted driver simulators, fire extinguisher training simulations and a motorcycle safety foundation refresher training course with a certified MSF instructor.

McRoberts explained how exciting it was to have a certified MSF instructor at the event. "Military members who ride motorcycles are required to complete motorcycle safety refresher training at least once every five years. The safety courses in our region that are open to the general public are somewhat limited and often fill up quickly. Hosting a refresher course at our unit provides our members and local Army Guardsmen an additional opportunity not only to complete the required training, but also to develop rider skills, enhance rider safety, and cultivate a network of fellow military riders in our region." Tech. Sgt. Grant Lion, a Pennsylvania Air National Guardsman assigned to the 193rd Special Operations Wing provided the MSF refresher course for the first time at the 171st.

Pennsylvania National Guardsman, Brig. Gen. John Pippy, Land Component Commander and Deputy Chief of Engineers for National Guard Affairs at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers headquarters, provided a short briefing commending all of the units across the commonwealth for their safety reports and delivered a summer safety briefing.

Pippy also presented awards to the following ground maintenance facilities for their accomplishments spanning up to five straight years of operation without a recorded injury in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration regulations: Combined Support Maintenance Shop - West, located in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, Combined Support Maintenance Shop - Annex 11, located in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, and Combined Support Maintenance Shop - Annex 22, located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Maintaining a high level of safety is one of the National Guards' highest priorities. "As our unit's high operational tempo endures and we endlessly persevere from one exercise, inspection, and deployment cycle to the next, it is important to occasionally take pause and shift the focus to the health and safety of our Airmen," said McRoberts. "Health and Safety Awareness Day provides a forum to recognize, reflect upon, and improve individual and organizational health and safety. The resources and training provided throughout the day aim's to better prepare our Airmen to effectively complete the mission while sustaining the units outstanding 63-year safety record."





# Hearing Our Airmen:



## Command Chief of the Air National Guard Visits 171st Air Refueling Wing

“  
The best advice  
I can give is . . .  
**INVEST IN  
YOURSELF**”

Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams



by Capt. Jodi Snyder

by Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

Published: June 11, 2022

The 171st Air Refueling Wing received a visit from Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams, the command chief of the Air National Guard, on June 11, 2022.

Williams is visiting Air National Guard bases across the country. His goal is to ensure the enlisted ranks have direct access to higher leadership. This is his 44th wing visit, so far.

“I want to help develop our Airmen. I want to be able to provide the director of the Air National Guard a pulse of each organization and make sure that the policies we develop for the force are beneficial for Airmen,” said Williams.

As Williams visits each base, he gains an understanding of what Airmen need. He looks for common themes, which allows him to provide recommendations about his observations to other agencies for improvement.

“One of the most important things I’ve learned is that we need to improve our Airmen’s understanding of our competition and adversaries. That’s going to make them more effective in feeling empowered to complete their jobs,” said Williams.

Another important focus when visiting different bases is helping Airmen understand what resources they can access.

“In different environments, you need to operate differently, so you need to know what is

“  
Get outside of your comfort zone. This will help make a better version of you. The better you are, the better you are for your organization

Chief Master Sgt.  
Maurice Williams

available to you to be effective,” said Williams.

During his trips, Williams visits and speaks with Airmen of all ranks, but he prioritizes the junior enlisted force.

“I always visit the junior enlisted counsels. You get the unfiltered (information) and that allows me to feel the pulse of what is happening,” said Williams.

While the primary purpose of his visits is to give a voice to the enlisted, he also uses his time to mentor younger Airmen.

“The best advice I can give is... invest in yourself, monitor the circle of people around you, and embrace life’s journey,” said Williams.

Along with motivating Airmen to develop professionally, Williams also encourages Airmen to gain different perspectives to enhance themselves.

“Get outside of your comfort zone. This will help make a better version of you. The better you are, the better you are for your organization,” said Williams.

Overall, the thirteenth command chief master sergeant of the Air National Guard wants Airmen to learn, develop and grow.

“Things won’t go as you plan, but if you invest in yourself and have a strong circle, challenges won’t be a roadblock, they’ll just be a bump in the road,” said Williams.





# Strength Through Partnership: 171st Air Refueling Wing Partners with 159th Fighter Wing

“  
The ultimate goal is to get the mission done...”

Capt. Christopher Bowser

The 171st Air Refueling Wing hosted 30 Airmen from the 159th Fighter Wing as a part of a collaborative training effort to accomplish core competency training for Airmen of the Logistics Readiness Squadron from June 6, 2022- June 15, 2022.

The 159th FW, located in Louisiana, needed to complete training requirements for items that are not a part of their routine operations, such as snow readiness and cargo processing. The fighter wing’s F-15C aircraft do not carry cargo, and the fighter wing does not experience much snow. However, the Airmen assigned to the 159th are still required to have hands-on experiences with these tasks.

“One of the main reasons for traveling outside of the unit was for compliance,” said Lt. Col. Trupiano, commander of the Logistics Readiness Squadron at the 159th FW.

“We have tankers here, and they have fighters there, but when we deploy down range, it does not matter what airframe or mission you have at your home station. It’s about being able to do your job in any environment,” said Capt. Chris Bowser, installation deployment officer at the 171st ARW.

Although each base has very different aircraft, the collaborative efforts between the two units has established a unique relationship. This relationship will allow each base to receive necessary training to stay qualified for the myriad of responsibilities Airmen need to be “always ready.”

“We refuel fighters, so having a solid relationship with a fighter wing can help us better prepare our people,” said Bowser.



“It pushes the mission forward when you are connecting both bases,” said Trupiano.

Collaborating with other units not only allows for relationship building and training, but it also encourages an exchange of shared knowledge, which allows Airmen to validate established processes.

“It’s always good to look through a different lens. AFI’s (Air Force Instruction) can be left to interpretation, so it’s good to see how someone else is accomplishing tasks,” said Trupiano.

“Across the force, the same systems are used. It’s all about standardization. So, when you have people with shared experiences who can share their knowledge, it’s a win-win,” said Bowser. “At the end of the day, it allows for us to work better as a collective force in any environment.”

While the main goal of the connection between the two units was training, mentorship happened organically through their interactions.

“We’ve been able to collaborate on training, but now it’s extending into the roles of mentorship where you’re talking to someone who walked the same paths that you are about to,” said Bowser.



“It also contributes to unit cohesion,” said Trupiano.

Partnerships, like the one established between the 171st and 159th, increase interoperability and readiness.

“The ultimate goal is to get the mission done, and we can foster and cultivate that by working with others,” said Bowser.



# 171st Air Refueling Wing Honored Local World War II Veteran



//

We are dedicated to supporting our military families and remembering those who have fallen

Chief Master Sgt. Charles Wiley

by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover  
Published: July 7, 2022

The 171st Air Refueling Wing hosted WQED, a local television station, to honor a World War II veteran by showing a video documentary titled “Homecoming: Sgt. Hamilton’s Long Journey” June 24, 2022.

Airmen gathered in the installation’s dining facility to listen to David Soloman, vice-president of production and programming for WQED, discuss the return of the remains of Sgt. Vernon Hamilton, a Monongahela, Pennsylvania resident, to his family. The Airmen also watched the full documentary.

“It’s not very often you get to hear stories like Sgt. Hamilton’s,” said Chief Master Sgt. Charles Wiley, the 171st ARW command chief. “We need to continue educating our current, and specifically, younger Airmen about the ultimate sacrifices made by those men and women before us. Their stories should never be lost to history.”

One of the major takeaways from the documentary was learning how much effort the U.S. Government goes through to bring home and identify the remains of service members who made the ultimate sacrifice.

“I’m actually shocked by what I saw in that video,” said Tech. Sgt. Jacob Linsenbigler, a public health technician assigned to the 171st. “To see that there are entire departments at Dover (Air Force Base) and Offutt (AFB) that work tirelessly to identify human remains from wars past is really impressive.”

During the visit, Soloman emphasized how it was an honor to tell this nearly forgotten story.

“It’s really a story for American history,” said Soloman. “I didn’t know him but his name was sort of lost in history. So it is important for us to tell his story.”

Hamilton lost his life along with two other aircrew members when their A-26 bomber was shot down over German airspace March 21, 1945.

“We are dedicated to supporting our military families and remembering those who have fallen,” said Wiley.

For more information and to watch the documentary Homecoming, please visit WQED’s webpage. [www.wqed.org/homecoming](http://www.wqed.org/homecoming).



David Solomon, Vice President, Production & Programing for WQED, introduces the video documentary to 171st Airmen

“ I’m actually shocked by what I saw in that video ”  
Tech. Sgt. Jake Linsenbigler



*DIG IN*

**NOW OPEN**

**UTA WEEKENDS AT 11AM**

*Steel City  
Cafe*

**171st  
Force  
Support  
Squadron**

# 258<sup>TH</sup> AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SQUADRON

Attends  
NATO  
Exercise



John Murtha  
Cambria County  
Airport Air Traffic  
Control tower is  
operated solely by  
the Pennsylvania Air  
National Guard

The 258th Air Traffic Control Squadron attended a multinational, joint exercise, Defender Europe-22, with NATO and other military partners, June 2022.

Spanning across several months, the exercise focused on building operational readiness and interoperability between allies and partners to train as they fight. The Airmen from the 258th went to Lithuania to collaborate with the Lithuanian Air Force and share their expertise on air traffic control operations and capabilities.

“We are sharing our capabilities and working together to become more efficient. We are collaborating and placing an emphasis on modernization, especially with equipment,” said Capt. Benjamin Kaufman, an airfield operations officer at the 258th.

While the Airmen from the 258th worked directly with the Lithuanians, the exercise consisted of more than 8,000 total participants from 11 different countries. Over 1,200 Guardsmen were a part of the exercise activities.



“It’s important to see things at our level and how we fit into the bigger picture as a whole,” said Master Sgt. Frankie Perez, a mobile tower chief controller at the 258th.

“It was an amazing experience to walk in and see all the different flags on people’s shoulders knowing we are working together,” said Kaufman.

Throughout the exercise, participating countries practiced many different operations, such as live ammunition exercises, road marches, river crossings and more. The members of the 258th partnered with Lithuania on airfield operations as a part of the State Partnership Program, which is a joint program where states have specific countries they work with in order to increase cooperation and collaborative efforts.

“It was great to communicate our capabilities—what capabilities we have, what we can learn from each other, and even how we can work together in the future,” said Perez.

With all of the moving pieces in a large-scale exercise, extensive support from each of the host nations is imperative.

“It was impactful to see all of the different NATO countries involved in the exercise. With our State Partnership Program visit, we were able to discuss how our future engagement could benefit both the Lithuanians and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard,” said Kaufman.



Lt. Col. Frank Shoaf,  
Chief Master Sgt.  
Jason Everetts,  
Capt. Matthew Reed

Siauliai Air Base,  
Lithuania,  
Defender Europe-22,  
June 2022.

Master Sgt.  
Frankie Perez,  
Chief Master Sgt.  
Andrew Mowry, and  
Capt. Benjamin  
Kaufman

by Capt. Jodi Snyder

Courtesy Photo

Published: July 22, 2022



# OPERATION NOBLE DEFENDER

📷 by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover Published: Nov. 15, 2022





by Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

“  
The 171st  
is always  
prepared to  
answer the  
call . . .

Lt. Col. Brian Radford

The Pennsylvania Air National Guard, 171st Air Refueling Wing participated in the North American Aerospace Defense Command’s Operation Noble Defender, an air defense operation off the northeastern coast of the United States, Oct. 25-27, 2022. NORAD’s continental U.S. region led this iteration of OND, which incorporated military assets from CONR and the Canadian NORAD Region to exercise layered defense of North America.

The 171st launched a KC-135 aircraft to provide air-to-air refueling with two F-15 aircraft assigned to the Massachusetts Air National Guard, 104th Fighter Wing. The 171st arrived over the Atlantic Ocean to refuel the F-15s and provided about two-thirds of the total fuel capacity (nearly 15,000 pounds) of jet fuel before the fighters disconnected to continue their mission.

NORAD also launched two CF-18 aircraft assigned to the Royal Canadian Air Force, 3 Wing Bagotville, Quebec, Canada and a KC-135 assigned to the Maine Air National Guard, 101st Air Refueling Wing. The 101st maintains aircraft with a drogue refueling basket attached. Drogues are utilized for refueling support with Navy, Marine and allied aircraft. This provided the aerial refueling needs the CF-18s require.

OND showcased the ability to launch multiple aircraft from various regions within NORAD’s jurisdiction at a moment’s notice and successfully deter a simulated threat against the United States and Canada.

NORAD routinely conducts training operations and exercises with various scenarios including simulated incoming cruise missiles, airspace restriction violations, and response to unknown aircraft. All NORAD operations are carefully planned and controlled.

Pennsylvania Air National Guardsman, Lt. Col. Brian Radford, a pilot assigned to the 147th Air Refueling Squadron, was the aircraft commander for the successful mission.

“The 171st involvement (in OND) shows that our wing is ready to respond when needed at any moment’s notice,” Radford said. “The 171st is always prepared to answer the call whether it comes from Harrisburg, Washington D.C. or NORAD.”

This multi-region integration demonstrates NORAD’s ability to deter advisories. Tactics utilized during OND include airspace restrictions, outpace threats, and demonstrating the ability to defend against an attack before it begins.



“NORAD provides continuous 360-degree defense of North America, so whether an airborne threat originates from within our borders or off our coasts, NORAD is always ready,” said Royal Canadian Air Force Maj. Gen. S.T. Boyle, CONR deputy commander. “This NOBLE DEFENDER iteration allows us to collaborate with our Canadian NORAD Region partners while demonstrating our capacity to defend the northeast coast of the United States from airborne threats.”

The 171st geographical location in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is a tactical advantage required for NORAD to successfully accomplish its primary mission.





# 171st Tanker Keeps **Low-on-Fuel** Stealth Bomber Airborne

by Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk Published: Dec. 9, 2022

**A** KC-135 tanker crew from the 171st responded to an unexpected request for fuel on Oct. 25, 2022 from a B-2 bomber crew.

The KC-135, an aircraft capable of air refueling, call sign “Steel 51”, was performing its preflight checklist. The three-man crew began to start the engines and prepared to depart from Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City, to fly to their home base, the 171st Air Refueling Wing, an Air National Guard base near Pittsburgh. The crew was returning the aircraft after it completed regular scheduled maintenance.

Just before takeoff, with the first of four engines started, Steel 51 received an unexpected call requesting immediate refueling for a B-2 Bomber. The B-2, call sign “Fury 72,” was quickly running low on fuel had about 90 minutes remaining.

Moments before that call, Tech. Sgt. Scott Nagel, a boom operator with the 171st, received the initial request from Whiteman AFB. Nagel said that it’s normal to get calls for fuel throughout the week, but normally refueling missions are scheduled weeks in advance for routine operations and training. In this case, when he asked when they wanted to schedule, the response was “**We need it right now.**”

Realizing the urgency of the situation, Nagel relayed the message to the duty officers, Capt. Seth Melnick and Lt. Col. Erik Schillo, who were just about

to change shifts for the day. Learning about the situation, they quickly scrambled to coordinate with Tinker AFB, Whiteman AFB, and the crew of Steel 51.

Steel 51’s crew, pilots Maj. Dan Dynys, and Capt. Bryant Laris, and boom operator Master Sgt. Mike Worthington only had enough fuel to fly to Pittsburgh as the aircraft was not scheduled for an air refueling mission. But Steel 51 was the only tanker ready and within range that could help.

“We only had enough gas to make the flight home, but Capt. Melnick asked how much extra we might have to give to a receiver and how soon we could take off,” said Laris. “He informed me that the receiver would be able to meet us on our planned route of flight, so we agreed to **take off as soon as possible and figured the rest out in the air since time was critical for the receiver.**”

Steel 51 took to the sky and flew to rendezvous with Fury 72.

The plan was made enroute. Steel 51 would give the B-2 as much fuel as they could while leaving enough to circle back to land at Tinker AFB.



“**Once we were airborne, we flew as fast as we could to try and meet the receiver,**” said Laris. “Everyone on our crew was working hard to expedite the rendezvous with the receiver, coordinate a random air refueling with Air Traffic Control, and calling Air Force bases in the area to coordinate a divert if it would be necessary.”

Fury 72, a stealth bomber aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons, was originally scheduled to land at Whiteman AFB, Missouri, after a long-range test mission. Due to a sudden and unexpected runway closure, Fury 72 had no place to land and was circling above Whiteman AFB until the runway could be re-opened. Diverting the stealth bomber to another air base was an option, but as a last resort. Unlike a civilian passenger airliner, diverting a technologically advanced stealth bomber requires extensive coordination and time. Air refueling would prevent the need to divert.

Roughly 45 minutes after Nagel received the initial call, Steel 51 and Fury 72 began lining up for air refueling procedures. The weather conditions and visibility were poor due to a nearby storm. Master Sgt. Mike Worthington, the Boom Operator on Steel 51, saw the silhouette of the stealth bomber approaching through the clouds and guided the twenty-foot boom into position with special controls from his position at the tail end of the aircraft.

The stealth held its position about 20 feet below the 63-year-old tanker. Through the turbulence and low visibility, Worthington skillfully extended the boom and made contact with the B-2 and offloaded 17,500 pounds of fuel, allowing Fury 72 to stay airborne long enough for the runway at Whiteman AFB to be cleared for landing.

“Overall we were very lucky to be in a position to assist,” said Laris. “All the members of our crew and the crew of Fury worked expeditiously to overcome a **real world, time critical, air refueling mission** that was made very challenging with adverse weather and minimal planning time available”

Steel 51 circled back to Tinker AFB and landed. The ground crew at Tinker AFB was aware of the situation and provided fuel to Steel 51 so it could continue on its way to Pittsburgh the same day.

The reliability and versatility of the KC-135 once again proves itself to be a critical asset that supports the total force in the United States and to our allies.

Like many other Guardsmen at the 171st, KC-135 pilots Maj. Dan Dynys and Capt. Bryant Laris, serve as “citizen Airmen.” They are both traditional part-time Air National Guardsmen serving at least one weekend a month, and two weeks a year. When not on duty, they both are commercial airline pilots. The team at the 171st personified the National Guard motto that day-- Always ready, always there.





# New Resiliency Center **NOW OPEN** at the 171st Air Refueling Wing

//  
Helping  
our Airmen  
and their  
families is a  
priority.

Col. Raymond L. Hyland Jr.

The 171st Air Refueling Wing opened a new Resiliency Center on Aug. 27, 2022 to help Guardsmen and their families handle mental, social, physical, financial and spiritual challenges they may face on and off duty.

Guardsmen and their families can face a multitude of challenges and stressors during their careers, including demanding workloads and deployments away from loved ones. The Resiliency Center's goal is to increase Airmen resiliency.

"Helping our Airmen and their families is a priority. We know that in order for our 171st family to be successful, our Airmen need to be healthy and able to handle any challenges they encounter," said Col. Ray Hyland, commander of the 171st ARW. "We are dedicated to helping our Airmen thrive so that the 171st remains 'always ready' for any mission."

The Resiliency Center is the combination of several offices on base. While the services provided were already available at the base, relocating the services to a single, co-located area is new.

"A major goal for all of us in these roles is to help our Airmen build resiliency within themselves. In order to do that, it is vital that we address several key fitness areas of their lives, specifically mental, physical, financial, social and spiritual," said Julia Catanzerite, one of the two directors of psychological health at the 171st. "This goal can be accomplished much easier with all of us under one roof. This is so important for our Airmen because resilient individuals have the ability to successfully adjust to or bounce back from difficult life experiences, whether those experiences are military-related or not."

Another reason for creating the Resiliency Center is to increase access to the collective resources available to Guardsmen and their families while increasing collaboration of those services.

"There's a whole team of highly trained, qualified personnel coming together in this one place, and our mission is to support and care for the Airmen and families of our 171st community," said Lt. Col. Jonathan Bell, chaplain at the 171st. "This is an exciting adventure as not only are we now co-located, but we will be working together to offer classes and various other programming and opportunities to strengthen and encourage our Airmen and families."

In addition to bringing these offices together in a unified, collaborative space, the Resiliency Center will give Guardsmen and their families more privacy.

"We want our Airmen to feel safe, welcomed and respected when they meet with us. We can accomplish that within this building thanks to the privacy that it has afforded us and our Airmen," said Catanzerite.

The new location strives to be a safe place for families to feel comfortable.

"It's a dream come true creating a one-stop shop for Guardsmen and families to receive guidance or even to just sit, read, relax and have a cup of coffee," said Bell. "My spouse has often said over my multiple deployments that it would be nice to have one easy-to-

//  
We want our  
Airmen to  
feel safe,  
welcomed and  
respected...

Julia Catanzerite

find place at the 171st if our family needed something-well, here it is! And there's even a kids' corner, so families can find a space to relax during pre or post-deployment processing or really anytime personnel come out and have families along. I think it's fantastic that the gate can now tell people, just go to the first building on the left, and someone there will be able to help you!"



### Resiliency Team:

- Religious Support Team . . . . . 412-776-7815
- Directors of Psychological Health . . . . . 412-776-7978
- Directors of Psychological Health . . . . . 412-776-7631
- Sexual Assault and Response Coordinator. . . . . 412-776-7950
- Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager 412-776-7665
- Equal Opportunity office . . . . . 412-776-7393
- Yellow Ribbon Program Specialist . . . . . 412-776-7499
- Personal Financial Counselor . . . . . 412-776-7606

by Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk

Published: August 25, 2022



# KEEP

# MOVING

# FORWARD

**Tech. Sgt. Ronnice Massengill**, now a member of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, learned to use her upbringing in Homewood to help kids find their way in life and overcome oppressive challenges.

by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hoover    Published: March 22, 2022

**G**raduating high school is one of the first major accomplishments in an adolescent's life. It is at that moment when a child gets their diploma that they realize, it is just the beginning. It is still a cherished moment even though roughly 3.7 million kids in the U.S. celebrate the same achievement every year. However, not everyone will have an opportunity to share in this celebration. There are millions of kids growing up in tough neighborhoods with obstacles that hinder the likelihood of graduating high school and moving on to a path towards a career. These potential roadblocks are greater for kids in predominantly African American

neighborhoods. These obstacles and more stood in the way of Tech. Sgt. Ronnice Massengill, a production recruiter assigned to the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard.

Massengill recently attended total force recruiting school at Joint Base San Antonio-Langley, Texas where she introduced herself with a short story. One where she walks across a stage in front of a room full of minorities at a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania city school, receives her diploma from her school's superintendent, and is greeted at the end of the stage by her mother holding her two-week-old daughter.





There were so many incredibly smart kids that I went to school with that never got a chance because people didn't believe in them. Because of the color of our skin, no one gave us the time of day.

Tech. Sgt. Ronnice Massengill



Like every other kid in the U.S., this was just the beginning of Massengill's journey. She grew up in Homewood, Pennsylvania. Homewood is one of 90 distinct neighborhoods within the city limits of Pittsburgh and has a population of 3,280 people where 97.8% are African American.

As a young child growing up in Homewood, she did not understand that gang violence, teen pregnancy, and frequent drug use are uncommon in most neighborhoods. "It's all we ever knew," said Massengill "all I have ever known was Homewood so I thought that was just normal."

Her father served in the Army National Guard and pushed her to become more than a product of her environment. "I'm lucky because my dad was always there for me, he was always in my corner giving me advice and telling me to keep moving forward."

Like her neighborhood, her high school was not diverse with the student body being primarily African American. "There were so many incredibly smart kids that I went to school with that never got a chance because people didn't believe in them. Because of the color of our skin, no one gave us the time of day." One of the major issues with teenagers in Homewood is that boys were more susceptible to being involved in gangs. This resulted in some of the boys having criminal records before they turned 18 or worse, being killed due to some form of gun violence. Girls face issues like getting pregnant and not finishing high school to raise their children. Massengill was a part of this statistic when she became pregnant during her senior year of high school. Her father encouraged her and would not let her quit so she continued to study and earned her diploma. She cherished her achievement on graduation day for about 30 seconds before returning to her responsibilities as a young mother.

She uses her past experiences when speaking with potential recruits. "I love going back to my hometown to talk to

these kids and tell them that they can beat this system like me. There is more to life than just Homewood. I try to encourage them and tell them that these gangs won't be there forever and raising a baby is one of the hardest things to do." Massengill wants to help people in these neighborhoods because she has that opportunity. This is the platform she can use to help break the mold. She tries to educate recruits on the opportunities the National Guard can provide to them even if they come from a tough neighborhood like Homewood.

She believes that her upbringing has helped her flourish as a recruiter despite how stressful her career can be. "Sometimes I see my co-workers struggling with things and I just wonder, is this what really stresses you out?" She has seen classmates not return to school because they had been killed due to gang violence. She also has stories about some of her other friends having lengthy scars on their bodies because of emergency life-saving surgery after they had been struck by a stray bullet. She gave birth to a girl weeks before submitting her high school senior project. The mental trauma that she has endured in her early life heavily outweighs any of her current assignments. "I'm the way I am because it's the way I was raised. Sometimes, people look at me differently, but they don't understand what I've been through. They don't know where I've been, the things I've seen or the issues I've had to overcome. But we can change that, just ask me, or someone like me about my past. Take the time to learn a little bit about me. You may realize that we aren't so different."

Massengill worked hard so she did not become a victim of her environment. She still lives near Homewood and visits regularly because of the friends and family that still live there. She didn't let anything stop her from earning her high school diploma and enlisting in the ANG. She hopes to be an example in her community of what you can accomplish even if the odds are stacked against you.

# Rising Six



## Need swag?

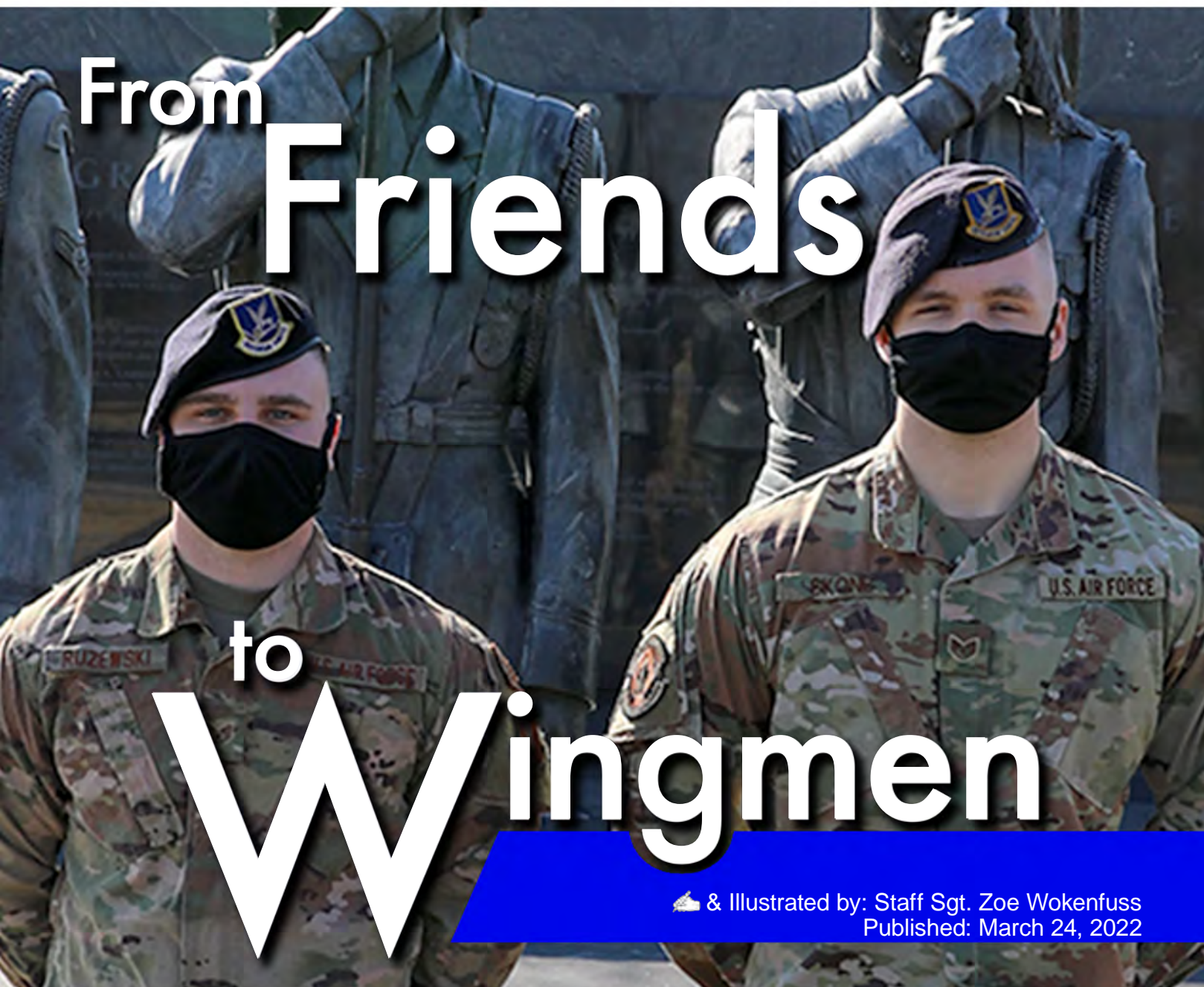
  
**171 ARW'S RISING SIX**  
**has you covered!**



**SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO SHOP ONLINE!**

OR GO TO: <https://stores.inksoft.com/171arw>

Orders from this online sale will ship straight to you in 10-15 business days.  
All proceeds go straight back to the team. Thank you for your support!



# From Friends to Wingmen

& Illustrated by: Staff Sgt. Zoe Wokenfuss  
Published: March 24, 2022

How far is Alaska from New Mexico? 3,673 miles; that is the distance the friendship of Staff Sergeants Jerrad Skone and Bob Ruzewski endured during a four year active duty enlistment in the U.S. Air Force.

The two met in third grade at Stewartville Elementary School in Irwin, Pennsylvania, where they did almost everything together. From playing on the playground to joining cub scouts together, they were practically brothers. Going from elementary all the way through high school by each other's sides, each of them have a lot of stories they could share. For instance, they both picked up wakeboarding and competed in several nearby states even getting to the level of being sponsored by several wakeboarding companies.

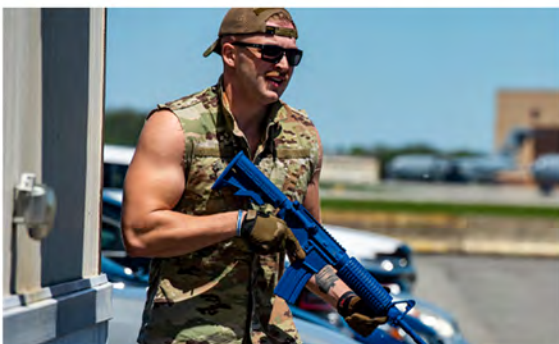
"Wherever we were going, whatever we were doing, Jerrad was always there," said Ruzewski.

Both Skone and Ruzewski felt a calling to serve their country from a young age. They both enlisted in the Air Force with the desire to be in security forces earning the title, "Defender". Unfortunately, Air Force members are often separated from their friends and family, sometimes by a few states, other times by oceans. But that's just the nature of the job. Service members recognize and accept that the mission comes first. Ultimately, the Air Force sends people where they need them the most. And Skone and Ruzewski were needed 3,673 miles apart from one another. Skone was stationed at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, while Ruzewski was at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico.

The two have been following very similar paths for years to include both of them completing basic training. They each began their path in 2016, Skone in June and Ruzewski in October. Within the same career field, though at very different bases, they experienced many of the same things while individually excelling in different aspects. Skone found that his strong suit was being a dispatcher; while Ruzewski thrived at patrolling.

They deployed to very different locations in the world compared to one another. Skone deployed to Eareckson Air Station on the tiny, 12 square mile island of Shemya, in the Alaskan Aleutian Islands and Ruzewski deployed to Al Asad Air Base, in the vast desert of Iraq. Their daily tasks were very similar, including providing security and maintaining the safety of their respective installations. Whether drenched by rain or dripping in sweat, Skone and Ruzewski underwent the same challenges of deployed life for six months. They both returned, each having earned an Air Force Achievement medal for their individual accomplishments.

Throughout the years, the two were able to get approval for leave at the same times. They both flew home to Pittsburgh for their first Christmas after going through basic training and again a few years later to do the recruiters assistance program together.







Wherever we were  
going, whatever  
we were doing,  
Jerrad was always  
there,

Staff Sgt. Bob Ruzewski

“Even though we were only home for a week or less, it was always nice when we got to catch up,” said Skone.

After completing four years of service on active duty, they both decided to separate and continue their service in the Air National Guard. Skone and Ruzewski returned to their home state and are now members of the 171st Security Forces Squadron in Pittsburgh. It was there that they promoted to the rank of staff sergeant; once again sharing a similar task of becoming supervisors to young Airmen. For the first time in their military careers they were able to deploy together in support of Operation Capitol Response II in Washington D.C. from January to March 2021.

Similar to the beginning of their Air Force careers, Skone and Ruzewski started their Pennsylvania law enforcement careers at the same police academy. They were in two different cycles but graduated less than a year apart. Their time serving in security forces benefitted them greatly by providing them the opportunity to take an assessment that exempted them from portions of the police academy based on their knowledge and experience in military law enforcement. This drastically reduced their required time at the academy.

From cub scouts to Defenders; from best friends to wingmen; and from Airmen to Guardsmen, they have proven to be brothers in arms from day one.



171st Strength Management Team

**NOW  
RECRUITING**



**1-877-249-5193**

**171.ARW.RECRUITING@US.AF.MIL**



# 48 Years of Making a Difference at the 171st Air Refueling Wing

by: Capt. Jodi Snyder    Illustrated by: Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Monk    Published: June 24, 2022

**A**fter nearly five decades of service to the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Deborah Krall retired on June 30, 2022.

Most people around the base know her as “Deb,” but previously, she was Master Sgt. Deborah Krall.

“I enlisted in 1975 and retired as a master sergeant,” said Deb.

After being an enlisted member at the 171st for more than 20 years, Deb obtained a civilian position on base as the airman and family readiness program manager, the first person to ever serve in this role at the installation. In this role, Deb provided assistance and support to enhance the quality of life for Airmen and their families. With her military and civilian service combined, Deb has served in some capacity at the base for 48 years.

While Deb’s love of service is common knowledge at the 171st, there is a story many people may not know about her. Deb was a pioneer for women at the 171st, even at a young age. When Deb was in high school, it was mandatory for girls to take a home economics course, but Deb wanted to take an industrial art class, which was only a class for boys. Having a determined attitude, Deb got herself into that shop class, and unknowingly, she started her path towards the 171st.

Deb’s industrial art teacher, a public affairs officer at the 171st, overheard her talking with a friend about test scores she had just received. These test scores were her Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores, which is the test students can take to see if a military career is the right choice for them. Deb’s teacher handed her a flyer for the 171st, and she was hooked! Her family, on the other hand, was not sold on the idea of their little girl joining the military. At the time, it was still uncommon for women to be in the military.

“I started off with a struggle with my family and then to add to it, the military didn’t have that many females yet. I never had any bad

experiences, but we have come a long way as females in the military,” said Deb.

Paving a pathway for other women is just one of Deb’s many accomplishments. Through her military and civilian career, she supported all Airmen of the 171st.

“My goal was to have a positive impact. If someone came to see me and felt like they left with something, then I knew I was making a difference,” said Deb.

While enlisted, Deb worked different jobs around the base, including base photography, administrative work, food services, and she was assigned to the chaplain’s office. From helping Cuban refugees to scrubbing seats in a briefing room, Deb expressed that her many roles and experiences at the 171st helped shape who she is today.

“I had never been on my own before—I had never even been away from home before the military,” said Deb. “But, what I learned is you can make a difference every day. If you smile at someone, you don’t know what a difference it can make in their day.”

The emphasis Deb places on positive change was not only evident through her military career. It was also present in her efforts as the base’s airman and family readiness program manager.

“We are grateful to Deb for her nearly 50 years of service to the wing, both as a uniformed member and a civilian leader. Her efforts to provide the best care and support to our Airmen and their families has been greatly appreciated through the years. We wish her all the best in her retirement,” said Col. Ray Hyland, commander of the 171st ARW.

While everyone will miss working with Deb, there is comfort knowing the programs she established will live on and will continue to spread kindness through the foundation of the 171st ARW.



## AIRMAN SPOTLIGHT

Airman 1st Class Claire Weaver is a 23 year old Aerospace Medical Technician assigned to the 171st Medical Group. As a recent graduate from Blackhawk High School, she wanted to follow in her father and brothers footsteps and enlist in the Air Force. She had aspirations to be a medic but was denied due to career field availability so she enlisted as an Intel specialist, just like her brother. Unfortunately, Weaver was denied entry into the AF active duty component due to her previous knee injuries sustained in high school while participating on the soccer and lacrosse teams. Weaver attended Slippery Rock University towards a degree in Exercise Science while she pursued a medical waiver. The Pennsylvania Air National Guard approved a medical waiver and offered her the opportunity to become a medic. Weaver currently works full-time at the wing serving her country, her state, and her local community.



Tech. Sgt. Richard Doran is a 53 year old Pavement's & Construction "Dirtboy" assigned to the Civil Engineer Squadron, Mission Support Group. Doran has a lengthy military career beginning at the age of 18 when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. After 3 years of active duty service, he transitioned into the PA Army National Guard and served for 4 more years as a combat engineer. In 1993, Doran turned in his combat boots in exchange for a PA State Trooper campaign hat. In 2010, Doran felt the urge to continue his military service and he re-enlisted into the PA Army National Guard. In 2015, Doran transitioned once again, but this time to the PA Air National Guard. Doran recently retired as a State Trooper with 22 years of service at the Greensburg barracks ending his career as a forensic specialist. He also has 19 collective years of U.S. Military service and plans to retire from the 171st ARW. Doran is also a member of local unions #9 (Brick Layers Union) and #526 (Cement Masons). Doran's advice to young service members who ask him why he continues working after retirement is "Don't ever stop moving!"



## AIRMAN SPOTLIGHT

Airman 1st Class Elijah Evans is a 19-year-old Power Production specialist from Karns City. Evans joined the Air National Guard with a desire to work with his hands in any sort of mechanical type career field.

While receiving his medical clearance from MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Stations), Evans failed his hearing test and was referred to a specialist. He learned that he has frequency hearing loss and would require a waiver to enter service. Evans has had an issue with his hearing since he was 12-years-old but it was not enough that required hearing assistance. The military hearing requirements are not too stiff as long as the member does not rely on assistance such as hearing aids or sign language. This paved the way for Evans to raise his right hand and swear in. "I don't wear hearing aids now, but it could be something in my future", said Evans, "for now, I just want to come to work, do my job, and serve my country"



## Airman Spotlight

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, we would like to highlight Tech. Sgt. Néstor Jiménez, a Traffic Management Specialist with the 171st Traffic Management Office. Néstor, who was born and raised in Puerto Rico, has been in the Air Force for 24 years and has served in four different career fields. Having an interest in aircraft and wanting to expand on his English skills, Néstor said the Air Force was the best way to learn and have a job at the same time. Outside of the Air Force, Néstor likes watching sports, especially boxing and baseball. He also enjoys spending time with his family and friends.





Pennsylvania Air National Guardsman, Senior Airman Brook Morgan, assigned to the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Security Forces Squadron has been a defender for nearly four years. She is a Norwin High School graduate currently enrolled in the Cyber Security program at Robert Morris University. She is an avid horse trainer and competes in equestrianism. When the horses stay inside the stables for the winter, she can be found shifting from heel-to-toe on her snowboard at one of the three local ski resorts.



“  
PROTECT &  
HONOR  
YOUR  
FRIENDS

A1C TIMOTHY ABRAHAM

Pennsylvania Air National Guardsman, Airman 1st Class Timothy Abraham, assigned to the 171st Air Refueling Wing, Security Forces Squadron, has been a defender for nearly two years. He enlisted out of Salisbury-Elk Lick Junior/Senior High School, Salisbury, Pennsylvania. He is working towards a degree in criminal justice from Allegheny College Maryland, but has taken a break to fulfill training requirements as a defender. Later this month, Abraham will attend Raven school. Ravens are a flyaway security forces team that protects aircraft and aircrews while airborne and on the ground.







# OUTSTANDING

# AIRMEN

# OF

# 2022



## AIRMAN CATEGORY

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS DOMINIC MONTEMURRO

WATER & FUELS SYSTEM MAINTENANCE  
APPRENTICE

171ST CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP



## NCO CATEGORY

STAFF SGT. CARLISA DIXON

AVIATION RESOURCE JOURNEYMAN

147TH AIR REFUELING SQUADRON

OPERATIONS GROUP



## SNCO CATEGORY

MASTER SGT. STEVEN SISNEROS

CONTRACTING OFFICER

171ST CONTRACTING

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP

# PROMOTIONS

## ENLISTED

HAGETER, TEJA	AMN	6/7/2022
HOFFMAN, EMILY	AMN	6/7/2022
MEDINACOLLAZO, PATRICK	AMN	6/21/2022
WATKINS, KYLE	AMN	4/26/2022
BIRTIKIDIS, BRADY	A1C	9/8/2022
DUNNICK, LANDON	A1C	5/31/2022
DUNSMORE, CHEYENNE	A1C	6/1/2022
HANNAN, DIANA	A1C	1/18/2022
HOOVER, ASHTON	A1C	8/31/2022
HUTCHISON, LEAH	A1C	5/31/2022
KINNEY, BRAYDEN	A1C	8/31/2022
LEIATO, KIANNA	A1C	6/1/2022
MAY, CONNOR	A1C	6/1/2022
WOITAS, TIERNEY	A1C	6/16/2022
WOODS, EMILY	A1C	10/13/2022
AUEN, TAYLOR	SRA	8/3/2022
BAILEY, BROCK	SRA	11/21/2022
BAILEY, JACOB	SRA	3/14/2022
BAKER, SIERRA	SRA	8/31/2022
BEIGHEY, VICTORIA	SRA	8/23/2022
BORSOS, MADELINE	SRA	2/24/2022
BRADLEY, EVAN	SRA	1/31/2022
BURTNETT, AUSTIN	SRA	11/28/2022
CABLE, DERRICK	SRA	2/7/2022
CHEEK, JESSE	SRA	1/31/2022
DI PIETRANTONIO, ALEXA	SRA	8/31/2022
DO, VINH CONG	SRA	11/21/2022
DOWNEY, ALEXANDER	SRA	2/11/2022
GORBY, HUNTER	SRA	8/23/2022
GROSS, NICHOLAS	SRA	10/19/2022
HAZEL, JULIA ANN	SRA	5/2/2022
HURLEY, DOMENIK	SRA	11/9/2022
HUTCHIN, CALEB	SRA	11/10/2022
IRWIN, NATHAN	SRA	3/10/2022
IRWIN, SEPTEMBER	SRA	1/18/2022
JULIUS, JOSHUA	SRA	4/12/2022
JURY, ALEXIS	SRA	6/21/2022
KASSEL, MICHAEL	SRA	11/21/2022
KAUFFMAN, DEREK	SRA	11/3/2022
KINGSKARBK, DERICA	SRA	1/20/2022
LARGE, CARLYN	SRA	8/15/2022
LEIGHTY, CADEN	SRA	9/27/2022
MAGLICCO, JORDAN	SRA	8/31/2022
MCCREA, JUSTIN	SRA	2/1/2022
MONTEMURRO, DOMINIC	SRA	1/13/2022
MURPHY, LAUREN	SRA	6/22/2022
PAFF, ZACHARY	SRA	2/24/2022
POOLE, ALLISON	SRA	8/31/2022
PRIBADI, ADRIAZKA	SRA	1/4/2022
QUINN, ZACHARY	SRA	3/7/2022
RISHER, CHRISTOPHER	SRA	11/28/2022
SAHADY, KATELYNN	SRA	6/16/2022
SENG, JOSHUA	SRA	3/14/2022
SINCLAIR, CAMERON	SRA	11/30/2022
SPRUNK, HANNAH	SRA	5/5/2022
THOMAS, KAITLYN	SRA	1/18/2022

THOMPSON, PRECIOUS	SRA	6/16/2022
WEAVER, CLAIRE	SRA	7/29/2022
WIETRZYKOWSKI, MITCHELL	SRA	11/9/2022
ABERNETHY, JOSHUA	SSG	6/29/2022
AGNEW, NOAH	SSG	1/20/2022
BOWSER, RONALD	SSG	10/20/2022
CAMPBELL, MORGAN	SSG	8/31/2022
CHARLIER, JUSTIN	SSG	5/4/2022
CHECK, JACOB	SSG	4/12/2022
DAVIS, ASHLEY	SSG	3/15/2022
DONNELLY, KATELYN	SSG	4/12/2022
FASCETTI, JORDAN	SSG	5/26/2022
FRITZ, ALEXANDER	SSG	9/8/2022
FRUTOS, CADEN	SSG	5/17/2022
GARBER, MICAH	SSG	1/13/2022
GRANT, JAMIYA	SSG	7/7/2022
GREGG, GEORGE	SSG	10/16/2022
HAMILTON, ALAYNA	SSG	1/20/2022
HAYS, THERESA	SSG	11/10/2022
HOWARD, OLIVIA	SSG	8/18/2022
INZANA, ROSS	SSG	6/30/2022
KELLY, ZACHARY	SSG	9/23/2022
LYNCH, MICHAEL	SSG	3/17/2022
MASNERI, THERESA	SSG	4/26/2022
MCBRIDE, MAURA	SSG	10/15/2022
MCCOY, DANIEL	SSG	6/2/2022
MCDADE, BRIAN	SSG	6/21/2022
MCFALL, KATELYNN	SSG	3/25/2022
MCGRATH, BRIAN	SSG	3/5/2022
MCQUAIDE, DANIEL	SSG	3/8/2022
MEANS, KACIE	SSG	5/17/2022
MUNIZ VILLALON, GASPAR	SSG	3/5/2022
PAES, ALEXANDRA	SSG	1/13/2022
PANTUSO, TANNER	SSG	7/11/2022
PENN, GARRETT	SSG	5/4/2022
PHINNEY, MARIEL	SSG	1/18/2022
POSTERIVO, MADISON	SSG	4/27/2022
RODEN, SEAN	SSG	4/6/2022
RUSSELL, RASHAWN	SSG	4/12/2022
SCHAEFFER, JUSTIN	SSG	2/7/2022
SCOTT, CHRISTIAN	SSG	1/13/2022
SLOPEK, GRANT	SSG	9/8/2022
SWANSON, GARRETT	SSG	8/1/2022
TRUNZO, TYLER	SSG	11/2/2022
UPP, ALEXANDER	SSG	9/23/2022
WILKINSON, ALEXANDER	SSG	7/7/2022
WILLIAMS, BENJAMIN	SSG	5/10/2022
BLAKER, ROBERT	TSG	1/31/2022
BROOKS, KYLE	TSG	3/24/2022
BROWN, ALEXANDER	TSG	3/6/2022
CHAPPELL, FRANK	TSG	8/11/2022
CLARK, PATRICK	TSG	1/31/2022
COLLINS, RICHARD	TSG	10/7/2022
DAVIS, JEFFREY	TSG	5/26/2022
DEMAIOLO, COREY	TSG	1/5/2022
DINGLE, DYLAN	TSG	7/7/2022

DOWNS, BRANDON	TSG	3/15/2022
ERICKSON, BRIAN	TSG	4/21/2022
FABRIZI, BRADLEY	TSG	2/28/2022
FOSTER, JACOB	TSG	10/19/2022
GRANZEIER, SCOTT	TSG	2/7/2022
HODGSON, KAMAL	TSG	10/12/2022
HUBER, JONATHAN	TSG	9/13/2022
KOZIKOWSKI, SHANNON	TSG	7/7/2022
KRELOW, CHANDLER	TSG	9/13/2022
LANDSPERGER, ANDREW	TSG	4/14/2022
LYDIC, ROBERT	TSG	2/7/2022
MYERS, MARK	TSG	5/2/2022
NICHOLS, NATHAN	TSG	1/4/2022
OLISH, PATRICK	TSG	3/14/2022
PRICE, ALYSIA	TSG	6/15/2022
ROELL, MARK	TSG	3/14/2022
ROLLAR, ZACHARY	TSG	7/5/2022
SIWULA, MICHAEL	TSG	7/11/2022
VANGROOTENBRUEL, TYLER	TSG	2/1/2022
VENESKI, STEVEN	TSG	1/6/2022
VERGARI, IAN	TSG	6/30/2022
YACKOVICH, NICHOLAS	TSG	1/20/2022
BISH, CAMERON	MSG	8/10/2022
COGIS, THOMAS	MSG	9/28/2022
DEVINE, LAURA	MSG	1/18/2022
FIELDS, HELENA	MSG	1/14/2022
GALLEGO, KAISA	MSG	10/24/2022
GASS, STEVEN	MSG	6/9/2022
HEIL, JACOB	MSG	1/12/2022
HOOVER, BRYAN	MSG	11/9/2022
HRADECKY, LOGAN	MSG	6/15/2022
JOHNSON, CHRISTIAN	MSG	11/15/2022
KOTCH, MARK	MSG	10/20/2022
LAIAPPLE, RICHARD	MSG	2/17/2022
LANE, NICHOLAS	MSG	5/25/2022
LLOYD, ADAM	MSG	4/14/2022
LUBEN, NICOLE	MSG	8/10/2022
MCCREARY, SHAWN	MSG	6/10/2022
MCMILLEN, CHAD	MSG	11/9/2022
PAULL, WILLIAM	MSG	11/9/2022
PRICE, BENJAMIN	MSG	6/11/2022
RUSSELL JR., DAVID	MSG	3/11/2022
RYDEN, ROBERT	MSG	3/31/2022
SCHMIDT, BRANDON	MSG	4/12/2022
TARACIDO, FRANK	MSG	3/10/2022
TARACIDO, LEANNA	MSG	8/18/2022
WAGNER, ALEX	MSG	1/14/2022
ABT JR., ROBERT	SMS	4/15/2022
GALLAGHER, PATRICK	SMS	6/21/2022
HARRIS, NIKI	SMS	10/25/2022
HOCKENBERRY, DANIEL	SMS	2/11/2022
LEWIS, JUSTIN	SMS	3/25/2022
MAURER, JEFFREY	SMS	10/1/2022
SISNEROS, STEVEN	SMS	3/11/2022
SHAWLEY, JENNIFER	CMS	6/7/2022
SPISAK, JOSEPH	CMS	9/28/2022

## OFFICER

AVERA, STEWART	2LT	3/11/2022
HANEY, JACK	ILT	10/16/2022
MALONEY, THOMAS	ILT	5/22/2022
MCALEAVEY, HEATHER	ILT	7/10/2022
WEST, BRADFORD	ILT	4/3/2022
CLOSKY, JASON	ILT	10/16/2022
BOWSER, TOBIAS	CPT	5/24/2022
BOYD, MICHAEL	CPT	11/16/2022
DIFRISCHIA, ALLEN	CPT	6/8/2022
EDSALL, HEATHER	CPT	5/2/2022
KNORR III, DONALD	CPT	6/8/2022
MALL, KEVIN	CPT	3/16/2022
MESINERE, MICHAEL	CPT	5/24/2022
MORETTI, LISA	CPT	8/24/2022
PREFFER III, RALPH	CPT	8/17/2022
REESE, CALEIGH	CPT	8/17/2022
SAHD, STEVEN	CPT	11/7/2022
SMITH, ALEXIS	CPT	6/8/2022
STEPHENSON, BRITTANY	CPT	6/8/2022
VEGA JR., DEMETRIO JR	CPT	5/24/2022
DENNY, SHANNA	MAJ	1/28/2022
LEWIS, VALERIE	MAJ	2/1/2022
ORDEAN, DALE	MAJ	2/14/2022
REED, MATTHEW	MAJ	11/18/2022
SNYDER, ROBERT	MAJ	10/7/2022
BOGART, RYAN	LTC	9/23/2022
COLUSSY, SCOTT	LTC	11/25/2022
KING, ANTHONY	LTC	6/25/2022
LOOSLI, BRANDON	LTC	4/1/2022
MCROBERTS, SHAUN	LTC	2/1/2022
FIGLEY, JASON	COL	5/26/2022
WING, TROY	COL	8/1/2022

*“On behalf of the 171st Air Refueling Wing, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and the United States Air Force, Congratulations on your promotion! You will be challenged to with more expectations and expected to lead by example.”*

**Chief Master Sgt. Charles Wiley**

# RETIREMENTS

01/01/2022	MAJ	JACOB STEPHENSON
01/16/2022	MSGT	MICHELE BRUCE
01/31/2022	CMSGT	RICHARD COSTOLO
02/10/2022	MSGT	EARL MORGAN
02/20/2022	MSGT	ADAM SCHWIEDEROWSKI
03/05/2022	SSGT	BRAD MICHAELSON
03/06/2022	MAJ	ALECIA HUTSLER
03/21/2022	LT COL	LYNDON RAMSEY
04/01/2022	MAJ	BRANDON MURPHY
04/30/2022	MAJ	THOMAS WHITE
05/05/2022	SMSGT	JEFFREY HARPER
05/05/2022	SMSGT	JEFFREY ROSE
06/01/2022	LT COL	ANDREW SCHAPPERT
06/06/2022	MSGT	DANIEL YAKICH
06/09/2022	COL	JAMES SWANIK
07/01/2022	LT COL	JOSEPH SULLIVAN
07/16/2022	SSGT	ANITA RITZ
07/31/2022	CMSGT	GREGORY HANEY
07/31/2022	CMSGT	RICHARD CERCONE
07/31/2022	MSGT	WAYNE WILHELM
08/01/2022	MSGT	KIRK KURTYKA
08/01/2022	SMSGT	LLOYD CARVER
08/07/2022	SSGT	WILLIAM PETACH
08/28/2022	MSGT	WILLIAM SHAPIRO
09/01/2022	SMSGT	JOSHUA CURTACCIO
09/01/2022	SSGT	DAVID MOSS
09/06/2022	LT COL	DAVID LUKE
09/13/2022	TSGT	JOSEPH MANGINO
09/16/2022	MSGT	JOSHUA RUCKMAN
09/30/2022	CMSGT	PHILIP HEVERLY
10/01/2022	TSGT	MATTHEW BRUZDEWICZ
10/15/2022	LT COL	DONALD CALKINS
10/20/2022	TSGT	ANTHONY HILL
10/31/2022	MSGT	STEPHEN CONNELLY
11/01/2022	MAJ	GREGORY TOURNAY
11/12/2022	TSGT	DAVID KEPPLER
11/12/2022	MSGT	DANIEL DONAHEY
12/01/2022	TSGT	ANDREW KING
12/31/2022	CMSGT	MICHAEL DUGANIERI
12/31/2022	SMSGT	DARYL FERRICKS

*“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.**

