



The Ocean State

WINTER 2015

GUARDIAN



**WINTER STORM
JUNO**



Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) ready to help

Who is a TAA?

A TAA is a state-wide resource advisor for Veterans, service members, and their Families, regardless of service branch, or whether active, Guard or reserve. We will assist you and your Family in accessing the myriad benefits and services you've earned, such as:

VA Assistance – Education/Training Assistance – Health & Life Insurance – Employment Assistance – State and Local Benefits Effects of a Career Change – Financial Assistance – Legal Assistance – Disabled Veterans Programs – Relocation

Why the TAA will be successful in meeting your needs.

- We care about you and your Family.
- Over 98% of us are Veterans or spouses of military members.
- Many TAA have worked through the disability process and received disability compensation.
- We have built strong partnerships and coalitions with many agencies at Federal, State, and local level, as well as many community and private agencies.

Where is the TAA?

We are located in Cranston, R.I., but we can also go off-site for large events including mobilization-demobilizations and unit events/drill weekends.

What you mean to us:

You served your country; now let us serve you.

For assistance, please contact:

Chuck O'Connor
 Contractor, Skyline Ultd Inc.
 National Guard Transition Assistance Advisor
 Rhode Island National Guard, Joint Force Headquarters
 Command Readiness Center
 645 New London Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920-3097
Office: 401.275.4198 or DSN 247.4198
E-mail: charles.b.oconnor.ctr@mail.mil
Website: <http://states.ng.mil/sites/RI/Resources/VeteransBenefits/default.aspx>



RHODE ISLAND NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNICATOR

The Rhode Island National Guard's RING Communicator is now active. Please click on the website below to ask a question, offer a comment, request military support, or request historical military records.

www.riarmynationalguard.com/RINGCommunicator

This tool was developed to enhance two-way communication with individuals, organizations and major stakeholders who require assistance from the Rhode Island National Guard or wish to partner with our organization.

You can also find a link to the RING Communicator at the top right corner of our website at www.ri.ng.mil.

Rhode Island National Guard
**The Ocean State
 Guardian**

Winter 2015



The Governor of Rhode Island and the Captain
 General of the Rhode Island National Guard

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo

The Adjutant General of Rhode Island and Commanding
 General of the Rhode Island National Guard

MG Kevin R. McBride

Director of Joint Staff
 Rhode Island National Guard

BG Charles E. Petrarca Jr.

Deputy Adjutant General
 Rhode Island National Guard

Brig. Gen. Marcus Jannitto

Assistant Adjutant General for Air
 Rhode Island National Guard

Brig. Gen. Matthew Dzialo

Managing Editor
 State Public Affairs Officer

LTC Peter Parente

Public Affairs Specialists

**2LT Megan Burmeister
 SSG Peter Ramaglia**

Public Affairs Office
 (401) 275-4038

Feedback on *The OSG* content, please email:
ngristaffpao@ng.army.mil

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
(401) 275-4038

ON THE COVER

Cover photo by
 Army Staff Sgt. Peter Ramaglia

From the Deputy Chief of Staff

Colonel Arthur Floru



Lead, Mentor, and Teach...The Value Is Extraordinary

Mission Accomplishment...

As members of the finest military in the history of man, these two words are the driving force behind everything we do. Our focus on organizing, training, and equipping is driven by one common desired end-state. Mission accomplishment.

For the Airmen and Soldiers of the Rhode Island National Guard, mission accomplishment is only the beginning. With nearly 14 years of wartime operations behind us, the Rhode Island National Guard has always proven itself exceptionally qualified in primary mission accomplishment. However, don't rest there because that is exactly what the American people expect of us.

It's all of the other things we do that set us apart. To name a few, events such as Leapfest, the RING Open House & Air Show, our C-130J international training, our State Partnership Programs, and of course our community involvement, demonstrates the dedication of our men and women. Today, members of the RING serve in key staff positions from Capitol Hill, to the Pentagon, and major commands around the globe. We always do more.

So how is it that a state as small as Rhode Island, with a population of just over 1 mil-

lion, can build a 3,000 member military team that is routinely mentioned at the highest levels of U.S. military leadership? We do it with an intensity and passion that is unrivaled. We never stop at good enough and the reasonable expectation for the RING is excellence.

Not Without Leadership...

All 3000 members of our team are leaders of some kind. Our success in the past proves that we will meet every challenge and win. Leadership is not something that depends on age or experience. Some of our youngest members come to us with outstanding leadership potential and we must focus the light on them. As military budgets suffer in the coming years, the future of our organization demands we continue to foster an environment for success, and it starts with each volunteer who takes the oath to serve. We must take the time to refine the skills and talents of our future leaders. The raw talent is right before our eyes.

A Pipeline Rich With The Best And Brightest...

Many of those who are joining our ranks today are well-educated, gifted, motivated,

and just all-around great. Now is the time to lead, mentor, and teach them. These three actions, executed properly, are the most powerful tools we have in our arsenal and it's not just a one-way street. It's fascinating to watch some of newest members instructing our most experienced members on new concepts or initiatives. Would anyone with 20 years or more experience want to challenge some of our newest computer operators?

The RING continues to evolve as one of the brightest beacons for our state and nation. Let's guarantee a viable future for those who have taken the oath. Lead by example, mentor with a lifetime of skill, and teach with your vast experience.

Our Team has done great things and we all take great pride in our success.

Let's continue to build on that success by passing on all we've learned in the last 14 years. The knowledge we share will take the next generation of our RI National Guard Team to unimaginable levels of accomplishment.

Lead, mentor, and teach. The value is extraordinary. ■

143d AIRLIFT WING RECEIVES NEW COMMAND

by Air Force Master Sgt. Janeen Miller, 143d Airlift Wing, Public Affairs

Colonel Arthur Floru relinquished command of the 143d Airlift Wing to Colonel Daniel Walter during a Change of Command Ceremony held in the Maintenance Hangar at Quonset Air National Guard Base in front of the Airmen of the 143d Airlift Wing and distinguished guests. Floru served proudly as the Wing Commander for three years. He guided the Wing through several successful inspections, Open Houses and an Air Force wide known International Training Program. Floru has taken a position at Joint Force Headquarters-RI as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Rhode Island National Guard.

Walter, Vice Commander of the 143d AW, assumed command from Floru. Walter addressed the Wing stating that the focus will remain the same for the Wing moving forward. Our physical fitness and professional military education emphasis will continue with the addition of leadership training opportunities for both enlisted and officers. He went on to say, "I'm also a bit worried that we've

been working so hard for so long we've forgotten how to enjoy each other's company and that's not a trivial thing. We just don't know each other as well as we used to. To be good Wingmen we've got to know each other like family." One of his goals going forward will be to encourage the Rhode Warriors to spend more time with one another outside of the duty day.

Walter added that we have a lot of work ahead of us but he is confident that we will tackle the jobs and get them done in true Rhode Warrior fashion.

He closed by saying, "I just want to say that I'm proud to be here, leading you, working for you. I'm proud of all the work you've done and I'm just proud to be on your team. I want you to feel that way too because if you don't you're missing the point of what we do here." Walter is succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Rick Hart as the Vice Wing Commander.

Preceding the Wing Change of Command ceremony, two other units within the 143d Airlift Wing received new Com-

manders. Major Jeremiah Buckenberger took command of the 143d Civil Engineering Squadron during an Assumption of Command. He takes command from Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Bartlett who retired from the 143d Airlift Wing at a ceremony held on February 7, 2015. Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Francoeur was promoted to Colonel, pinned by his wife and children, and then took command of the 143d Operations Group from Colonel John Sullivan during a Change of Command ceremony. Sullivan has taken a position at Joint Force Headquarters-RI. ■



(Left) Colonel Arthur Floru, outgoing Commander of the 143d Airlift Wing, Rhode Island Air National Guard, and Colonel John Sullivan, outgoing Commander of the 143d Operations Group, flew their "fini-flight" on February 6, 2015. Colonels Floru and Sullivan were greeted by family, friends, and fellow Airmen upon landing at Quonset Air National Guard Base, North Kingstown, RI and were sprayed with fire hoses and champagne, a tradition reaching back to World War II. National Guard Photos by Master Sgt. Janeen Miller



(Above) Colonel Daniel Walter assumes command of the 143d Airlift Wing, Rhode Island Air National Guard, by accepting the guidon from Brigadier General Matthew Dzialo, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, RIANG, at a Change of Command Ceremony held February 8, 2015 at Quonset Air National Guard Base, North Kingstown, RI. National Guard Photo by Technical Sgt. Jason Long

FAC HOSTS WINTER ASSISTANCE FAIR

by Army Staff Sgt. Peter Ramaglia, 110th Public Affairs Detachment



The Rhode Island Military Family Assistance Center hosted its 2nd Annual Winter Assistance Fair on Saturday, January 24, 2015 at the Warwick Armory.

The Winter Assistance Fair provided an opportunity for Military Families and Veterans to apply for heating and oil grants, have their resumes looked over by Heroes to Hired, schedule appointments to have their homes evaluated by RISE, and much more.

Despite a snow storm, 33 families attended the Winter Assistance Fair nearly doubling the attendees from last year.

The first 50 people to register received a \$25 gift card to Stop & Shop upon their departure of the event.

“Just about everyone who came went away with some form of assistance,” said Kevin McDonnell, Family Assistance Center Coordinator. “Whether it be 100 gallons of oil, or financial

grant applications, everyone received something to help which made it a worthwhile effort.”

The participating agencies from the event were Realtor Troop Support Task Force, several Community Action Programs, RISE, SNAP, Home Depot, The American Red Cross, The American Legion, The Vet Center, Veterans Affairs, Operation Stand Down, the Diocese of Providence Visiting Vets and many more.

“Overall, the event was a success,” said McDonnell. “Dozens of people helped put the Winter Assistance Fair together and through their efforts many families benefited from it.” ■

SRAAG PROVIDES RI NATIONAL GUARD INSIGHT FOR MOBILIZATION AND TRAINING

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Carr is down in North Carolina now, he left in January but the work him, his predecessor, and his successor do remain in Rhode Island.

The Senior Army Advisors to the Guard (SRAAG) occupy a unique position; they have their feet in both worlds. These officers come from active duty posts to serve several years as an advisor to a National Guard Adjutant General.

As the Rhode Island National Guard's SRAAG, Carr's job dealt mostly with bridging the gap between the National Guard and its active duty counterparts. Carr smoothed the way when Rhode Island Soldiers prepared for mobilization and he helped ensure that training readiness met standard requirements.

As the National Guard's foot print in activations in support of operation shrink the SRAAG's position is changing to. They are now more focused on pre mobilization training, supporting that mission through training visits, exercises and training events.

Additionally Carr performed several unique roles within the Rhode Island Guard; he worked on the Officer Federal Recognition boards and worked with the Defense Coordinating Officer for FEMA region 1 in the event of a state activation.

The SRAAG's job is to synchronize National Guard and Active component objectives and receiving a posting as an advisor can be a unique experience for the active duty officers.

“It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as the SRAAG for this great state for the last three years,” said Carr, outgoing Senior Army Advisor to the Rhode Island National Guard. “During my time here I have gained an even greater appreciation for the professionalism and dedication of the National Guard in serving our nation overseas and our citizens here in Rhode Island.”

Carr will continue on to a position in the U.S.J.F.K. Special Warfare Center and School in Fort Bragg.

“I've thoroughly enjoyed my time in New England and I would like to thank all the members of the Rhode Island National Guard with whom I have the honor to serve.”

Carr's successor will arrive in Rhode Island at the beginning of the summer. ■

RIANG SENIOR NCO COUNCIL HOSTS INAUGURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COURSE

by Air Force Master Sgt. Janeen Miller, 143d Airlift Wing, Public Affairs

The Rhode Island Air National Guard Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Council conducted its first Leadership Development Course on January 21st 2015 at Quonset Air National Guard Base. The event was held in an attempt to provide the future enlisted leaders of the Rhode Island Air National Guard with the tools they will need to be effective Senior NCO's.

The evening was opened with remarks from Rhode Island Air National Guard Leadership, Brigadier General Mark Jannitto, Deputy Adjutant General, Colonel Arthur Floru, current 143d Airlift Wing Commander and incoming Deputy Chief of Staff, Command Chief Master Sergeant Mike Brady, RIANG Command Chief, and Command Chief Master Sergeant Jose Baltazar, 143d AW Command Chief. Attendees were Technical Sergeants and Master Sergeants from the 143d Airlift Wing, 281st Combat Communications Squadron, 102nd Network Warfare Squadron, and Joint Force Headquarters-RI who either volunteered to attend or were chosen by their command to attend the seminar. Following the opening remarks the training began with the foundation of the Enlisted Airman, the "Little Brown Book." Chief Baltazar stressed the importance of Air Force Instruction 36-2618, otherwise known as, the Little Brown Book, and explained how he uses it and how all attendees can use it in their tool box.

Senior Master Sgt Brian Robitaille, 143d Fuels Management Flight Section Chief, and Chief Lori Casucci, former State Command Chief and currently the RIANG Military Personnel Management Officer, briefed on the importance of written communication such as email etiquette, awards and recognition, disciplinary paperwork and the new Enlisted Feedback program. Master Sgt Janeen Miller, 143d Public Affairs Manager and Master Resilience Trainer, briefed about the Comprehensive Airman Fitness Program and followed up with Resilience Skills – Good Listening

and Active Constructive Responding. This training focused on how to listen and respond to your fellow Airmen and others, and encourage them to talk to you whether it is good news or bad news. SMSgt Joe Hart, 143d AW Human Resource Advisor and Satellite NCO Academy and Airman Leadership School Facilitator, and MSgt Doug Gavilanez, 143d Civil Engineering Production Controller, closed out the training portion of the seminar with Situational Leadership. MSgt Gavilanez opened with a story from his experience as a manager in the civilian workforce and SMSgt Hart followed up with an explanation of leadership styles and how to apply each style to the situation at hand.

The evening was wrapped up with a call in from the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air National Guard, Chief James Hotaling. Chief Hotaling thanked the Senior NCO Council for organizing the event and the attendees for taking the time

away from their busy schedules to attend, recognizing that their willingness to attend the Leadership Development Course shows that they are engaged and willing to further their careers and better themselves and their unit. He spoke about the importance of the Air National Guard and its Airmen and our role alongside the Regular Air Force and the Air Force Reserve. He also generously answered questions from the attendees and Senior NCO Council.

All in all, the inaugural Leadership Development Course, hosted by the RIANG Senior NCO Council was a huge success and the Council is looking forward to holding more events of its kind in the future. The men and women of the RIANG thank the Senior NCO Council for their time and effort putting the event together and the Senior NCO council thanks the men and women of the RIANG for their support. ■



Chief Master Sergeant Michael Brady, State Command Chief, Rhode Island Air National Guard, addresses the attendees of the inaugural Leadership Development Course hosted by the RIANG Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Council at Quonset Air National Guard Base, North Kingstown, RI on January 21, 2015. Photo by Master Sgt. Janeen Miller

GOVERNOR'S INAUGURATION

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

Big fat flakes of snow fell onto the gathered audience waiting on the south side of the Rhode Island State House on Jan. 6, 2015.

Neither the cold nor the snow stopped the inauguration of the 75th Governor of the State of Rhode Island, Gina M. Raimondo.

Governor Raimondo received the gorget, a symbolic piece of armor, from Maj. Gen. Kevin R. McBride. The gorget identifies Governor Raimondo as the Captain General and Commander-in-Chief of the Rhode Island National Guard and Militia units.

The first female governor of Rhode Island expressed gratitude to the people of Rhode Island for choosing her to lead the state during her remarks.

"What an incredible day. I am so proud and humbled to be Rhode Island's next governor," said Raimondo on her website following the ceremony. "Thank you so much for all your support over the past year and I can't wait to work with you to ignite a comeback for our state in the year to come."

The ceremony concluded with a 19 gun cannon salute from the Guards of Thunder. ■



Governor of Rhode Island Gina M. Raimondo gives the crowd a thumbs up after receiving the gorget from Maj. Gen. Kevin R. McBride, Adjutant General of Rhode Island and Commanding General of the Rhode Island National Guard during the governor's inauguration ceremony at the Rhode Island State House on January 6, 2015. (Photo by Master Sgt. Janeen Miller)

RHODE ISLAND NATIONAL GUARD FEATURED ON GOOD NEWS RI

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs



(left to right) Transition Assistance Adviser Chuck O'Connor, Chaplain Tim Bourquin, Good News RI host Juliana Anderson, Military Spouse Julie Delcourt, and Survivor Outreach Coordinator Jessica Rivard after appearing on Good News RI which aired in January 2015. (Photo courtesy of Good News RI)

Good News RI, a local public access show reached out to the Rhode Island National Guard this winter.

The show which aired in January included participants from the Family Assistance Center, the State Chaplain and a military spouse who discussed programs available to military members and their families.

The show host, Juliana Anderson, focuses on interviewing Rhode Islanders from all walks of life who are striving in their own way to make Rhode Island a better place to live and work.

The work of the members of the Family Assistance Center highlight the unique challenges that military families' deal with and the support available to them. ■

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HARMON RECOGNIZED

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs



Lieutenant Colonel Sharon L. Harmon recognized at the State House in the House of Representatives Chambers

The State of Rhode Island House of Representatives recognized the achievements of Harmon on Wednesday Feb. 11, 2015 at the Rhode Island State House.

Harmon's state representative, Representative Casey, introduced a House Resolution in recognition of her recent promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in the Rhode Island National Guard.

The resolution was introduced and read on the floor of the House by the clerk; "That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations hereby recognizes and congratulates Major Sharon Lenette Harmon on her promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. We furthermore applaud her myriad achievements, awards, and commendations, and thank her for the longevity of her service and commitment and wish her and her entire family the very best health, happiness, and future success."

Harmon received a standing ovation after Brig. Gen. Marcus Jannitto, Deputy Adjutant General of Rhode Island, presented her with the Excellence in Diversity Award from Gen. Frank J. Grass, Chief of National Guard Bureau.

Jannitto expressed his gratitude for the work of Harmon and thanked her for all her contributions to the Rhode Island National Guard.

Harmon is the State Family Program director and runs the Adjutant General's family programs. She is a resident of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. She lives with her two children, Marcus Allen and Valerie Lenette, and her mother, Mary Worthy. ■

(Above) Brig. Gen. Marcus Jannitto, Deputy Adjutant General of Rhode Island congratulates Lt. Col. Sharon L. Harmon after presenting her with the Excellence in Diversity Award on February 11, 2015 at the Rhode Island State House. (Photo by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs)

(Right) Members of the State House of Representatives Lt. Col. Sharon L. Harmon, and Brig. Gen. Marcus Jannitto, Deputy Adjutant General of Rhode Island pose for a photo after Harmon had just been recognized for her achievements on February 11, 2015 at the Rhode Island State House. (Photo by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs)



OPERATI

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

At first, it seemed that the northeast might be spared from a prolonged and challenging winter. Milder than normal temperatures were the norm.....until mid January.

As temperatures began to plummet, snow was seemingly in the forecast at least three times a week. Extreme weather conditions on Jan. 26, 2015 resulted in the Governor of Rhode Island activating the National Guard.

Before the state had recovered from Winter Storm Juno, which dumped more than twenty inches or more of snow across the state, over 300 Soldiers and Airmen answered the call, assisting in route clearance and traffic control point operations across the state.

Providing support during an emergency event that is inherently dangerous for not only our citizens but for our first responders and uniformed service members as well, requires close coordination with local and state agencies to ensure the safety of the citizens of Rhode Island.

The state activation triggers an immediate response from our highly skilled and trained Soldiers and Airmen assigned to the Rhode Island National Guard's Joint Operations Center (JOC), the planning hub of all Guard actions during an emergency. During normal operations the JOC is a 24/7 operation that is managed by a small cell, but quickly becomes a swarm of activity, providing the necessary coordination to conduct future operations.

The JOC personnel monitor reports and develop plans in order to prepare for

Specialist O'Brien from the 861st Engineer Company guides a piece of engineering equipment as the 861st conduct snow removal operations on January 26, 2015 in Woonsocket, RI. (Photo by Army Sgt. Terry Rajsombath)

ON JUNO

activations like Winter Storm Juno. The primary focus during an actual emergency is to receive mission requests from the state Emergency Operations Center, conduct a mission analysis and then provide the necessary support to our towns and communities. On occasion, when emergency conditions cross state borders, request for assistance may be coordinated with adjacent states.

To enhance our response time and capabilities, the Rhode Island National Guard, the Rhode Island State Police, National Grid and the Department of Transportation formed "strike teams" in order to provide immediate assistance when called upon. These teams included a critical mix of response assets that were designed to manage a multitude of emergencies by utilizing a diverse team of highly skilled professionals in pre-staged positions throughout the state.

The timeframe of the storm closed down most businesses and organizations, creating a demand for immediate action. The concept was proven highly successful, placing the right personnel at the right time with the necessary equipment in the most critical areas of need based on the forecast and historical data of similar weather conditions.

Soldiers from the 861st Engineers were standing by and quickly responded to the request from the City of Woonsocket to conduct snow removal operations. The rapidly falling snow created a dangerous situation for Public Works employees quickly overwhelming their capacity to respond safely.

When the Woonsocket Public Works employees were exhausted due to the snowfall at rates of 2 to 3 inches per hour, Soldiers of the 861st Engineers provided the necessary assistance allowing the town's crews time

to recover and re-focus their internal operations.

Just as the 861st responded to a critical need to the north, members of the 118th Military Police Battalion provided a wide array of traffic control support throughout the state's major routes, creating the conditions for a more rapid recovery.

As the state's first military responder, the Rhode Island National Guard trains year round to assist our local communities in time of need. Many of our service members who have

deployed to support our nation feel the most job satisfaction when they are helping their neighbors here at home.

"We are cleaning up some snow mess, helping out Woonsocket, trying to get to some of the stuff they didn't get to do," said Spc. John O'Brien, an equipment operator with the 861st Engineers. "This is my third snow storm I've been activated for. I am glad to get out and help the communities."

Just another example that the Rhode Island National Guard is, "Always Ready Always There." ■



A vehicle from the 43rd Military Police Brigade assists local and state authorities provide safety and security for Rhode Island Department of Transportation workers as they remove snow from Rt. 95 on January 26, 2015. (Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Peter Ramaglia)

SONS TREK TROUGH WILDERNESS AND PAST TO HONOR HIS FATHER

by John Hill, Providence Journal



Robert B. Urquhart and members of the Roark family stand by the sign Robert erected honoring his father Maj. Roland L. Urquhart and the six other US Air Force Airmen who perished on January 22, 1957 when their KC-97 Stratofreighter crashed on Big Shanty.

Robert B. Urquhart was 9 years old in January 1957 when, on a rainy night in upstate New York, his father was killed. The Air Force plane he was aboard slammed into the side of a mountain called Big Shanty.

At least once a year, the North Kingstown resident makes the trip to Greenwood Cemetery in Coventry to plant geraniums at his father's grave. But in October he went on a more arduous pilgrimage — to a rocky ledge on the side of Big Shanty, to stand on the spot where his father died.

As he prepared for the journey,

he told himself it was no big emotional deal.

"I have peace with it," he said before he left. "It's more curiosity."

On Oct. 18, after he spent two years researching the crash, four local men guided him to the site. They helped him plant a metal sign that listed the names of the men on the doomed flight.

After he stepped back to look at the sign, it hit him that he wasn't the only son whose father hadn't come home that night. He realized he wasn't there for just himself, but for them, too.

"That feeling is exactly what the

military is all about," he said. "We work hard, we train hard, and we live on the edge. We all know it can end without ever saying goodbye."

Urquhart knows about the edge. He followed his father's career flight path, joining the Air National Guard and rising to lieutenant colonel. He flew in 48 states and from 60 international airports. He saw an engine explode on takeoff and flew over the Andes with the landing gear jammed in the down position.

His father, Roland L. Urquhart Jr., joined what was then the Army

Air Corps in 1943 and piloted bombers in World War II, earning two Flying Crosses and four air medals. In the Korean War, he was a test pilot, trying out huge new cargo aircraft that some feared were so heavy they'd ruin the runways. He flew clandestine Cold War missions in Europe and served stateside in Florida, Washington, D.C., and Rhode Island. He was still on active duty when he died, at age 36.

At 67, Robert Urquhart, now retired, said his memories of his father are the ones of a 9-year-old, when parents are all-knowing and perfect.

He remembers trips and projects: when his father, for example, took him to see a model miniature village of little houses, ships and cars in the Netherlands. He remembers helping his dad build a breezeway on their house at Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee, Mass. He got hit on the head with a two-by-four, and remembers how his father rubbed his head and kept asking if he was sure he was OK.

FATEFUL DELAYS

Jan. 22, 1957, was the night Urquhart's dad didn't come home.

He was on orientation assignment aboard a KC-97, an enormous tanker plane sent to pump 30,000 pounds of jet fuel into a B-47 bomber in the skies over western Massachusetts.

The KC-97 took off at 1:30 p.m. from Westover and was ready to head home at 5:30 p.m. The day's rain and fog had worsened and the plane, with the call sign "Crony 14," was told to head north to a base in Maine.

A half-hour later, according to the report on the crash, conditions in Maine deteriorated as well, and Crony 14 was sent west for Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, N.Y., northwest of Utica in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains. At 6:35 p.m., Crony 14 was approaching Griffiss, where it was about 50 degrees and raining. They were third in line to land and circled the air base in a wide holding pattern.

At 7:20 p.m. Crony 14 got the go-ahead, but at the last moment they were ordered to pull up and return to the holding pattern so a fighter jet, dangerously low on fuel, could land. When the tanker again got permission to land 25

minutes later, controllers reported its radio signal was weak and Crony 14's crew complained of homing difficulties. But then they messaged the plane was starting a standard approach.

It was the last the tower heard from them.

The search, hampered by freezing rain and snow, began the next day. A local hunter, Nelson Folts, found the wreckage on the mountainside, about 70 miles from Griffiss, on the morning of Jan. 24.

Urquhart said that if the Air Force ever determined the cause of the crash, no one told him.

His mother's theory was that the crew was overcome by carbon monoxide. She said his father had often said the cockpit of the KC-97 could get awfully cold, and air crews sometimes brought their own kerosene heaters to keep warm. If Crony 14 had one on board, and it malfunctioned, the cockpit could have filled with the odorless, colorless gas.

SON'S SEARCH MISSION

Urquhart often wondered about where his father's plane crashed, and two years ago he began to find out. He got the Air Force crash report, but it didn't locate exactly where the plane went down.

Then, the breakthrough came on the Internet, when he found a website on military plane crashes and a New York newspaper story about an anniversary of the accident. The site had a photograph of the crash site.

He couldn't locate the photographer, so he decided to call the town hall in Ohio, N.Y., the nearest town, to see if they knew him. No luck, but the clerk told him about a town bookkeeper whose husband, Harold Roark, hunts in the area of the crash and had been there.

On Oct. 18, Urquhart and Roark, Roark's brother Gordon, Gordon's son Chip and Chip's son Colton climbed onto their all-terrain vehicles and headed into the woods of the 2,300-foot Big Shanty Mountain.

Even with the rugged vehicles, the trip wasn't easy. They spent an hour bouncing down an old logging trail used mostly by hunters of deer or black

bears, Urquhart said. Then they trekked 20 minutes more on foot in the rain, working through thick underbrush up a ridge slippery with wet leaves and mud.

The KC-97, a four engine-plane with a wingspan of 141 feet, came in at an angle, chopping the tops off trees in a 10-acre swath until it hit the ground. The trees grew back and the underbrush returned as the forest healed itself. "You'd never know anything happened there," Urquhart said.

Decades ago, the Air Force cut a trail into the woods and hauled out most of the wreckage, particularly the fuselage, wings and engines. An untold number of smaller parts were left embedded in the earth, Urquhart said. Over the years, when hunters found them, they left small piles on boulders at the site. He spotted one still in the dirt — a piece of the fuselage his father died in. He took it.

But it was after the Roarks helped him plant the metal sign — as they stood back to inspect the work, and he saw the names of those men and thought of their sons — that Urquhart said the emotions of the moment caught up with him.

"So I saluted the sign and they were all looking at me," he said. "I didn't want to give a speech, that isn't going to happen, but I wanted them to understand how much I appreciated what they did, the trail, the weather."

When Urquhart talked about other aspects of his search, he found the words easily. But when he described that moment, he labored.

"When it was time to go ... I looked at the sign ... I didn't want to show ... It wasn't easy," he said. "I'm still decompressing."

He took pictures, gathered fragments of wreckage to take home and headed out. Roark, a Korean War veteran, sent him a message last week that he plans to clear a wider path to the site. He said he'll go back on Memorial Day and plant a flag.

The sign with the names of the airmen will stand there alone in the New York woods to be hit by rain, leaves and snow. Only the Roarks and the hunters who stumble upon the site will know it's there.

But Urquhart said he'll know it's there, and that is enough. ■

RING COMMUNICATOR

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

The Rhode Island National Guard launched its Communicator, an interface between major stakeholders and the RI National Guard, this winter.

The RING Communicator is a system designed to provide a communication method to individuals, organizations and major stakeholders who require assistance from the Rhode Island National Guard or wish to partner with our organization.

Located on the organizations website, www.ri.ng.mil, the link allows direct communication to the Rhode Island National Guard.

The Communicator provides a streamlined process that helps ensure requests for support, information or collaboration go through the proper channels. This is not an emergency communication device but is tailored to address day to day interactions between the external organizations and the Rhode Island National Guard. ■



RHODE ISLAND NATIONAL GUARD LAUNCHES IT'S FIRST PODCAST

by Army 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

The Rhode Island National Guard released its first podcast on Feb. 5, 2015 on the organization's Facebook and Twitter pages.

The podcast, hosted by 2nd Lt. Megan Burmeister, focuses on providing information to Soldiers and Airmen regarding all things Rhode Island National Guard.

The initial episode highlights the Thrift Savings Program, a 401K type retirement savings program offered to members of the Rhode Island National Guard. The follow on episodes will look at both the Tricare Reserve Select health insurance option and Educational benefits.

Servicemembers are encouraged to participate by asking questions and/or ideas for the podcast. Emails can be sent to megan.j.burmeister.mil@mail.mil

Check out the podcast at www.ri.ng.mil. ■



PROVIDENCE COLLEGE HOSTS MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT

by Army Lieutenant Colonel Peter Parente, Rhode Island National Guard Public Affairs

The excitement surrounding the Providence College men's basketball team was evident from the tip-off as they battled the Marquette Golden Eagles to a win on March 1, at the Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence, firmly establishing themselves as a top national program.

Adding to the excitement of the evening's events was the tribute to our men and women of the armed forces who continue to serve our state and Nation.

The theme of the game was Armed Forces Night, a night to honor

service members from all across Rhode Island.

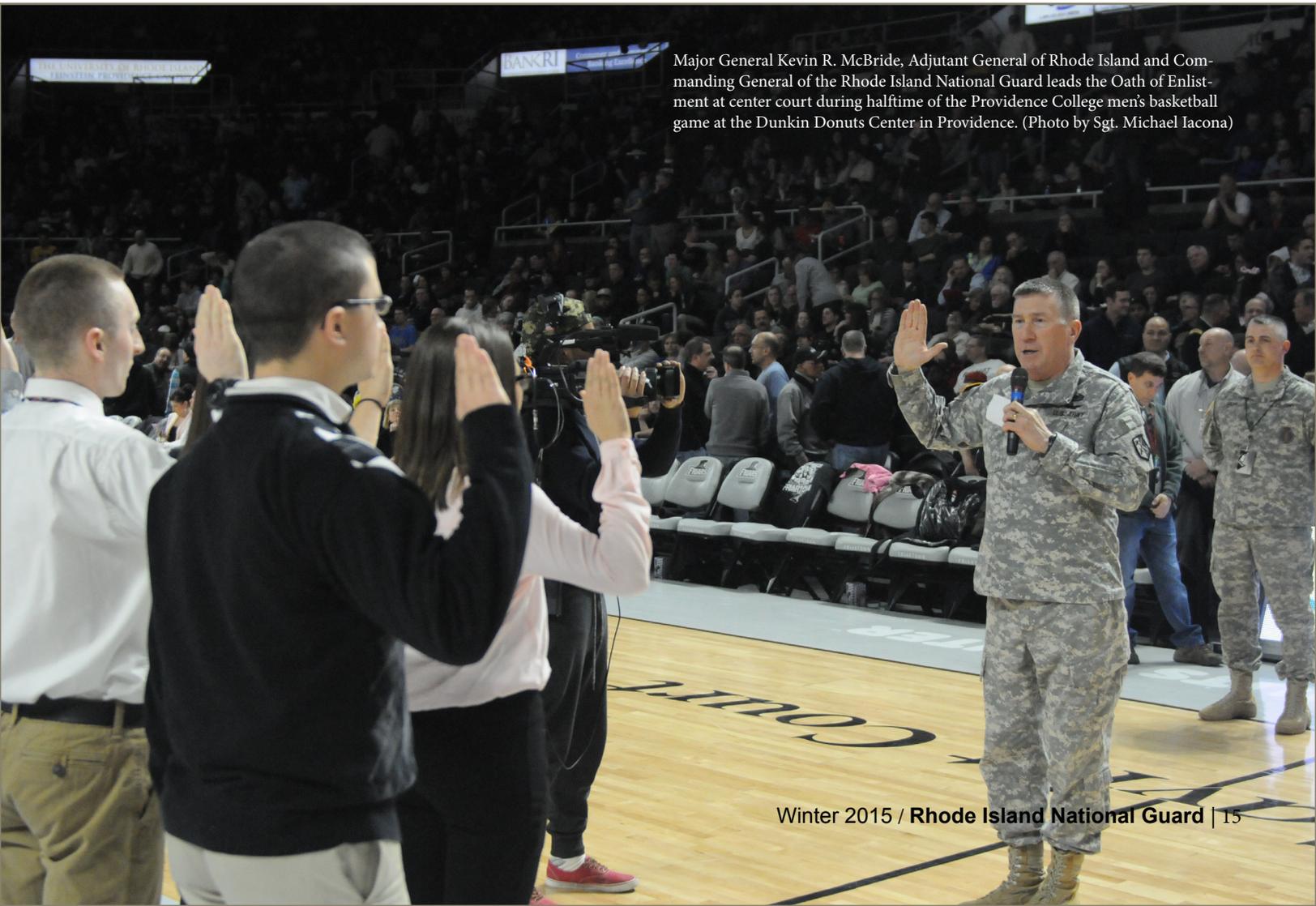
Highlighting the Military Appreciation Night, which takes months of planning by many dedicated people, was the swearing in of five new recruits by Major General Kevin R. McBride, Adjutant General of Rhode Island and Commanding General of the Rhode Island National Guard.

The response from the sold out arena during the half-time ceremony is something the new recruits will forever remember as they begin their military careers.

Providence College has a long history of supporting the Armed Forces, and is home to an R.O.T.C. program on campus.

McBride spoke for a short time to the new recruits and the crowd; he emphasized the importance of the job the young recruits were embarking on, and the sacrifices that lie ahead.

At the completion of the Oath of Enlistment, the recruits and the general exited the court to a standing ovation. ■



Major General Kevin R. McBride, Adjutant General of Rhode Island and Commanding General of the Rhode Island National Guard leads the Oath of Enlistment at center court during halftime of the Providence College men's basketball game at the Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Iacona)



2015 RHODE ISLAND AIRSHOW 25th ANNIVERSARY

by Air Force Master Sgt. Janeen Miller, 143d Airlift Wing, Public Affairs

The Rhode Island National Guard Open House and Air Show, sponsored by the National Guard Association of Rhode Island, is coming again this May 30th and 31st, 2015 to Quonset Air National Guard Base, North Kingstown, Rhode Island.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the RING Open House Air Show and will feature the United States Navy Blue Angels. For the first time in the history of the show there will have three jet teams performing at the show! In addition to the Blue Angels, the Rhode Island National Guard will welcome the Canadian Snow Birds and the Breitling Jet Team on their first North American tour from Europe. The show will also feature acts from long time favorites and award winning aerobatic performers such as Sean D.

Tucker flying the Oracle Challenger, John Klatt representing the Air National Guard, Rob Holland Ultimate Air Shows, The Jack Links Screamin' Sasquatch jet powered bi-plane, the Geico Skytypers, Ace Maker Air Shows, the Shockwave Jet Truck, a CF-18 demo, an F-16 demo and the USAF Heritage Flight.

As a result of the 2014 Open House and Air Show the National Guard Association of Rhode Island was able to donate \$115,000 to the Hasbro Children's Hospital, bringing the total amount donated since the show's inception to \$1.8 Million! In addition to the Hasbro Children's Hospital, NGARI has been able to donate at total of \$380,000 to smaller local charities throughout the state of Rhode Island from the Open House Air Show.

The men and women of the Rhode Island National Guard work tirelessly to open Quonset ANGB to the community for the largest, FREE, two day summer event in Rhode Island. Each year our neighbors are given the opportunity to meet the Soldiers and Airmen and see what they do. We look forward to welcoming our community members again this year for what is sure to be an OUTSTANDING show celebrating 25 years!

For more information about the show visit the website – www.riairshow.org – and follow the show on Facebook and Twitter – www.facebook.com/riairshow – @riairshow on Twitter. Use #riairshow when posting on social media. ■



