**Promotions, retirements & separations**

The following individuals have been promoted to the rank indicated as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

**SENIOR AIRMAN (E-4)**
- Adam Barker, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Wendy Haight, 123rd Services Flt.

**STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)**
- Heath Bloyd, 123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Jonathan Coulter, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Sheldon Cowley, KyANG State Headquarters
- Lawrence Hamele, 123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Christopher Lockwood, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Daniel Miske, 165th Weather Flt.

**TECHNICAL SERGEANT (E-6)**
- Anthony Berold, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Jeffrey Bryant, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Thomas Hagan, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Jody King, 123rd Aerial Port Control Element
- David Nichte, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- James Tongoate, 165th Airlift Sq.

The following individuals have retired as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

- Lt. Col. Robert Abell, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Lt. Col. Douglas Butler, 123rd Medical Sq.

- Tech. Sgt. Timothy Duncan, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Master Sgt. Ronald George, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Larry Hill, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Senior Airman Stephen Johnson, 123rd Services Flt.
- Staff Sgt. Barbara Kolb, 123rd Airlift Wing
- Tech. Sgt. Donald Pierce, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Lt. Col. Christopher Ryemman, 165th Airlift Sq.

The following individuals have separated from the Kentucky Air Guard:

- Senior Airman Brandi Allen, 123rd Logistic Gp.
- Airman 1st Class John Walton, 123rd Student Flt.
- Senior Airman Gary Warford, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.

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**2 STS troops killed in MC-130 crash**

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Ziegler

Cargo Courier Editor

A sea of blue filled the Base Annex Aug. 16 to remember the lives of Tech. Sgts. Christopher Matero and Martin Tracy, combat controllers here in the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron.

The men were killed Aug. 7 when the MC-130H Combat Talon they were aboard crashed in Puerto Rico while on a training mission.

They will be remembered for their big smiles, senses of humor and a pursuit for physical fitness excellence, according to friends and co-workers.

The loss is great, said 2nd Lt. Sean McLane, director of operations for the special tactics squadron.

“It’s hard to quantify,” he said. “As combat controllers, it’s not unusual for us to lose friends in the career field because of the dangers associated with the job.”

What makes this more tragic, McLane said, is that both men spent time in war-torn Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom and survived only to come home and be killed on a training mission.

“We’ve just lost two of our best operators, guys with real-world experience who have been shot at and still did their job. That’s a rare commodity.

“We know they have courage under fire because they’ve been under fire.”

Most of all, McLane added, “we just lost two really great guys.”

Tech. Sgt. Martin Tracy, 33, had been in the Kentucky Air Guard for nearly six years and had served in the military since 1987.

After leaving the active-duty Air Force as a survival school instructor, he joined the unit here and made a career change to become a combat controller. In his new job, Tracy, like other Kentucky Air Guard combat controllers, stayed deployed nearly 200 days a year.

Tech. Sgt. Martin Tracy

His friends remember him as the man they wish they could be because of his attitude and dedication to physical fitness.

“He was every thing you could ever want to be in person,” said Tech. Sgt. Bill Sprake, also a combat controller in the 123rd.

“He was the most physically fit, and he had the personality that nothing ever bothered him. He was the most fun to be around, and you could always count on his laugh to liven things up.”

Tracy was, Sprake said, the kind of person who didn’t let the little things get to him.

“When things get stressful in the field,
COMMANDER'S CALL

The war is not over—stay prepared

It has been one year since our nation was brutally attacked and since we started our military, economic and diplomatic response to this attack. Our president told us this was going to be a long and arduous struggle—that lives would be changed, and lives would be lost. Nothing has changed since then to lead us to think this thing is over.

I'm afraid we have been lulled into a false sense of well-being in the past six months or so and just might have forgotten what a sense of well-being in the past six months would be changed, and lives would be lost.

This was far from over, and we must all be prepared to once again answer the call. Everyone in the 123rd is a player in this war. You may not be the guy who personally kills the enemy, but you may fly him there. You may fix the aircraft that get him there. You may order the part to fix the aircraft. You may build or protect the base from which our aircrews operate. You may cook the meals or type the orders. You may not be the guy who personally fights the enemy, but you may fly him there. You may order the part to fix the aircraft. You may build or protect the base from which our aircrews operate. You may cook the meals or type the orders.

We have to find these people, and we have to convince them to do that. So our response is not a “War on Terror,” it is a war on every person who plots or carries out an attack on us, and against those who give financial or other aid to them. We have to find these people, and we have to eliminate their impact on our nation.

This is not a battle that can be won overnight. It is a war that will require a commitment from all of us. It will require a commitment from our nation to protect us.

We have arrived at a new steady-state, “Stop-Loss.” Roche said he has no assurance that the Department of Defense will not be able to authorize it. The stop-loss policy will be a one-month period to allow both the Air Force and affiliated personnel time for transitional employment.

“I have arrived at a new steady-state, ‘Stop-Loss,’” Roche said. “We have not yet decided if we will send anyone into harm's way or to do a mission without the full protection that we can offer,” he said.

But Roche added, “We do not want to send anyone into harm’s way or to do a mission without the full protection that we can offer.”

The release does not apply to anyone who is not currently deployed in support of operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom.

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of The Cargo Courier are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Air Force.

The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the public affairs office of the 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville International Airport, Louisville, Ky. 40213-2678.

Our office is located in room 2118 of the Wing Headquarters, Building Deadline for this issue is Sept. 23.

By Master Sgt. Ron Tull
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — More than 100,000 of the Air Force’s government travel cards will be canceled in early October for lack of use, according to the service’s travel card program manager.

“People have, Michael Weber, is part of a service-wide effort to “clean up the books and will affect those people who have not used their card for a year or more. He added that precautions are in place to ensure no one is caught empty-handed in a time of need. “We won’t leave anyone stranded,” he said. “If for some reason an individual didn’t hear about this policy and is checking into a hotel and the card is rejected, the Air Force travel card manager said, “I believe it is not an accident that there has been another attack since Sept. 11. The actions of our government, the military, civilian law enforcement and others have been the reason. This war is far from over, and we must all be prepared to once again answer the call. Everyone in the 123rd is a player in this war.

We have to find these people, and we have to convince them to do that. So our response is not a “War on Terror,” it is a war on every person who plots or carries out an attack on us, and against those who give financial or other aid to them. We have to find these people, and we have to eliminate their impact on our nation.

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Nearly 35 Kentucky Air Guard aerial port members joined with four other Guard units at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., July 21-28. 3 to hold the first all-Guard Patriot Partner exercise.

With Kentucky’s 123rd Aerial Port Squadron serving as the lead unit, the troops assembled and took over aerial port facilities at the active-duty base, said Chief Master Sgt. Tommy Downs, who served as superintendent for the 703rd Consolidated Aerial Port Squadron during the exercise.

It’s purpose was to free up active-duty troops for training and annual leave while providing Guard troops with additional experience and training, the chief said.

The annual exercise usually is run by both Air Force Reserve and Guard personnel. What made this event different is that it was the first national exercise of its kind with all Guard participants, said Maj. Doug Rosc, commander of the 123rd Aerial Port Squadron.

“We had 144 personnel deployed from five units providing around-the-clock support for a vital strategic port,” Rose said.

“I was thoroughly impressed by the professionalism, skill level and attitude of each of the members of the 703rd,” the chief added.

The Guard units mirrored active-duty’s daily activities and provided 24-hour coverage seven days a week, with three daily eight-hour shifts.

During Patriot Partner, approximately 75 to 80 percent of the active-duty unit’s activities were handled exclusively by the Guard members.

Guard units also took advantage of the opportunity to train with unfamiliar equipment.

“We have been able to train with a Tunner loader, operational software and oversized cargo that aren’t available at our home bases,” said 1st Lt. Kevin Thornberry of the Kentucky unit, who served as officer in charge of air freight for the 703rd.

Ultimately, Patriot Partner allows guardsmen to train with other Guard units in an active-duty personnel and achieve complete work-force integration.

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“Patriot Partner offers us a unique opportunity to further refine the skills we will need when we are called to duty anywhere in the world.”

Both active-duty and Guard personnel realize the value of cooperative training programs like Patriot Partner.

“Patriot Partner is based on mutual benefit,” said 1st Lt. Jeff Vincent of the 123rd and 703rd.

“The (active-duty) personnel get a feel while Guard members get crucial training.”

Other Guard units that participated included the 358th Aerial Port Squadron of Baltimore, Md.; 137th Aerial Port Squadron of Oklahoma City, Okla.; 152nd Aerial Port Squadron of Reno, Nev.; and 156th Aerial Port Squadron of Carolinas, Puerto Rico.

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Ziegler
Cargo Courier Editor

Kentucky Air Guard Family Day returns to the Thoroughbred Express this year, and it’s scheduled for Oct. 6.

The event, which was cancelled last year for security reasons, promises to be a fun day for everyone, said Lt. Col. Rich Frymire, event coordinator.

“It’s really a splendid opportunity for Kentucky Air Guard members and their families to enjoy a fun-filled and relaxing afternoon.

“It’s always great when family members get a chance to come and see what we do,” he said.

“It’s even better when we have good food and fun things to do to go along with it.”

The day will be packed with events beginning at 11 a.m. and continuing until 3:30 p.m., Frymire said.

The day’s static display will feature the C-130 Hercules and the F-16 Falcon aircraft.

Other attractions include live demonstrations and mock attacks by the 123rd Security Forces Squadron.

Visitors also will have a chance to view the unit’s Firearms Training System in action.

Meanwhile, the Fire Truck Pull will allow members of the 123rd Civil Engineers Squadron to defend their title from Family Day 2000.

Numerous children’s activities are planned, including a rock-climbing wall.

Finally, popular Louisville aviation artist Bob Conely will be on hand to display his prints featuring KyANG aircraft from the past 50 years.

Unit members are encouraged to bring cookies, cakes and brownies for a cake-walk.

Desserts should be dropped off at the Thoroughbred Dining Facility on Family Day between 7 and 10:30 a.m.

For information on the event, contact Lt. Col. Rich Frymire at ext. 4589.


KyANG NEWS

123rd APS leads 1st all-Guard Patriot Partner

Story and photo by Jennifer Turner
437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Five Air Guard units took over aerial port operations at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., July 21-28. 3 for the first all-Guard Patriot Partner exercise.

Remember to care for yourself even when caring for others

“First In… That Others May Live” is the motto of Air Force special tactics personnel.

The military community is expected to take care of others first.

“We cannot hear other people’s pain without being affected by it in some way.

Some of the effects include sleep difficulties, irritability, depression, aggression, pessimism, cynicism, quitting the job and poor work performance.

Discovering how to restore your batteries is good self-aid. Here are some helpful tips:

—Stay with “good enough.” Do you really need a new car, boat, etc.? Sometimes, what you have is good enough.

—Take a break from media and electronics. Turn off the TV and leave it off for a week.

—Establish routines that refresh. Enjoy breakfast with the family weekly.

—Adjust your expectations with yourself. You are not Superwoman or Superman.

Avoid things that deplete you—they usually only make you feel worse: Caffeine, eating for comfort, alcohol, pornography, compulsive buying, nicotine and workaholism are a few examples.

Instead, try things that replenish you—like storytelling, music, exercise, couples’ relationship time, hearing stories of healing, meditation, spiritual growth/Bible study/worship and connecting with friends.

—Lt. Col. Tom Curry
Wing Chaplain

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**KYANG NEWS**

**TALCE completes ORI in own backyard**

By Senior Airman Mark Flener Cargo Courier Staff Writer

The 123rd Tactical Airlift Control Flight successfully completed an Operational Readiness Inspection here Aug. 14-16, support- ing an Army unit in conjunc- tion with an exercise at Fort Knox, Ky.

The flight, which deployed earlier this year for Operation Enduring Freedom, pull- together with little advance no- tice to complete the inspec- tion, proving once again that unit members are ready to an- swer the call when needed, said Lt. Col. Greg Nelson, the flight’s commander.

“I was in Cuba when AMC called and asked if we’d be willing to do an ORI in Louis- ville 30 days later,” Nelson said.

Complicating matters: While Nelson was in Cuba, the rest of his personnel were at Fort Campbell, Ky., sup- porting the Army.

The inspection involved redeploying the 3rd Battal- ion, 27th Field Artillery Regi- ment—120 Army personnel and 300,000 pounds of cargo, including a Mobile Rocket Launching System—to Fort Bragg, N.C.

Brigadier General Maj. Richard Matero, operations officer of the 123rd Tactical Airlift Con- trol Flight, and Senior Airman Margaret Bennett, an airfield manager, built a tent outside the command and control center during the unit’s operation readiness inspection here in August.

Family Readiness Team volunteers now employees

By Senior Airman Mark Flener Cargo Courier Staff Writer

For more than 10 years Paula McLain and Darlene Swanner have volunteered their time to the Kentucky Air Guard’s Family Readiness Team.

Recently, however, that changed. On July 16, both women were hired as part-time employees. They did it in 48 hours with two 24-hour operations.

Inspectors concentrated on the command and control of the nine C-141s and the timely reporting of information to the Air Mobility Command/Tanker Control Center, as well as the ability for the group to survive and operate under combat condi- tions.

The Kentucky unit did its job with a heat index of 108 degrees and a simulated hos- tile environment.

“They performed very well,” Nelson said.

He also noted that the working relationship be- tween the KYANG unit and the other units during the inspec- tion was very good.

“We’ve been working with the Army and other ser- vices for a year now,” he said. “They understand what we do, and we understand what they do. I think we did exception- ally well for an exercise in our own back yard,” Nelson said. “We’ve been proven in combat and by the Air Mo- bility Command Inspector General evalua- tion. You can’t get any better than that.”

All personnel and equipment had to be loaded onto nine C-141s as quickly and accurately as possible, according to Nelson. They did it in 48 hours with two 24-hour operations.

Tech. Sgt. Christopher Matero, 31, joined the Kentucky Air Guard in May 2001. Pre- viously he was an instructor at the combat controllers’ school, where he trained many airmen who served in Afghanistan defend- ing our nation.

Only three weeks before his death, Matero was selected for an officer position in the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron.

It had been his long-term goal to attend college and then become an officer. According to friends, once he put his mind to something, it was bound to happen.

Master Sgt. Jon Rosa, also a combat controller in the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, said Matero left active duty to provide stability for his family.

“Rosa said that they would never have to move again,” Rosa recalled.

Matero’s first few months in Louisville were pretty uneventful. Then Sept. 11 came and changed everything.

Chris knew that special tactics would be deeply involved in our country’s new war on terrorism, Rosa said. Shortly after return- ing from a deployment to Africa, Chris and other members of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron were en route to Afghanistan.

Some people live an entire life and won- der if they ever made a difference,” Rosa said. “I think we did exception- ally well for an exercise in our own back yard,” Nelson said. “We’ve been proven in combat and by the Air Mo- bility Command Inspector General evalua- tion. You can’t get any better than that.”

**Matero and Tracy remembered as great men**

Continued from Page 1

you may not have water for a day and it’s 100 degrees. You may not think you’re go- ing to make it through the day, but that never bothered him.

Sprake recalls being on mission with Tracy when things got rough.

“We were out for seven days and ran out of water the first day. It didn’t rain. We were being eaten alive by ticks, chiggers and flies. But Martin was joking the whole time.”

Tracy also was remarkable for his high standard of physical fitness.

“He was always striving to be at a higher fitness level, although he was already at a level above everyone else,” Sprake said, noting that Tracy would run 10 miles to the gym and then work out.

“It was extreme.”

Staff Sgt. Josh Haney, a pararescueman in the 123rd, said he admired Tracy for his dedication.

“He went above and beyond the standards in physical fitness. He was in about the best shape of anyone in the special tactics career fields.

“He symbolized everything a combat con- troller should be.”

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Rosa was never the same after the loss of his friend.

“She’s very quiet about it,” said Matero’s wife, Leanne. “If you know her, you know it was bad.”

Rosa had the opportunity to serve with such outstanding in- dividuals as Tracy and Matero. “Sgt. Tracy and Matero served this na- tion and our unit with honor and dignity,” said Marijuana. “They were warriors in the tru- est sense of the word, and I am honored and extremely proud to have served with them.”

By Staff Sgt. Tommy Downs

**KYANG NEWS**

**Maj. Kevin Morris, operations officer for the 123rd Tactical Air- lift Command Flight, and Senior Airman Margaret Bennett, an airfield manager, build a tent outside the command and control center during the unit’s operation readiness inspection here in August.**

**Darlene Swanner and Paula McLain no longer volunteer to run the Family Readi- ness Team because they recently were hired as part-time KYANG employees.**

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**Col. Michael Harden, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing Commander**

“*They were warriors in the truest sense of the word, and I am honored and extremely proud to have served with them.*”

2002 KyANG News

Senior Airman Mark Flener Cargo Courier Staff Writer

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5
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Cargo Courier Staff Writer

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Other Air Force units participating in the exercise were the 105th Aerial Port Squadron of the New York Air National Guard and the 452nd Aircraft Generation Squadron, an Air Force Reserve unit.

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The military community is expected to take care of others first. But who takes care of you, the care-giver?

Self-aid and buddy care includes taking care of yourself, especially in stressful times.

Barney Self, a licensed therapist, warns us against burn out or compassion fatigue.

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Chaplain Column

— Lt. Col. Tom Curry Wing Chaplain

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By Tech. Sgt. Amy Ziegler
Cargo Courier Editor

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Meanwhile, the Fire Truck Pull will allow members of the 123rd Civil Engineers Squadron to defend their title from Family Day 2000.

Numerous children’s activities are planned, including a rock-climbing wall.

Finally, popular Louisville aviation artist Bob Conely will be on hand to display his prints featuring KyANG aircraft from the past 50 years.

Unit members are encouraged to bring cookies, cakes and brownies for a cake-walk.

Desserts should be dropped off at the Thoroughbred Dining Facility on Family Day between 7 and 10:30 a.m.

For information on the event, contact Lt. Col. Rich Frymire at ext. 4589.

The war is not over—stay prepared

By Master Sgt. Ron Toll

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — More than 100,000 of the Air Force’s government travel cards will be canceled in early October for lack of use, according to the service’s travel card program manager.

Mark Weise, said Michael Weber, is part of a service-wide effort to “clean up the books and will affect those people who have not used their card for a year or more. He added that precautions are in place to ensure no one is caught empty-handed in a time of need.

“We won’t leave anyone stranded,” We-ber said.

“If for some reason an individual didn’t hear about this (policy) and is checking into a hotel and the card is rejected, (he or she) can always have the hotel staff call the number on the back of the card to have the bank override the transaction. We can force au-thorize restaurants, rental cars and airline tickets, but not automatic teller machines.”

The actions come as a result of a recent task force formed in response to congressional hearings on government credit cards.

The task force confirmed that the Depart-ment of Defense has too many cards in the hands of people who are not using them, Weber said.

The Air Force has the largest travel card program in the Department of Defense with approximately 532,000 travel cards issued, or 37 percent of the DOD total, according to Web-ber.

“It’s not as bad as it appears on the sur-face. A lot of these cards are already ex-pired,” he said.

“We estimate that out of the 100,000 cards (subject to cancellation), 80,000 of them are expired or unused.”

The card cancellations, set to begin Oct. 31, will help the Air Force and Bank of America clean up their databases, Weber said.

Those who have their card canceled but still need one for Air Force travel will have to go through a re-application process. New applications should be available in September on the Web.

This could inconvenience some people, but we know of no easy way to do it,” he said.

Commanders and agency program coordi-nators will receive lists in early Septem-ber of cards expected to be canceled.

If anyone on the list is traveling in the near future, he or she can call the bank to get an authorized override on the account. It will be a polite request to the agent at the merchant at the point of purchase.

The government travel card remains an integral part of the Defense Travel System and represents the best option for Air Force travelers, Weber said.

“I still get people who tell me they don’t like the travel card,” he said.

“But I’ve yet to have someone suggest a more modern way to travel.”

Furthermore, Weber said, the proper use of the card relates to military readiness.

“If we need you to travel and you don’t have a card, your travel will have to be handled special,” he said.

“We no longer have the manpower or fa-cilities to do that for a person.

“Gone are the days when we had people in uniform behind a counter, looking at your orders and handing out cash. The travel card helps the Air Force to use manpower in more pressing areas, such as the war on terror-ism.”

Anthrax shots to resume this month

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — The Anthrax Vaccine Immunorepot Program (AVIP) will resume in December 2001 because of supply concerns, will likely resume this month for people in selected ar- eas overseas.

The vaccine will initially be given to people assigned or deployed to “high-threat” areas for more than 15 days, according to the office of the assistant secretary of de-fense for public affairs. The message noted that the program will expand as supply catches up with demand.

Brig. Gen. Mike Gould, the Air Force’s director of operational plans at the Penta-gon, said that the program is an important tool in the force protection arsenal.

“This is all about readiness,” he said. “It’s about taking care of our people who are fighting the war on terrorism. The key thing to remember is this: First, all, the threat is real and, secondly, the anthrax shots…are proven safe and effective.”

Manufacturing of the anthrax vaccine was temporarily halted in January 1998.


Gould said the job of Air Force command-ers and senior leaders is to take care of their people, and that is what the anthrax vacci-nation program is all about.

“We don’t want to send anybody into harm’s way or to do a mission without the full protection that we can offer,” he said.

“A football coach isn’t going to send an offensive linemen on to the field without the same protective equipment and training and conditioning as his star running back and quarterback. It’s the same exact thing here.

“We want every member to have every opportunity to survive should (he or she) encounter a threat like this.”

An electronic version of the Cargo Courier is available at the Kentucky Air Guard’s Web site — www.kyloui.ang.af.mil
Promotions, retirements & separations

The following individuals have been promoted to the rank indicated as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

**SENIOR AIRMAN (E-4)**
- Adam Barker, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Wendy Hight, 123rd Services Flt.

**STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)**
- Heath Boyd, 123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Jonathan Coulter, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Sheldon Cowley, KYANG State Headquarters
- Lawrence Hamel, 123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Christopher Lockwood, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Daniel Morris, 165th Weather Flt.

**TECHNICAL SERGEANT (E-6)**
- Anthony Berold, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Jeffrey Bryant, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Thomas Hagan, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Cody King, 123rd Airlift Control Element
- David Nichter, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- James Tongate, 165th Airlift Sq.

The following individuals have retired as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

- Lt. Col. Robert Abell, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Lt. Col. Douglas Butler, 123rd Medical Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Timothy Duncan, 123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Master Sgt. Ronald George, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Tech. Sgt. Larry Hill, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Senior Airman Stephen Johnson, 123rd Services Flt.
- Staff Sgt. Barbara Kolb, 123rd Airlift Wing
- Tech. Sgt. Donald Pierce, 123rd Communications Flt.
- Lt. Col. Christopher Reynmann, 165th Airlift Sq.

The following individuals have separated from the Kentucky Air Guard:

- Senior Airman Brandi Allen, 123rd Logistics Sq.
- Airman 1st Class John Walton, 123rd Student Flt.
- Senior Airman Gary Warford, 123rd Aerial Port Sq.

The Cargo Courier

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2 STS troops killed in MC-130 crash

Unit remembers late comrades as great men, patriots

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Ziegler
Cargo Courier Editor

A sea of blue filled the Base Annex Aug. 16 to remember the lives of Tech. Sgts. Christopher Matero and Martin Tracy, combat controllers here in the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron.

The men were killed Aug. 7 when the MC-130H Combat Talon they were aboard crashed in Puerto Rico while on a training mission.

They will be remembered for their big smiles, senses of humor and a pursuit for physical fitness excellence, according to friends and co-workers.

The loss is great, said 2nd Lt. Sean McLane, director of operations for the special tactics squadron.

“It’s hard to quantify,” he said. “As combat controllers, it’s not unusual for us to lose friends in the career field because of the dangers associated with the job.”

What makes this more tragic, McLane said, is that both men spent time in war-torn Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom and survived only to come home and be killed on a training mission.

“We’ve just lost two of our best operators, guys with real-world experience who have been shot at and still did their job. That’s a rare commodity. “We know they have courage under fire because they’ve been under fire.”

Most of all, McLane added, “we just lost two really great guys.”

Tech. Sgt. Martin Tracy, 33, had been in the Kentucky Air Guard for nearly six years and had served in the military since 1987.

After leaving the active-duty Air Force as a survival school instructor, he joined the unit here and made a career change to become a combat controller. In his new job, Tracy, like other Kentucky Air Guard combat controllers, stayed deployed nearly 200 days a year.

Tech. Sgt. Martin Tracy

His friends remember him as the man they wish they could be because of his attitude and dedication to physical fitness.

“He was everything you could ever want to be in person,” said Tech. Sgt. Bill Sprake, also a combat controller in the 123rd.

“He was the most physically fit, and he had the personality that nothing ever bothered him. He was the most fun to be around, and you could always count on his laugh to liven things up.”

Tracy was, Sprake said, the kind of person who didn’t let the little things get to him.

“When things get stressful in the field, See MATERO AND TRACY, Page 5