

# The HORNET

January 2017

**One Family, Four Generations  
of Military Service and Three  
Army Aviators**



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**Greetings from the PAO Office**

Over the last quarter the NCNG has been engaged here at home, across the country and the world. In this edition we covered a family's military heritage, highlighted the accomplishments of our service members and the We Care Golf Tournament which support the Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Fund. These are the top notes but there are many more stories and great photos in this edition of the Hornet.

Please continue to make this publication great and submit your stories, ideas and suggestions to the Public Affairs Office at [ncngpao@gmail.com](mailto:ncngpao@gmail.com).

Enjoy your magazine: The Hornet

Always Ready, Ready Team – Capt. Matthew Boyle

*The Hornet magazine is an authorized publication for members of the North Carolina National Guard. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the NCNG, United States Government or the Department of Defense. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the NCNG. General comments and suggestions should be addressed to [NCNGPAO@gmail.com](mailto:NCNGPAO@gmail.com) or call 984-664-6847. Layout and design by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell*



**Where's Jordan?**  
Find him hidden in the magazine!



# News From Around The Nest



NCNG State Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Graves retires after almost 40 years of service in a ceremony Oct. 27.



Brigadier General Kenneth Beard retired after 33 years of service and was honored during a ceremony Dec. 2.



The NCNG's Tarheel Challenge Academy Salemburg Campus hosted a graduation ceremony Dec. 9, 2016.



Command Sgt. Maj. Russell Prince takes the State Command Sergeant Major on Oct. 15.



The 1-130th ARB hosted a holiday celebration for children and families from the Raleigh Rescue Mission Dec. 8.



The NCNG's Family Programs hosted a Boo Bash event for Families on Oct. 28, handing out candy and enjoying games.



The NCNG celebrated the promotion of Todd Hunt, to the rank of Brigadier General in a ceremony on Nov. 9.



Maj. Dale Cowan was promoted to Lt. Col. Nov. 15.



Chief Warrant Officer 5 James Herring dressed as Elvis during the JFHQ Christmas celebration, Dec. 22.

Click the buttons below to check out our social media pages and stay up to date on what's happening in your Guard!

## RALEIGH N.C.

Soldiers and Volunteers came together in the parking lot of Coldwell Banker Howard Perry and Walston Builder Services in Raleigh, North Carolina to unload about 1000 frozen turkeys as part of Turkeys for the Troops and the Turkeys for the Triangle.

Turkeys for the troops will distribute their half of the turkeys to Veterans organizations and military installations across the state to include Camp Lejeune, Fort Bragg, Seymour Johnson and the North Carolina National Guard.

[Click here to see more photos!](#)



## RALEIGH N.C.

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The North Carolina National Guard's 440th Army Band entertained fair goers at the N.C. State Fair in Raleigh, North Carolina on Oct. 19, 2016 as part of the fair's Military Appreciation Day.

The band performed 3 separate times and included performances by their woodwind quintet, the ceremonial band and the 440th's rock band.



[Click here to see more photos!](#)

## RALEIGH N.C.

Soldiers, Airmen and Civilians working at the North Carolina National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters were entertained by the USO Show Troop in the Atrium of their building in on December 2, 2016.

The troop performed a small Christmas concert for employees at the request of the local USO.

USO Show Troops perform for military personnel in concerts like this all over the country.



# Coming & Going ...

## 105th MPs Return from Guantanamo Bay



North Carolina National Guard Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 105th Military Police Battalion, were honored during a welcome home ceremony, in Winston Salem, Dec. 3, 2016. The unit of 55 soldiers provided command, control and administrative supervision of the Joint Detention Group in order to provide safe, humane, legal and transport care of detainees currently at Guantanamo Bay during a year-long deployment. Photos by Sgt. Ruth McClary



## 130th Financial Company Deploys

Friends, family and community, honored Soldiers of the North Carolina National Guard's 130th Financial Management Support Company with a mobilization ceremony at their armory in Siler City, N.C., Dec. 3, 2016. The more twenty Soldiers will deploy to Southwest Asia in support Central Command (CENTCOM) as part of Operation Spartan Shield. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Jordan



## 258th Engineer Det. Mobilizes



Approximately 50 Citizen-Soldiers of NCNG's 258th Engineer Utilities Detachment, based in Butner, N.C. conducted their mobilization Ceremony on Nov.11, 2016, at Joint Force Headquarters, Raleigh, N.C. The unit will deploy for about one year in support of Operation Spartan Shield. The 258th's mission will be to provide facilities engineering support in the areas of carpentry, masonry, electrical, plumbing, road maintenance and repair in Iraq and Kuwait. Photo by Sgt. Ruth McClary

# 145th CES receives Federal Energy and Water Management Award

Photo and Story by Staff Sgt Paul Porter

The North Carolina Air National Guard, 145th Civil Engineer Squadron was selected as recipients of the 2016 Federal Energy and Water Management Award by the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) September 2016. The team is made up of NCANG members and civilian employees including Senior Master Sgt. Jason Huffstetler, Lt. Col. Milton Addison, Capt. James Eaton, Mr. Caleb Chambers and Mr. Christopher Bryant. The award recognizes individuals and organizations for significant contributions to energy and water efficiency within the federal government.

The North Carolina Air National Guard, 145th Civil Engineer Squadron has been selected for the 2016 Federal Energy and Water Management Award by the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). NCANG instituted an effective team approach to energy and water conservation that resulted in a sustained annual energy reduction of more than 6% per year for the last two years, with an overall 40% reduction in energy intensity and an 84% reduction in water intensity from respective 2003 and 2007 baselines.

The team is made up of NCANG members and civilian employees including 145th CES commander, Lt. Col. Milton Addison, Capt. James Eaton, Senior Master Sgt. Jason Huffstetler, Mr. Christopher Bryant, and Mr. Caleb Chambers. The award recognizes individuals and organizations for significant contributions to energy and water efficiency within the federal government.

145th CES is one of only two Air National Guard units and six Air



Force units recognized out of this year's 30 awardees.

This award partially reads, "Energy savings initiatives through conventional heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems upgrades, direct digital control and smart meter improvements, systems monitoring, and lighting upgrades are combined with base wide educational initiatives, improved maintenance, and reporting for a fully integrated program that enlists leadership support and involves the entire base population."

"In other words, we look at all facets of construction. Whether building a new facility, making sure we're using the most technological features we can afford or the day to day maintenance making sure that we're upgrading the buildings to get them as technologically advanced and as efficient as possible is all part of the responsibilities of our Energy Management Team," said Huffstetler, Facility Manager for 145th CES.

"One of the ways we've done this is we leverage technology with common sense. Things like building

automation; being able to look and see how our buildings are performing and meets our customers' needs as well as thermal imaging so we can see where we're having heat loss or having cooling issues as well as our smart meter program; that way we can look real-time and see how our buildings are performing and whether or not they're meeting the criteria that they were designed for. If they're not, then we look at what we need to do to remedy that problem, said Huffstetler.

"It's really pretty simple; you get buy in from the wing leadership down, so from the wing commander down to the lowest Airman, it's as simple as treating the workplace as if you're paying the bill at home... when you get to the common sense mentality of it; you own the building that you're in because you're a taxpayer, it's no different than if you're paying your power bill at home," Huffstetler stated energetically.

Form more information about the award click here - <http://energy.gov/eere/femp/2016-federal-energy-and-water-management-award-winners>

# NC Guard Recruiters sweep regional awards and compete for national honors

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Jordan

For the first time in North Carolina National Guard (NCNG) history its Recruiting and Retention Battalion (RRB) Soldiers swept first place honors at National Guard Strength Maintenance Advisory Group (SMAG) - Region 3 competition held in Savannah, Georgia, Nov. 16 – 17, 2016.

Army Staff Sgt. Johnathon Bates earned the "Directors 54" title as the best recruiter and Army Master Sgt. James Williams earned the "Expert 7" title as the best noncommissioned officer beating professionals representing 10 states and territories in the southeast.

"It is the highest I have ever achieved," said Bates.

Bates is the on campus recruiter at East Carolina University in Greenville and signed 23 new Soldiers, 29% above his RRB mission goal, into the NCNG in fiscal year 2016 (FY16). Williams leads a team of Soldiers stationed in High Point and serving from Chapel Hill to Concord that was responsible for 129 new recruits in FY16. Their state mission success gave them the chance to compete at the regional competition.

"They had the best production in the state by far," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Pisano, NCNG RRB Command Sergeant Major.

The team at SMAG - Region 3 after a 2-day competition evaluating leadership, recruiting knowledge, education, uniform appearance and

physical fitness and an appearance before a board of sergeants major were judged best among their peers.

The recruiters shared more than first place they adapted to the changing nature of recruiting tech savvy millennials into the NCNG. The personal touch still important but the ability to reach out to recruits in ways that best match their needs and skills was the key to success.

"I am not much older than my recruits and the approach is more indirect with electronic communication, texts and emails," said Bates.

Bates used social media to form a community with the recruits that makes finding the next NCNG Soldier easier.

"Most of my recruits are referrals from someone I already put into the Guard," said Bates.

Williams, a senior leader in the NCNG's recruiting, made sure he and his team kept up with the challenging nature of a new generation.

Lt. Col. B. "Clay" Jackson (far left), Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Pisano (far right), stand with NCNG winners Staff Sgt. Johnathon Bates (middle right) and Master Sgt. James Williams (middle left) at the National Guard Strength Maintenance Advisory Group - Region 3, in Savannah, Ga. Nov. 17, 2016.

"I grew up before computers and I had to learn how the recruits think and communicate today," said Williams.

The technology changes but the desire to serve remained the same since the founding of the country.

"They (millennials) may be socially different from your grandfather who served but grew up post 9-11 with a patriotic spirit," said Bates.

William's team built on this spirit when trying to convince a civilian to join an operational force in time of war.

"We try to explain the tradition, selfless service and duty when in the uniform," said Williams.

Bates will represent the region at the national competition scheduled for early 2017.

"It is a great honor for the battalion and state and sends a message to the rest of the nation of how much of a solid and professional well-rounded force we are," said Pisano.



# *4 Generations of Service*

## *3 Army Aviators*

### *1 Commitment*

From WWII to now, four generations of the Thomas family have made the sacrifice to serve their country and go to war.

*Story by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell*

A collection of family photos show three of the four generations of the Thomas Family who have served in the United States Armed Forces. The oldest of the four generations started the tradition by joining the Army Air Cops and serving in WWII and since then Thomas men have served in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Bosnia Afghanistan and Iraq. Photos Courtesy of the Thomas Family.



# Less than one percent of the American population currently serves in the United States Armed Forces, but for one North Carolina National Guardsman, it is the only life he's ever known.

“Because of my family, this is all I’ve ever known. I don’t really know what it would be like to be a civilian and have that type of commitment outside the commitment to this Nation,” said North Carolina Army National Guard Capt. Timothy Thomas, who currently serves as the logistics officer for the 1-130th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion. “So I read the statistics and I read that number and I honestly don’t know what the rest of America is doing if they’re not signing up to serve.”

Thomas, who deployed to Iraq in 2009, is the fourth generation of his family to join the military, continuing a tradition that starts with his great-grandfather who initially joined the Army Air Corps, which later became

the Air Force, and served in WWII and Korea. He retired as a Chief Master Sgt. after more than 26 years as a Petroleum Oils Lubricants Specialist.

Thomas’s grandfather, William Thomas, continued the tradition by joining the Army as a Warrant Officer after the start of the Vietnam War.

“He joined the Army and went straight to flight school,” said Timothy Thomas. “He came out of flight school and two weeks later was in Vietnam and had a battlefield promotion to 1st Lt., completely skipping 2nd Lt. and that’s his claim to fame, that he was never a butter bar [2nd Lt.]”

William Thomas retired as a Lt. Col. in 1992 and over the course of his career was qualified to fly several aircraft, including the Huey helicopter and at one point, from 1979-1982, served as the active duty advisor to the unit where his grandson would later serve.

At the time, the 28th Attack Helicopter Company was transitioning to Cobra Helicopters. They would later become the first reserve component to have Apache Helicopters and be known as 1st Battalion, 130th Aviation Regiment, and the unit the youngest Thomas has served in for the past 10 years.

“It’s pretty neat that before I was born my grandpa advised the unit where I would later serve a larger portion of my military career,” Timothy Thomas said.

Thomas’s father, Kelly Thomas, remembers his dad going off to Vietnam and the impact it had on him as a young man, leading him to also join the Army as an Aviator.

“I didn’t understand what Vietnam was,” said Kelly Thomas, who has served in Grenada, Bosnia and Afghanistan. “I really didn’t understand the war, but I understood the year, two years plus that he was gone and the team of teams that Army Aviators have with all the

infantry and all the ground forces. That was what really impressed me about being a tactical helicopter pilot, the respect those branches have on each other.”

Kelly Thomas retired as a brigadier general in 2013 and like his father was qualified to fly several aircraft including the Cobra and Kiowa Warrior Helicopters. He said he is proud that his son is the third in the line to become an Army Aviator.

“I think the common theme with the three generations of aviators is that we fly something that shoots and that’s what we all take very much pride in,” he said. “Our standard is that it has to hover and it has to have guns on it, besides that, we’ll fly it. I think that’s our proudest tradition.”

When the youngest Thomas of the four generations qualified as an Apache Helicopter pilot the two previous generations of Thomas pilots were there to congratulate him and pin his newly earned wings to his chest.

His father, Kelly Thomas, pinned on the wings, which were the same wings his father pinned onto him. Those wings had the date of all three generations of Thomas pilots on them.

“I’m very, very proud of him,” Kelly Thomas said of his son. “It really is a proud day.”

The newest Thomas said he could not remember one specific time that started him on his journey to join the service but that it was part of his everyday life.

“I just remember always seeing the uniform and thinking it was dad, even if it wasn’t dad,” Timothy Thomas said. “I always thought that the Thomas is a military family and we understand that it’s bigger than us and we’re committed to serve. I think that is the understanding that we can serve and do our part because we know that it is bigger than us and we’re just a small part of that puzzle, but it’s a



*Capt. Timothy Thomas, far right, stands with his father and grandfather after graduating flight school in January 2009.*

great feeling.”

The commitment to service that runs through the Thomas family has also branched to include Don Ray Thomas, brother to Kelly Thomas, who retired from the Air Force as a Major in 2011. Like his father and nephew, Ronald Thomas took to helicopters and flew the Pave Hawks as a combat search and rescue pilot serving in Afghanistan and Iraq on multiple deployments.

“Even his [Capt. Thomas] sister served as an Army civilian,” Kelly Thomas said of his daughter. “That’s the kind of dedication that this Thomas family has strong ties to, it’s to God and country and we want to continue to serve.”

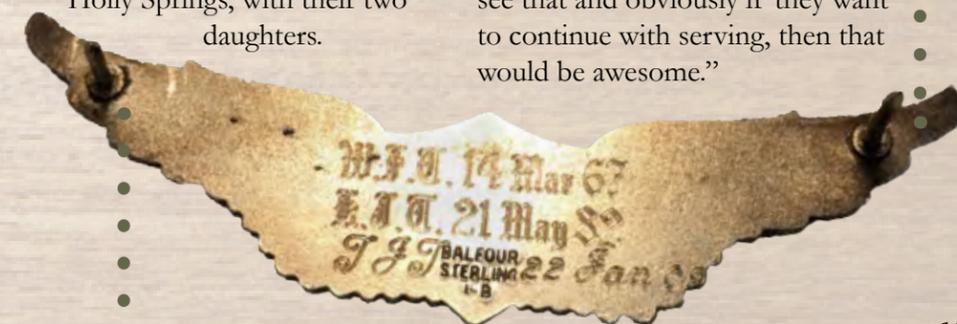
The youngest of the Thomas men currently works full-time for the North Carolina National Guard. He said that growing up he remembers having to move a lot and wanted to be able to raise his family in North Carolina.

“It was kind of a blessing that I was hired as Active Guard and Reserve, but the intent was that I was going to be a traditional Guardsman,” said Timothy Thomas who initially joined 2004 while attending East Carolina University thinking he would just serve one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer like many Guard Soldiers. “But then the opportunity was afforded to me that I could be full-time.”

Thomas got the best of both worlds by being able to serve full-time like the generations before him but stay in one location to raise a family. He and his wife reside in Holly Springs, with their two daughters.

Although he said he would never pressure his children to join the military, he hopes that he can teach them the commitment to service that he learned from his father and grandfather.

“I just want them as kids to understand the service aspect,” Timothy Thomas said. “I feel like the Thomas family, we serve this country. I’ve seen my dad, my grandpa, these dedicated military men and wanted to do that for my country and wanted to do that for my family and carry on the tradition and that honor of being able to serve. So, I want my kids to see that and obviously if they want to continue with serving, then that would be awesome.”





# Tarheel Homecoming

Photos and Story by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell

North Carolina National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, civilian staff, service organizations and other vendors hosted the annual Tarheel Homecoming celebration held at the North Carolina National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters in Raleigh, North Carolina on Dec. 16, 2016.



● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● Melonie Lewis, an education services specialist with the NCNG's Education Center, talks with a retiree about the education benefits available to him during the annual Tarheel Homecoming event.



● ● ● ● ● ● Sgt. Gary Spencer talks with a NCNG retiree during the annual Tarheel Homecoming event.



● ● ● ● ● ● Retirees stand during the National Anthem at the NCNG's annual Tarheel Homecoming event.

Tarheel Homecoming invites NCNG retirees and prior service members to learn more about current Guard operations and provide information on retiree benefits.

Many veterans are not aware of the benefits and programs available to them and this event acts as a way to bring together these former service members and the organizations aimed at helping them.

“We are educating retirees to make sure they understand their benefits and what they’re entitled to,” said Sgt. 1st Class

Robert Shook, the acting director of casualty operations for the NCNG, who was manning one of over a dozen booths in the atrium at the headquarters building. “Many funeral homes and civilian authorities don’t actually understand that a National Guardsman is entitled to additional benefits that are comparable to the active component.”

Other booths included the Education Office, the Employment and Education Center and the North Carolina National Guard Association.

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Shelton Faircloth,

who left the service in 2011 said that the event acts as a way to reconnect and stay educated on the Guard and his benefits.

“To come back and not just see older friends that I served with but to find out about the information they put out is great,” said Faircloth, who now works at the Durham, N.C. VA Medical Center as a Telehealth health technician. “Coming to these types of events are great for any type of retiree as it will give you a perspective on what is going on that can benefit you for your service to the North Carolina National Guard.”

In addition to the regular briefing on the current state of the Guard, a special presentation was held for Vietnam Era Veterans, as this year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration.

All the Vietnam Veterans were asked to come onto the stage in the auditorium where they were presented with a commemorative lapel pin and a sticker for their cars.

The annual event brought more than 230 retirees Guardsmen together this year.



# We Care Golf Tournament Supports N.C. Guardsmen

*Photos by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell*



**G**olfers came together at the Wakefield Plantation Golf Course in Raleigh, North Carolina on Oct. 4, 2016 for the annual We Care Gold Tournament to benefit N.C. Service Members and their Families.

The Wakefield Senior Men's Golf Association (WSMGA) hosts the charity tournament and the money raised goes to support the USO of N.C., The Soldiers and Airmen's Assistance Fund which supports N.C. Guardsmen

dealing with unforeseen hardship, and the WSMGA Scholarship Fund for children of N.C. Service Members.

Every team in the tournament has rounded out with at least one Service Member, most of whom where North Carolina National Guard Soldiers.

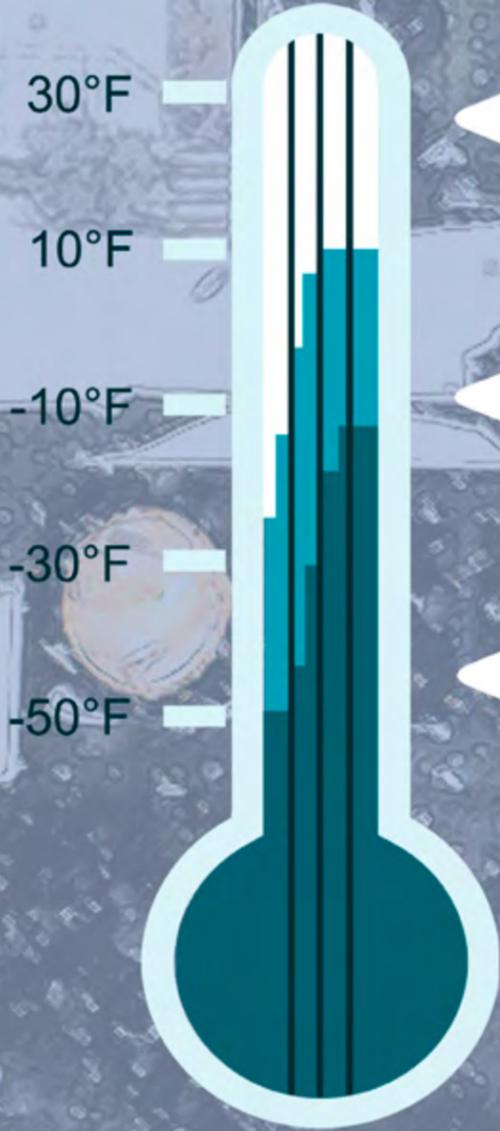
The NCNG also supported the tournament with vehicle displays, pin pullers on the 18th hole, logistics support and the 440th Army Band.



# COLD WEATHER INJURY AND PREVENTION

WIND SPEED (mph)

0 10 20 30 40



**Little Danger**  
Freezing to Exposed Flesh  
within **1 Hour**



**Danger**  
Freezing to Exposed Flesh  
within **1 Minute**



**Extreme Danger**  
Freezing to Exposed Flesh  
within **30 Seconds**



KEEP IT **C**LEAN

AVOID **O**VERHEATING

WEAR **L**OOSE LAYERS

STAY **D**RY



# NCNG presents award to Green Hope High School Soccer Team



NCNG Recruiters stand with the winning team Dec. 21.

*Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell*

The North Carolina National Guard presented Green Hope High School soccer coach David Corsbie and the men's soccer team with a trophy during a pep-rally held in their honor on Dec. 21, 2016 at the school's gymnasium in Cary, North Carolina.

The award was part of the 12th Annual MaxPreps Tour of Champions where the soccer team was rated number one in the country out of 10,000 boy's soccer teams.

MaxPreps uses an intricate computer program to determine the ranking taking into account number of wins and wins against highly ranked opponents.

Maj. Robert Prout, the NCNG's Recruiting and Retention Battalion Operations Officer presented the trophy after congratulating the team, who in addition to the Tour of Champions award won the NC 4A division state title this year.

**"This team Exemplifies courage, hard work and character," said Prout, "values that the Army National Guard promotes and encourages."**

The team joined their coach on the gymnasium floor to accept the trophy as their classmates cheered their accomplishment.



# NC Air Guardsman Receives Department of Public Safety Badge of Excellence

*Photo and story courtesy of the NC Department of Public Safety.*



DPS Secretary Frank Perry presents the Badge of Excellence to Mitchell.

Badge of Excellence awards were given to 19 Department of Public Safety employees at a ceremony Nov. 15 held at the State Bureau of Investigations' auditorium, including the North Carolina National Guard's own, Maj. Selicia M. Mitchell, a Military Personnel Management Officer.

"Excellence can mean different things to different people, but to quote John W. Gardner, it means 'doing ordinary things extraordinarily well,'" said DPS Secretary Frank Perry.

Mitchell creates, plans and executes successful events such as the NCNG Association Combined Ball, which hosted more than 1,200 enlisted and officer members along with their families, pinning ceremonies, Air Force birthday events and multiple

retirement ceremonies for Joint Forces Headquarters staff.

"Today, we honor these exceptional individuals for doing their job extraordinarily well," Perry said. "They have not only made significant contributions to the Department of Public Safety, but their diligence to perform their jobs to a higher standard has long-lasting impacts on their co-workers and the State of North Carolina."

Mitchell also was instrumental in the development of the innovative office process improvements that updated duty appointments, revised headquarters instructions and organized Joint Forces Headquarters-Air participation in the Air Force inspection program.

The Department of Public Safety's

mission is to improve the quality of life for North Carolinians by reducing crime and enhancing public safety. The department's employees are charged to prevent, protect and prepare with integrity and honor.

Mitchell was recognized in the human relations category. The other categories are customer service, innovation and efficiency, outstanding achievement and performance, public service and volunteerism, and safety and heroism.

"I applaud the men and women in this Department who continuously strive to excel not only in their job but also within their community," Perry said. "Badge of Excellence recipients are model examples of public servants – selfless, competent, with hearts devoted to service."

# *North Carolina National Guard Association*

56th Annual Convention

MARCH 18th & 19th, 2017

Sea Trail Resort, Sunset Beach NC

Visit

[www.ncnga.org/convention](http://www.ncnga.org/convention)

for more info

