



The Knox County Joint Veterans Council are looking for **volunteers!!!**

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 105 E Chestnut St. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:00 P.M. **Contact Carol Riley @**

[740-504-3264](tel:740-504-3264) if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you!



They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. And they do this without thought of payment. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased soldier, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

South Korea Stages Drills Simulating Downing of North Drones

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea staged large-scale military drills Thursday to simulate shooting down drones as a step to bolster its readiness against North Korean provocations, three days after the North flew drones into its territory for the first time in five years.

South Korean warplanes and helicopters failed to bring down any of the five North Korean drones spotted south of the border on Monday, before they flew back home or vanished from South Korean radars. One of them traveled as far as northern Seoul. That caused security jitters among many people in the South, for which the military offered a rare public apology Tuesday. Thursday's training involved land-based anti-air guns, drones playing the role of enemy drones, and a total of 20 fighter jets, attack helicopters and unmanned assets. While there was no actual live-fire, it was still the country's first major anti-drone drills since 2017, according to military authorities.

The drills near Seoul set up diverse scenarios of border infiltrations by small enemy drones, under which the mobilized South Korean military assets practiced how they could detect, track and shoot them down, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

On Thursday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol reiterated his push to build a stronger air defense and get tough on North Korean provocations. The North's drone flights followed its record number of missile tests this year that some experts say is part of an effort to pressure the United States and its allies to make some concessions like sanctions relief. "Whether they have nukes or whatever weapons of mass destruction they have, we must send a clear message to those who repeat provocations. We must not be frightened of (their nukes) and we must not hesitate," Yoon said during a visit to a weapons development agency. "To obtain peace, we must prepare for a war that (we can win) overwhelmingly."

North Korea's state media hasn't commented on South Korea's announcement of its reported drone flights. But some observers say North Korea likely sent those drones to test South Korean and U.S. readiness. They say North Korea also likely assessed that drones could be a cheap yet effective method to trigger security concerns and an internal divide in South Korea. In response the North's drone flying, South Korea said it also sent three of its surveillance drones across the border in a rare tit-for-tat measure. North Korea didn't make any reaction, according to South Korean defense officials.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/12/29/south-korea-stages-drills-simulating-downing-of-north-drones.html>

Delivering Babies, Plowing Snow: Hundreds of Guardsmen Deploy as New York Is Buried in Historic Storm

Staff Sgt. Colin King and a team of airmen were racing against the clock to the hospital to deliver two critical patients in the back of their F-350 pickup truck: a woman in labor and a man on life support with critical medical gear swiftly running out of power. The problem was that the Guardsmen of the 107th Attack Wing were navigating Buffalo, New York, where a historic storm dropped snow as high as four feet, leaving streets littered with abandoned vehicles. "We were driving through parking lots, over sidewalks; there were a ton of stranded cars to get around. It looked like the apocalypse," King told Military.com in an interview about a convoy of two pickup trucks the airmen were using. "Our trucks got stuck about six times, and we had to dig out with our hands and shovels."

More than 500 New York Guardsmen are deployed as Buffalo has been devastated by a crippling winter storm, with at least 28 people dead.

Buffalo was walloped by at least 49 inches of snowfall over Christmas weekend, and local officials are scrambling to dig out the city and its surrounding suburbs, with many neighborhoods still cut off from emergency services. The Buffalo Niagara International Airport is closed until at least Wednesday, adding to nationwide flight cancellations and delays.

Troops have been conducting health and wellness checks alongside first responders, a Guard spokesperson told Military.com. Those checks amount to going door-to-door in hard-hit areas, some of them impossible to navigate by vehicle. In some cases, Guardsmen are driving doctors and nurses to work. Military Police will also be helping local authorities and state troopers enforce a driving ban in Erie County, which includes Buffalo. Guardsmen, however, are not deputized, according to a Guard spokesperson, and therefore will only be assisting officers and not enforcing local laws themselves. King described the harrowing experience of trying to help the two patients who had been loaded into the pickup truck.

The woman in labor had to be moved from Kenmore Mercy Hospital, which was short on staff and equipment, limiting the facility's ability to handle any complications during delivery. The other patient, a man with a blood-pumping medical device and no means to properly charge his equipment at the hospital, needed to go home for extra batteries. He was also suffering from frostbite. Both patients were loaded into an F-350. The woman had priority, as doctors believed the man's medical device had at least 10 hours of life left. But the six-mile trip to the John R. Oishei Children's Hospital took at least an hour. The woman and husband were eventually dropped off without incident, but the airmen had a medical kit in case she needed to deliver in the back of the truck. But then the man's medical device started beeping, indicating it had about 30 minutes of life left. He couldn't survive without it. "We're probably only three miles away from his house, but there was a four-foot snowdrift everywhere," King said.

The truck got stuck, despite efforts to dig it out, but New York state officials sent plows that managed to get the man out to a hospital. He survived. But the storm has proven deadly for others; in at least one case, airmen responded to a fatality in which someone may have frozen in their car. Guardsmen worked with local authorities to properly remove the body, according to King.

With plummeting temperatures and extreme windchill, the storm has claimed dozens of lives as thousands of residents struggle to find warm shelter despite widespread power outages. Temperatures are forecast to stay below freezing until Wednesday. In one case, airmen with the 107th Attack Wing rescued a man and his dog stuck in high snow drifts on Christmas Eve. Many people were trapped in their cars after getting stuck and running out of gas.

Pfc. Matthew Waldman, who is assigned to the 105th Military Police Company, was late reporting to his unit on Christmas after stopping at a woman's house to help her deliver a baby. \ Soldiers with the 827th Engineer Company are assisting with snow removal efforts in areas that need access to emergency vehicles, such as a senior living center in Cheektowaga, a suburb of Buffalo.

On Monday, President Joe Biden declared a state of emergency in New York, a move that opens up federal resources and money for relief efforts. It is also part of a series of steps that can be taken to put Guardsmen on so-called Title 32 orders, which means the troops would be federally activated and could earn some benefits -- such as retirement points -- and get disability assistance and compensation if injured on duty while still under the control of the governor.

However, troops are still on state active duty, or SAD, orders. Under those orders, Guardsmen are effectively state contractors and not formally affiliated with the military on paper. They generally cannot file disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs or accrue key benefits such as the GI Bill or VA home loans. Guardsmen also generally do not have access to free health care while on state missions, something Gen. Daniel Hokanson, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, is lobbying to fix. It's unclear whether Guardsmen will be placed on federal orders in the coming days. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul's office did not respond to a request for comment.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/12/27/delivering-babies-plowing-snow-hundreds-of-guardsmen-deploy-new-york-buried-historic-storm.html>

US to Sell Taiwan Anti-Tank System Amid Rising China Threat

WASHINGTON — The U.S. State Department has approved the sale of an anti-tank mine-laying system to Taiwan amid the rising military threat from China.

The department on Wednesday said the Volcano system and all related equipment would cost an estimated \$180 million.

It's capable of scattering anti-tank and anti-personnel mines from either a ground vehicle or helicopter. The announcement indicated Taiwan would be buying the vehicle-borne version, the kind of general-use weapon many experts believe Taiwan needs more of to dissuade or repel a potential Chinese invasion.

To advertise that threat, China's military sent 71 planes and seven ships toward Taiwan in a 24-hour display of force directed at the self-ruled island it claims is its own territory, Taiwan's Defense Ministry said Monday.

China's military harassment of Taiwan has intensified in recent years, along with rhetoric from top leaders that the island has no choice but to accept eventual Chinese rule.

That has seen the ruling Communist Party's increasingly powerful military wing, the People's Liberation Army, send planes or ships toward the island on a near-daily basis.

Between 6 a.m. Sunday and 6 a.m. Monday, 47 of the Chinese planes crossed the median line of the 160 kilometer (100 mile) -Taiwan Strait, an unofficial boundary once tacitly accepted by both sides, according to the Defense Ministry.

That came after China expressed anger at Taiwan-related provisions in a U.S. annual defense spending bill in what has come to be a standard Chinese practice.

China also conducted large-scale live-fire military exercises in August in response to U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. Beijing views visits from foreign governments to the island as de facto recognition of Taiwan as independent and a challenge to China's claim of sovereignty.

The PLA would continue to launch such missions until Taiwan's pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party ceases "constantly provoking confrontation and enmity between the two sides," Chinese Defense Ministry spokesperson Col. Tan Kefei said at a monthly briefing Thursday.

"The PLA always ... resolutely defends national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Tan said.

While Washington has only unofficial ties with Taiwan in deference to Beijing, those include robust defense exchanges and military sales.

In its announcement, the State Department said the Volcano sale "serves U.S. national, economic, and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability."

It said Taiwan would have "no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces," and that the sale would "not alter the basic military balance in the region."

Analysts differ over what Taiwan's defense priorities should be, with some calling for big-ticket items such as advanced fighter jets.

Others argue for a more flexible force, heavily armed with land-based missile systems to target enemy ships, planes and landing craft. China's overwhelming numerical advantage in personnel and equipment give Taiwan little choice but to opt for that more "asymmetric" approach, they say.

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/12/29/us-sell-taiwan-anti-tank-system-amid-rising-china-threat.html>

Pictures of the Month



A Soldier fires blank rounds through an M240 machine gun during Hammer 22, an annual combined forces exercise conducted by and alongside the Finnish army in Niinisalo, Finland, Nov. 9, 2022



The first AH-64 Apache helicopter is discharged from the commercial cargo vessel, ARC Endurance, at the Port of Esbjerg, Denmark on Aug 22, 2022