



THE LIAISON



FORT DRUM REGIONAL LIAISON ORGANIZATION

AUGUST 2017

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By: **Brian E. Ashley**

It's always an interesting experience to compare notes with organizations around the country who have the same mission as the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, namely protecting their local military installation from threats and working to

enhance its value. FDRLO Board member Judy Gentner and I recently attended the Association of Defense Communities National Summit in Washington D.C. and we've returned with many new ideas and perspectives on the FDRLO mission.

We had the chance to hear and meet with representatives from many states and localities working hard to ensure the future for their installation(s)! Texas boasts 15 major military installations and has formed the Texas Military Preparedness Commission which reports directly to the Governor and distributes millions of dollars in grant funds to local agencies and organizations that are working with the Army, Air Force and Navy to address issues of local concern. The Texas organization has also formed a Commanders Council that pulls together the senior commanders of all the installations in the Lone Star state and meets directly with state leaders to talk about their concerns and how the state can help meet their needs or assist with addressing a concern. The FDRLO has begun a discussion about how to bring together the leaders of the many installations across New York to speak in a more unified voice in Albany and impress upon our state legislators the importance of protecting and enhancing our military presence, not only in the North Country, but all across the Empire State

Education was also a major concern at the ADC Summit, with many state and military representatives offering testimony that the quality of schools is a major consideration for Soldiers and spouses when it comes to choosing a duty station. Most installations have on site schools and there was a continuing theme about Soldier satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the quality of those schools. Over and over again, the issue of school performance was linked to mission readiness and the focus for Soldiers who are being or who are deployed. In some instances, installations are looking outside the fence to the local school districts for help in addressing these concerns. Fort Drum has never had on post schools and we take pride in the relationships that have been developed over the past three decades, but we also want to make sure parents are satisfied with the job that's being done to educate their kids. The FDRLO's Education Committee, under the leadership of Board member and BOCES Superintendent Stephen Todd, is in the beginning stages of formulating a qualitative survey of Fort Drum parents. The Center for Community Studies at JCC will conduct the study in 2018 with the hope we can confirm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The next Membership
Meeting will be held on

**Thursday
November 2nd
at 3:30 p.m.**

It is a great opportunity for our members to hear about what is happening on Fort Drum and what your FDRLO has been doing. We will announce the location of the meeting soon on our website, www.fdrlo.org.

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**FORT DRUM REGIONAL
LIAISON ORGANIZATION**

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Chair's Corner

By: Mary M. Corriveau

How quickly time moves on and leaders change at the 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum. In the past two weeks, Fort Drum and the North Country bid farewell to the division's Deputy Commanding Generals, BG Xavier Brunson and BG Andrew Rohling.

We have also welcomed COL Brian Eifler and COL Milford Beagle, as the division's new Deputy Commanding Officers for Operations and Support, respectively. Once again we have added two proven Army senior leaders to the 10th Mountain team.



On a bright sunny morning in early August, the Division, Garrison and Community bid farewell to Fort Drum's Garrison Commander COL Bryan Laske. From day one, COL Laske made strengthening the partnership between the local community and Fort Drum a priority. COL Laske reached out and engaged all facets of our community, schools, medical, business leaders, public officials at all levels, local state and national, be they elected or appointed. From an FDRLO perspective, he showed a great sensitivity and understanding for the interconnection between all of these community elements and their relation to Fort Drum, Soldiers and Families.



Like COL Laske, Fort Drum's new Garrison Commander COL Kenneth 'Dean' Harrison has plenty of opportunities awaiting him to engage with local community and business leadership. FDRLO is committed to working with COL Harrison and the 10th Mountain team to ensure we successfully embrace MG Walter Piatt's challenge that "More importantly than just being ready today, we've got to be relevant tomorrow; we've got to be prepared." Being prepared for what tomorrow may bring means we need to continue to work together, keep the lines of communication open, share information, and be willing to have those frank discussions about the future of the installation and our community. The Joint Land Use Study and the recent Public/Public Partnership symposium each provide opportunities to protect and enhance Fort Drum's capabilities.

Encroachment is a topic that has been discussed by the community and Fort Drum for many years. All too often it is viewed from the ground level; however the air space over Fort Drum and our region is a highly valued asset for Army and Air Force training. Continuing industrial wind turbine development throughout the region deserves a serious analysis regarding implications for Army aviation, training with unmanned aerial systems, weather systems, as well as future Army training requirements, some of which have not yet been defined. We all understand this subject is complex and touches upon many stakeholder groups. FDRLO is facilitating discussions with stakeholders, knowing that it is one deserving the best efforts of all involved parties.

Mary

FDRLO Welcomes. . .

RUTH DOYLE
St. Lawrence County Administrator

to its Board of Directors effective June 2017.
FDRLO looks forward to working with Ms. Doyle.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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the satisfaction our military families have with our local schools, but also identify areas where improvements can be made.

The Summit also featured a lot of discussion about the possibility that Congress will authorize another Base Realignment and Closure Commission and how to mount a defense! While the debate continues about how best to address excess capacity in the various branches of the military, the political battle is driven by preserving home town economic engines and removing politics from the process. Our Congresswoman, Elise Stefanik, voted not to include a BRAC in either the 2017 and 2018 National Defense Authorization Acts and in a meeting in her office confidently predicted that a BRAC will not happen. The FDRLO wants to remain vigilant and prepared for whatever political eventuality comes from the BRAC debate. We are dusting off our archives from the 2005 BRAC fight and inviting those who were architects of that defense of Fort Drum more than a decade ago to help us prepare a strategy in the eventuality BRAC gains new momentum in Congress.

We learned a lot at the ADC Summit about what others are doing, but we also felt affirmation that the uniqueness of the co-operative relationship the North Country community has with Fort Drum was a model that others were eager to learn about and put into practice in their own communities.



Brian Ashley and Judith Gentner



FDRLO Bio: Stan Zaremba

You could say that parades are in Stan Zaremba's blood. The 64-year-old Watertown resident, and 38-year veteran of the Army Reserves and National Guard, has been organizing parades in the City of Watertown since 1992.

Having returned home in 1991 from serving as a Staff Sergeant with the 145th National Guard Maintenance Company in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Stan began helping former Watertown City Council member, Jim Brett, with organizing the annual Armed Forces Day Parade. Stan figured that Fort Drum was getting up-to-speed and his love of parades was a natural reason to get involved. Stan has always professed a love for the military and he felt the annual parade was a chance for the Watertown community to show its appreciation for the men and women serving the nation.

Stan's grandfather, father, and uncles served in the military and Stan has continued his support by joining the VFW and American Legion Post 61 where he served as Commander on four separate occasions. Stan has also served as President of the United States Service Organization (USO) currently located on Fort Drum. He also helped organize the annual Elks Club Flag Day at the Watertown and Carthage clubs. Stan was instrumental in the erection of the Jefferson County War Memorial in front of the Jefferson County Office Building honoring local Soldiers who fell in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

Retiring from the City of Watertown after 30 years, Stan now works for Davidson Automotive Group. In his spare time, he is an avid bowler, winning the City championship in 1973. He has also been involved in DIRT and oval track racing since the late 1960s, and considers himself an avid fan to this day.

Stan considers himself a Patriot who loves the American flag and the men and women in uniform who defend it. FDRLO thanks Stan for all his work and support of the armed forces.



NYS Education Regulations to be Amended to Align with Interstate Compact for Military Children

By Stephen Todd, Superintendent
Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-Oneida BOCES



Common sense changes to New York State Education Department regulations have recently been approved by the New York State Board of Regents, giving school districts valuable tools that will better enable them to help students from military families to graduate on time. This positive development is the culmination of years of work, and further regulatory changes will likely be recommended to the Board of Regents in the months and years to come.

In 2014, New York became the fiftieth state to join the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children, a national consortium designed to remove barriers to on-time graduation for children whose families move from place to place as a result of military service. Though New York was slow to join this movement, progress in the last twelve months has been rapid and encouraging.

When New York became a signatory of the Interstate Compact, the New York State Legislature and Governor enacted legislation to create a state-wide committee to oversee New York's implementation of the Interstate Compact's requirements. This state-wide committee includes representatives appointed by the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the Assembly, and the Senate. Our Fort Drum region is well represented on this committee, with three of the 12 members hailing from Jefferson County: James Koch, retired Business Manager for Indian River Central School District; Matthew Rogers, Educational Liaison at Fort Drum; Stephen Todd, District Superintendent of Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-Oneida BOCES. Since April of 2016 the committee has met several times in Albany, led by Dr. Debra Jackson, Chair of the committee and New York's representative to the National Interstate Compact Commission.



The New York State Military Compact Committee collectively identified a number of specific provisions in state education regulations that needed to be modified to bring the state into alignment with the Interstate Compact. In April of 2017, the committee sent formal recommendations to New York State Commissioner of Education, Mary-Ellen Elia, who in turn recommended those changes to the New York State Board of Regents at its June meeting. The Board of Regents voted to initially approve those changes at the June meeting, and following a public comment period, they will be presented with these regulatory changes for final approval. The speed with which the State Education Department and Board of Regents acted upon these proposed measures is a testament to the fact that

they recognize that these common sense reforms are long over-due. The thirteen thousand children from military families around the state, and the seven thousand in the Fort Drum region, will benefit from these new provisions.

Some of the most significant common sense changes included in this round of reforms are provisions

that allow schools to:

- accept passing state assessment results from other states in place of comparable required New York State Regents Examinations when students from military families transfer to New York schools. Previously, students transferring from other states had to pass the five required New York State Regents Examinations prior to graduation, even if they had passed a comparable test in another state, and even if they were late in their high school career.

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- enroll students in just one Physical Education class at a time after they transfer to a New York school from a school in a state with different Physical Education requirements. Previously, students in that situation had been at times required to take two, three, or even four Physical Education classes per day in order to accumulate enough Physical Education credits to graduate when transferring to a New York State school late in their high school career. This could push other classes out of their schedule, making it far more difficult to graduate on time. The new regulations allow students to meet Physical Education requirements while enrolled in a New York school without having to make up for PE courses they did not take elsewhere.

- enroll students immediately upon arrival, rather than waiting for all official records to be transferred from their last school. Previously, delays in record transfer could delay students' enrollments through no fault of their own.

These are among the changes that will give schools greater flexibility in helping students from military families to enjoy smoother transitions and to graduate on time. The final regulations, if approved by the Board of Regents as expected, will take effect on September 27, 2017. The proposed amendments, in full, are available for viewing at: www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/617p12d4.pdf

Changes in the Command Leadership at Fort Drum:

Farewell:

BG XAVIER BRUNSON, Deputy Commanding General for Operations

BG ANDREW ROHLING, Deputy Commanding General for Support

COL BRYAN LASKE, Garrison Commander

Welcome:

COL BRIAN S. EIFLER's last assignment was with the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison. He assumed the responsibilities of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) deputy commanding general of operations.

COL MILFORD H. BEAGLE last served as executive officer to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. He assumed the responsibilities of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) deputy commanding general of support.

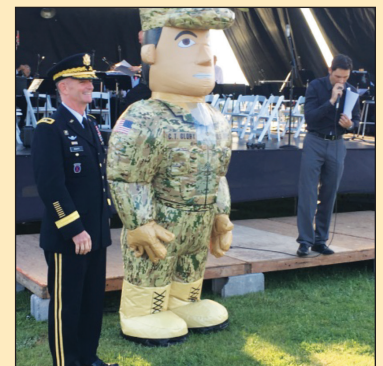
COL KENNETH D HARRISON most recently served as Chief of Counter-intelligence, Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-2. Col Harrison is the new Garrison Commander of Fort Drum, NY.



Operation Yellow Ribbon

Operation Yellow Ribbon invited **SERGEANT C.T. GLORY** to attend the annual Concert in the Park on July 3rd. SGT Glory had a great time entertaining the concert goers and posing for pictures with young and old alike!

MG Walter Piatt, Commanding General, 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum, and SGT Glory wooed the crowds at the Concert. Keep your eyes open for C.T. Glory at upcoming community events!!



Have you ever tried to Guess How Many? Well, at the Concert, Operation Yellow Ribbon offered everyone that stopped by their tent an opportunity to see how skilled they were at guessing how many toy Soldiers were contained in an ammo box. A young 10th Mountain Soldier had the closest guess of all. And a great guess it was, he guessed 800 when there were actually 802. Congratulations to **SGT AARON FALK** on his accurate estimate and on winning the Kindle Fire.



**FORT DRUM
REGIONAL LIAISON**

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Did You Know, FDRLO Four Star Leader:



Watertown Savings Bank



Since 1893, Watertown Savings Bank has made great strides to help ensure the economic growth and development of the local community and is proud to support Fort Drum and its many organizations. Watertown Savings Bank is a truly local bank owned by its depositors, not stockholders. This means that your mortgage, consumer loan or business loan can be approved quickly and in-house by our management team and local Board of Trustees.

In Jefferson County, Watertown Savings Bank is proud to retain the largest deposit market share, the top mortgage lending share over the past several years and recognition as the top commercial lender. In stark contrast to the large retail banking institutions in our area, the Bank can not only meet the diverse banking needs of the community, but can do so in a much more personalized and expeditious manner.

The Bank supports local non-profit and charitable organizations throughout the North Country with a philanthropic mindset second to none in our community. They are the largest charitable donor among all financial institutions in the area which is all made possible by their strong and loyal customer base.

From Mobile Banking, Mobile Deposit, On-line Banking & Bill Pay, E-Statements, Bank to Bank Transfers and ACH Origination to the recent introduction of Remote Deposit Capture (RDC), Watertown Savings Bank is continually upgrading its menu of products and services to meet the ever-evolving needs of its customers.