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**Soldiers
unite in
homeland
security
missions**

Cpl. James Kroeger points to suspicious activity along the Arizona and Mexico border to Sgt. Ben Katzman. The 108th Infantry Battalion is taking part in Operation Jump Start in order to assist the Border Patrol in preventing and deterring illegal immigration. Photo by Cpl. James Kroeger. Story page 3.

'Arctic' Air Wing holds change of command

Col. Max Della Pia passes Stratton Air National Guard Base mission to Col. Anthony German

Guard Times Staff

SCOTIA, N.Y. — Col. Max Della Pia passed control of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing to Col. Anthony German, Aug. 5, in a formal change of command ceremony in Hanger One. Della Pia has served as the organization's commander for seven years. This ceremony marks the 11th time in the unit's 58-year history that leadership has changed.

"Col. Della Pia has had an extraordinary tenure as commander of the 109th," said the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto. "He has been an important advocate for the 109th and a valued member of the state military forces. I look forward to working with him in his new capacity at state headquarters and welcome Col. German, whose capability and experience has shown him to be ready to move into this position of great responsibility."

Maj. Gen. Robert Knauff, Deputy Adjutant General of the State of New York and Commander of the New York Air National Guard, said, "Col. Della Pia has proven himself to be a great leader who is universally respected by those who served under him, as well as to those in the community. Under his command, the 109th has achieved unprecedented performance in their service at the North and South Poles. While he will be missed in Scotia, I know we can expect great things as he moves into a position of significant responsibility at Headquarters, New York Air National Guard."

"I know Col. German will assume the mantle of leadership in distinguished fashion, calling upon his wealth of knowledge as a polar navigator, former squadron commander and staff officer with experience working with the National Science Foundation and the senior staff at the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs," Maj. Gen. Knauff said. "New York State is indeed fortunate to have such outstanding officers from whom to select for its command positions."

Col. Della Pia, outgoing commander of the 109th said, "It has been a great honor to have worked with such an extraordinary group of individuals. The Wing has served with distinction in Afghanistan, Iraq, and at areas of domestic crisis, each year it has reached higher and higher levels of performance. Whether moving science cargo for the National Science Foundation in Antarctica and Greenland, or providing relief supplies for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, the 109th has been up to any task. I will miss this unit and treasure my experience as their commander, which has been a high point of my military career."

Col. German said, "As one who rose through the ranks as a member of the 109th and



Col. Max Della Pia leads the command group of the 109th Airlift Wing during the unit's change of command ceremony at the Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia on August 5. Col. Max German takes command of the Air Wing after rising through the ranks of the unit. The 109th Airlift Wing is famous as the only unit in the world equipped with the ski-fitted LC-130 Hercules aircraft for supporting scientific research missions in both the northern and southern Polar Regions. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Smith.

knows its people and their capabilities in fulfilling our mission, I look forward with great anticipation to this new assignment. I would like to thank Col Della Pia for establishing a great foundation. Through his efforts, I know the future will be bright for the 109th."

Upon completion of this assignment, Col. Della Pia will assume duties as Executive Support Staff Officer for Headquarters New York Air National Guard.

The 109th Airlift Wing is the only unit in the world equipped with the ski-equipped LC-130 aircraft with responsibility for supporting scientific research in the northern or southern Polar Regions. □

Governor announces overhaul of Intrepid

Office of the Governor

NEW YORK — Governor George E. Pataki announced July 6 that the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum will receive a \$5 million capital grant to support the significant repair and refurbishment needs that have developed in the 24 years since the Intrepid arrived in New York and opened as a Museum in 1982. The Intrepid will be "On Leave" and will be removed from its current home at Pier 86 while the infrastructure repairs and upgrades are being performed.

"The Intrepid is an American icon and a truly awe inspiring reminder of the sacrifices generations of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines have made to protect our freedom," Governor Pataki said. "On behalf of the citizens of our State, I am proud that our State will be providing additional support to help restore the Intrepid to the grandeur befitting of her legacy."

"From her amazing service in defense of our nation to her continued service on September 11th, the Intrepid has given so much to this Nation time and again, and with this overhaul she will continue to serve as a symbol of hope for all of us for many years to come," the Governor added. "This commitment will help preserve the tremendous vision of a great New Yorker, Zachary Fisher, who saved the Intrepid from scrapping and helped transform this aircraft carrier into a world class museum and tourist destination that reminds people from around the globe of

the many battles American servicemen and women have fought to protect and promote freedom."

The Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum will utilize the \$5 million capital grant as part of a \$55 million renovation plan which will consist of major interior and exterior exhibit overhaul and refurbishment of the Intrepid, maintenance work on the entire aircraft collection, and the acquisition of new historic aircraft.

Established in 1982, the Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum complex is comprised of the 900-foot-long aircraft carrier USS Intrepid with two full decks and four theme halls; the guided missile submarine, USS Growler; and an extensive aircraft collection including the A-12 Blackbird, the fastest spy plane in the world, and now Concorde, the fastest commercial aircraft in the world.

While the Intrepid is offsite, crews will use the opportunity to perform maintenance work on the submarine Growler, SSG-577, the British Airways Concorde and other major exhibits that constitute the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum and also address the extremely deteriorated condition of Pier 86 which will be completely demolished and rebuilt into a new modern facility.

The Intrepid is scheduled to return to berth the new Pier 86 and reopen to the public in time for Fleet Week 2008. □



Governor Pataki announces the refit of the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space on the carrier's flight deck July 6. Photo by Lester Millman.