

The Nexus



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New York National Guard Counterdrug Task Force

Autumn 2009



Our Mission: To provide highly skilled personnel, specialized equipment and facilities as requested by Law Enforcement Agencies and Community Based Organizations in response to a changing drug threat.

The Colonel's Corner



FY 09 was a banner year for the NYNG Counterdrug Task Force, we had many significant accomplishments and improvements in our program. Our *Stay on Track* program increased to be the second largest program in the country. We had a presence in 42 schools and

taught 5,364 students across the state. Our alternative activities reached out to almost 11,000 participants, a 16% increase from last year. Our Criminal Analyst support to law enforcement resulted in over **97** million dollars worth of drugs currency and property seized. Significant increases in weapons and vehicle seizures also occurred. Our continued internal program evaluation resulted in the realignment of the Headquarters and NY/NJ HITDA personnel. These changes have postured us for significant future success. During FY10 we will continue improving our program and service

to our communities by making several additional changes within the CDTF. These will include realigning the regions from four to three, as a result we will be able to increase our Criminal Analyst support and DDR efforts in previously untouched areas of the state. The year ahead will also see increased training and testing efforts in our Substance Abuse Prevention Program and further development in our Prevention Treatment & Outreach Program.

~COL Saddlemire



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NYNG CDTF Conference FY'09, Geneva, NY

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NY State Threats

NYS contains one of the most expansive and robust interstate highway systems in the world and most of the public and private freight movements within NY cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries, LEAs are unable to control interstate traffic. New York City is the Nation's leading drug market. The city is the primary distribution hub for Cocaine, Heroin, Marijuana and MDMA trafficking. It is also the bulk distribution center for at least 24 states, and 2nd Busiest Port in the US . The NY/ Canadian border has 12 border cross-

ings sites and numerous water crossing sites. Counter NarcoTerrorist (CNT) information/ intelligence is freely shared and exchanged between all CDTF members having a need-to-



Seized Contraband**

As of 22 September FY09 cash value seizures;

Cocaine:	\$47,969,201.36
Heroin:	\$1,331,573.31
Marijuana:	\$35,202,475.93
Other Drugs:	\$2,160,411.47
Currency:	\$9,507,218.26
Property:	\$967,941.83
Weapons:	\$30,389.99

FY09

Total Seizures:	\$97,169,212.15
Arrests:	1916

Security & Support / OH-58



LEA officers "rip up" a row of pot plants in a Washington County corn field spotted by OH-58 pilots. This field alone netted nearly 970 plants!

The FY09 season for the NYNG CDTF Marijuana Eradication Team has been very successful. As of 17 September, the Erad Team had surpassed their number of plants eradicated compared to FY08 by more than 75%! The grand total thus far is 2,769 plants with three more missions planned before FY10. The biggest "bust" was in Washington County while supporting their counter-narcotics task force. Al-

most 1000 plants were taken there in mid August over a two day period.

According to one of the OH-58 pilots, a major reason for this year's success is the support for the flying crews from the maintenance and service folks who are keeping the "eyes" where they belong; in the sky. "Last season, there were more maintenance issues to tackle which led to less time in the air supporting

the LEA", said one pilot. "I think we have proven that we can support these missions and hopefully, that will equate to more funding and flight time to have even more success next season.



Pot plants being "four-wheeled" out of a corn field by a Washington County LEA agent. Last years net was equaled in this one day of "harvest".

Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (MVACIS)

The MVACIS inspection system provides substantial flexibility to assist with a variety of security missions including contraband interdiction (i.e. narcotics, weapons, and cash). Mobile scanners use gamma rays as opposed to x-rays, allowing lower equipment cost, smaller operating space, higher reliability, availability, and safer operation. We have to this date supported 13 agencies including: NYSP, DEA, Schenectady PD, Albany PD, Norwich PD, as well as the NYPD.



[L] Confiscated cash is checked for drug residue. [R] Eighteen-wheelers are scanned for contraband [Both in the NYC Region]*

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Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Program

Congratulations to TSgt Stefanik and TSgt Frankovic for completing Phase 2 of the NGB DDR course. They are both now fully NGB trained! What does that mean? They are subject matter experts and will be able to share plenty of DDR knowledge with everyone who is supporting a DDR mission.

An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you do know and what you don't.

Anatole France

French novelist (1844 - 1924)

The training that DDR personnel participate in demonstrates a commitment to stay on the cutting edge of drug prevention knowledge and practices. DDR personnel attended three days of training in September that included an Overview of Addiction, Ethical Standards in the Sub-

stance Abuse Prevention Field and Adolescent Substance Abuse. Throughout FY10 there will be several opportunities to attend DDR training. NGB will offer several DDR phase 1 and 2 courses. Please let your Regional Commander know if you would like to attend.

It is very important to keep up with the current drug trends and slang. Some prominent influences of current trends are:

- Media (TV, radio, print, internet)
- Commercialism
- News and video
- Family, social, community, school culture
- Response to freedoms and responsibilities

Check out www.urbandictionary.com and www.erowid.com to find out what Zippers, B-40, Pharming and Roboshots are.



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Substance Abuse

A new year brings change to Substance Abuse, we have said goodbye to some, we've welcomed back some deployed soldiers and hired new personnel. We have moved to the Counterdrug HQ building, and have started to implement the new policies of testing. We are looking forward to a very busy year, where the support of the CD staff will be very appreciated. If you need to know anything about SA or you need assistance please contact any of the staff and we will help you as best we can.

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Prevention, Treatment & Outreach (PTO) Program

The PTO establishes a culture of responsible choices, compatible with core National Guard values, through the use of Substance Abuse Prevention and Awareness training and support. Provides up to date information on drug and alcohol trends affecting military communities.

The PTO provides the community a resource for drug and alcohol information. Provides alcohol and other drug abuse prevention products to Military communities. Provides training materials and resources for commanders and UPLs to utilize in training and educating the unit about alcohol and other drugs.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- www.militaryonesource.com
- www.va.gov
- www.vetcenter.com
- www.alcoholics-anonymous.com
- www.secularrecovery.com

[R] SGT Olcott, the PTO Coordinator

[L] SSG Ruffing, the SA Coordinator



Congratulations to Sergeant Major Roland Wells!

First Sergeant Wells is a name only for the record books. On September 19th, Counterdrug's very own Roland Earl Wells has achieved, what some to consider, a feat too unattainable to strive for, one of his own personal dreams. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major. The Adjutant General, Major General Taluto pinned him in a ceremony witnessed by SGM Wells' wife and two daughters, colleagues, and friends.

SGM Wells started this journey in 1989 as a young recruit with a combat medic group out of Schenectady, NY. A job that has taken him all over the

222 Chemical Company's First Shirt. An experience that has helped SGM Wells for this very occasion. When asked of his thoughts on this monumental achievement, the Sergeant Major humbly noted the he hopes to "earn the respect from his peers and sub-ordinates alike".



New Personnel and Locations within the Counterdrug Task Force

Western Region has a retirement on the way, SSG Rosemary Caicedo will be saying "good bye" this coming October. A couple of new hires, SPC Robert Short (working with DEA Buffalo) and SGT Kelly Sanger (working as a *SOT* instructor) both came on board as of 1 September 09, so make sure to welcome them.

Northeast Region is welcoming back the newly promoted Maj Nick Dean from deployment as the region's commander as well as SSG Lorrie Cartier (who was DDR and is now Intel). A1C Ryan Hogancamp was hired to replace deployed SGT Paul Bonificio for DDR. SGT Joshua Stickle (Intel) is deployed as well. NE is also welcoming a new full time hire, SSgt Dean Lansley for *SOT* as well as some familiar faces, SrA Jason Young from HQ and SGT Sean Markham from NYC to Intel. Sadly, NE and the CDTF will be saying their goodbyes to MAJ McGloine. He will be retiring at the end of November.

HQ has a few changes; after CW3 Tillman's retirement, Warrant Officer Candidate Michelle Courville has taken her place as Logistics Officer and in turn, SPC Sherry Rockwell is now the new Logistics NCO. SSG Shawn Nethaway has moved to J1 working with SMSgt Maryalice Rebis. The Substance Abuse office has been relocated to the HQ building at the Stratton ANG Base from the Watervliet Arsenal. SPC Yvonne Thorpe (from Western Region) is now part of the Operations Team in J3 at HQ.

The annexation of **Central Region** is officially complete. Central Region territory is now shared between the Western and Northeast Regions.

RC-26B changes include, Maj James Dunn transferring to the 174th Reaper Operations Squadron. His replacement is Lt Col Paul Dallamagne as MSO. Lt Col Edward Gadarowski is temporarily assigned to support C-26 missions

abroad.

NYC Region is welcoming SSG Jairo Aquino and SGT Timothy Turane as *SOT* instructors. Also being welcomed is SSG Alberto Pedroza at the HIFCA as a Criminal Analyst. Goodbyes are for CPT Michael Gieraltowski, who accepted an AGR position at the US Merchant Marine Academy, and HIFCA Analyst SGT Brian Bradshaw who has entered the NYPD Police Academy. MSG Santos Diaz and SSG David Perez are hanging up their hats and retiring. Good luck to them all.



CDTF HQ Logistics section leader, Michelle Courville, is currently at school training to become an Army Warrant Officer. Taking her place while she is gone is SPC Sherry Rockwell.

C-26

The RC-26B crews were busy this year to say the least. They flew a total of 374.3 flying hours during a period between 2 March to 31 August. Counterdrug missions took up 80% of those hours with a total of 266.3 flying hours. Using the new *FLIR* turret, C-26 pilots can support LEAs from a longer distance as well as for a longer amount of time. Their time though, is limited due to the war-time demand. The C-26

fleet consists of eleven planes operating in a 19 state area but six of the aircraft are over seas leaving the remainder to pick up the slack. The shortage of materials has the C-26 team from their base in Syracuse, NY, supporting numerous NY LEAs as well other states' LEAs. To mention a few, the Massachusetts State Police, the Milwaukee Department of Justice, Wisconsin DEA, NJ Attorney General's Office, Virginia FBI Office, Northern Virginia Gang Taskforce and the Bolivar Police Department from Jackson, TN. All assigned aircrews

also supported AFSOC operations between 1 October, 2008 thru 30 April, 2009 and again between 16 September, 2009 to a few date still yet to be determined.



"The 'Katrina Modification' FLIR Turret not only has better optics than the old pod, but it also reduces the C-26's weight thus allowing for more time 'on station'", Lt Col Karl Wolff informs.



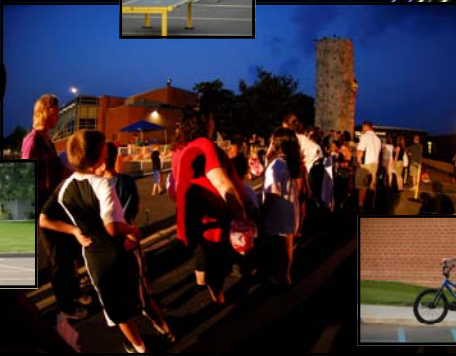
**Courtesy Photo



Lt Col Wolff demonstrates the state of the art, FLIR observation station inside the RC-26B. The FLIR can pinpoint targets 7 miles away as opposed to 5 with the old style pod. Using this device, C-26 crews also have a 20% increase in working data, can blend low light and IR images onto one screen for optimum imagery, and they can "freeze" an image for further investigation without disrupting the recording process. All this in HD too! The turret's only short-coming is the loss of 'geo-rectification', which is the ability to over-lay images to make a larger one. But with loss of pod weight, the crews believe they have a keeper.

National Night Out "Sk8 Nite" '09

Sk8 nite '09 this year went very well! Detective James Nawoichyk, of the Orangetown Police Dept has already (for the second year in a row) requested the use of CDTF's skate park for next year's event. The turn out of participants and observers was incredible. "It's twice the size of last year!", states Det. Nawoichyk. "This year, with the rock wall, the skate park, fire department's rappelling, we even have 'BIKE' kids this year! What a showing. If we help just ONE of these kids?, it's all worth it." the Detective beamed with enthusiasm. "I already can't wait for next year!"



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Drug of Choice: Salvia Divinorum

Salvia divinorum, is a hallucinogenic plant native to the northeastern Sierra Mazateca mountain region of Mexico where the native Mazatecs have used it for centuries as a healing and divining tool. Though this is the only known location where this perennial herb grows naturally, Salvia is cultivated in some areas of the United States. Salvia is not likely to be found at a local nursery although it is one among many of the cooking and medicinal herbs in the mint family. It is also one among many that share the genus name Salvia; for example, *Salvia Officinalis*, is also known as common sage. The psychoactive component (that which produces the hallucinogenic effects) of Salvia, Salvinorin A, is the most potent naturally occurring hallucinogen. Currently, neither Salvia nor its active ingredient Salvinorin A are listed as controlled substances in the United States, though there are efforts to criminalize Salvia and its active ingredients and classify them as Schedule I controlled substances. To date, Australia is the only country that has criminalized Salvia Divinorum and its active ingredients.

History

The first recorded mention of Salvia was made in 1938 by Jean B. Johnson, who heard of Mazatecs making a tea from the leaves of "hierba Maria," which induced visions in users. In 1952, Roberto G. Weitlaner, Johnson's father-in-law, reported the preparation of "yerba de Maria." R. Gordon Wasson and Albert Hofmann acquired the first specimen of Salvia divinorum from the Mazatecs in 1962; they described it as "a less desirable substitute" for hallucinogenic mushrooms. It was not until August 2002 that researchers discovered that Salvia acts at the kappa opiate receptor (KOR) site, where much of human perception is regulated. This puts Salvia in a class of drugs known as KOR agonists, which

are thought to play psychotherapeutic roles in perception altering diseases such as schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease.

Methods of Use

Only when enough of Salvia's highly active compound, Salvinorin A, is absorbed through the oral mucosa and into the blood stream can a psychoactive effect be produced. There are several methods of ingesting Salvia with varying durations of hallucinogenic effects. Dried leaves of Salvia can be smoked like marijuana, in a bong, pipe, or as a joint, with effects lasting up to 15 minutes. Fresh leaves of Salvia can be chewed and swallowed or chewed as a quid. When chewed as a quid, the leaves of Salvia produce extractions of Salvinorin A before the leaves are removed from the mouth. The extractions are absorbed through the oral mucosa and produce visual hallucinations, lasting 1 to 2 hours; the longer the herb remains in the mouth, the stronger the effect will be. Salvinorin A extracts can be mixed in a drink or vaporized and inhaled. When Salvia's leaves are crushed and the extracted Salvinorin A can be mixed with water to make a drink. Since Salvinorin A is deactivated by the gastrointestinal system before entering the blood stream this method may produce a more moderate effect than other methods. When Salvinorin A is vaporized and inhaled the Salvinorin A is heated on a piece of tin foil and the vapors are inhaled through a glass pipe.

Psychological and Physical Effects

Recent research suggests that Salvia acts at the kappa opiate receptor (KOR) site of the brain where much of human perception is regulated. Although the Mazatec Indians have been using this herb for centuries with no obvious ill effects, it is still unclear

whether Salvia causes long-term effects on the brain or on the rest of the body. There have been no reports of health problems or hospitalizations as a result of Salvia use, few dangers related to its use have been identified, and no evidence exists that it is addictive. Although the dosage ingested and the method of ingestion affects the user's experience, some common effects include: Intense hallucinations, such as sensations of traveling through time and space, of floating or flying; sensations of twisting and spinning, heaviness or lightness of the body, and "soreness." Less intense effects (that occur only when the eyes are closed) include visual hallucinations of various patterns and shapes. The hallucinogenic visions produced by this herb terminate when interrupted by noise or light. Physical effects include: *dizziness, nausea, lack of coordination, slurred speech, awkward sentence patterns, decreased heart rate and chills.*

Terminology

Many of the names used for Salvia divinorum indicate how the Mazatecs honor this herb for its healing and divination qualities; they believe it is the incarnation of the Virgin Mary. It has also been reported that visions of a woman are common during hallucinations. The genus name, Salvia, comes from the Latin word, *salvare* meaning "to save," while the specific name, *divinorum*, means "of the seers." Some of the common names are: *Leaves (or herb) of the Shepherdess, Leaves of Mary, the Shepherdess, The Female Sage of the Seers, Magic Mint, Diviner's Mint, Diviner's Sage.*

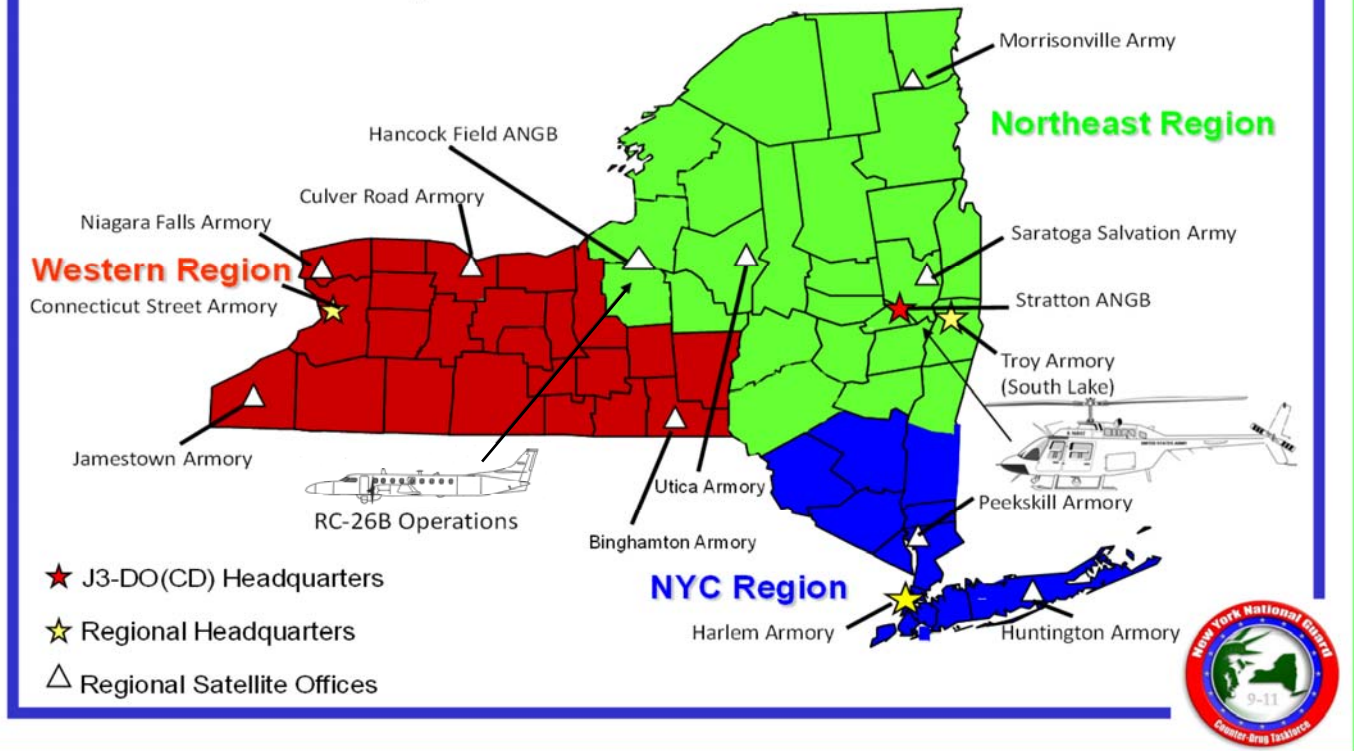
While not currently regulated by USA federal drug laws, several states have passed laws criminalizing the substance and the DEA has listed Salvia as a "drug of concern".

*retrieved from www.cesar.umd.edu on 30 September '09

End of Year Pix



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All photographs taken by CDTF Photographer SSgt Stephen J. Girolami

*MVACIS photos taken by SSG Shawn Nethaway **Stock Contraband Photo