



Military and Naval Affairs NEWS

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New York Air National Guard Cleans Middleburgh High School

Members of 109th Airlift Wing from Stratton Air National Guard Base Begin Day Two-Day Project to Assist Flood-Damaged School

MIDDLEBURGH, NY (09/06/2011)-- Fifty-five Airmen from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing began cleaning up flood damage caused by Tropical Storm Irene at Middleburgh High School on Tuesday, Sept. 6. The Airmen, based at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, cleaned the school's track, outside basketball court, gym, parking lots, bus garage, the school's sewage treatment plant, and boiler room, on the first day of a two-day operation, said Lt. Col. Walt Wintsch, the Office in Charge of the team. "We have made a boatload of improvements here," Wintsch said. Despite the hard work the Airmen were enjoying what they were doing, Wintsch said. "Several of them are from Schoharie County so it is in their own back yard, but we are all citizens of New York so it is gratifying to be down here to help (Middleburgh)," Wintsch said. Along with specific projects the Airmen moved through the school tearing out damaged sheetrock and scrubbing down walls, he said. Since most of the classrooms are on the second and third floor of the school, the cleaning and sanitizing work done by the Air National Guard members will allow the school to open in a timely manner. A flood almost six feet high went through the Schoharie Valley town on Sunday, August 28 as Tropical Storm Irene dumped rain on the hillsides. The 109th Airlift Wing team will be back at the school on Wednesday, Sept. 7 to finish the two-day project. High quality copies of these photographs are available at the New York National Guard Flickr site at : www.flickr.com/photos/nyng

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The large, grass-filled rectangle behind Middleburgh High School was encircled by a dirt path, which, whether or not it was emblazoned with chalk lines for a meet that particular evening, was referred to as "The Track."

I ran many a hot, clumsy, and excruciatingly slow mile on that humiliating piece of acreage, once even managing to dive head-first over a 10-foot long bench in front of the entire 11th grade boys' gym class. Needless to say, I wasn't exactly the "Athletic Type".

The wonderful thing about that particular location is that it really had a great 360-degree viewing radius of all the adjacent on-goings, ensuring that every last one of the attractive, older guys saw my horrific display. Also, the sewage treatment plant was located little more than a stone's throw away, and on a warm day a scent reminiscent of sweaty goat balls covered in shit often permeated the country air.