



# Press Release

## District of Columbia National Guard



Major General Errol R. Schwartz  
Commanding General

Lt. Col. Kevin McAndrews  
Public Affairs Officer

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr., former Commanding General, wife, Ann, killed in Metro accident**

WASHINGTON D.C. - Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr., and his wife, Ann, both 62, tragically died from injuries suffered in the Washington DC Metro Rail accident Monday, June 22, 2009. They leave behind a son, David, a noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Army Golden Knights, and daughter, Betsy. They had one grandchild.

"We are all deeply saddened by this sudden and tragic loss of General Wherley and his wife, Ann," said Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, Commanding General of Joint Force Headquarters, District of Columbia National Guard. Wherley preceded Schwartz as Commanding General. "I am personally grieved by this unbelievable tragedy. David Wherley and Ann were two of the best people you could ever want to know. This community will grieve, as will the entire National Guard throughout the country who knew and loved them both."

General Wherley served as the Commanding General of the DC National Guard from July 2003 to June 2008. As Commanding General, he was responsible for operational readiness and command and control of District of Columbia Army and Air National Guard units with an authorized strength of about 2,500 soldiers and airmen.

The general began his military career in 1969 when he received his commission as a second lieutenant through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) from Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. After he was released from active duty he joined the District of Columbia Air National Guard where he commanded two flying squadrons, served in a number of staff assignments and deployed as the deputy operations group commander for fighters at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. He was a Fighter Weapons Instructor Course graduate in the F-4 and had more than 5,000 hours of flying time in a multitude of missions. Prior to appointment as Commanding General, he served as commander of the 113th Fighter Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, where he was responsible for two flying missions, the 121st Fighter Squadron with F-16 C/D and the 201st Airlift Squadron with C-40 and C-38A aircraft.

"I share in the huge grief of the entire 113th Wing," said Brig. Gen. Jeff Johnson, commander, 113th Wing. "Dave and Ann were an integral

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part of the history of the 113th Wing, and more importantly, an integral part of our family. There are no words."

U.S. Senator Mary L. Landrieu, D-La., said she had gotten to know General Wherley and Ann well over the years.

"As the recipient of more than a dozen medals and multiple honors, he served our nation with distinction," Sen. Landrieu said. "Gen Wherley was not only the quintessential citizen soldier - he also made valuable contributions to our community. I worked closely with General Wherley to ensure the success of the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program, which has changed the lives of thousands of at-risk children in D.C. and around the country."

Senator Landrieu said General Wherley was a role model to young people in D.C., and he and his wife will be greatly missed in the community and throughout the country.

"My thoughts and prayers go out to the entire Wherley family," she said.

Under his leadership, the DC National Guard deployed several of its units, soldiers and airmen in the Global War on Terrorism, including the 113th Wing and 275th Military Police Command. Their successful mobilization and safe return were always his top priority. It was his imperative that soldiers and airmen have the best training they could possibly receive before going into harm's way, and will remain as one of his most important legacies.

Time and again, General Wherley would say his most challenging accomplishment was the establishment of the DC National Guard's Youth Challenge program. This required coordination between the National Guard Bureau, the Department of Defense, Congress and the District of Columbia City Government, resulting in a program now in its third successful year. In addition, he strongly supported the Family Readiness Program, Youth Leaders Camp and the About Face Program, all of which focused on supporting the families of soldiers and airmen, especially during deployments, and strengthening the youth in the community through discipline, teaching them job skills and introducing the importance of education into their lives.

The Secretary of Labor appointed General Wherley to serve on an Advisory Committee for the U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps in 2007. The Job Corps is the nation's largest and oldest federally funded job training and education program for at-risk youth ages 16-24. In the same year, he was a speaker at the Labor Department's annual Job Corps Leadership Summit, drawing attention to the many Job Corps participants and graduates who went on to successful military careers, some of whom have given their lives in the war in Iraq.

General Wherley was appointed to the Board of Directors of the District of Columbia Sports and Entertainment Commission in 2003 and served throughout his tenure as Commanding General. A baseball fan himself,

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he participated in the return of Major League Baseball to the District and was instrumental in the successful construction of Nationals Park, which was built on-time and within budget.

With many more achievements not mentioned here, General Wherley would say the most satisfaction he had was being able to make a difference, not only in the organization and the units he served in and commanded, but in the individual lives of soldiers and airmen he was able to mentor. He encouraged all of his officers and non-commissioned officers to read the book, *Servant Leader*, and he tried each day to live by that creed – to serve the people he was appointed to lead.

In approximately 600 B.C., the Chinese sage Lao Tzu wrote *The Tao Te Ching*, a strategic treatise on servant leadership:

The greatest leader forgets himself  
And attends to the development of others.  
Good leaders support excellent workers.  
Great leaders support the bottom ten percent.  
Great leaders know that  
The diamond in the rough  
Is always found "in the rough."

### **EDUCATION:**

1969 Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics, Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y.  
1973 Squadron Officer School, by correspondence  
1977 Masters of Business Administration, University of Maryland, College Park  
1980 Air Command and Staff College, by seminar  
1981 National Security Management Course  
2002 CAPSTONE

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. September 1969 - September 1970, student, undergraduate pilot training, 3576th Student Squadron, Vance Air Force Base, Okla.
2. September 1970 - October 1972, T-38 instructor pilot, 3553rd Pilot Training Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga.
3. October 1972 - October 1973, T-38 class commander, 3550th Student Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga.
4. October 1973 - September 1978, F-105 pilot, 121st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.
5. September 1978 - June 1982, flight safety officer, National Guard Bureau, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
6. June 1982 - June 1985, F-4 instructor pilot, 121st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.
7. June 1985 - December 1985, operations officer, 121st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.
8. December 1985 - July 1987, commander, 121st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.
9. July 1987 - March 1989, director of operations, Headquarters, District of Columbia Air National Guard, Washington, D.C.

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10. March 1989 - November 1995, commander, Detachment 1, Headquarters, District of Columbia Air National Guard /201st Airlift Squadron, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

11. November 1995 - December 1997, vice commander, 113th Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

12. January 1998 - April 1998, deputy commander for operations (fighters) 4404th Provisional Wing, Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia  
13. May 1998 - June 2003, commander, 113th Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

14. July 2003 - 2008, Commanding General, District of Columbia National Guard, Washington, D.C.

### **FLIGHT INFORMATION:**

Rating: Command pilot; Flight hours: More than 5,000 Aircraft flown: F-16, F-4, T -33, T -38, F - 105, C-21, C-22, C -38 Pilot wings from: Vance Air Force Base, Okla.

### **MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

Legion of Merit

Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster Air Medal Air Force Commendation Medal Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with four oak leaf clusters Air Force Organizational Excellence Award Combat Readiness Medal with three oak leaf clusters National Defense Service Medal Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal Southwest Asia Service Medal with two bronze service stars Air Force Longevity Service Award with one silver and one oak leaf cluster Armed Forces Reserve Medal with one gold hourglass Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon Air Force Training Ribbon District of Columbia National Guard Distinguished Service Medal