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SPRING 2014

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On the Cover: Guardsmen with the 103rd Civil Support Team, Alaska National Guard, respond to a hazardous material scenario at the Anchorage Fire Department training center rubble pile in Anchorage in March as part of exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. The Alaska

National Guard partnered with several local, state and federal agencies during the exercises to test the response and coordination of various organizations in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake.

Photo: Specialist Kimberly Chouinard, 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Memorial Wreath. Former Alaska Air National Guardsman Chuck Volanti, 74, speaks with Alaska Guardsmen after laying a wreath at the memorial wall to honor his friends and fellow Alaska Guardsmen who were killed in a plane crash in April 1964. Volanti was one of the first responders during the "Good Friday" earthquake in 1964 when he worked as a flight dispatcher for the Air Guard. Four of his fellow Guardsmen were killed when they were flying out on a search-and-rescue mission in Alaska. Photo: First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

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veterans and families are invited and encouraged. Please send articles and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to:

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For the People

Governor Sean Parnell
Commander in Chief



Setting the Record Straight for Alaskans

April 28, 2014

In response to a recent opinion piece on April 27 in the Anchorage Daily News regarding the Alaska National Guard that was full of false statements and inferences designed to mislead readers, I am compelled to set the record straight.

First and foremost, the author's claim that I did nothing when first hearing the concerns from National Guard chaplains about sexual assault complaints is utterly false.

Since my days in the state Legislature to my time as governor, my top priority has been to eliminate sexual assault and domestic violence in Alaska, including the military.

The chaplains provided general information to me that sexual assaults were occurring in the Guard, but because of their duty of confidentiality to the people they counsel, the chaplains could not disclose names of victims, perpetrators or specific circumstances.

Nevertheless, even without specific enough details to pinpoint a victim or case, I went to Adjutant General Tom Katkus, requesting information regarding what the chaplains had told me. I made sure through Major General Katkus that Guard members have a safe route to report sexual

misconduct, and that their allegations are taken seriously and investigated to conclusion, including appropriate penalties.

Where criminal conduct was alleged, we directed referrals to the appropriate law enforcement agency, such as the Anchorage Police Department.

Further, the opinion piece asserts that Senator Fred Dyson came to me a number of times with concerns about what he heard from the same chaplains. During Senator Dyson's visit with me last fall, he too had only general allegations. On Feb. 26, 2014, Senator Dyson gave me the name of a Guard member who was willing to provide specific detail.

Within 24 hours of that meeting, I personally phoned the person named by Senator Dyson. In that call, I learned of specific, but unverified allegations, causing me to question the existing reporting and investigation process.

Two days later, within a day of getting specific details about the reporting system — not two weeks, as the columnist claims — I sent my request to General Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, for a review of all open and closed investigations related

to reports of sexual assault, rape and fraud among Alaska National Guard members.

The National Guard Bureau responded quickly and currently has a team in Alaska conducting the review.

The columnist's claim that our administration had enough specifics to act on before 2014 is based on two instances: First, the writer alleges that Katie TePas of my office had witness statements. As I understand it, Ms. TePas was visited on separate occasions by two members of the Guard who provided the same general allegations related to sexual misconduct, and those allegations were broad and lacked specifics. On another occasion, a third Guard member came to see Ms. TePas and said she had been the victim of a sexual assault. This person let Ms. TePas know the case had been referred to the Anchorage Police Department.

The columnist refers to a letter from Senator Mark Begich's aide, Bob Doehl, a former member of the Alaska National Guard, as someone who "named names." However, Mr. Doehl's letter was not about sexual misconduct in the Guard but about his concerns related to overtaking of Guard members and assets, his own failure to be promoted and alleged illegal activity.

I dug into those concerns with Major General Katkus and learned about inspector general investigations and reviews conducted years before Mr. Doehl's letter. The only other communication I have from Mr. Doehl is a request that I hire him for the adjutant general's job.

No one should be subjected to sexual assault or have to work in a hostile work environment. I have always acted swiftly and aggressively to protect Alaskans, whether Guard member or non-Guard Alaskans. I have and will continue to take these issues very seriously.

REACHING OUT IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH

If you are coping with invisible wounds, you are not alone. There are resources and support available to you and your family. For tips and tools to help you cope with psychological health concerns and strengthen your resilience, visit www.realwarriors.net or call 866-966-1020.

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Heritage Painting Unveiled

By Major Candis Olmstead,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... The newest painting in the National Guard's heritage series was unveiled in a ceremony at the National Guard armory here in January.

General Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, unveiled and presented the heritage painting to members of the Alaska National Guard and distinguished guests.

The painting, "Midnight Sun Guardians: 'So That Others May Live,'" by Mark Churms, is the 84th National Guard heritage painting commissioned since the series began in 1961. "Midnight Sun Guardians" depicts Alaska Air National Guard rescue efforts in response to the plane crash that killed five people including U.S. Senator Ted Stevens in August 2010.

An Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter, its crew and two pararescuemen arrived at the scene in severely inclement weather to provide medical care to survivors and transport the two most critically wounded to Dillingham. A U.S. Coast Guard HH-60 Jay Hawk transported two additional survivors to Dillingham, and all four were transported to Anchorage in a Coast Guard C-130.



Unveiling. The Alaska National Guard unveils a National Guard Bureau heritage painting in January that honors the 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons of the Alaska Air National Guard for their support in the rescue and recovery efforts of a plane crash that took the lives of five people including U.S. Senator Ted Stevens in August 2010.

Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

Additional Air Guard aircraft and personnel assisted in recovery efforts.

Stevens served Alaska for 40 years in the U.S. Senate and was a tireless advocate for the state and its military.

Grass serves as a military adviser to the president, secretary of defense, and National

Security Council and is the Department of Defense's official channel of communication to governors and state adjutants general on all matters pertaining to the National Guard.

This unveiling ceremony was the first of several events to showcase the painting and recognize those affected by the crash. ■

GUARDIANS OF THE NORTH



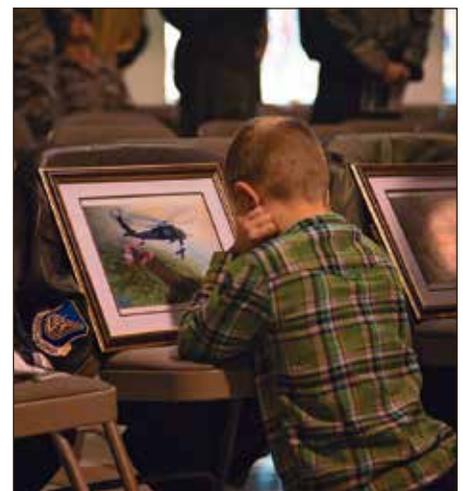
Midnight Sun Guardians. The painting, "Midnight Sun Guardians: 'So That Others May Live,'" by Mark Churms is the 84th National Guard heritage painting commissioned since the series began in 1961. "Midnight Sun Guardians" depicts Alaska Air National Guard rescue efforts in response to the plane crash that killed five people including U.S. Senator Ted Stevens in August 2010.

Photo: Major Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs



So That Others May Live. Because of the coordination and efforts of the Alaska Air National Guard, four of the plane's passengers survived the crash.

Photo: Major Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs



Impact of a Rescue. Elias Watson, 6-year-old son of Lieutenant Colonel Rick Watson, a HH-60 Pave Hawk pilot with the 210th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, closely examines a small-scale print of the 84th National Guard Bureau's heritage painting. The painting depicts the rescue and recovery mission, of which Watson was a pilot, of a tragic plane crash that killed five people in 2010. Photo: First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

Uninformed, Inaccurate Reporting

IS PAINTING THE WRONG PICTURE OF THE Alaska National Guard

In the past seven months, as of May 20, 2014, two news writers have contacted the Alaska National Guard with questions regarding sexual assault in the organization. All additional news reports have recycled inaccurate, misconstrued information. Interviews with Alaska National Guard leadership have resulted in reports that left out key, relevant details.

Media and politicians who lack correct information and have chosen not to pursue accurate, current data have made multiple false and defamatory statements about the Alaska National Guard.

Every commentary printed to date in local media was written without the author contacting the Alaska National Guard for information. The authors did not give us an opportunity to correct inaccuracies or provide facts, but chose to regurgitate information that had already been reported without fact-checking. Others are using this sensitive subject for political posturing, disparaging our organization to advance their political or commentary careers as they generalize and exaggerate reality.

Here are the facts.

1. In the Alaska National Guard, there have been nine reports of sexual assault that have occurred in the past 5½ years in which the alleged perpetrator was a member of the organization. (This includes data from January 2009 through May 20, 2014.)

- A. Nine reported assaults in 5½ years averages fewer than two reported assaults per year. In this 4,000-member organization, that equals about 1/20th of 1 percent of our membership who have reported a sexual assault by another member in the past 5½ years.
- B. Of these nine assaults, one occurred on duty at duty location. Three occurred on a military installation off-duty. Five occurred after hours, off-location.
- C. There was one report of a sexual assault committed by a member of the Alaska National Guard in 2013. There have been zero reports in 2014.

2. Nearly three-quarters of the sexual assaults reported since 2009 were committed by perpetrators who were not in the Alaska National Guard. We track these numbers because we want to help victims regardless of who assaulted them or when the assault happened. Yet these numbers continue to be included in data that media and politicians are citing when they misrepresent our organization and suggest that we have such a high number of assaults in our ranks. They say we have a culture that tolerates this behavior.

How many other organizations have full-time support personnel dedicated to meeting with victims and helping them through the difficulties after being assaulted? We do.

We don't just point them to a counselor. Our sexual assault response coordinators and victim advocates are with victims every step of the way to the extent that the victim allows.

Our sexual assault response coordinators go with victims to appointments, court dates, sit with them when they are being questioned by law enforcement, check in with them and notify them of the status of their cases when possible. These services are offered to all victims who report, regardless of when the offense took place or who the perpetrator was.

3. Two chaplains shared with a reporter for an October 2013 print media article that there were victims in the Alaska National

Guard who had not received proper, timely response from the organization, and victims were not taken seriously with regard to being sexually assaulted.

After that media coverage, the chaplains shared previously undisclosed details of their cases with our sexual assault response coordinator so that she could cross-reference the names with those victims who had reported to a victim advocate or a sexual assault response coordinator.

Every victim who sought support from our chaplains had either reported their assault and was receiving support from our sexual assault response coordinators; chose to report only but not seek further assistance; or chose not to report while knowing that assistance is available.

All unrestricted reports had been referred to local law enforcement. Of the cases that local law enforcement did not pursue, one met criteria that allowed us to request further review by the National Guard Bureau's Office of Complex Investigations. We referred that case, and they sent an OCI team to investigate further.

4. The Alaska National Guard does not have criminal justice authority over sexual assaults or other non-military criminal offenses in the way that active duty military services do. Some politicians and partisan commentators have incorrectly suggested that the Alaska National Guard, rather than local law enforcement and the court system, should pursue prosecution of sexual assault. This is not possible, as civilian offenses such as sexual assault may only be prosecuted by civilian criminal justice authorities, per state law.

These uninformed individuals have also asserted that we chose not to be proactive in our response to victim reporting. This is also incorrect, as every unrestricted report has been referred to local law enforcement.

5. The Alaska National Guard pursues administrative action in response to local law enforcement and Office of Complex Investigation results. Some members who have committed acts of sexual assault or sexual harassment have lost rank, been forced out of the organization, lost command or been administratively reassigned pending the outcome of administrative boards.

In order to ensure due process for the subject and the alleged victim, these actions take time. Due to required confidentiality and respect for privacy, personnel who are not directly involved in the administrative actions are not privy to the status or details of pending actions. This may be the reason for some people's concerns about timeliness or level of response; they are unaware of the status for each case, and therefore make incorrect assumptions that cases are not pursued.

6. There are three sexual assault response coordinators and 42 victim advocates throughout the Alaska National Guard. We have individual and class training, sensing sessions (feedback discussions), "all-calls" for leadership to communicate directly with all personnel, in addition to a video message from leadership, announcements, advertisements, articles, posters, brochures, presentation tables and social media posts. All of this is to ensure in every way possible that we have resources in place to help victims.

Communications are consistent and frequent so the message will be clearly understood that sexual assault is not tolerated. We do many things to ensure our members know our stance on sexual assault, including encouraging them to come forward for support in the event that they have been assaulted.

7. Of the nine assaults that allegedly occurred since 2009 by a member of the Alaska National Guard,

- A. Five were off-base, off-duty.
- B. Four were rapes.
- C. Five were inappropriate touching with clothes on.

D. Seven were referred to law enforcement (the other two were restricted reports — a decision made by the victim — which therefore could not be prosecuted or otherwise further pursued while in such status.)

E. None have been prosecuted.

8. Administrative investigations in the National Guard are now conducted by the Office of Complex Investigations, but this program has only been funded since 2012. Prior to this, local units did not have the resources or guidance to fully and properly respond to reports of sexual assaults and were limited to "15-6 Investigations" (in the Army National Guard) or "Commander Directed Investigations" (in the Air National Guard).

One assault is too many. But in an organization that draws members from a community of citizens who live in the state with the highest rate of sexual assaults in the nation, 1/20th of 1 percent is not the epidemic proportion being portrayed by some journalists and politicians.

We are very proud of the many distinguished Soldiers and Airmen in the Alaska National Guard who proudly serve our state and nation. We will continue to educate them, protect them and pursue justice within the means we have.

We hope that others who care about the people in our organization will focus on the real needs and concerns we must address, and hold their fire, even though they are being misinformed by cynical political agendas. ■



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Where in the World

Air Guard Returns from Qatar

By Lieutenant Colonel Ed Borneo, 168th Maintenance Squadron

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska ... More than a dozen maintainers from the Alaska Air National Guard's 168th Maintenance Group returned to Eielson Air Force Base in February from a two-month deployment to Al Udeid, Qatar.

Their mission was to support air operations in the Central Command area of responsibility.

The active duty operates maintenance differently than the Air National Guard. In theater, the members were separated into two squadrons, with five members assigned to the maintenance squadron and eight members assigned to the aircraft maintenance squadron, specifically the 340th Aircraft Maintenance Unit.

The 340th AMU had more than 200 members from the Guard, Reserves and active duty. At the height of operations, they had 35 tankers to maintain and flew more than 18 missions a day.

The team that formed in the 340th AMU not only met the daily mission, they increased the reliability of the fleet, surpassing all Air Force maintenance metrics, a standard not met by the AMU in more than a year. In January, the 340th AMU won AMU of the month, the first time the 340th was recognized in more than a year.

The maintenance squadron performed back shop maintenance on five separate weapon systems from B-1 to C-130s. The small contingent of maintainers was quickly integrated into respective squadrons, where members worked 12-hour shifts with one

day off for every five days worked to support the 24/7 operations.

The KC-135 fleet was broken down into three separate categories. One category supported special operations, nicknamed "dark world." The "vanilla tails" supported close air support and surveillance missions, and the third category was the multi-point

refueling system tails, which supported Navy and allied nation missions.

In the two months Guard members were deployed, they supported more than 950 sorties, which supported more than 2,900 receivers offloading 51.7 million pounds of fuel. ■

Mongolia

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Afghanistan Deployment.

Major Matthew Wilson, Joint Forces Headquarters, Alaska Army National Guard, stands in front of the American flag flying on the last day coalition forces occupied Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan, in February. Wilson, along with Sergeant First Class Lane Smith, A Troop, 1-297th Cavalry (Reconnaissance and Surveillance), was deployed as a U.S. liaison in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces in Afghanistan. They were deployed for nine months to Afghanistan. Photo: Courtesy Major Matthew Wilson, Alaska Army National Guard



Shooting Match. Alaska Air National Guardsmen Master Sergeant Nicolas Blace, left, and Senior Airman Justin Smith, right, both with security forces for the 213th Space Warning Squadron, and Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers Staff Sergeant James Bruce, second from left, 1-297th Cavalry Regiment, and Corporal Christopher Maclee, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, compete alongside more than 200 competitors at the All Army small arms shooting match in Fort Benning, Georgia, in February. The Alaska Guardsmen competed well overall with Bruce taking home a third place award overall for the novice category. Photo: Courtesy Master Sergeant Nicolas Blace, 213th Space Warning Squadron



Home Sweet Home. Members of the 168th Maintenance Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, return home to Eielson Air Force Base in February after a successful two-month deployment to Qatar performing aircraft maintenance and maintenance missions. Photo: Master Sergeant Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



Talks from the Trail. Lieutenant Colonel Lee Knowles, commander, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, Alaska Army National Guard, talks to exchange students from across the state at the 2014 Iron Dog race finish line in Fairbanks. The Alaska National Guard is the title sponsor for the world's longest and toughest snowmachine race, where racers travel 2,000 miles over some of the most remote and inhospitable land in the state. Part of the sponsorship allows for students in the state to travel and experience the popular race and interact with National Guardsmen at each location. Photo: Staff Sergeant Jack Carlson, Recruiting and Retention Battalion



Extreme Cardio and Mental Focus. Second Lieutenant Kristine Laughlin-Hall, 176th Logistics Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, competes in the senior women's pursuit race of the National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships at the Ethan Allen Firing Range, Jericho, Vermont, in March. She, along with Alaska Army National Guard Private First Class Tadhg Nakada, was named to the All Guard Team and will represent Alaska, the National Guard and the United States in international competitions. They have the opportunity to go on to the World Cup level and potentially the Olympic teams. Photo: Staff Sergeant Sarah Mattison, Vermont Air National Guard



Mongolian Partnership. Sergeant First Class Lane Smith, A Troop, 1-297th Cavalry (Reconnaissance and Surveillance), Alaska Army National Guard, shakes hands with First Lieutenant Undrakh Badrakh of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Force, while leading troops from the METF upon their arrival at Shindand Airbase, Afghanistan. Smith was deployed as a U.S. liaison in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces in Afghanistan. Photo: Courtesy Major Matthew Wilson, Alaska Army National Guard

Captain David Cunningham and Private First Class Tadhg Nakada, all from 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation; Captain Karl Bruening, Joint Forces Headquarters; Sergeant First Class Travis Kulp, 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron; and Alaska Air National Guardsmen Second Lieutenant Kristine Laughlin-Hall, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Staff Sergeant Jaime Haines, 212th Rescue Squadron; and the coach Senior Master Sergeant Scott Belyea, 176th Civil Engineering Squadron.

“Our team was well-rounded with varying skill and ability levels, in both skiing and shooting, led by an extremely talented and experienced coach,” Laughlin-Hall said.

Biathlon is a winter sport that combines skiing and precision marksmanship. Participants alternate between skiing laps intended to get their heart rate up, and then transitioning to shooting small targets at 50

meters while attempting to control their breathing.

“Biathlon hones in on the critical skills of shoot, move and communicate,” Ruggerio said. “There are no other sports I can think of that better mimic combat stress on a service member than biathlon.”

Laughlin-Hall and Nakada were named to the All Guard Team and will represent Alaska, the National Guard and the United States in international competitions. They have the opportunity to go on to the World Cup level and potentially the Olympic teams. ■

Biathlon Championships

By Sergeant Balinda O’Neal,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF RICHARDSON, Alaska ... Service members from the Alaska Air and Army National Guard competed in the 39th annual Chief of the National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships at the Camp Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho, Vt., in March.

After winning the Western Regional Biathlon, the seven Guardsmen on the

Alaska National Guard Biathlon Team took home an additional nine individual and team awards at the championships.

“We had representation from 21 states and 122 Soldiers and Airmen participating,” said Major Christopher Ruggerio, National Guard Biathlon coordinator. “The Alaska National Guard did very well at all levels of competition this year and left with quite a few awards for such a novice team.”

The 2014 AKNG Biathlon Team included Alaska Army National Guardsmen Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Schell,

103rd Civil Support Team Aces Evaluation

Story and photos by Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... Members of the Alaska National Guard's 103rd Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction, along with Guardsmen from Idaho, Montana, Utah and Washington, took part in a training proficiency evaluation exercise here in February and passed with flying colors.

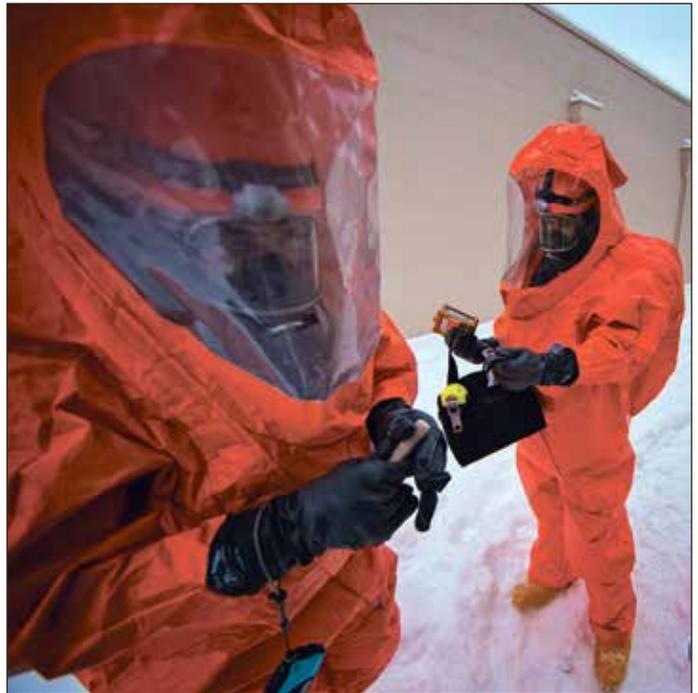
The exercise was designed to evaluate and grade the 103rd CST on its ability to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. Four months before the exercise, the 103rd CST was rated as being trained in less than 20 percent of its skill sets.

"We assessed ourselves as being trained in only two of 12 areas last October just because of the amount of personnel turnover we had," said Lieutenant Colonel Wayne Don, commander of the 103rd CST. "So we had a very aggressive train-up period to get us to overcome some of the personnel challenges and some of the experience gaps we had throughout the teams."

The exercise took place in a fictional city named Baumeister, at the Baumeister Military Operations on Urban Terrain site, which is a mock-up of a small town for service members to train for urban operation scenarios. There, various clandestine labs were constructed to set the stage.

Inside the labs, real but safe levels of hazardous materials were put in place, just enough to trigger the alarms on the unit's detection devices.

"One of the challenges we had was the weather," said Staff Sergeant Michael Buck, survey member with the 103rd CST.



Suited Up. Alaska National Guardsmen from the 103rd Civil Support Team - Weapons of Mass Destruction, as well as Guardsmen from Idaho, Washington, Montana and Utah, participate in a field training exercise on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in February.



Weapons of Mass Destruction. Members of the Civil Support Team from five states, including Alaska, are evaluated on their ability to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats during an exercise in February. The Alaska National Guard's 103rd Civil Support Team received perfect scores in all 12 categories of its evaluation.

"We had a lot of snow dump on us the first night, and then going back the second day, we had to deal with a lot of the snow while going into the laboratories, moving our equipment around in confined spaces and moving around in level-A suits."

Suited up in their protective suits, teams from the 103rd CST moved into the snow-covered city after they were given the green light from a notional security element. With each team, a grader followed along, noting the steps of their performance.

"The challenge is the response to the evaluation," Don said. "There are time standards that we have to meet. We have an alert procedure that requires us to have 100 percent accountability of all of our personnel once we've been notified within an hour. At 90 minutes, our advanced element has to respond and be leaving once we've been given the notification, and then our main body has to respond and be leaving within three hours."

After the exercise finished, the team gathered in a room and conducted an after-action-review of its evaluation. There, the graders reviewed with the teams their performance and whether they rated as being trained and ready to perform their real-world missions.

"Our team did great," Buck said. "We were able to go in with the mission goals and achieve that goal according to our processes, checklists, and guidelines and meet the needs of the incident commander. As a Citizen-Soldier in the Alaska National Guard, we do provide that capability to the protection for or the identification of clandestine labs so that the population can be safe if the need should ever arise."

The training between the two evaluations paid off. The graders rated the unit with a 100 percent pass rate in all its functional areas, a vast improvement over the previous evaluation four months before.

"It was a pretty significant achievement to get certified as trained in 12 of 12 functional areas after the amount of turnover we had and with experience issues," Don said. "What this means for us is that we're certified to respond within the state and also participate in the national response cycle in the country." ■

RANGER CHALLENGE COMPETITION

U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets from the University of Alaska Anchorage participated in the annual Ranger Challenge competition on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, in February. The Ranger Challenge is a physically and mentally demanding competition between teams from different Army ROTC units across the nation. Of the 10-person team from UAA, four cadets are in the Simultaneous Membership Program in the Alaska Army National Guard. The UAA Army ROTC cadets competed against 33 schools and placed sixth overall.



Teamwork. Of the 10-person Ranger Challenge team from UAA, four are Simultaneous Membership Program cadets in the Alaska Army National Guard including team captain cadet Ryan Hunte, on wall, upper right. Photo: Sergeant First Class Kevin McGaha, UAA Army ROTC

Army Strong. University of Alaska Anchorage Army ROTC cadets participate in the annual Ranger Challenge competition on Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Photo: Sergeant First Class Kevin McGaha, UAA Army ROTC



Veteran Competitor. Cadet Rebekah Williams, Alaska Army National Guard, is the cadet operations officer at UAA Army ROTC and a three-time Ranger Challenge competitor. Photo: Sergeant First Class Kevin McGaha, UAA Army ROTC



Youngest Teammate. Cadet Robert Stone, Alaska Army National Guard, is a freshman at UAA and the youngest member on the Ranger Challenge team. Photo: Sergeant First Class Kevin McGaha, UAA Army ROTC

Homeland Security & Emergency Management



Alaska: Ground for Natural Disasters

By Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... Alaska is home to many sizable wonders such as Denali peak, the mighty Yukon River, giant grizzly bears and the 800-mile-long Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. All of these are well suited to the nation's largest state.

On March 27, 1964, we also became the state with the largest recorded earthquake in North America, the second largest in the world. The magnitude 9.2 earthquake struck at 5:36 p.m. on Good Friday.

The intense shaking from the earthquake raged for nearly five minutes. The earth

rolled and pitched like waves on the sea; massive crevasses opened and slammed shut, and trees swayed so violently that their tips touched the earth. The shaking caused tsunamis that surged into several of Alaska's coastal communities, causing death and destruction here and as far away as California. In all, 131 people perished as a result of the earthquake and resulting tsunamis.

The 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake forever changed the lives of those who experienced it and transformed the very landscape of our state. The ground in Portage

dropped eight feet in areas. Even today, remnants of buildings and a ghost forest can be seen when traveling between Anchorage and the Kenai Peninsula. In Kodiak, the ground was raised 30 feet in some areas. Measurements on Montague Island, at the entrance of Prince William Sound, indicate that the highest vertical displacement was as much as 50 feet above previous levels. It is difficult to comprehend the forces at work which could cause such upheaval.

In the days that followed the earthquake in 1964, Alaskans dealt with massive damage to infrastructure and a severe limitation



Fourth Avenue Collapse. The 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake unleashed an incomprehensible amount of energy, ground fissures and ground failures, causing major structural damages. The magnitude 9.2 earthquake drastically altered ground elevation in many areas of Southcentral Alaska. Photo: Courtesy DHS&EM



Falling Ground. The Turnagain area of Anchorage witnessed catastrophic ground failure where the ground shifted and dropped, but many of the homes remained intact. Photo: Courtesy DHS&EM

in the delivery of goods and services. Thousands of Alaskans were without power, communication, food, water, medical care and other basic services for an extended period of time. Things were simpler in Alaska in 1964, and residents were much more self-sufficient than Alaskans today. They lived in small homes heated by wood or fuel oil and were accustomed to frequent delivery disruptions. The population of Alaska in 1964 was 226,167.

As of 2011, more than 722,190 people now call Alaska home. As the population increased, a greater dependency on the delivery of goods and services developed, and the reliance on technology became a hallmark of our modern times. It can be expected that an event of similar nature to the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake would have a much more significant impact on the people of Alaska today.

Alaska is one of the most seismically active regions in the world and accounts for approximately 11 percent of the world's earthquakes. Each year more than 12,000 earthquakes occur in our state, and a magnitude 8.0 earthquake happens about every 10 years.

Alaska also has 90 active volcanoes and three-fourths of the U.S. volcanoes that have erupted in the last 200 years. The 1912 eruption of Novarupta, in Katmai National

Park and Preserve, was the largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century. Novarupta dumped several feet of ash on communities across the state, but most notably on Kodiak Island and the area to the west. Ash from the eruption was spread worldwide.

"During the next catastrophic event, needs will likely be greater than the resources available, and while local, state and federal government agencies will be able to help, Alaskans must be personally prepared," said John Madden, director of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. "The state has emergency backup communications, power generation and water purification. We are preparing emergency food caches. We plan and practice for events with all of our partners. But realistically, we will not be able to help everyone right away. Many Alaskans will have to be self-sufficient."

Individual preparedness starts with three simple steps: building an emergency kit, having a family communication plan and informing yourself about the risks your community faces. Individuals and families should build an emergency kit that contains essential items such as food, water, medical supplies, clothing, backup communications, and a family communication plan that identifies emergency contact information, meeting points and emergency medical information.

Be informed: know the risks your community faces and what to do in the event of a disaster. The diversity of Alaska's

communities and families requires that each family considers their unique circumstances when preparing.

"Preparedness is everyone's responsibility," Madden said. "A prepared population allows responders to focus on those with critical needs and to restore essential services. Individual preparedness is the bedrock of a prepared community."

The state of Alaska observed the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake with a commemorative event at the Anchorage Museum March 27. The anniversary event drew survivors and other Alaskans together to remember the quake that shaped the personality of our state and the very landscape upon which it was built. In addition, the Legislature unanimously passed a resolution that proclaimed March 27, 2014, as Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day in Alaska.

A Great Alaska Shakeout earthquake drill was conducted, and more than 100,000 people statewide participated in the drop, cover, hold-on drill. A full-scale exercise was also conducted with local, state, federal, and non-government agencies to practice emergency management response and initial recovery efforts to an event similar to the 1964 earthquake. The exercise was the largest ever conducted in the state of Alaska and included participation from more than 100 agencies.

For more information about preparing for disasters or to view commemorative information, visit www.ready.Alaska.gov. ■



Downtown Anchorage. While ground failure was the most significant impact in Anchorage, other areas of the state were struck with landslides, ground movement and earthquake-induced tsunamis. Today, much of the area in Anchorage that suffered from subsidence has been redeveloped. Photo: Courtesy DHS&EM



Ready to Serve



Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska

Unloading Equipment. Specialist Kekoa Macloves, 207th Brigade Support Company, Alaska Army National Guard, operates a forklift to unload equipment for the Alaska Medical Station at Raven Hall within the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer.
Photo: Staff Sergeant Megan Leuck, 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 was a statewide exercise involving national, state and local agencies designed to test the response and coordination of various organizations in a disaster scenario modeled after the 1964 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that ravaged Alaska.

The exercise commemorated the 50th anniversary of the magnitude 9.2 earthquake and emphasized response and recovery operations with the first portion of the exercise focused on the ability to share information among federal, state, local, tribal and community officials. As the exercise progressed, focus shifted toward unified coordination essential to identifying short- and long-term recovery considerations.

The exercise consisted of scenario-based events at multiple locations from Anchorage to the Mat-Su Borough, the Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak, Cordova, Valdez and Fairbanks. Scenarios included hazardous material detection and response, search and rescue, triage, casualty evacuation, communication support and transportation support.

Prepared to Protect

By Sergeant Edward Eagerton,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... When faced with dire circumstances, most people will resort to either a fight or flight mentality. How a person reacts is often dictated by whether or not they are prepared for the situation. In this light, first responders train to mitigate the instinct to run, and instead, learn to charge forward in the face of danger for the greater good.

For the National Guard, the defense in support of civil authorities mission remains one of the tenants of the organization. The DISCA mission means that in the event of natural disasters, the National Guard is one of the first responders activated to support the multitude of organizations in place to respond to those disasters.

Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 took place at venues across the state the last week of March. It was the latest iteration of a comprehensive exercise involving the State of Alaska, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, North America Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Transportation Command, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services and many other organizations.



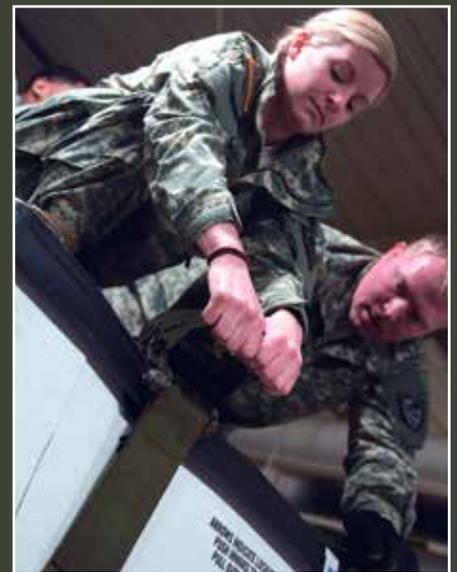
Removing Dangers. Sergeant First Class Jason Rode, left, 103rd Civil Support Team, assists Travis Reier, Anchorage Fire Department, Station 1 engineer and HAZMAT technician, with removal of Level A hazardous material. National Guardsmen from Alaska and Nebraska joined efforts with the Anchorage Fire Department to assess a simulated atmospheric hazardous contamination at the Alaska State Public Health Lab during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. Photo: Sergeant Michelle Brown, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

The Air and Army National Guard had approximately 1,150 Airmen and Soldiers participating from Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Arizona, California, Nevada, Idaho, Minnesota, North Dakota and Utah.

“With Alaska Shield 2014, we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1964 earthquake by replicating its significant damage and corresponding tsunami in order to educate and prepare participants for potential catastrophic events,” said Major



Checking for Contaminates. Specialist James Hensley, left, and Specialist Igor Bondar, right, members of the Oregon National Guard's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear Enhanced Response Force Package, carefully check for contaminants on someone notionally caught in debris. Photo: Technical Sergeant John Huguel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs



Medical Supplies. Specialist Crystal Roseman, left, and Sergeant Geoffrey Hansen, both with the 207th Brigade Support Company, Alaska Army National Guard, secure cargo of medical supplies before transporting it to the Alaska Medical Station in Palmer. Photo: Staff Sergeant Megan Leuck, 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Searching for Survivors. Members of the Fairbanks, North Pole and Fort Wainwright Fire Departments search for notional survivors at a training rubble pile on Fort Wainwright. Photo: Master Sergeant Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



Medical Aid. A nurse charts the treatment of a patient while two medics administer medical aid. The medical personnel are members of the 966th Area Support Medical Company, Arizona Army National Guard, which conducted a mass casualty training exercise, held at the city of Valdez's Herman Hutchens Elementary School during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. Photo: Captain Brian Fallinson, Wisconsin Army National Guard



Preparing for Transport. Alaska Army National Guardsmen from the 207th Engineer Support Platoon and the 297th Military Police Company assist with loading patients on to AmbuBus transport vehicles from Anchorage-based hospitals to a simulated Disaster Aeromedical Staging Facility on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Photo: Sergeant Michelle Brown, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs.

VG-AK14 kicked off with a mock magnitude 9.2 earthquake that struck in Jonah Bay in Prince William Sound. Afterward, simulated reports began filtering into participating organizations about the destruction in Anchorage and surrounding areas.

In the exercise scenario, a tsunami ravaged coastal towns across Alaska following the earthquake.

Immediately, the wheels of the machine began to spin. The National Guard responded by sending out a recall, accounting for personnel and equipment to get an accurate picture of what resources it had available to contribute to the imminent relief effort.

The State Emergency Operation Center was stood up, housing personnel from numerous agencies in a central location to consolidate and streamline interagency coordination for the disaster response. The National Guard also stood up a Joint Operations Center to coordinate Air and Army Guard assets.

Within the scenario, the governor declared a state of emergency and activated the dual-status commander. Dual status commanders are authorized to command both federal and state forces, allowing the Department of Defense to achieve unity of effort and continuity of operations while increasing command flexibility for mission tasking.

The dual-status commander position was filled by Alaska Air National Guard Brigadier General Scott Wenke, commander of the 176th Wing, which is located on JBER.

"My job here (is) to unify all of our federal Department of Defense forces in uniform under one unified command to support the effort of our state and federal partners in recovery, life-saving and prevention of suffering within the state of Alaska, as we dig our way out of this hole," said Wenke at a mock press conference during the exercise.

As the exercise scenarios kicked off, locations around the state were staged to replicate collapsed buildings, hazardous material spills, degraded communication capabilities, utility failures and mass casualties in need of triage.

In Anchorage, a rubble pile was used to simulate collapsed buildings, and train cars were used to simulate a derailed train.

"It's very nice to work with other agencies, not only another civil support team but local fire departments and emergency managers," said Technical Sergeant Donovan Garcia, a team chief with the 72nd Civil Support Team, Nebraska National Guard.

In Palmer, because hospitals were overwhelmed with damage or at full capacity in the scenario, a request came in to set up a medical



From Hercules to Ambulance. Members of the Fort Greely Fire Department transport role players and mannequins from an Alaska Air National Guard 144th Airlift Squadron C-130 Hercules to a triage area and ambulances during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. Photo: Technical Sergeant Thomas Hough, 144th Airlift Squadron

station at the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer. There, medical personnel from both civilian and government agencies worked to help sustain casualties as they came streaming in.

Within the exercise scenario, reports began filtering in about tsunamis hitting coastal areas, and communication with towns like Valdez and Cordova became degraded as utilities failed in the aftermath. With utilities and resources in short supply, requests for support flooded in.

Guard members distributed water to affected citizens after the utility was damaged, causing local agencies to set up a desalinization machine to convert salt water into drinkable water. The Soldiers also worked to communicate updates and provide safety information with local residents.

In Valdez, a coalition of local, state and National Guard assets worked to restore communications capabilities so information about the needs and situation of the area could reach those tasked with controlling the response effort.

“Our mission as a Joint Incident Site Communications Capability team is to provide communication and networking support from one organization to another — either local, state, military or federal, including FEMA,” said Staff Sergeant Ryan Miller, a JISCC operator with the 128th Air Control Squadron, Wisconsin National Guard. “During a natural disaster, we link one type of communication with another. We set up antennas and satellite communications and talk across the world and provide telephone support to the local emergency officials.”

While communication capabilities were being restored in Valdez, elements from the Alaska National Guard worked to provide security checkpoints at the city’s hospital, emergency operations center and at an alternate medical treatment facility.

As the countless problems developed, the National Guard worked hand in hand with federal and state agencies through the night, reallocating assets, requesting additional support or supplies from agencies in other states and working to distribute the supplies and efforts as efficiently as possible.

When the smoke finally cleared, the National Guard conducted after-action reviews to assess their performance in the overall effort. The process of reviewing data from exercises like VG-AK14 helps the National Guard refine their processes to better respond in the event of a real disaster.

“There is no question that Alaska was an ideal venue for this exercise, which tested our collective ability to share information among federal, state, local, tribal and other community organizations and respond accordingly,” Katkus said. ■



Mongolian Partners Observe. Staff Sergeant Ned Tri, right, Alaska Medical Station clinical noncommissioned officer-in-charge, explains to Major Ariunaa Chadraabal, left, and Colonel Ulambayay Nyamkhuu, both with Mongolia’s National Emergency Management Agency, the contents of a medical bag used at the Alaska Medical Station Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. The Mongolian representatives attended as part of the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program.

Photo: Staff Sergeant Megan Leuck, 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Communications Support. Airmen with the 128th Air Control Squadron, Wisconsin Air National Guard, monitor communications support provided by a Joint Incident Site Communications Capability located at the National Guard Armory in Valdez during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014.

Photo: Captain Brian Fallinson, Wisconsin Army National Guard



Security Checkpoint. A Soldier with the 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, mans a security checkpoint in front of the city of Valdez’s Herman Hutchens Elementary School as part of a mass casualty exercise. Photo: Captain Brian Fallinson,

Wisconsin Army National Guard



Going Mobile. Alaska National Guardsmen from the 207th Engineer Support Platoon use a mobile application to respond to simulated damage sites in Wasilla during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. The engineers reported the findings back to an emergency operation center using the mobile application.

Photo: Sergeant Michelle Brown, 134th Public Affairs Detachment



Alaska Guardsmen Compete in CrossFit Open



By Sergeant Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... Service members from the Alaska Air and Army National Guard competed against approximately 140,000 worldwide participants to determine the "Fittest on Earth" during the CrossFit Open February through March.

The 22 Alaska Guardsmen and 10 Department of Defense civilians who competed in the competition are from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's 907 CrossFit program.

"The CrossFit Open is the starting point of the culmination of the CrossFit Games," said Sergeant Matt Johnson, a coach with 907 CrossFit and a member of the 208th Construction Management Team, Alaska Army National Guard. "We were ranked on five workouts over five weeks, and the fittest 48 men, 48 women and 30 teams from each region will earn invitations to one of the 17 regional events."

CrossFit is a functional fitness program that is designed based on constantly varied functional movements performed at relatively high intensity.

"The movements replicate and mimic life," Johnson said. "When you sit down in your chair, you are executing an air squat; when you pick something up from the ground, a deadlift."

The fitness regime developed by Coach Greg Glassman defines CrossFit as increased work capacity across broad time and modal domains.

"We really pride ourselves on the ability to move large loads over long distances quickly," Johnson said. "It lends itself very well to the military community by preparing you for the unknown and unknowable."

"There is no shortage of heart in this competition," he added. "Once you hear three, two, one, go, it's you and the whiteboard and the clock. Nothing is left on the table."

907 CrossFit conducted its first Workout of the Day, known as a WOD, in March 2012 at Hangar 5 on JBER.

Toes to Bar. Alaska Army National Guardsmen Chief Warrant Officer Two Mark Nieto, property book officer, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, grades as First Lieutenant Danny Canlas, platoon leader, 207th Battlefield Support Company, performs the toes to bar exercise during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in March.

Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Heavy Lifting. Sergeant Matt Blanchett, a fire support sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, power cleans 135 pounds during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in March. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Cardio. State Command Sergeant Major Pam Harrington, Alaska Army National Guard, completes a 60-calorie row during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in March. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

Since March 2012, 907 CrossFit has grown to almost 200 members. In November 2013, a new facility on Camp Carroll on JBER opened offering enough equipment to conduct classes of up to 25 personnel simultaneously.

“We hold three classes a day Monday through Friday, open to any Department of Defense cardholder,” said Johnson. “It’s a broad and inclusive fitness program that is scaled to meet your physical and psychological tolerance. It’s for anyone who wants to increase their fitness capacity.”

CrossFit also fosters camaraderie by the community that spontaneously arises when people do these workouts together.

“A key component of why the program is so effective is the community aspect of everyone coming together to do some collective suffering,” Johnson said. “There are high-fives and chest bumps at the end of the day, and everyone gets in a great workout.”

With a new gym and almost 200 clients, it’s a very exciting time for 907 CrossFit, Johnson added.

Participants chosen for the regional competition will be receiving invitations in the mail. ■



Power Clean. Alaska Army National Guardsmen First Lieutenant Danny Canlas, platoon leader, 207th Battlefield Support Company, grades as Chief Warrant Officer Two Mark Nieto, property book officer, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, power cleans 135 pounds during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in March. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs

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213th Space Warning Squadron



By Chief Master Sergeant Chad Parsons, 168th Air Refueling Wing

CLEAR AIR FORCE STATION, Alaska ... What can you do in 60 seconds? Not much by most accounts, but the men and women of the 213th Space Warning Squadron's Operations Flight would disagree. They would say that in 60 seconds, a crew of two people can:

- Identify a visual and auditory queue of an inbound intercontinental or sea-launched ballistic missile directed at North America.
- Notify mission-essential personnel in the facility to prepare to execute their strategic responsibilities.
- Visually assess indications of an inbound threat and determine the number of targets.
- Query the maintenance experts for system performance.
- Assess crew performance for any adverse system indications.
- Contact the Missile Warning Center at Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado., and relay all of the above information without error, each time, every time in less than 60 seconds.

In short, you can be the vital “human in the loop” interface required for the Strategic Missile Warning mission of the North

American Aerospace Defense Command — all in 60 seconds. That's what a space operator will say.

Nestled in Alaska's vast interior wilderness, you will find Clear Air Force Station, home of the 213th Space Warning Squadron. The 213th SWS is a force provider to the 13th Space Warning Squadron that employs a 10-story AN/FPS-123, Solid State Phased Array Radar System to perform its primary mission of strategic missile warning and its secondary mission of space surveillance.

The 213th SWS comprise five flights staffed primarily by active Guard Reserve members, all working together to make the mission happen. The most apparent of these is the operations flight, which is composed of a combination of enlisted personnel and officers responsible for performing crew duties as well as training and evaluating their active-duty counterparts of the 13th SWS.

The security forces flight is the 213th SWS' largest flight at 60 members authorized. As the only SF presence on the installation, their responsibilities include anti-terrorism, integrated defense, pass and identification, reports and analysis, protection of the installation and the PL-1 asset, among a



Communications. Second Lieutenant Steven Havens, chief executive officer for the 213th Space Warning Squadron, talks important business in his office at Clear Air Force Station.

Photo: Courtesy 213th Space Warning Squadron



Mission Ready. Master Sergeant John Stolz is the noncommissioned officer in charge for the 213th Security Forces Resources Department at Clear Air Force Station. The security forces flight is the 213th Space Warning Squadron's largest flight at 60 members authorized.

Photo: Courtesy 213th Space Warning Squadro

myriad of others that come with securing an installation.

The quality assurance flight, staffed by a civil engineer, material management, vehicle management and analysis, cyber systems operations and cyber transport systems, is the 213th SWS' most diverse flight. The quality assurance flight personnel exercise vital contract oversight responsibilities. These duties are essential to ensuring that 170 contract personnel deliver services as indicated in contractual agreements covering everything from sanitation services to Solid State Phased Array Radar System maintenance.

The services flight has what may be the most difficult duty of all — providing for the well-being and quality of life for all personnel assigned. For a remote location along the Parks Highway, there are a multitude of activities to keep people occupied. There's a batting cage, bowling alley, golf/shooting simulator, full weight and cardio room, full-size gymnasium and all ranks club, to name a few. The men and women of the services flight keep it all in tip-top condition.

Last, but certainly not least, is the commander's support staff. This section is composed of personnel, knowledge operations management, education and

training, the first sergeant, chief and commander. The primary charge of the CSS is to keep the 213th SWS machine in motion — from enlistments to orders, family care plans to force development — the CSS manages it all.

While diverse in skill set and specific responsibilities, each of these flights pulls together in the same direction as one organization — one team dedicated to the mission and to each other. We are, as the

commander's vision states, "One team, committed to the evolving challenges of the nation and state's call, with mission-ready resilient Alaska citizen soldiers."

Each flight of the 213th SWS complements the others making our strategic missile warning mission possible. So rest easy, America; the 213th Space Warning Squadron and the members of Clear Air Force Station have been standing watch for more than 50 years. ■

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Lava Rescue 2014



Rescue. An Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk hovers over the Pacific Ocean five miles off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii, during the Alaska Air National Guard's Lava Rescue 2014, a search-and-rescue exercise. Guardian Angel pararescuemen parachuted out of a C-17 into the water and helped personnel out of the water to be hoisted into the helicopter. The personnel were simulated aircraft crash survivors. Photo: First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs



By Major Candis Olmstead,
DMVA Public Affairs

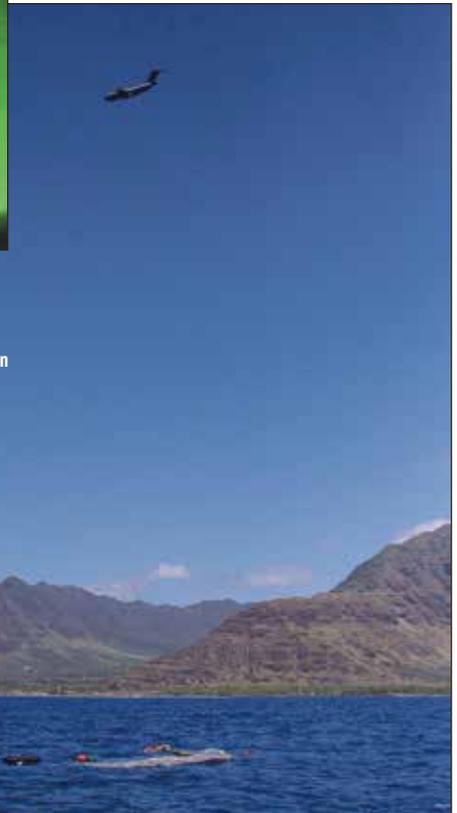
JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii ... Airmen from the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing completed an 11-day flying training exercise, "Lava Rescue 2014," here in February. Seventy-seven members of the 210th and 212th Rescue Squadrons, the 144th and 249th Airlift Squadrons and the 176th Maintenance Group participated in a first-ever opportunity of its kind in the Alaska Air Guard.

"What makes this unique is having the largest operations group in the Air National Guard train together for a mass casualty water search and rescue response and conduct air refueling and air drops with other service components in the Pacific Command area of operations," said Lieutenant Colonel Steve Latham, 210th Rescue Squadron commander. "Few folks in our ops group have had much opportunity to perform our mission and get this type of training in our tasked area of responsibility."

Training exercises included search-and-rescue operations performed at sea during the day and additional SAR training after dark with night-vision equipment. For one of the scenarios, "survivors" were pre-placed about five miles off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii, with 212th RQS Guardian Angel



Night Vision. An Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk hovers over the Pacific Ocean five miles off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii, during a night water search-and-rescue exercise mission as part of the Alaska Air National Guard's Lava Rescue 2014 in February. Guardian Angel pararescuemen were lowered into the water and later hoisted out. Photo: First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs



Searching for Simulated Survivors. An Alaska Air National Guard C-17 flies over the Pacific Ocean five miles off the coast of Oahu, Hawaii, during a search-and-rescue exercise Lava Rescue 2014. Guardian Angel pararescuemen along with their Guardian Angel rescue craft and Jet Ski parachuted out of the C-17 into the water. Photo: First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

pararescuemen in place on a watercraft and additional pararescuemen in the 210th RQS HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter to practice exiting the helo, rescuing survivors and being hoisted back onto the aircraft.

In another search-and-rescue exercise — a mission that only the Alaska Air National Guard C-17 Globemaster III aircraft has performed — PJs and two SAR watercraft were dropped from the aircraft over water, simulating a long-range SAR mission.

This was the first time that a Guardian Angel rescue craft has ever dropped from a C-17 over water.

“We are the only C-17 unit in the Air Force and Air National Guard that currently executes the C-17 rescue air drop,” said Major Scott Altenburg, a C-17 pilot and mission commander for the C-17 portion of Lava Rescue 2014. “We wrote the book on it. It’s now published in our tactics and procedures and will be released this year for other C-17 units to reference.”

The C-17 also practiced air refueling this week with the Hawaii Air National Guard’s KC-135 Stratotanker and conducted formation flying with the Air Force’s 535th Airlift Squadron.

A C-130 from the 144th Airlift Squadron flew a mission in support of 35 Marines and Navy personnel that included static line drops with special operations Marines

and high-altitude, low-opening personnel drops with Navy SEALs. The 144th also transported personnel and cargo from Alaska for the exercise.

The first-ever Lava Rescue 2014 exercise would not have been possible without the support and hard work of maintenance crews, logistics and support personnel.

“Maintenance and logistics personnel have performed flawlessly to support generation of aircraft, equipment and cargo, which was essential for the success of Lava

Rescue 2014,” said Lieutenant Colonel Karl Westerlund, the mission commander.

Lava Rescue 2014 included many high-value mission opportunities for aircrew, pararescuemen, maintenance and support personnel from the Alaska Air Guard to train together and in joint training events with other military services. They flew more than 25 sorties.

“The combination of training opportunities really couldn’t have been any better,” Westerlund said. ■



Keeping Everything Operational. Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk maintainers from the 176th Air Maintenance Squadron work on a helicopter at Joint Base Hickam-Pearl Harbor in February during Lava Rescue 2014 in Hawaii. Photo: Major Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs

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Veterans

You Earned Benefits – Sign Up for Them

By Verdie Bowen, Veterans Affairs

ANCHORAGE, Alaska ... Often in life, we pass through time way too fast and forget the little things. Veterans often look at each other and can see those common traits that each of us possesses and how they have shaped our lives. I wonder how often you check your gig line to make sure you are squared away, and the humor behind this single event is how often you do this when you're hunting or fishing. I want you to think about your left thumb and how it is affected by the sound of the national anthem; I bet it finds the seam on your left pant leg. These are things that make every veteran more alike than not.

We have the richest communities across Alaska because we have the strongest volunteer force in the nation. Our veterans are always part of every event; moreover, they are the leaders behind the drive that started the program. This is because the DNA of a veteran is selfless. They look for ways to always enrich others and to make the community a greater place to live.

Take a moment to go back in time and remember the first thing you did once you



Helping Veterans. Navy veteran Kelly McGonegal prepares salmon while volunteering at the Veterans Stand Down event in Dillingham in August 2013. McGonegal serves as a tribal veterans representative in Anchorage, assisting veterans in receiving their earned benefits.

Photo: by Sam Hudson, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



Showing Respect. Vietnam veteran George Bennett and members of the Kake Native Veterans Association along with their families salute the flag in Kake during a ceremony that placed grave markers on unmarked veterans' graves in October 2013. Bennett is a member of the Southeast Alaska Native Veterans Association and also serves as a tribal veterans representative in Sitka, assisting veterans in receiving their earned benefits. Photo: Sam Hudson, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

were no longer in the military. Some of us slept in, some just sat quietly and some had huge family parties. I remember thinking how great it will be to not get a flu shot or to worry about that military dentist again.

Did you ever sign up for your VA benefits before leaving the military? Veterans often tell me how signing up will take away from those returning today or those more ill than they are. But, if you don't sign up, the only people hurt are those in your community and your family.

Today, we are about one and a half years into the VA/Alaska Native health care agreement. This agreement alone has placed \$2.2 million back into your communities. Without the rural veterans signing up for health care, this could not have occurred. Your fellow veterans have placed \$53 million into our Alaska education system. This is huge for keeping our schools alive and helping others to attend. I could go on about

what our veterans do for our communities, and it is all wonderful. What I want you to think about is what you should be doing now to help your veteran community.

After you returned from military service, what did you do? Did you sign up for VA medical benefits? Did you file a claim for disability? Did you purchase a home under the VA home loan program? Did you use your education benefits? What did you do? I hope you took the time to sign up for all the VA benefits you earned. It is hard to stress how important this is. If you can't do this for yourself, think about the impact to your family and community if you receive all your earned benefits.

If you don't know what your benefits are, give us a call in the state's Veterans Affairs office. For those outside of Anchorage call toll free 1-888-248-2682; in Anchorage, call 334-0874.

What will you do next? ■

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage Commemorates New Facilities



Sharing Spaces. Captain Paul Mehler III, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, commemorates the opening of the new U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage wing of the Alaska National Guard headquarters building during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in January. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Joint Forces. Rear Admiral Thomas Ostebo, commander, U.S. Coast Guard 17th District, speaks about the significance of Sector Anchorage moving into a new wing of the Alaska National Guard headquarters building on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in January. The co-location with the Alaska National Guard shows the partnership and joint efforts of the two organizations.

Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Ribbon Cutting. Rear Admiral Thomas Ostebo, center, commander, U.S. Coast Guard 17th District, and Major General Thomas Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, cut the ceremonial ribbon in January during the opening of the new U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage wing of the Alaska National Guard headquarters building.

Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Alaska State Defense Force

Serving the Community at the Alaska Medical Station

By Brigadier General Roger E. Holl,
Alaska State Defense Force

PALMER, Alaska ... The Alaska State Defense Force undertook many missions in support of the National Guard during Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014.

The exercise was designed to prepare for another magnitude 9.2 earthquake like the earthquake that hit Alaska in 1964. The ASDF served in many roles in the exercise to include serving in the Joint Operations Center, assisting with the joint staging and reception of troops from other states, supporting communications, providing medical personnel, and engineering for damage assessment and debris removal.

The ASDF has been focusing on training and force development that responds to critical missions needed by the state of Alaska in the event of a disaster.

As part of the exercise, the Alaska Medical Station was set up at the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer to treat victims of the earthquake. The Alaska State Defense Force was able to augment those many volunteers in several ways beginning with the inventory of the field hospital. Traffic



Spiritual Guidance. Chaplain (First Lieutenant) Bradley Thomas walks around the Alaska Medical Station during Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014. Photo: First Lieutenant Zlata Lund, Alaska State Defense Force

control was also provided by the ASDF, as well as a physician and an emergency medical technician. Further, the ASDF provided chaplaincy services to the hospital.

The ASDF provides an opportunity for those with prior military service or those who wish to volunteer to serve the people of Alaska when Alaskans need help the most. ■



Under the Microscope. Captain (Doctor) Norman Means, a medical doctor and member of the Alaska State Defense Force, serves at the Alaska Medical Station during Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 at the state fairgrounds in Palmer.

Photo: Captain Ray Barrett, Alaska State Defense Force



Traffic Control. Captain Timothy Stephan, Sergeant First Class Carlos Lousenburg and Staff Sergeant Jeremy Flippen direct traffic at the red gate during Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014 at the state fairgrounds in Palmer. Photo: Captain Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

THE LAWS OF *Happiness*

By Sergeant Edward Eagerton,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... It can be said that the real measure of a person's worth is not by material gain but by the drive to accomplish his or her dreams regardless of the reward. This is further accentuated when faced with obstacles, the kind we all face in life, and overcoming them to achieve these goals.

For one Alaska Army National Guardsman, the objective was to graduate from law school and pass the bar exam. The challenges she faced along the way included not only being a full-time student but also a full-time mother, as well as being a drilling member of the U.S. Army Reserves and working part time at the school.

"I had to balance still being a mom and finding time to be with my kids, but then also having enough time to read all of the case law and prepare the case briefs I needed for class the next day," said Sergeant Lindsay Chvilicek, now a signal intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade. "I learned how to survive on very little sleep."

Chvilicek first became interested in going to law school when she worked as a legal secretary at a law office. Originally, she had considered going to graduate school for pharmacy.

"Once I worked in the law firm, I realized how much I loved the law," she said. "That's when I decided to pursue a law degree."

In 2009, Chvilicek was living in Idaho when she took the Law School Admission Test and subsequently applied to two different law schools. Four days before the semester started, she was accepted into the University of Montana School of Law and had little time to move to Missoula, Montana. At the time, her youngest child was 8 and a half months old.

During her third semester at the University of Montana School of Law, Chvilicek gave birth to her third child. Nine days later, she returned to class to finish the semester and take her finals.

"It was a perfectly acceptable reason to defer my finals," she said, "but I wanted to get them done. I felt like I didn't have a

choice. Would I have loved to take six to eight weeks off and stay home with my newborn daughter? Of course, but I needed to graduate with my class."

With hours of homework every day, Chvilicek juggled the responsibilities of raising a family, meeting her obligations as a Soldier in the U.S. Army Reserves and managing her time to finish her assignments.

"I would have major assignments due Monday after a drill weekend," explained Chvilicek. "After drill, I would have to go right into homework for five to seven hours."

It was the flexibility of her unit, she said, that allowed her to pursue her degree by working with her to reschedule drill dates when her studies required more of her time.

"It's really important that if units want their Soldiers to actively pursue the educational benefits that are available to them, they need to understand that flexibility is required for them to be able to complete their assignments," she said.

In 2012, Chvilicek graduated from law school on schedule. She returned to Alaska in early 2013, after having lived here before when her husband was stationed at Fort Richardson while serving in the active-duty Army. Once in Alaska, she joined the Alaska Army National Guard and found a home working as a dual-status federal technician for the Purchasing and Contracting Division of the U.S. Property and Fiscal Office.

While working for the USPFO, Chvilicek tested for the bar exam in July.



Legal Success. Sergeant Lindsay Chvilicek, signal intelligence analyst, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, stands in the Supreme Court room on the Boney Courthouse in Anchorage after being sworn in to the Alaska and U.S. District Courts in November.

Photo: Colonel Susan Bailar, Alaska Air National Guard

In October, she found out that she had passed the exam and was now certified to practice both state and federal law in the state of Alaska. Despite this, she plans to keep her current job.

"On the civilian side, I am a contract specialist for the Guard, and I really love my job" she said. "I would only leave for the right job. I would most likely make more money, but not all money is good money, so I think me being happy has a lot of value to it, and that's why I'm still here."

Her future plans, she said, include commissioning as an officer in the Judge Advocate General corps, which is the legal branch of the military.

"You need to prioritize what is going to make you happy," she said. "Just because you're going to make a lot of money doesn't mean you're going to be happy. Find something that you enjoy, that you get up in the morning and look forward to. That will make your quality of life so much better." ■





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Congratulations, Graduates!

By DMVA Public Affairs Staff

ANCHORAGE, Alaska ... The Alaska Military Youth Academy celebrated the graduation of 137 cadets of Class 2014-1 from its ChalLeNGe program in February.

The 137 cadets joined the 4,128 previous graduates since 1994.

During their 22-week residential phase at the AMYA ChalLeNGe program, the corps of cadets focused on academics, military

style discipline, physical fitness, vocational training and service to the community.

Upon graduation, cadets take part in the yearlong post-residential phase where graduates return to their communities to enter the workplace, continue their education (high school, college or vocational schools) or enter the military. The goal of this phase is for graduates to sustain and

build on the gains made during the residential phase.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy continues to help intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. ■



Honor Graduate. Cadet Mason Korica, of Chandler, Arizona, the honor graduate of class 2014-01 of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalLeNGe program, shakes hands with Brigadier General Timothy O'Brien, assistant adjutant general-Air of the Alaska National Guard, during the graduation ceremony in February. One hundred thirty-seven cadets graduated from the 22-week residential phase of the program, which focused on academics, military-style discipline, physical fitness, vocational training and service to the community. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Congratulations. Cadet Sarah Haskell, of Juneau, receives her diploma during the graduation ceremony of class 2014-01 of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalLeNGe program. She was one of 137 graduates from the program in February. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Outstanding Leader. Cadet Gayla Smith, of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, recipient of the leadership award, stands at attention during the graduation ceremony of class 2014-01 of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalLeNGe program at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage. Upon graduation, the cadets take part in a yearlong post-residential phase where graduates return to their communities to enter the workplace, continue their education or enter the military. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Job Well Done. Cadet Jennifer Ohlund, of Trail, Oregon, recipient of the ChalLeNGe award, stands at attention during the graduation ceremony of class 2014-01 of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's ChalLeNGe program in February. Photo: Sergeant Edward Eagerton, DMVA Public Affairs



Group Gathering. From left, Colonel Jeff Roach, Alaska Army National Guard and Department of Transportation in Fairbanks; Master Sergeant Gerard Damian, U.S. Army Reserves; Bryce Ward, mayor of North Pole; Jeremy Kimmel, owner of Peppercini's Deli; Leverette Hoover, general manager of Siemens Building Technologies; Master Sergeant Limwel Padios, U.S. Army Reserves; Tom Hewitt, reporter with Channel 13 in Fairbanks; Jamie Abordonado, Alaska ESGR; Jennifer Stuke, Narcotic Drug Treatment Center; Magen James, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce; Craig Campbell, state chairman of Alaska ESGR; Tran Brunberg, volunteer with Alaska ESGR; Bill Bailey, Alyeska Pipeline; Suzan Bast, Banner Health; Jim Hajdukovich, Era/Ravn Air; Barbara Johnson, Office of Mayor Luke Hopkins; Erik Lind, Alaska USA Federal Credit Union.

Employers Travel to Guam for Close Look at Guard and Reserve Missions



Story and photos by Jamie Abordonado, ESGR

ANDERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Guam ... Employers from Alaska travelled to Guam in February to experience first-hand what their National Guard and Reserve employees do during their military missions.

Five Anchorage-based employers and six Fairbanks-based employers volunteered their week to participate in an ESGR "Boss Lift." The employers boarded a KC-135 Stratotanker flown by members of the 168th Air Refueling Wing, Alaska Air National Guard based out of Eielson, and flew to Anderson Air Force Base, Guam.

"I think that the Guam trip highlighted the fact that the challenges facing our Guard and Reserve members are universal, meaning that no matter where they are stationed or what the mission is, every one of these service members can benefit from a supportive employer and community."

— Erik Lind, Alaska USA Federal Credit Union

Even before they arrived in Guam, the employers got an up close look at what Guard members do. Each employer spent



Ready, Aim, Fire. Jeremy Kimmel, owner of Peppercini's Deli in Anchorage, receives firing instructions from Guam Air National Guard member Staff Sergeant Colleen Flores during an ESGR trip to Guam in February.

time in the front of the aircraft and wore a head set that allowed them to speak with the aircrew.

The highlights of the trip included a demonstration in a Humvee roll-over simulator and a simulated M-4 range. Each employer got the chance to understand what it is like to ride in a Humvee and what to do in the case of a roll over. They were briefed on the vital importance of safe reaction during an improvised explosive device detonation that might flip the vehicle. The employers also got to "gear up" in a protective vest and helmet, and soon understood how a military member can carry loads exceeding 50 pounds to ensure their safety.

At the M-4 range, employers shot at pop-up targets on a simulated range. High scorers got bragging rights.

Employers also received a World War II heritage presentation by the National Park Service in Guam. This event provided detailed information regarding the Japanese invasion and occupation on Guam. The National Park Service ranger took the group

to four locations that were vital in the history of the occupation. One of the locations was a look out and defense area that the Japanese constructed to defend the shores against the American Naval and Marine forces.

One other area the group visited that had a great impact was the Japanese bunker at Nimitz Hill. The park ranger unlocked the gates protecting the bunker and let everyone inside to see the last area containing Japanese command before U.S. Marine Forces arrived.

Entering the bunker was an experience in itself – quiet and sobering with communication wires still hanging in the bunker and a stone table which could have held the plans to completely take over Guam as well as the Mariana Islands. It was this part of the trip that many found fascinating: a first-hand reflection of events during that war.

The Alaska employers also visited the U.S. Coast Guard, and after a mission brief with the command, they climbed aboard a Coast Guard rescue boat to tour the vessel and understand her capabilities. The boat remained docked during the tour as high winds and a treacherous weather advisory was in effect.

Later that day, the Guam Army National Guard demonstrated its convoy simulator. The purpose of this simulator is to recreate a vehicle convoy in Bagdad, Iraq. The virtual road used by the program is based on actual footage from a convoy from the Bagdad Airport to the middle of the town’s center.



Mission Failure. The skull and cross bones symbolizes the failure of that convoy to reach its mission during a simulated convoy operation.

The employers each selected a position in the assigned vehicle – turret gunner, driver or front-seat passenger. Once everyone was situated and equipped with a head set and virtual reality goggles, the mission began. Much like in a real-life convoy, a convoy officer spoke to the drivers with information needed about the location and the route of the mission. The drivers were each given the order to commence driving,

and the mission began. Each of the four vehicles was supposed to stay in line with the others as different enemy fire started along the streets leading to the town center. It was very difficult to maneuver the vehicles, and several times the convoy was interrupted by enemy fire.

“I think that the Guam trip highlighted the fact that the challenges facing our Guard and Reserve members are universal, meaning that no matter where they are stationed or what the mission is, every one of these service members can benefit from a supportive employer and community,” said Erik Lind, manager of Military Branch Operations at Alaska USA Federal Credit Union. “Deployments are a stressful time for everyone involved, and the better the employer and community support is to these military members and their families, the more it will reduce some of the anxiety and burdens they face during these times.” ■



Tribute. Jennifer Stukey, Narcotic Drug Treatment Center, reads the World War II commemorative wall, which lists all of the 16,000-plus names of Chamorro (native Guamanian) people who were on the island during the Japanese invasion.



Convoy Concentration. Bryce Ward, mayor of North Pole, participates in a simulated convoy operation as a mounted .50-caliber gunner. He is wearing the virtual eyewear that connects with the convoy program; as he looks left and right, the weapon’s barrel follows.



Transitioning Into Retirement from the Military

By Mirta Adams, Warrior and Family Services

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ...

Retirement can be a stressful transition when a service member is not prepared. Many individuals are applying for their next employment opportunity, preparing to relocate to another state or stressing about their soon-to-change financial situation. These challenges and obstacles at times leave us no time to think of the other benefits or entitlements we should be applying for. Here is a list of some of the retirement items you should check out.

TRICARE:

- Check with your contractor before leaving the area to ensure you have the information necessary to receive care while on terminal leave. The service member will remain enrolled at the last military treatment facility they are assigned to and would need to call and obtain authorization to be seen out of the area if not using another military treatment facility. The family will be transferred enrollment to the new location.

- If relocating, check <http://tricare.mil/Welcome/CurrentTopics/ChangestoPSAs/PSALookup.aspx> to determine if the area you are moving to offers the Prime Retiree option. If so, an enrollment form with fees is due before the retirement date to avoid lapse in coverage. If enrollment is not done prior to retirement date, the 20th of the month rule will apply. If the location is not a prime service area or if the retiree family prefers not to enroll in Prime, the Standard option will become effective on the date of retirement.

VA:

- Visit with a Veteran Service Officer to represent and assist you in filing your VA Claim for compensation because of disabilities.

- Filing a claim for compensation does not enroll you into the VA for healthcare purposes. To enroll for VA Healthcare, complete VA Form 10-10EZ. There are certain criteria that must be met to be eligible. Once your service connection is established, you will have better access to VA Healthcare.

- Dental benefits with the VA are very limited. If a veteran is not provided with dental treatment within 90 days before separation, he or she may receive one-time dental treatment.

- File a VA Claim for Compensation of ailments sustained or aggravated by your military service. Complete VA Form 21-526EZ, but it is highly recommended you use the VSO to facilitate the process.

- Remember, your education benefits have time limits.

- The Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (Chapter 30) expires 10 years from release of last active-duty segment with very limited extensions.

- The Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) expires 15 years from last discharge or separation with limited extensions.

- If eligible for Chapter 1606 or 1607, inquire what the time limits are for each.

- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment helps veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare for, find and keep suitable employment. The time limit is usually 12 years from the time the veteran received at least a 10 percent rating.

- The VA Home Loan Guaranty has no time limit but does have qualifying service requirements. Veterans must still qualify for the financial loan with a lending institution.

- The Life Insurance – SGLI – will terminate 120 days from the service member's release from military obligation. Service members may look into Veterans Group Life Insurance, National Guard State Sponsored Life Insurance or commercial policies for life insurance options. There are limitations on converting coverage without the requirement of a medical exam.

Department of Labor:

- Visit the various employment websites for re-employment opportunities. These are only a handful of those available.

- www.dol.gov

- <https://www.usajobs.gov/>

- <https://h2h.jobs/>

- <http://jobs.alaska.gov/>

- <http://www.indeed.com/>

State of Alaska Benefits:

- *Real Estate:* Alaska Housing Finance Corporation mortgage program, interest rate preference, land discount/purchase preference, property tax exemptions for disabled veterans and federal home loan programs.

- *Permits, Passes and Plates:* vehicle licenses and plates, recreational licenses and passes, hunting and fishing licenses, disabled veteran hunting and fishing licenses, Alaska Marine Highway pass, state camping pass for disabled veterans and Alaska Railroad discount.

- *Obtain full benefit information at:* <http://www.veterans.alaska.gov/index.html>

Should you have any additional questions about transitioning into retirement or simply transitioning out of the military, contact your nearest Family Assistance Center or call 907-428-6663, toll free at 1-888-917-3608, and we'll connect you with what you need. ■

Alaska National Guard Day • July 30

Open House at Alaska National Guard facilities across the state.

Current and former members, retirees and families are invited to celebrate with us.

Alaska Air National Guard Promotes Commander



New Stars. Brigadier General Timothy P. O'Brien, assistant adjutant general-Air and commander of the Alaska Air National Guard, receives his general stars at a promotion ceremony in March. O'Brien is responsible for ensuring the training and equipping of the approximately 2,200 men and women of the Alaska Air National Guard. Photo: Technical Sergeant Jennifer Theulen, 176th Wing

By Sergeant Edward Eagerton,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... The Alaska Air National Guard promoted the assistant adjutant general-Air of the Alaska National Guard and commander of the Alaska Air National Guard, Timothy O'Brien, to the rank of brigadier general at a ceremony here in March.

"The Alaska Air National Guard consists of well over 2,000 citizen-Airmen of which I'm immensely humbled to lead and extremely proud to serve," O'Brien said.

As the commander of the Alaska Air National Guard, O'Brien ensures that the training and equipping objectives are met for the 176th Wing, based at JBER, and the 168th Air Refueling Wing, based at Eielson Air Force Base, both wings under his command.

O'Brien's career in the military started when he enlisted in the California Air National Guard in 1985 while attending graduate school at California State University East-Bay in Hayward, California. His first assignment after completing basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio,

Texas, was with the 561st Air Force Band, California Air National Guard.

After completing graduate school in 1988, O'Brien received his commission as a second lieutenant. He was then assigned to the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard, as a student pilot that year. In 1989, he graduated from Undergraduate Pilot Training in Fort Rucker, Alabama, and began his career flying rescue helicopters.

His career took him from California to Alaska, where in 1992 he joined the Alaska Air National Guard as a full-time pilot with the 210th Rescue Squadron of the 176th Wing. Throughout the next 10 years, O'Brien was credited with 109 lives saved while flying rescue missions over Alaska, as well as participating in numerous combat deployments such as Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Provide Comfort and Desert Storm.

In 2002, O'Brien accepted a staff assignment at the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C., where he served until 2005. During this time, he deployed as a combat rescue pilot to Afghanistan to augment his former unit, the 210th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard. At

the culmination of his time in Washington, D.C., O'Brien was selected to attend the War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, graduating in 2006 with a Master of Science in Strategic Studies.

In 2006, O'Brien returned to Alaska, accepting a command tour of the 210th Rescue Squadron. During the fall of 2009, O'Brien was selected to be the first ever Air National Guard commandant of the U.S. Air Force Officer Training School at Maxwell Air Force Base. There, he was instrumental in forming the framework for the dual-status command of the combined active-duty Air Force and Air National Guard mission.

In 2011, O'Brien returned again to Alaska when he assumed command of the 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks. After serving two years in command there, he was appointed as the assistant adjutant general-Air in 2013 and returned to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

"This promotion is very meaningful to me and my spouse, Catherine," he said. "I'm thankful for the trust and faith our leadership has in me." ■

Alaska Community Service Medal

Story and photo by First Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska ... Tastee Freez owner Rich Owens was presented the Alaska Community Service medal in front of his south Anchorage restaurant in February.

The award, certified by Alaska Governor Sean Parnell, was for recognition of his contributions to the Alaska National Guard in support of Operation Santa Claus. Owens has been supporting Op Santa for the past 11 years, volunteering his time, soliciting donations and taking ice cream sundaes to the remote villages of Alaska.

Owens was also presented an American flag from the Alaska National Guard Officer's Association that replaced the weathered flag that flies in front of his restaurant. ■



Awarded. Tastee Freez owner Rich Owens displays the Alaska Community Service medal he was awarded in February for his support of the Alaska National Guard's Operation Santa Claus since 2002.



Honoring a Community Supporter. Brigadier General Timothy O'Brien, Alaska Air National Guard assistant adjutant general – Air, reads Governor Sean Parnell's certification for Tastee Freez owner Rich Owens as he receives Alaska's Community Service medal.



New Flag. Brigadier General Mike Bridges, left, assistant adjutant general – Army, and Brigadier General Timothy O'Brien, assistant adjutant general – Air, help put up a donated American flag in front of Rich Owens' Tastee Freez restaurant in February.



Who We Are...

What is in your emergency preparedness kit?

Lieutenant Colonel James Palembas
Joint Forces Headquarters



"Generator set, hand held radio, MREs, a water filtration system and two first-aid kits."

Sergeant Melinda Dawson
207th Brigade Support Company



"Dry food and water, first-aid supplies, blanket, candles, knife and matches."

Bob Ernise
Administrative Services



"Water, food, blankets, first-aid kit, lighter and a flashlight."

Master Sergeant Lynett Dubia
168th Air Refueling Wing



"A winter bag with hats, gloves, scarves, snow pants, a pair of boots and a blanket. I also have an emergency kit, two flares and two tie-down straps."

Captain Barney Girdner
168th Air Refueling Wing



"A flashlight, batteries, extra phone charger, cold-weather gear, reflective belt, self-heating winter blanket, tool set, e-tool, knife, snack food and water."

Supply Excellence Award



Photo: Courtesy of U.S. Army National Guard

Brigadier General John E. O'Neil IV, left, 52nd Quartermaster general commandant, U.S. Army Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Virginia, and Brigadier General Mike Bridges, commander of the Alaska Army National Guard, presents Chief Warrant Officer Two David Sanchez, property book officer with the Alaska Army National Guard's 49th Missile Defense Battalion located at Fort Greely, Alaska, with the Supply Excellence Award in January. Sanchez was presented the 2012 award for maintaining his unit's property books at a standard higher than that of competing units. This award marks the first time the Alaska Army National Guard has ranked first place in the competition, which includes other National Guard units in all 54 states and territories.



Awards • Decorations • Promotions

Meritorious Service Medal



MSgt Kenneth W. Hardwick 176th LRS
 CMSgt Stephen L. Burris 176th ADS
 LtCol Mark W. Tuccillo 212th RQS
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 MSG Lonzell Scott 297th MP
 SFC Kendre Jones MED DET
 MAJ Robert Seymour 297th BFSB
 CPT Allen Hulse 103rd CST
 SFC Jerome Arisman JFHQ-AK (Army)
 LTC Joel Gilbert 297th BFSB
 SGM Jeffery Coker JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SFC George Heckaman 38th TC
 SFC Henry Casto 297th BFSB
 SMSgt Christine R. Lemieux 168th MXS
 MSgt Robert C. Dowler 168th ARW
 MSgt Brian T. Zeisel 168th SFS
 LtCol Andrew W. Love 168th LRS
 LtCol Marvin T. Ee 168th MSG

Army Commendation Medal



CPT Steven Major R&R

Air Force Commendation Medal



SrA Timothy J. Howell 144th AS
 SSgt Calvin L. Jaynes 211th RQS
 TSgt Shaun R. Wehe 176th OSS
 MSgt Victor J. Weber 168th AMXS
 MSgt Ella J. Doak 168th ARW
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MSgt Raymond S. Allen 168th AMXS
 SSgt Reuben R. Wright 168th SFS
 TSgt Rodney A. Phillips 168th SFS
 TSgt Jason S. Mills 168th SFS
 SSgt Reuben R. Wright 168th SFS
 MSgt Claudia N. Barclay 168th MSG
 SrA Lindsay F. Swing 168th ARW
 MSgt James G. Meyer 168th MSG
 TSgt Jay D. Adams 168th SFS
 LtCol William E. Hunstein 168th ARW
 COL Wendy B. Wenke 168th ARW

Air Force Achievement Medal



SrA Courtney R. Waters 176th OSS
 MSgt Raymond S. Allen 168th AMXS
 TSgt Shawn C. Bush 168th AMXS
 SSgt Robert A. Segla 168th AMXS
 MSgt Daniel J. Ruonavaara 168th AMXS
 A1C Jordan C. Weum 168th MXS
 A1C Casey M. McBride 168th FSF
 SSgt Andrea L. Valentine 168th FSF
 SSgt Raymond R. Kelley 168th MSG
 Amn Brooke S. Mosdal 168th FSF
 SrA Megan L. Schreder 168th FSF
 SSgt Kevin M. Ruedy 168th SFS

Combat Readiness Medal



TSgt James W. Hudnall 168th ARS

Alaska Legion of Merit



CSM Tim Dughman JFHQ-AK (Army)
 MSG Lonzell Scott 297th MP

MSG Shawn Rall JFHQ-AK (Army)
 CW5 John Hardy JFHQ-AK (Army)
 CW5 Terry Rollie JFHQ-AK (Army)

Alaska Distinguished Service Medal



SFC Kendre Jones MED DET
 SFC Jerome Arisman JFHQ-AK (Army)

Alaska Community Service Medal



Rich Owens CIV

Alaska State Service Medal



SFC Rodney Jones JFHQ-AK (Army)
 MAJ Jared Wandell JFHQ-AK (Army)
 MSG Maureen Meehan JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SFC Andre Scott JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SFC Trevor Hodge JFHQ-AK (Army)
 COL Ray Kelley MED DET
 COL Joseph Streff JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SSG Jack Carlson 49th GMD

Master Recruiting Badge

SSG Neal Fulks R&R

Expert Recruiting Badge

SFC Rodney Spaulding R&R

Senior Recruiting Badge

SSG Michael Wright R&R
 SSG Natasha May R&R
 SFC Elaine Jackson R&R

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Michael Mellor JFHQ-AK (Army)

Lieutenant Colonel

Robert Barr JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Richard A. Rymerson 176th WG
 Kelly J. Mellard 168th LRS
 Michael G. Scadden 213th SWS

Major

Jay A. Casello 176th WG
 Hannah L. Sims 176th WG
 Sharyl L. Worrell 176th WG
 Leilani C. Frazier 213th SWS

Captain

Erika B. Dahm 176th WG
 Daniel P. Kozak 176th WG
 Jeffrey S. Boesche 168th OSS
 Casey B. Darst McCray 168th ARS

First Lieutenant

Jeanette Padgett 49th GMD
 Bijay Tamang 1-297th CAV
 Joel Fulsang 297th SIG
 Holly A. Demmert 176th WG
 Brent E. Kramer 176th WG

Chief Warrant Officer Four

Bryan Keese 1-207th AVN

Chief Warrant Officer Three

Sean Hitchcock 761st MP

Chief Warrant Officer Two

Jay Daw 1-207th AVN

Sergeant Major

Donald Ramey JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Jody Hefele JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Robert Francisco 1-207th AVN

Chief Master Sergeant

Joyce A. Davis 176th FSF

Master Sergeant

Richard Beck JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Terry Severin JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Matthew Roeber 761st MP

Senior Master Sergeant

Richard Beal 176th CE
 Tiffany Gregory 176th MDG
 Anthony Liberty 176th CE
 Jamie S. Kurzenberger 213th SWS
 Robert T. Johnson 168th ARW

Sergeant First Class

Brian Christman 297th MP
 Benjamin Hankins 297th R&S
 Jonathon Meyer 49th GMD
 Michael Manson 761st MP CO
 Mark Scott 49th GMD
 Brandee Gresham JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Dutchy Inman 103rd CST
 Michael Odom 297th BFSB

Master Sergeant (Air)

Christopher Block 176th FSF
 Melissa A. Erhard 176th ADS
 Jeffrey L. Faulkner 176th OSS
 Leah B. Vergen 176th FSF
 Christopher R. Adams 168th OSS
 Scott P. Hanks 168th LRS
 David J. St. Laurent 168th MXG
 Monica M. Menninger 168th FSF
 Saroya Porche JFHQ-AK (Air)

Staff Sergeant (Army)

Joshua Reierson 761st MP
 Christine Sedillo 297th MP
 David Smith 297th R&S
 Jason Sebring 297th R&S
 Hector Rivera 49th GMD
 Sean Murphy 49th GMD
 Trent Lee JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Doralee Castillo 49th GMD
 Steven Ernst MED DET
 Russell Hepler 297th MP
 Buddy Ranel 297th BFSB

Technical Sergeant

Jamie M. Abordonado 176th WG
 Justin A. Cuccarese 211th RQS
 Clayton A. Deloach 176th LRS
 Russell Dziedzick 176th MXS
 Clara A. Glynn 176th COMPT
 Ryan Hoffman 176th COMPT
 Michael J. Lamphere 176th ADS
 Vernon L. Phillips 249th AS
 Robert L. Propst 176th MXS
 Jesus R. Rodriguez 176th MOF
 Joshua A. Moore 168th LRS
 Brian C. Rowbotham 213th SWS
 Shannon L. Garris 168th MXG
 Kevin W. Harvey 168th MXS
 Michael J. Ledford 168th MXS
 Nastasskia F. Sy 168th FSF

Sergeant

Jessica Jefferis 49th GMD
 Ryan Sorenson 297th R&S
 Sarah Almeida JFHQ-AK (Army)
 Nathan Williams 49th GMD
 Joel Paganmartinez 49th GMD
 Cody Payne 49th GMD

Steven Behrens 207th MFTR
 Ishmeal Martin 297th MP
 Keith Humphrey 297th MP
 Ulysses Cortez 297th MP
 Joshua Hahn 297th MP
 Dylan Tallant 297th MP
 Kevin Lewis 297th MP
 Christopher Lallish 297th MP
 Henry Montalvomunoz 297th MP
 Markus Clark 297th MP
 Omar Matoscortes 49th GMD
 Michael Guzman 49th GMD
 James Howell 49th GMD
 Truit Martin 49th GMD
 Robert Stamper 49th GMD
 Juan Rodriguezsuero 49th GMD
 Ramon Aquino 49th GMD
 Denis Sajae 297th BFSB
 Lucas Wendeborn 297th R&S
 Amina Alexanderw 207th BSC
 Jeanette Derry 207th BSC
 Nathasha Waringuez 297th BFSB
 Weili Weng MED DET

Staff Sergeant (Air)

Anthony R. Barker 249th AS
 Paxton J. Chatfield 176th MXS
 Erin C. Soellers 176th AMXS
 Daniel A. Tierney 176th MXS
 Britany L. Sprague 168th LRS
 Charles C. Hill 168th CF
 Brent A. Garrison 168th MDG
 Shamika S. Bertero 168th MDG
 Michael R. Meyers 168th MXS
 Janet E. Garrido 168th MXG
 Corina M. Thrasher 168th MXS
 Daniel G. Coombs 213th SWS
 Broghan W. Orgas 168th SFS

RETIREMENTS

SFC Kendre Jones MED DET
 SFC Gordon Reid JFHQ-AK (Army)
 MSG Shawn Rall JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SSG Orlando Bautista 1-207th AVN
 SGT Mildred Nicholas 49th TG
 SFC Robert Wright 297th MP
 David Glick 144th AS
 Paul Freund 176th MSG
 Scott Lambert 176th AMXS
 Duane Gonzales 176th AMXS
 Victoria Lambert 176th MXS
 Lt Col Todd R. Quier 168th MDG
 SMSgt Robbin L. Foran 168th LRS
 MSgt Todd Tallady 213th SWS
 SSGT Roy Lashley 168th MXS



Start of the Trail

Welcome to our newest members & employees

297th Battlefield Surveillance

Natalie Zarecki
Virginia Mountain

207th Combat Support Company

Keerstin Beitter
Austen Armstrongwinkler
Alexander Fanene

1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance

Eric Dicks
Joseph Marshall
Calvin Johnson
Nestor Flores
Barrington Wright
Preston Roberts
Jeffrey Todd

1-297th Cavalry

Turuk Gatkuoth
Anthony Russo
Dvontae Ford

1-143rd Infantry (Airborne)

Shawn Vent
Daniel Macintyre
Kanoa Singson

297th Military Police Company

Josef Carstens
Justin Sammons
Kenberlyn Villaester
Michael Watson
Brandon Stack
Lewis Williams
Vasilios Papalas
Esene Tui

207th Engineer Equipment Support Platoon

Lamara Lainei
Jordan Cofield
Ryan Hickok
Juan Avilahn
Steven Smith
Riley Solie

Maxine Soukkoth
Alexander Odegaard
Samuel Wilt

208th Construction Management Team

Christopher Brenner

1-207th Aviation

Jenessynmae Buendia
Nicholas Fussner
Jeremy-Jacob Tapadan
Korvel Sumpterboyd
Alyssa Deitz
Tevin Hopper
Mary Goodale

49th Personnel Detachment

Sharmaine Kan

Joint Forces Headquarters (Army)

Xerix Plaza

134th Public Affairs Detachment

Marisa Lindsay

Medical Detachment

Roy Uyeno
James Lombrano
Weili Weng

176th Medical Group

Mickea Randle
Rosemary Vinoya

176th Civil Engineer Squadron

Patrick Clayton
Sean D. Williams
Cole Abarr
Clint Heller
Benjamin Wager
Brian Danter

176th Security Forces Squadron

Carmen Moeller

176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Jimmy McCombs
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Jesse Rippy
Ed Magararu
Dustin Porter

176th Maintenance Group

Anthony Gugino
Timothy D. Shutler
Sonya Hood
Eric Landrum
Michelle Plastow
Zachary Cherry
Drake Burton
Marcus Hanselman

176th Operational Support Squadron

Natasha Sanders
John Flemming
Kyle Cox
Seth' mikel Queja
Nathan Ferguson

144th Airlift Squadron

Jason Guinnee

212th Rescue Squadron

Tyler Gaenzle
Thomas Fisher

249th Airlift Squadron

Nathan Schaueremann

211th Rescue Squadron

Marcus Moloney

WARRIORS Training Schedule

Here are the inactive training dates for most Alaska Army *and* Air National Guard units. All dates are subject to change.

Alaska National Guard	May	June	July
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Air)	3-4	7-10	12-13*
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Army)	17-18	5-8	No drill
Alaska Army National Guard			
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	4	7-8	No drill
38th Troop Command	17-18	7-8	No drill
Alaska Air National Guard			
168th Air Refueling Wing	3-4	7-8	12-13*
176th Wing	3-4	7-10	12-13*
Alaska State Defense Force			
Headquarters	3-4	7-8	5-6
*Make up			



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We were there when you returned to the Philippine shore.

We were there when you fought in Korea and Vietnam.

We were there when you rolled across the deserts of Iraq.

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