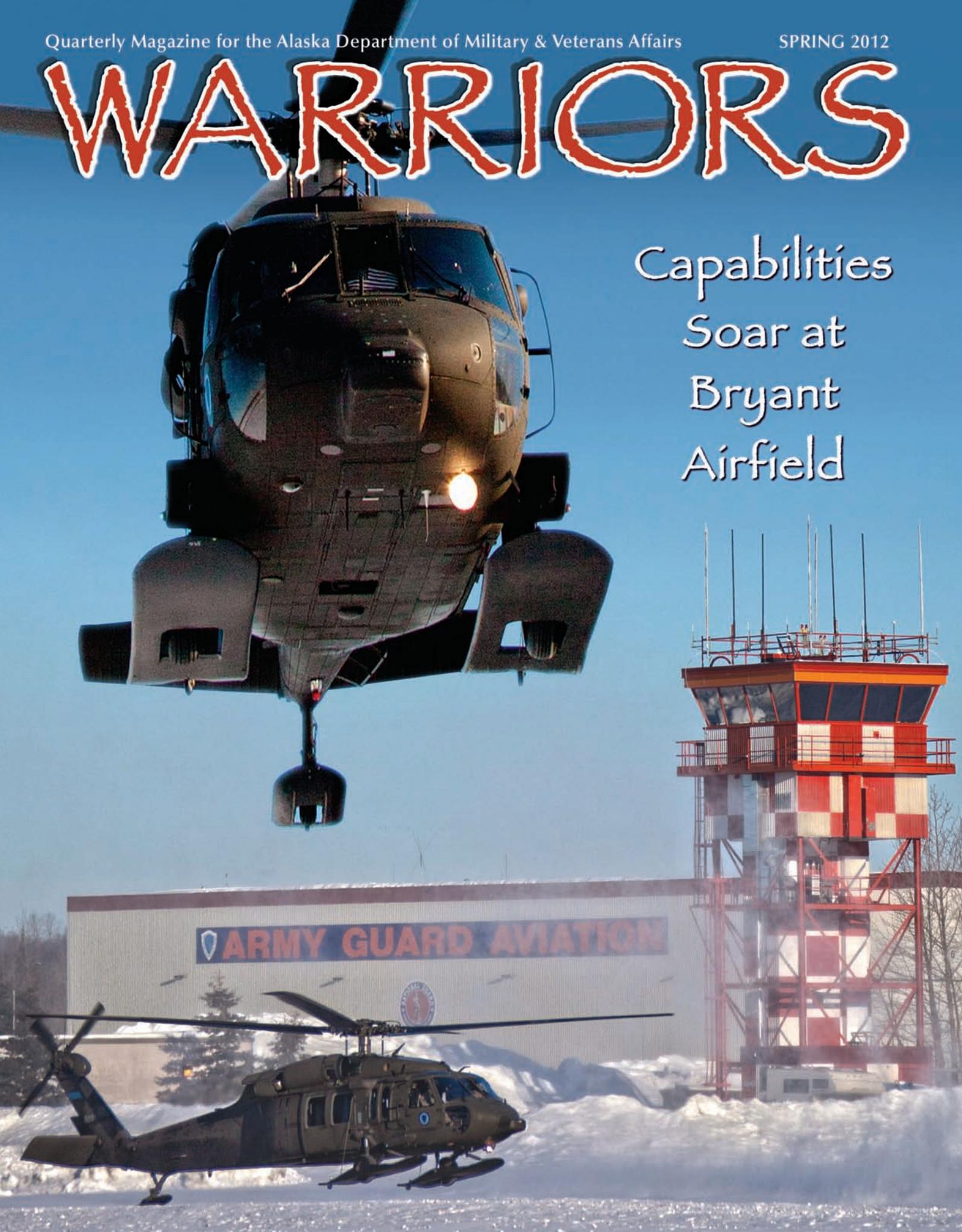


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Transition 1/12



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Commander in Chief



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Cover. Two Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters take flight in front of Hangar Six on Bryant Army Airfield in March. The air traffic control tower, on the right, has been recently restored to assist in providing a safer environment for military and civilian aircraft travelling through the popular air corridor. Photo: Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs



Soldier for a Day. Captain Brett Haker, maintenance officer, 1-207th Aviation, AARNG, shows 9-year-old Nathan Rothe of Dallas, Texas, how the control panel of a UH-60 Black Hawk works during "Soldier for a Day." Rothe has Duchene Muscular Dystrophy and was in Alaska to participate in the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race with the Make A Wish Foundation. Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

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For the People

Governor Sean Parnell
Commander in Chief



Keeping Alaskans Safe at Home and Abroad

With record snowfall, severe temperatures and high winds, the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs stayed busy helping Alaskans across the state this past winter.

The Legislature passed disaster relief legislation to assist communities with costly recovery efforts. House Bill 307 provides an additional \$5 million for disaster relief and authorizes expenditures related to the 2011 West Coast Storm Disaster, the 2011 Peninsula Windstorm and the 2012 Prince William Sound Storm.

Because of the heavy snowfall, spring may bring significant weather-related complications. We must be cautious and ready for those challenges. The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management has again teamed up with the National Weather Service and local communities for its annual River Watch campaign. Teams will be flying over the state's biggest and most powerful rivers during break up to monitor ice jam condi-

tions and communicate those observations to ground personnel so that communities can plan and act quickly if faced with hazardous river surges.

There has been a lot of attention on Alaska's military recently as a result of the U.S. Air Force's manpower and force structure announcements. Although manpower changes to the Alaska Air National Guard are minimal, our active duty military in the state is slated for some significant changes. Our administration advocated for \$300,000 for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs to immediately contract for specific expertise to counter the U.S. Department of Defense plans to reduce military spending through a Base Realignment and Closure Commission. We are working hard to support efforts to sustain Alaska's military facilities and force structure statewide.

We are grateful for the military service of all of our Alaska National Guardsmen, and our thoughts and prayers remain with

those deployed overseas. The Alaska Army National Guard has 123 Soldiers from B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment deployed to Afghanistan with the mission to provide security forces to provincial reconstruction teams. In addition, the Alaska Army National Guard has continued its partnership with the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces by deploying two Alaskan Soldiers as liaisons in support of the Mongolians' efforts in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, our Alaska Air National Guard is deployed to several locations supporting civil engineering missions.

On behalf of an indebted state and nation, thank you to you and your family members for your continued hard work to keep Alaskans safe here at home and abroad. ■



Visiting with Deploying Troops. Governor Sean Parnell visits with Sergeant Joseph Meacham, center, of Anchorage, and Staff Sergeant James Zuelow, of Juneau, both of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, at the King Dining Facility on Camp Atterbury, Ind., in February. Parnell and Alaska National Guard leadership visited with their deploying troops just days before the company's departure to Afghanistan. The company has been divided into three security forces details and is providing security to provincial reconstruction teams. Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs



The Adjutant General



Major General Thomas H. Katkus
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard
& Commissioner, Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

Force Structure Changes Prioritize Readiness

The Department of Defense's new strategy is focused on utilizing a leaner force with robust capabilities and flexibility to respond anywhere in the world. Sizing the force correctly to continue our global reach to defeat and deter our adversaries, while providing humanitarian aid are objectives based on the new defense guidance and Budget Control Act, which aims to find more than \$487 billion in savings throughout the next 10 years.

As a result, the Air Force announced force structure decisions that prioritize readiness, realign units and shrink the overall force by 10,000 personnel, with 5,500 of those cuts to the Air National Guard.

Here in Alaska, the most noticeable realignment decision is the Air Force's desire to transfer the active duty 18th Aggressor Squadron, composed of 19 F-16s and 542 personnel, to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson from Eielson Air Force Base.

In addition, the Alaska Air National Guard's newly formed active association with the active duty's 537th Airlift Squadron was eliminated with the announcement that the four C-130 aircraft and 243 personnel would transfer, effectively ending a one-year relationship.

Fortunately for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, there is minimal impact to the Alaska Air National Guard's manpower force structure; however, the announcement has incurred a

lot of attention from local, state and congressional leadership regarding the movement of the aggressor squadron.

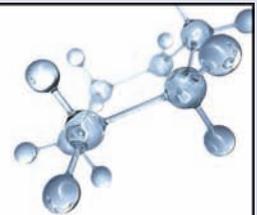
Governor Sean Parnell has formally requested that Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donlon and Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz conduct a complete and comprehensive review of the decision to move the aggressor squadron, and Alaska's congressional leaders are assisting that effort in Washington, D.C.

The Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is also prepared to provide any needed support to state and Air Force officials as they determine the best outcome for our state and nation, while keeping our focus on providing support to families, veterans, service members and Alaska citizens in need.

In a year where our national defense strategy and force structure evolve to meet the needs of the 21st century, the role of the National Guard is still virtually the same as it was 375 years ago when it began on Dec. 13, 1636, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony – provide well trained citizen Soldiers to save lives, preserve order and assist civilian authorities.

Although we will continue to face new challenges as a nation, our young men and women who make up the National Guard throughout our 54 states and territories will continue to uphold the highest standards while protecting our local communities. ■

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Dispatches from the Front...

Intelligence, Surveillance Over Afghanistan Skies

Story and photos by Staff Sergeant Jack Carlson III,
Task Force ODIN-A Public Affairs

PARWAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan ... High above the ground, in the clear blue skies of eastern Afghanistan, Staff Sergeant Eric Maschmeier, an Alaska Army National Guardsman from Anchorage, moves his full-motion video sensor to center on a compound below that coalition forces are surrounding.

The radio crackles in his headset. The ground force commander is giving the green light to enter the objective and seek out an insurgent long sought in this province.

Maschmeier is able to provide the commander with detailed intelligence about the compound prior to the unit's arrival, thus allowing the unit to have up-to-date information about the situation on the ground.

Maschmeier is among 20 aerial sensor operators currently deployed with B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, Task Force Observe, Detect, Identify and Neutralize – Afghanistan. Together with the 30 pilots who fly and ensure the safety of the crew and the modified King Air 300 aircraft, these Soldiers make up the only Army National Guard company within the battalion.

According to the Task Force commander, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Rogers, ODIN-A is the largest single aerial Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance unit ever deployed.

Represented by 11 state flight detachments, the Soldiers of the company have a vast pool of experience. There are 10 Soldiers deployed from Detachment 54, Alaska Army National Guard.

Flying more than 100 combat flight hours a month in Afghanistan, the Soldiers of the company become subject-matter experts on their respective duties.

"These are the best of the best Soldiers at the top of their game. I affectionately refer to our aircrew as 'Jedi Knights' because of the combined 130,000 flight hours of experience our pilots brought with them to this deployment," said Major Jerry Brennan, commander of B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, TF ODIN-A.

Enlisted Soldiers operating collection equipment onboard give the pilots appropriate altitudes to vector them into position. This represents a shift from standard Army aviation missions where pilots are flying the aircraft, and the enlisted personnel are supporting the crew through maintenance and load support.



Pilot's Wings. Chief Warrant Officer Two Clinton Brown, King Air 300 pilot, B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, Task Force Observe, Detect, Identify, and Neutralize – Afghanistan, stands in front one of the aircraft he pilots over treacherous terrain on a daily basis.



Eyes in the Sky. Staff Sergeant Eric Maschmeier, aerial sensor operator, B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, Task Force Observe, Detect, Identify, and Neutralize – Afghanistan, checks the equipment on board the King Air 300 prior to flight in March. The enlisted Soldiers of B Company operate and maintain the collection equipment onboard the aircraft throughout their 12 month deployment, accruing hundreds of flight hours over the skies of Afghanistan.

"Our sensor operators have really stepped up to the responsibility of being part of the crew," said Chief Warrant Officer Four Steve Henslee, a King Air 300 pilot and Anchorage resident with Detachment 54, Alaska Army National Guard. "The coordination between pilots and operators when arriving on station and maneuvering over very difficult terrain is essential. These Soldiers meet the task every day."

The sensor operators on board the King Air 300 not only operate the collection equipment, often in stressful situations, but also serve as a conduit for information flow. Throughout many missions, the aerial sensor operator in the back of the aircraft can be called on to relay information to ground commanders, Joint Tactical Air Controllers or other aircraft.

"As an aerial sensor operator, we have a very big responsibility to the supported units to provide relevant timely information," Maschmeier said. "That can be stressful when Soldiers are taking fire, but the relief we hear from the Soldiers on the ground when we are able to call out things they cannot see makes all the stress bearable."

Maschmeier pushes his video feed to the ground commander who sees the very same information that the aerial sensor operator in the plane can see.

"While the aerial sensor operator is working to get sensor coverage to the supported unit, the pilots are ensuring safe operation and maintaining awareness of the often-times very crowded and challenging airspace," said Chief Warrant Officer Two Clinton Brown, a King Air pilot and Anchorage resident with Detachment 54, Alaska Army National Guard.

Maschmeier continues his scan of the village and the proposed exit route back to the nearby forward operating base.

"Having come from the medevac community, I witnessed up close the devastating impact improvised explosive devices can have on our Soldiers," Brennan said. "Being a part of Task Force ODIN allows us to have a meaningful and proactive impact on the prevention of these events from happening in the first place. Serving in this role and saving lives is extremely rewarding for all of us."

The mission draws to a close with insurgents captured, weapons confiscated and the ground unit safely back at the forward operating base. It's just another day in the constant intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance coverage provided by Soldiers of Detachment 54, Alaska Army National Guard. ■

Where in the World

Soldiers Deploy to Afghanistan with Mongolians

By Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...

Two Alaska Army National Guardsmen deployed to Afghanistan in March as U.S. liaisons in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces in Afghanistan.

Captain Rafael Pacheco, 49th Ground Missile Defense senior tactical director, and Sergeant First Class Paul “Marc” Wonder, Alaska Army National Guard assistant operations noncommissioned officer, are the sixth team from the Alaska Army National Guard to be paired with the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces as tactical advisors and liaisons in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

As liaisons, the team is the METF’s direct link to U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and the Base Support Group at Camp Eggers and other sites in the country.

In 2009, when the initial team was sent to act as liaisons to the METF, living quarters, uniform and equipment requirements and the facilitation of other needs were established by the Alaska Army National Guard.

“As the mission has continued over the years, the needs of the Mongolian Expeditionary Team change, but our overall mission remains the same: to ensure that support to the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces continues,” Wonder said. “It’s important that we remain flexible to the needs of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces though. Something they needed assistance with a year or two ago, they may not need this time around, but they may need assistance with something else, and we have to be open to that.”

Pacheco said he’s excited to be part of the liaison team and feels it’s a chance to help the Alaska Army National Guard shine.



Flag Fold. Members of the Alaska Air National Guard 213th Space Warning Squadron perform an official flag folding ceremony at Clear Air Force Station to replace one burnt in a house explosion in Kansas in August 2011. The home belonged to Annette Cook, a childhood friend of Alaska Air National Guard Technical Sergeant Ricky Ramos, from Clear Air Force Station, who was spurred into action to help the Cook family after seeing pictures of the destruction online. The team also built a shadow box to display the new flag at Cook’s new home.

Photo: Courtesy of Technical Sergeant Ricky Ramos, 213th Space Warning Squadron



Iron Dog. From the starting line in Big Lake, Alaska National Guard riders Sergeant First Class Elaine Jackson and Staff Sergeant Jeremy Hanson wait for the signal to begin the Iron Dog’s 2,000-mile race to Nome and Fairbanks. The Alaska National Guard has been a presenting partner of the Iron Dog since 2009. The Guard became the lead sponsor to support a uniquely Alaska event and bolster the Alaska National Guard throughout the state and nation. This was also the third year that the Alaska National Guard had riders competing in the world-famous competition. Photo: Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

“I feel good about this deployment,” Pacheco said. “It’s an amazing opportunity to work directly with coalition forces, learn about the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces common interests and work to ensure the mission is successful.”

The Alaska State Partnership Program has continuously developed and maintained a relationship with the Mongolian Armed Forces from deployments to Iraq since 2003, where the Alaska Army National Guard provided liaison officers to the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces there, to numerous joint military exercises and subject matter expert exchanges, which have provided insight and training. ■

Point Hope
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Intelligence Mission. Five members of Detachment 54, Alaska Army National Guard, stand with a U.S. flag that was sent to Alaska Governor Sean Parnell as a thank you for a package of Alaska state flags he sent to the deployed unit. The Soldiers are deployed as B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, Task Force Observe, Detect, Identify and Neutralize-Afghanistan. From left: Chief Warrant Officer Five Terry Rollie, commander, Detachment 54; Chief Warrant Officer Three Dominic Kuntz, King Air 300 pilot; Chief Warrant Officer Four Steve Henslee, King Air 300 pilot; Staff Sergeant Jack Carlson III, aerial sensor operator; and Sergeant First Class Tracy Quigley, aerial sensor operator. Photo: Courtesy of Staff Sergeant Jack Carlson III, Task Force ODIN-A Public Affairs

Soldiers Support Civil Authorities

By Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... More than 30 Alaska Army National Guard members travelled to Point Hope in February to conduct a joint exercise supporting the North Slope Borough.

The exercise tested the North Slope Borough emergency response system and provided Guard members with the opportunity to train with other local, state

Showing Alaska Pride. Members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Civil Engineer Squadron display the Alaska state flag at the Sept. 11 Memorial at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait. They are assigned to the 386th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron.

Photo: Courtesy of 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard



Civil Engineers Deploy Overseas

By Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...

Twenty-six Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 176th Wing deployed to Kuwait, Afghanistan and Cuba throughout December 2011 and early January 2012 in support of base operations overseas.

The deployed Guardsmen represent a cross section of the entire civil engineer skill set including plumbing, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, structures, power production, readiness and electrical, according to Lieutenant Colonel Ed Soto, 176th Wing, Civil Engineer Squadron commander.

"We sent a host of different skill sets to respond to everyday needs," Soto said. "They are able to respond, fix and repair any facility that needs it."

The fully trained Guardsmen joined an expeditionary Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force squadron to provide a full range of support required to maintain each location.

"Our civil engineer personnel are representing the 176th Wing of the Alaska Air National Guard honorably and proudly," said Colonel Scott Wenke, 176th Wing commander. "We sent our finest folks to do our nation's bidding, and many of them have served overseas before this deployment. Throughout the history of the 176th Wing, our Guard members have made a positive impact in all parts of the world. I anticipate these deployments will be another showcase of our professionalism and excellence."

The Guardsmen will be deployed for approximately 180 days and are expected to return to Alaska in July. ■



Munitions Break. Alaska Air National Guard Senior Airman Jay Mendoza, right, of the 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, finishes loading artillery rounds on a K-Loader in Kuwait alongside Technical Sergeant Richard Aguon, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, Guam Air National Guard, in March. Mendoza was deployed for six months as part of the 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. He was in charge of munitions going and coming from Afghanistan.

Photo: Courtesy Senior Airman Jay Mendoza, 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Snow-scape Surveillance. A Point Hope fire department member looks through the Alaska Army National Guard's long range advanced surveillance system in February during a joint exercise supporting the North Slope Borough. The LRAS3 is a set of binoculars that the Alaska Army National Guard uses to sense heat and see objects from a significant distance.

Photo: Angie White, Family Programs



and federal agencies while simulating evacuation and search and rescue missions.

"Point Hope was exercising evacuation and emergency sheltering of citizens," said Captain Doug Smith, A Troop commander, 1-297th Reconnaissance & Surveillance, Alaska Army National Guard. "We were called in to support the community by providing defense support to civil authorities."

According to Smith, defense support to civil authorities is critical to fostering relationships and being prepared for real-world emergencies.

Focused on evacuation response, the Guard members were also tested in search and rescue operations when a lost hunter

was reported as an exercise input.

"Each citizen carries an avalanche beacon when conducting activities outside of the village. When there's an incident, the beacon sends out a signal, which is reported to the North Slope Borough emergency managers in Barrow," Smith said. "When the North Slope Borough received that signal, we supported the exercise by initializing rescue operations."

Reflecting on A Troop's ability to support DSCA operations, Smith is happy with the results of the exercise and is even more pleased with the diligence of his Soldiers who performed exceptionally leading up to and during the exercise. ■



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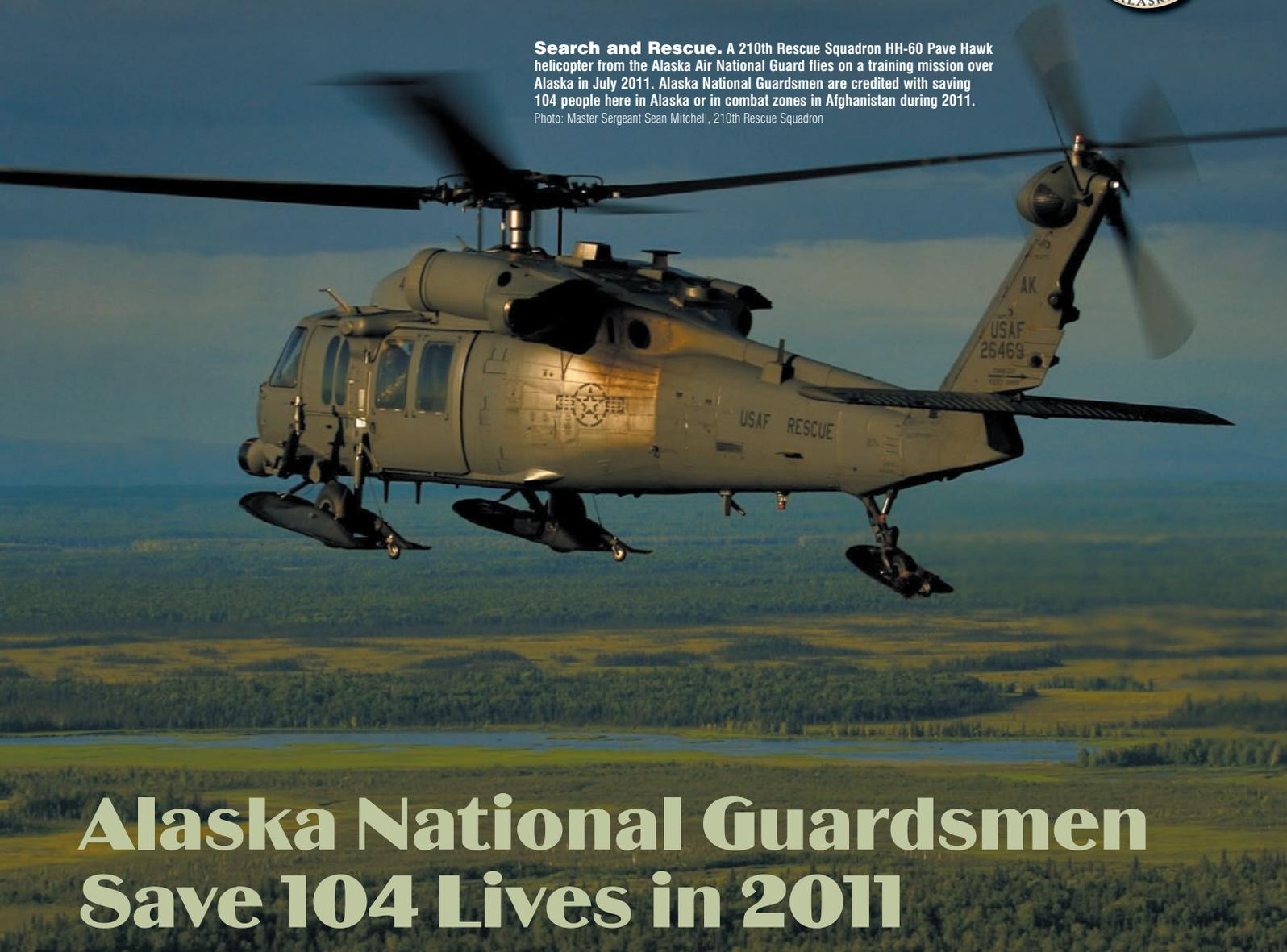


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Search and Rescue. A 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter from the Alaska Air National Guard flies on a training mission over Alaska in July 2011. Alaska National Guardsmen are credited with saving 104 people here in Alaska or in combat zones in Afghanistan during 2011.

Photo: Master Sergeant Sean Mitchell, 210th Rescue Squadron



Alaska National Guardsmen Save 104 Lives in 2011

By Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale,
DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... Alaska National Guardsmen saved 79 lives here in Alaska and 25 while deployed to Afghanistan for a total of 104 saves in 2011, making it another busy year for the Alaska National Guard.

The 11th Rescue Coordination Center, the Alaska representative responsible for most aeronautical search and rescue cases in Alaska, released its annual search and rescue data for the state.

A critical asset to supporting active duty missions, deployments, training exercises and the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, the National Guard's rescue assets are crucial to Alaska.

"Our search and rescue personnel are a valuable resource who are vital to supporting the active duty mission and JPARC," said Major General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "We are very fortunate to have this response capability in Alaska to assist our active duty military and the citizens of Alaska."

Since 1994, Alaska National Guardsmen have supported RCC calls with search and rescue assets, flying more than 20,300 mission hours, and earning more than 1,900 saves and 800 assists to safety. Supporting an often treacherous terrain with rapid weather changes without warning, Alaska National Guardsmen provide a sense of security and hope as the last chance for survival.

"Our Alaska National Guardsmen are called on to perform rescues in conditions where no one else is able to reach, and they do that with a sense of duty and professionalism that few can," Katkus said.

In addition to performing day-to-day support in Alaska, Guardsmen from the 212th Rescue Squadron also were deployed to Afghanistan to support combat search and rescue missions in the Global War on Terrorism and are credited with 25 saves while deployed in 2011.

"Whether it's here in Alaska supporting search and rescue efforts or defending our country overseas, Alaska Guardsmen are highly trained and recognized for their exceptional professionalism," Katkus said. "We have 104 people who are alive as a result of our Guardsmen's hard work." ■

State Sends Help to Cordova

By Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... Snow is no stranger to the city of Cordova, located on the eastern side of Prince William Sound. Cordova prepares for more than 10 feet of snow each winter.

But this winter, starting in early December, a series of storms with high snowfall exceeded local capabilities. Residents struggled to clear emergency access to buildings and remove snow from roofs of schools, public safety buildings, essential service providers and residential homes as more fresh snow continued to accumulate.

After several weeks of valiant efforts, residents and their equipment were at the breaking point. Roofs sagged under the enormous weight, and the community's snow



Shoveling Duties. Specialist Markus Clark, 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, clears a residential walkway in Cordova in January. Clark was one of 57 Guard members sent to Cordova to help the city dig out of several winter snow storms.

Photo: Specialist Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Digging Out. Staff Sergeant Stephen Mich, 297th Military Police Company, Alaska Army National Guard, tries to break up compacted snow and ice blocking a residential doorway in Cordova in January. The Alaska National Guard mobilized 57 Guard members to Cordova to help with snow removal. Photo: Specialist Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Winter Extreme. Members of the Alaska Army National Guard's 297th Military Police Company help clear the roof of the Cordova Junior/Senior High School in early January. Photo: Specialist Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

dumps reached maximum capacity. To make matters worse, the National Weather Service forecast called for additional storms to bring a mix of snow and rain.

On Jan. 6, faced with the possibilities of being cut off from emergency medical access and widespread roof collapse, the city of Cordova issued a Local Disaster Declaration and requested assistance from the state. The city of Cordova activated their Emergency Operation Center and stood up their Incident Management Team. While coordinating the local response, the city requested additional emergency management staff, laborers, snow removal equipment, heavy equipment operators and help in opening shelters.

After receiving Cordova's disaster declaration, the state Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management began to staff the State Emergency Operation Center.

The SEOC coordinated requested resources, including SEOC staff to support Cordova's EOC. The SEOC and Cordova's EOC operate under the principles of Incident Command System, a flexible and scalable framework used to manage events. ICS designates areas of responsibility and organizes the many parts of an effective emergency response.

"DHS&EM trains its staff and communities to use ICS because it works," said Bryan Fisher, DHS&EM Disaster Response section chief. "ICS allows the state and the communities to clearly identify objectives while having the same organizational structure and a similar planning and operation cycle. Cordova's firm grasp of ICS enabled the SEOC to quickly provide support."

With ICS in place, three DHS&EM emergency response specialists quickly joined Cordova's Incident Management Team to provide direct emergency management support in the Cordova EOC.

Working through the SEOC, the Alaska National Guard answered Cordova's need for laborers by mobilizing 57 Guard members. The requested Guard members were deployed to Cordova 19 hours after mission assignment.

The SEOC procured a contract with a private snow removal company that began transporting heavy equipment and personnel to Cordova to supplement Cordova's snow removal efforts. Less than 24 hours after receiving Cordova's disaster declaration, all of Cordova's emergency assistance requests were met or were en route to the community.

By Jan. 8, the requested personnel, equipment, and command and control elements were in place. Heavy equipment worked around the clock to restore emergency access. Alaska National Guard members teamed up with local Coast Guard personnel and cleared the roofs of critical buildings. While some non-critical buildings did experience major damage, Cordova's critical structures, including the schools and the hospital, were saved.

"Cordova's ability to efficiently interact within the ICS system allowed the state to quickly meet Cordova's emergency request," Fisher said. "Meeting those requests rapidly protected lives and prevented widespread property damage." ■



Roof Collapse. A crew works to salvage what they can from an unoccupied building in Cordova after the roof collapsed. Damages to homes, private boats, city buildings and facilities, the Cordova Medical Center, commercial buildings, schools and infrastructure were reported by the city of Cordova. Photo: Karl Edwards, DHS&EM

Guardsmen assist buried community

By Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... Alaska National Guard members arrived in Cordova in January to help the citizens in this small Alaska town dig out from a series of winter storms.

Termed Operation Deep Dig, 57 Alaska National Guardsmen arrived on the state's ferry system with shovels in hand ready to assist while keeping safety the number one priority, according to Alaska Army National Guard Captain Chad Ausel, commander, 297th Military Police Company.

"As soon as we got there, we identified a priority list for safety and familiarization training with Cordova. We asked for a subject matter expert on how they've cleared snow there safely and then completed training on harnesses, ropes and knots to make sure the Guardsmen were trained to do the mission safely," Ausel said.

With training completed, the Soldiers went out in the community to assist wherever they were needed.

"City officials identified three locations right away, and we stayed in squads to clear those areas," Ausel said.

With more snow and rain in the forecast, the Alaska National Guard arrived at a crucial time to assist before things got potentially worse.

"We were concerned about heavy and wet snow on roofs," said Allen Marquette, public information officer with the city of Cordova. "Some structures already collapsed. We tried to get those prioritized and shoveled off and assist residents in anticipation of the new snow and rain that was expected to come."

Cordova Mayor Jim Kallander also commented on the response to his community and how pleased he was with the assistance the city received from the state.

"I can't say how impressed I am with the homeland security response, the governor's office response and the National Guard stepping up to the plate," Kallander said. "It was exactly what we needed."

As the first military responder in all domestic emergencies, the Guard was focused on doing everything it could to help the community.

"It was our goal to leave Cordova in a better situation," Ausel said. "I'm very proud of my Soldiers and the job they did. They worked with a sense of urgency and were very proud to serve the community down there. This is why they signed up to serve in the National Guard." ■

Homeland Security & Emergency Management



Information Gathering. In the Matanuska-Susitna Borough emergency operations center, Mary Brodigan, public information officer, listens to an update from operations chief Richard Boothby, as Vickielee Fenster, public information officer, documents all the incoming information. Photo: Patty Sullivan, Mat-Su Borough

storm coupled extreme cold temperatures with high winds that knocked out power to more than 15,000 homes. The Prince William Sound disaster brought repeated snow storms that compromised both Valdez and Cordova's emergency access into and around the community, created a high avalanche danger, and threatened to collapse the roofs of critical public buildings and homes. Each event presented unique emergency response challenges within the affected communities, and lessons learned from these real-world events were incorporated into Alaska Shield 2012.

"When disasters affect a community, life safety is critical. You use experienced staff, tried and true tools, and known resources," said David Kang, planning program manager for DHS&EM and Alaska Shield 2012 incident commander. "The exercise gives us an ideal environment for trainees to learn new skills or step into a leadership position, to test new equipment, and to see how well changes to plans and procedures work. Communities unaffected by disasters for long periods of time use exercises to simulate stressful and demanding roles during a disaster."

ALASKA SHIELD TESTS

Cold Weather EMERGENCY RESPONSE

By Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... Every two years, Alaska communities, emergency response agencies and the state conduct the statewide Alaska Shield exercise. Led by the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Alaska Shield 2012 focused on a cold weather emergency. Response activities occurred across seven local jurisdictions throughout six days in February and included four state agencies, four federal agencies, two military branches, six private sector participants and three voluntary organizations.

"Community and agency exercise planning teams developed realistic and rigorous goals and objectives to test local capabilities and equipment," said John Madden, director of DHS&EM.

"In turn, state and federal agencies, private industry, the military and voluntary organizations tested their ability to support each community as they would during a real disaster event. DHS&EM developed the scenario and provided both technical assistance and associated training."

The decision to focus Alaska Shield 2012 on a cold weather event was made in 2010, prior to a series of significant 2011 real-world cold weather events, which were subsequently declared state disasters by Alaska Governor Sean Parnell. Savoonga's extended power loss during extreme cold weather led to community sheltering and subsequent repairs for affected residents. November's West Coast storm hit 38 western Alaska communities with extreme cold temperatures, coastal sea surges and hurricane force winds. The Kenai Peninsula



Winter Operations. The Fairbanks Fire Department's already tough job of hazardous material work is made more difficult by winter conditions. Alaska's emergency responders must practice their skills in a wide range of conditions, including the extreme cold.

Photo: Mike Drummond, DHS&EM

The most important element in any effective emergency response is the people. Large events may exceed local capabilities and require additional resources.

Communities need to be confident in their assessments and requests, while supporting agencies need to test their ability to meet those needs in a timely, effective manner.

“A full-scale, statewide exercise gives us the opportunity to plan and train together for a year or more prior to the exercise and then practice skills while the information is still fresh,” said Kathy Cayvell, DHS&EM exercise lead. “We exercise to prepare for actual events, and the work leading up to the exercise benefited communities across the state during this year’s winter storms.”

To support cold weather capabilities, DHS&EM secured national and other training partners to train electrical utility and public works providers, structural engineers, facility maintenance staff, search and rescue teams, community shelter providers, community leaders and others.

Incident Command System position-specific training was critical, as it supports all aspects of response. Nearly 100 Alaskans trained in one of the eight command and general staff positions used in emergency operations centers, incident management teams and first responder agencies.

Anchorage, Cordova, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kodiak, Unalaska and Valdez scheduled ICS, emergency management executive leadership, emergency operations center and responder-ready courses in the months before the exercise.

The Alaska Shield exercise also yielded valuable information to improve community readiness by identifying and documenting gaps in training, equipment, personnel and processes as areas for improvement. For example, during Alaska Shield 2010, the state’s interoperable communications was one area in need of improvement. DHS&EM subsequently worked with the amateur radio (“ham”) community to install high frequency radio with voice and data capabilities, along with dual band vhf/uhf radio voice communication equipment in the state emergency operation center. The cold weather scenario led to power outages requiring use of ham operators statewide to test those new capabilities. It also resulted in a request for the state’s mobile emergency operation center, which deployed to the Fairbanks North Star Borough emergency operation center, while a DHS&EM rapidly deployable communications trailer was dispatched to Palmer to serve as a communication hub.

The scenario also supported diverse activities, including cold weather hazardous materials response; mass care sheltering



Room With A View. Fairbanks residents participate in Alaska Shield 2012 by taking shelter at an American Red Cross shelter at the Big Dipper Ice Arena. Four additional communities practiced mass care shelter operations within their communities. Photo: Enola Brower, University of Alaska Fairbanks Campus Community Emergency Response Team

and feeding in Unalaska, Kodiak, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Fairbanks (including pet sheltering); hospital operations in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kodiak and Fairbanks, which resulted in delivery and installation of a massive back-up generator; and avalanche response in Juneau. Most communities activated their emergency operations center and used local public information officers while coordinating public information among state entities and local communities.



Treating the Injured. Firefighters practice a collapsed building mass casualty response at the Alaska National Guard Armory in Fairbanks. While firefighters regularly treat those with severe injuries, they rarely face the challenge of numerous patients with various degrees of injuries. Photo: Amber B. Courtney, City of Fairbanks

Developing partnerships is one of the key benefits of an exercise. During the lengthy planning of a large, full-scale exercise such as Alaska Shield, planning teams work together to determine who will participate, what the objectives will be and how the scenario will affect the exercise play. This process brings many levels of each participating organization together to discuss capabilities, plans, equipment and resources.

The planning team comes together at planning conferences at least three times prior to the exercise to ensure the quality of the exercise as an integrated whole. In the process, each organization becomes more aware of the roles each partner will play during a real-world event. Before the start of the exercise, participants have already strengthened their ability to work as a team.

The Prince William Sound communities of Cordova and Valdez credited Alaska Shield planning and training events in 2010 and 2011 as significant factors in their successful management of real-world snow events before the exercise. Having accomplished their exercise goals and objectives during the actual response, both communities had DHS&EM’s full support when they withdrew from Alaska Shield 2012.

“Unlike the Alaska Shield 2012 exercise, the state and our communities will never be able to anticipate every natural or man-made threat that may occur. Those situations will require us to use our existing resources and problem-solving capabilities,” Madden said. “The state and communities are continually improving specific functions through planning, training and local exercises. Statewide Alaska Shield exercises allow us to move forward together.” ■

Historic Airfield

Has Dynamic Future - Part II



By Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

BRYANT ARMY AIRFIELD, Alaska ... Bryant Army Airfield on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson is a landmark steeped in Alaska aviation history, but it's the future of Bryant that excites Alaska's military and state leadership.

Bringing the airfield into compliance to meet the requirements of today's modern military and provide an option to the state of Alaska for disaster response is the end state for Major General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard.

"Bryant Airfield has a very rich history here on JBER," Katkus said. "It was provided as a resource to the Alaska National Guard in the late 90s, and until recently, there's really been no effort to improve or make it a relevant resource. Relevancy is everything in the National Guard, and part of being relevant is making sure your facilities are modernized to meet the mission – not only as a

military platform for training but as a resource to project resources and address domestic emergencies."

Katkus assigned the dubious mission of making Bryant relevant to airport manager Jim Noe. With 42 years of Army aviation under his belt, Noe took over his current position in 2009 after retiring from the Alaska Army National Guard. The right man for the job, he was presented with the difficult task of developing Bryant from a heliport into an effective airfield for Alaska.

"There are three basic steps to becoming an airfield. The first step is to comply with regulations; the second step is getting the tower up and running; and the third step is to get controlled airspace around the airfield," Noe said. "The first thing we did was comply with the regulations, bringing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers up here to have the testing done about a year ago.

We've also refurbished the tower and are working with the Federal Aviation Administration for Class D controlled airspace."

Safety is the key issue and driving force behind most of the upgrades on Bryant, according to Noe. The tower restoration, controlled airspace, and compliance with regulations to improve the runway will provide a safer environment for military and civilian aircraft travelling through the popular air corridor.

"The near misses with other aircraft our Soldiers have had over the years have been significant," Noe said. "The tower and air traffic control function will increase the level of safety to help move civilian and military aircraft rapidly through the airspace while separating aircraft, which is critical."

Upgrading the runway, clearing trees, while addressing power lines, asphalt thickness and lengthening of



◀ **Tower Restoration.** The air traffic control tower on Bryant Army Airfield is shown during the early morning hours of December 2011. The tower is being restored after sitting empty since the mid-1990s. It will be manned by at least two personnel at all times during an eight-hour work day. Photo: Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

the airfield are a few of the recent improvements to enhance operational safety of the airfield and make it viable for the National Guard, Coast Guard, state and federal agencies to use.

“You need to be able to operate safely on the airfield, and we had numerous exceptions to policy. Exceptions to policy don’t make you safer when you’re in an aircraft that has an issue. We’ve gone through each and every exception to policy bringing the airfield to today’s current standards,” Katkus said. “There are a lot of different entities that come together near the airfield: the Glenn Highway, a firing range and a lot of civilian air traffic. Safety being paramount for the military, the tower provides us one more level to adequately address the requirements in today’s environment of operating safely. It’s a cheap investment compared to the loss of equipment and personnel as a result of inaction.”

In addition to controlling the airspace, Noe notes that the major upgrades to improve safety will make it a relevant resource to the state for domestic response.

“In the event that there is another earthquake in this area, there is the possibility that some of the airfields here may fail, and this gives the state an option to use Bryant Airfield,” Noe said. “Building the runway up to 6,000 feet will also allow us to get more airframes in here to support contingency operations.”

Katkus elaborated further by explaining that Bryant provides the state with broader options during a disaster because of the nearby State Emergency Operations Center.

“With the SEOC in such close proximity, it’s critical that we incorporate all the resources we have available to make Alaska



Airfield Improvements. Jim Noe, Bryant Army Airfield airport manager, points at a map of the airfield in December 2011 while discussing the significant improvements that have occurred throughout the last few years. Noe, a 42-year veteran in Army aviation, took over his current position in 2009 after retiring from the Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs

a safer, better place,” Katkus said. “In a disaster, Bryant Airfield provides us capacity; it provides us potential. Those are the things that are most valuable in response because you now have options. Depending on the magnitude of the disaster, this may be the only operational airfield. It may be the only area to stage equipment and supplies to move forward. It’s a safe environment that you could get to as a last resort or first choice if it develops properly, and we have the right resources.”

Developing properly also means new jobs. With the improvements to make Bryant Airfield a viable resource for Alaska, the National Guard Bureau authorized the creation of 22 new federal jobs to help man the tower and support airfield operations.

“For many years, taking care of the airfield was an additional duty for a warrant officer,” Katkus said. “We’ve now gotten to the point where this is officially recognized, and there is a minimum manning requirement. With that minimum

manning there are pretty significant job opportunities developing for our young men and women. In today’s constrained fiscal environment this is still important enough to fund as an improvement.”

A critical resource to the National Guard, military, and citizens of Alaska, Bryant Army Airfield’s history is well documented and the future is bright.

“Bryant Airfield has had a great history on Fort Richardson, and now that Fort Richardson is JBER, I would hope that the relevancy of this valuable gem continues to develop,” Katkus said. “We need to make sure we do our best as leaders to continue that legacy here at this airfield because the potential is unlimited.” ■

Editor’s Note: This is the second of a two-part series on Bryant Army Airfield. The first feature, published in Warriors Winter 2011-12 issue, discussed the history of Bryant Army Airfield and laid the groundwork for its value as an important resource for Alaska.



Busy Bryant. An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter is hitched for towing in front of Hangar Six on Bryant Army Airfield in January. The air traffic control tower, in the background, is currently being restored to assist in providing a safer environment for military and civilian aircraft travelling through the popular air corridor. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

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Nearly 2,500 Gallons of Heating Fuel Given to Tununak Villagers

Story and photos by Thomas Wolforth,
DMVA Cultural Resources and Tribal Liaison

CAMP CARROLL, Alaska ... Several members of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs spent a week in January transferring heating fuel from storage tanks at the abandoned Guard armory to the Native Village of Tununak.

Approximately 350 people live in Tununak, a village situated on the shores of the Bering Sea 100 miles west of Bethel. Like so many villages, Tununak was hit hard by the massive storm that ravaged the west coast of Alaska in late 2011.

"It has been an especially cold and rough winter," said Xavier Post, administrative assistant for the Native Village of Tununak. "Everyone here has been using more fuel than usual."

Herbert "Gil" Guillory, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Environmental Program manager, and Sergeant Michael Haltom, Alaska National Guard Facilities Operations manager, worked with the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency to process the federally owned surplus of heating oil to make it available free of charge to Tununak, a federally recognized tribe.

DMVA personnel travelled from their offices at Camp Carroll on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to Bethel to pick up 52 semi-clear plastic barrels, each with a maximum capacity of 55 gallons. The team then headed to the armory in

Tununak and was soon pumping fuel out of the pair of 1,500-gallon storage tanks into the barrels.

The temperature started out at a high of five degrees below zero and got colder by five degrees each day. However, the cold weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the recipients of the fuel.

Theodore Angaiak, president of the Native Village of Tununak, took possession of each barrel as it was filled and distributed them to villagers. People hauled away barrels with their snow machines and all-terrain vehicles. A few hardy individuals even towed away a full barrel on foot.

In addition to receiving the fuel, each recipient was able to keep the sturdy and reusable barrels.

"People who got those barrels were on top of the clouds," Angaiak said.

Everyone involved reported that it was great to see the fuel going directly into the hands of those who could use it the most. ■



Fuel Transfer. Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Environmental Program staff Tim Roy, front, Environmental Compliance Program supervisor, and Mark Hamilton, water resource program manager, seal another 55-gallon drum after pumping heating fuel from the 1,500-gallon storage tank alongside the former National Guard armory in Tununak.



Waiting for Fuel. Villagers in Tununak line up with their snow machines to pick up 55-gallon drums filled with heating fuel that had been transferred from the former Army National Guard armory into the drums for village residents.



Heating Haul. One Tununak villager hauls away his new 55-gallon drum filled with heating fuel that was transferred from the former Army National Guard armory there. The heating fuel was made available free of charge to residents of Tununak.



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ARMY GUARDSMEN ON DUTY IN AFGHANISTAN

Photos by Staff Sergeant Tim Chacon, U.S. Air Force



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1 On Site. Members of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team arrive at Kandahar University to deliver engineering training equipment in late March. Alaska Army National Guardsmen from B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, are deployed with three PRTs across Afghanistan to provide security during their missions.

2 Scanning the Scene. Private First Class Rowdy Robbins, of Wasilla, a member of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, provides security while members of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team's engineering department conduct a site assessment of a project in March in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

3 Streets of Afghanistan. Members of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, roll through the streets of Kandahar, Afghanistan, during a recent mission in March. The Guardsmen are deployed to Afghanistan to provide security for the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction, which is a joint team of U.S. Air Force, Army, and Navy service members and civilians from various U.S. agencies deployed to assist in the effort to rebuild and stabilize the local government and infrastructure in Afghanistan.

4 Kandahar Security. Staff Sergeant Caleb Funk, of North Pole, a member of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, provides security in the rugged Kandahar, Afghanistan, terrain while members of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team's engineering department conduct a site assessment of a project in March.

5 Security Lookout. Specialist Austin Makowski, left, of Anchorage, and Staff Sergeant Brandon Amarone, of Delta Junction, both members of B Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 143rd Infantry Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, provide security for the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team in March. Kandahar PRT is a joint team of U.S. Air Force, Army, and Navy service members and civilians from various U.S. agencies deployed to assist in the effort to rebuild and stabilize the local government and infrastructure in Afghanistan.



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Taking Care of Air Guard Members and Families at Clear

By Kris Capps for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, reprinted with author's permission

HEALY, Alaska ... Betty Westcott's family lives in upstate New York, but her extended family is at Clear Air Force Station.

The "troops," as she calls them, are her main focus. She takes care of them, and she has been doing it, around the world, for the past 37 years.

This Southern belle, with her pronounced Alabama accent, is in charge of Services at Clear Air Force Station. Her responsibility: the morale, welfare and recreation for service members and their families.

She did this job at stations that include Turkey, Eielson Air Force Base and since April 17, 2005, at Clear.

"I just like doing things for people," she said. "That's the only thing I'm good at. I can't sing, and I don't dance much. I make good brownies. I don't have any talents that other people might have."

"But running a daily business? I'm good at that."

She created the program at Clear, which was initially a remote posting with no families, no children. That changed when the Alaska Air National Guard began serving at Clear.

"We created the programs as we went along, some successful, some not so successful," said Westcott.

Those included open bowling on Saturdays and Sundays for families, youth art contests for kids and more.

Affectionately known as "Miss Betty," Westcott is a polite but driving force for making things happen.

She also is a stickler about a few things – including good manners and polite language. She begrudgingly admitted that the rumor is true – she did once slap a commander on the side of the head for



Taking Care of Guardsmen. Betty Westcott stands in her office at Clear Air Force Station in March. Westcott is in charge of Services with the responsibility to maintain programs of morale, welfare and recreation for Guard members and their families.

using bad language in her presence. He took it well, she said.

"I'm Southern – people tend to mind their manners a little more when I'm around," she said.

She is not a member of the military. She is a civilian.

Her previous husband worked as a club manager on military bases and in those days, Westcott volunteered for member services. When they divorced long ago, she stuck with it, this time as a job.

Her specialty is keeping to a budget and accounting for every cent.

"The bosses do like that," she said. "We have the best financials in the Air Force that I know of – even though we have little bitty dollars, we're one of the best."

Her philosophy: "If you take care of the pennies, nickels and dimes, the dollars will take care of themselves."

She's not kidding about her budget. In December of last year, Services made a profit of \$7.27. In February, its profit was \$24. She plows every cent into making things happen for military members and their families at Clear.

Services is self-supporting. It does not receive money from the military, except for programs required by the military, like fitness. Profit from the restaurant and bar support many of the programs.

Westcott writes grants, asks for donations and finds creative ways to make things happen.

Westcott is most proud of annual Family Day every summer, which includes the Armed Forces Fun Run where there are T-shirts for the kids and a picnic.

Her favorite program: free popcorn. Every year, she arranges to get pallets of free popcorn.

"I had enough for every child in Healy, Nenana and Anderson plus every person on base," she said, of her January 2012 delivery.

She displays a giant popcorn thank you note in her office, from kids in Healy.

She also brags about the annual Halloween celebration. Residents decorate a hallway in the dorm and invite local students to walk through their haunted hallway.

She's not afraid to ask for donations for her families, and she inspires others to help as well.

Last month, she worked closely with Anne Biberman, Fairbanks Concert Association, on FCA's military appreciation show, the Shanghai Circus. Generally, Clear personnel would receive a small number of tickets, perhaps 30 tickets. Because of Westcott's persistence, Clear families received 110 tickets.

"She is a driving force," Biberman said. "She told me, she's got all these families, and you cannot take half of your kids to the circus. She was so driven to do this for her people. And that was driving me."

"She blew me away," said the director of Fairbanks Concert Association. "She just made me want to drop everything and raise money just for her."

"I just found her to be amazing," Biberman said. "She was so inspirational."

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Any time you have something that people want and appreciate that much, what a difference it makes.”

“Betty is a force of nature,” she added.

In Westcott’s mind, every child needed the opportunity to go to that circus.

She approached some officers at Clear and said, “I want \$20 from each of you.”

“They all stepped up and gave me money,” she said. “Some more than others.”

“Then, I had over 100 requests for tickets from families,” she said.

So she started giving away tickets in batches, as long as the recipient bought one ticket. Military got first priority, followed by civilian employees.

In the end, she also received support from Usibelli Coal Mine, Anderson Lions Club and others.

Her time at Clear is coming to an end, because she has decided to retire and spend more time with her son and his family, which includes a 22-year-old granddaughter and a 3-year-old granddaughter.

“This is the most wonderful job I’ve ever had, at Clear,” she said. “I hate to give it up, I really do.”

She gestured to the array of family photos hanging on her office wall.

“You see what else I’m missing,” she said. “I haven’t been with my son since he graduated from high school. He is 43. He did eight years in the military. I was traveling. He was traveling. I want to

spend some quality time with my family.”

She’ll be missed by her “troops” including the commander, Lieutenant Colonel Torrence Saxe.

“She has given 37 years of dedicated service,” he said. “She’s been exemplary

in every facet and a joy to work with.”

It takes a special breed to do this job, Westcott said. “Because you either love it or you hate it, and you don’t stay in it if you hate it. We’re only as good as our last function.” ■

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Security Aviation Praised for Military Support

Story and photo by Bradley “Gunny” Miller, ESGR

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... The Alaska Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve held a “Breakfast with the Boss” event in late January where ESGR recognized an outstanding employer for its extraordinary support of the military.

Security Aviation was praised for its continued and outstanding support of its deployed National Guardsmen, as well as its operational support of many military programs involving all branches of services both active and reserve.

Security Aviation has supported both the active duty and Air Force Reserve by towing aerial drones and target banners for F-22 fighter training, in addition to supporting visiting National Guard and Air National Guard transient aircraft with airport ramp services. Security Aviation has also provided ramp services in private and honorable ramp ceremonies to the families of fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines whose remains return home to Alaska. Furthermore, Security Aviation has provided small aircraft lift support for National Guard activities around the Fort Greely and Fairbanks area.

In attendance to extend appreciation to Security Aviation were Brigadier General Deborah McManus, director of



Pro Patria. Rich Owens, center, state chairman, Alaska Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, presents a Pro Patria Award to Stephen “Joe” Kapper, right, president, Security Aviation, and Jason P. Ward, senior vice president, Security Aviation, for their exemplary support of their deployed Alaska National Guardsmen and continued support of state and federal military programs and training.

joint staff, Alaska National Guard; State Command Sergeant Major Gordon Choate, Alaska Army National Guard; Chief Master Sergeant Timothy Delph, state command chief, Alaska National Guard; Lieutenant Colonel David McPhetres, director of staff, Alaska Air National Guard; Staff Sergeant Melissa Branch, Alaska Army National Guard; Lieutenant Paul Davis, commander, Navy Operational Support Center; Colonel Bryan Radliff, commanding officer, Air Force Reserve 477th Fighter Group; Chief

Master Sergeant Timothy Zellar, command chief, Air Force Reserve 477th Fighter Group; Petty Officer Third Class Jerry Stevens, Coast Guard Reserve; Dave Lamothe, director, ESGR employer outreach; Pete Jensen, chairman, ESGR South Central; Bradley “Gunny” Miller, program support specialist, ESGR; Rich Owens, state chairman, ESGR; Stephen “Joe” Kapper, president, Security Aviation; and Jason Ward, senior vice president, Security Aviation. ■



Proud to Help Service Members. Alaska Lieutenant Governor Mead Treadwell signs a Statement of Support with members of the Alaska Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve in January. The Statement of Support is a document to be proudly displayed by an employer, showing dedication and support for service members and the employer’s continued commitment and understanding of the value of our military service. Joining Treadwell during the signing, (from back left): Jamie Abordonado, program support technician, ESGR; Brigadier General Deborah McManus, director of joint staff, Alaska National Guard; and Rich Owens, state chairman, Alaska ESGR. Photo: Chris Nelson, ESGR



Governor Supports Alaska's Military. Alaska Governor Sean Parnell proudly shows off his Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Statement of Support. In February, the Alaska Committee for ESGR participated in a Statement of Support signing challenge with the members of the state legislature in Juneau. Twelve state legislators signed Statements of Support, culminating with a signing by the governor. A signed Statement of Support signifies an employer's backing and encouragement of service members and their military commitment. From left: Dick Dau, ESGR; Charlie Smith, ESGR; Alaska Governor Sean Parnell; Chris Nelson, ESGR; and Mike Nizich, chief of staff for Parnell. Photo: Bob Anderson, ESGR

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Alaska State Defense Force

ALASKA STATE DEFENSE FORCE ASSISTS WOUNDED WARRIORS

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

ALCANTRA ARMORY, Wasilla ...

A majority of members in the Alaska State Defense Force have formerly served in the U.S. Armed Forces and have a great appreciation for those who presently serve. So, the ASDF is always looking for ways to support current service members.

In 2011, the Kenai River Professional Guide Association asked the Kenai-based A Company, 1st Battalion, Alaska State Defense Force, to assist the fishing



Great Day for Fishing. Members of the Alaska State Defense Force and wounded warriors from Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson take a break from salmon fishing during a free guided fishing event hosted by the Kenai River Professional Guide Association in 2011.

Photo: Captain Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

- ▼ **Helping Wounded Warriors.** Second Lieutenant Jeff Pearce, left, Sergeant First Class James York, center, and Staff Sergeant Steven Flippen volunteer during the 2011 Kenai River Professional Guide Association's free, two-day guided salmon fishing event for wounded warriors of Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Photo: Captain Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force





Fish On. The Kenai River Professional Guide Association's boats are lined up at Centennial Park in Soldotna ready to take wounded warriors salmon fishing.

Photo: Captain Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

guides in putting on a free, two-day king salmon fishing trip for wounded warriors. The ASDF was eager to assist, and 19 members volunteered in helping the more than 60 wounded warriors who participated.

The Alaska State Defense Force utilized the time to hone their skills at mobilizing to the Kenai Peninsula area and created a self-sustained encampment, as well as utilized ASDF communications. Upon arrival, the ASDF detachment, under the command of Major Rick Wride, set up camp and reported to Dave Goggia, president of the Kenai River Professional Guide Association.

ASDF members worked alongside numerous other community volunteers and set up large canopies to provide cover during the barbecues for the returning fishermen. It was especially meaningful

to meet the wounded warriors, many of who shared their stories with the ASDF. These wounded warriors were from Fort Wainwright and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

In addition to the two days of guided salmon fishing for each wounded warrior, the Kenai River Professional Guide Association gathered community donations and arranged excellent hotel accommodations, picnics, meals and a banquet at the Soldotna Sports Arena during which ASDF Chaplain Captain Kit Pherson gave the invocation.

The ASDF was asked to assist again in 2012 and will be participating in the event June 6-7. The Kenai River Professional Guide Association expects this year's event to be even bigger with 150 wounded warriors projected to participate. ■



Veterans

Military Funeral Honors Program Pays Tribute to Alaskans



Rendering Honors. Members of the Alaska National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team stand ready during funeral services at Fort Richardson National Cemetery December 2011. The Military Funeral Honors Team provides military honors for Alaska's 77,000 veterans. Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

By Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... The Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program is paying tribute to veterans all across Alaska in record numbers, honoring more than 400 veterans last year alone.

During fiscal year 2011, the Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program provided an honor guard detail

for 444 military funerals throughout Alaska. According to Charles Einarson, Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program state coordinator, each year that number continues to grow.

"Last year, in fiscal year 2011, we had a 230 percent increase over fiscal year 2010," Einarson said. "So far this year, as of February, we've already conducted half the number of services that we conducted in 2011."

Part of that growth stems from an increased awareness about the program. There is also a push to spread the word as to who is eligible for funeral honors.

"Previously, nobody knew about the Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program, and they didn't think that the active duty military funeral honors programs would handle a Guardsman's funeral, so many veterans passed away and didn't receive honors," Einarson said. "Now that we are becoming more well-known, we are being utilized like we should. People also like it when we perform the funeral honors because we are from their towns; we are Alaskans, too."

Eight Soldiers from the Alaska Army National Guard, five of whom have attended the Military Funeral Honors course in Arlington, Va., comprise the full-time team and are authorized to wear the honor guard tab on their uniforms. Twenty other Soldiers augment the Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program part-time and assist on an on-call basis throughout the state.



Flag Folding. Part of final honors during a funeral includes presenting a surviving family member with a folded U.S. flag.

Photo: Specialist Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

“Whenever a service member passes away in the state, whether he or she is a one-year veteran or a 20-year retiree, we travel to the site and provide final honors for the family – flag fold, firing party – whatever we can, based on what is authorized for that service member,” Einarson said.

He added that often times he will get a phone call from one of his part-time honor guard members or from a church in one of the remote villages requesting support.

“Having traditional Guardsmen as part-time honor guards located around the state is beneficial because when we get requests from some of the villages, instead of flying several honor guard members out there, we can send maybe one or two to join the Soldier already in the village and perform military funeral honors,” Einarson said.

He said the honor guard’s role is important during such a delicate time for families. Honor guard members perform their job with pride and go to great lengths to adhere to military customs so that their tribute captures the essence of a person’s military service. In Alaska, the honor guard covers a large geographical area, and Einarson hopes he can grow the team.

“We have traveled across the state to render these last honors for Soldiers,” Einarson said. “I would like to create two complete honor guard teams, one in Anchorage and one in Fairbanks, and I want them to be able to rival Arlington – that’s the kind of program I came from, and that’s the kind I’d like to develop here.”

That commitment to creating and maintaining a top-notch funeral honors team encourages members to put forward their best every day.

“Being a full-time honor guard member is competitive,” Einarson explained. “Every 90 days, Soldiers have to prove they are meeting the standards of the team. Whether it’s physical fitness, performance or attitude, there’s a whole list of criteria to remain on this team.”



A Final Tribute. Members of the Alaska National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team prepare for upcoming services. The team has eight full-time members and an additional 20 Soldiers who augment the full-time team on a part-time basis.

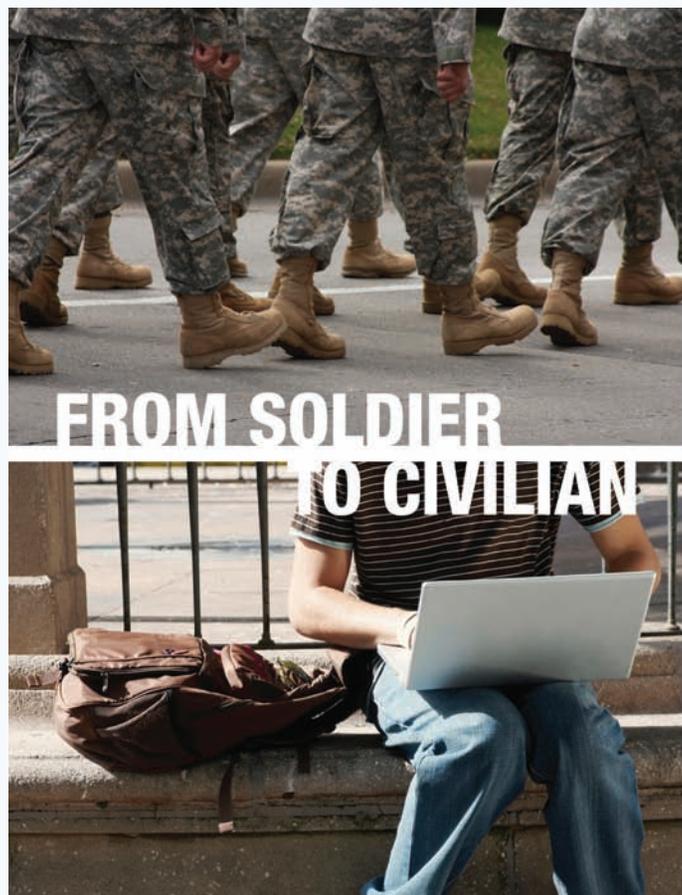
Photo: Specialist Balinda O’Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Einarson said because of current funding, the Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program isn’t adding any additional full-time slots right now, but the program is constantly looking for new members who want to help.

“This is a great opportunity for Soldiers looking to volunteer,” he said. “We have 20 part-time honor guard members throughout the state, but we are always looking for more volunteers, especially in western Alaska because the Alaska Army National Guard unit based out of Bethel is currently deployed.”

With Alaska home to 77,000 veterans, the Alaska Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program plays a pivotal role in paying tribute to those who have served the country. Each team member feels honored to be a part of this process.

“This is the most rewarding job I’ve ever had, and it’s important that we can provide this service,” Einarson said. “It’s the last benefit the Soldier will receive and our country’s way of saying thank you and giving that final farewell. It’s closure.” ■



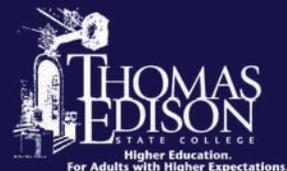
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Celebration. Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets toss their berets into the air after being released from formation for the final time at graduation in February.

Photo: Second Lieutenant Bernie Kale, DMVA Public Affairs



130 Cadets Graduate from Alaska Military Youth Academy

By DMVA Public Affairs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... The Alaska Military Youth Academy celebrated the graduation of 130 cadets of Class 2012-1 from its ChalleNGe program in February.

The cadets successfully completed the 22-week residential phase of the AMYA ChalleNGe program that focused on academics, military-style discipline and training, and community service. The graduating cadets are now among the 3,528 graduates from the Alaska Military Youth Academy since 1994.

Upon graduation, cadets take part in a yearlong post-residential phase where

graduates return to their communities to enter the workplace, continue their education in high school or higher education, 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 intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and to produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. ■



Academic Excellence. U.S. Representative Don Young hands cadet Austin Simoneau, of Palmer, his diploma from the Alaska Military Youth Academy in February. Simoneau, also the student first sergeant, graduated with the Academic Excellence Award.

Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs



Mentor Support. Wendi Shackelford, a police officer with the Anchorage Police Department and volunteer mentor for the Alaska Military Youth Academy, pins her cadet, student sergeant major and Leadership Award recipient Casandra O'Gorman, with an APD Crisis Intervention Team pin following O'Gorman's graduation from the AMYA ChalleNGe Program in February.

Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs



Attention. Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets stand at attention during their graduation ceremony in February at Buckner Physical Fitness Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Photo: Staff Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs



NATIONAL GUARD MISSILE DEFENDER OF THE YEAR

Story and photos by Captain Ryan Richard, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

FORT GREELY, Alaska ... A Soldier from the Alaska Army National Guard's 49th Missile Defense Battalion, based out of Fort Greely, was recently selected as the 2011 National Guard Missile Defender of the Year.

Staff Sergeant Craig Davis was selected over three other National Guard nominees and received his award from Colonel Timothy Coffin, deputy commander for Operations, Space and Missile Defense Command. The Missile Defender of the Year has three separate categories with a winner selected from the Army, Navy and National Guard.

"I am honored to be selected as the National Guard representative," Davis said. "Personally, this award is an excellent career builder. I encourage other noncommissioned officers within the battalion to compete for this award. It helps grow the Ballistic Missile Defense System community and our mission at Fort Greely."

The 2nd annual Missile Defender of the Year award ceremony was hosted in January 2012 by the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance in Alexandria, Va. The MDAA is a nonpartisan, membership-based organization with a stated mission of educating the American public and policy makers about missile defense issues. It advocates for the development and deployment of missile defense systems to defend the United States and its allies. ■



Top Honors. Staff Sergeant Craig Davis accepts his award at the 2nd annual Missile Defender of the Year ceremony in Alexandria, Va., after being selected as the 2011 National Guard award winner. Davis is a member of the Alaska Army National Guard's 49th Missile Defense Battalion at Fort Greely.



Winter Windstorm. The Missile Assembly Building on the Fort Greely Missile Defense Complex weathers a January windstorm. Ground-based interceptors sit in the Missile Assembly Building and are fielded in Alaska and California to protect the nation from a limited intercontinental ballistic missile threat.



Missile Defense Complex. The Alaska Range is a picturesque backdrop on a cold, clear day at the Fort Greely Missile Defense Complex, which encompasses 800 acres and is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by members of the Alaska Army National Guard's 49th Missile Defense Battalion.



Family Programs

REAL RESILIENCE

By Second Lieutenant Robert Parrish, Family Programs

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... Resilience is the ability to thrive through or bounce back from adversity. The Army Resilience Program is made up of five core competencies and seven core skills.

The skills learned in resilience are scientifically proven to work; I know because it saved me, and I have seen the positive changes it has created in others. The Army Resilience Program has been so successful in helping Soldiers and their families, all branches of service are looking at the program and sending service members to become master resilience trainers.

The program is applicable to families of service members, too. A more resilient service member has a more resilient family, and a more resilient family makes a more resilient service member. These competencies and skills have proven to work across cultures, places and sexes. Everyone can learn to be more resilient and live a more fulfilling life practicing these skills.

The 5 Core Competencies:

Self-Awareness – Identify thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and patterns in thinking and behavior, especially counter-productive patterns. Be open and curious. This is an important skill because our thoughts affect our emotions.

Self-Regulation – Regulate impulses, emotions and behaviors to achieve goals. Express emotions appropriately and stop counter-productive thinking. Service members need to self-regulate all the time because when we don't, we can get in trouble with excessive use of force, inappropriate comments, not paying attention to detail, etc.

Optimism – Hunt for what is good, remain realistic, maintain hope, identify what is controllable, and have confidence in yourself and your team. We spend lots of time thinking about negative things so that learning to spend time reflecting and appreciating positive things is essential.

Mental Agility – Think flexibly and accurately, take in other perspectives, identify and understand problems and try new strategies. I have always liked an eastern philosophical saying that goes something like, "Bring me an empty bowl, and I will fill it with rice, but bring me a full bowl, and I cannot fill it for you." It reminds me to empty my mind and learn.

Connection – Build strong relationships, have positive and effective communication, show empathy, have a willingness to ask for help and support others in need.

The 7 Core Skills:

ATC, (Activating Event, Thought, Consequence – Emotion and Reaction) – Identify your thoughts about activating events, the consequences of those thoughts, good or bad, and identify patterns in thoughts and emotions.

Thinking Traps – Identify and correct counterproductive patterns in thinking through the use of critical questions.



We all fall into thinking traps, identifying you are in one helps you get out of it.

- Me, me, me – thinking you are the center of all that happens
- Them, them, them – thinking others are responsible for all that happens
- Jumping to conclusions – making conclusions without enough evidence
- Mind reading – thinking you know what another person is thinking
- Always, always, always – the outcome never changes, it's always the same
- Everything, everything, everything – everything is affected

Icebergs – Identify deep beliefs and core values and evaluate the accuracy and usefulness of these beliefs. Usually our core values stem from sayings such as: Death before dishonor, Honor thy father and mother, Blood is thicker than water, etc.

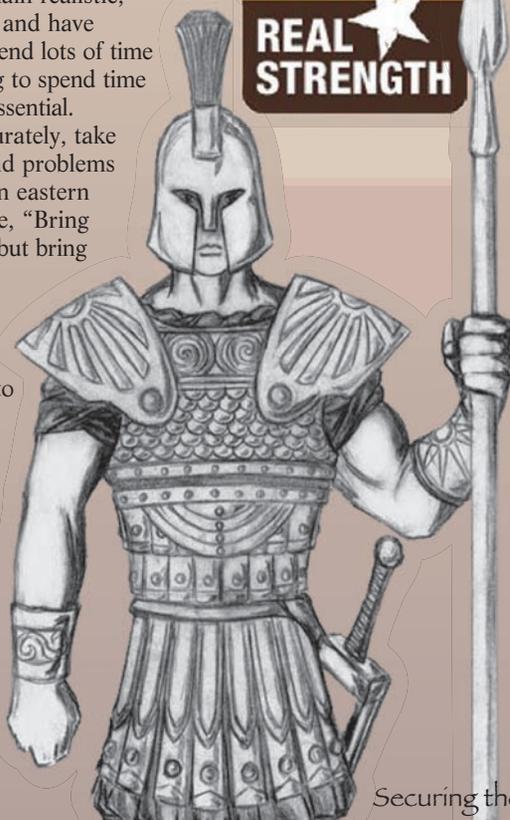
Energy Management – Pick what is important and what to spend energy on, and also do things that rejuvenate energy levels.

Problem Solving – Accurately identify what caused the problem and solution strategies. This helps us avoid arguments such as, "You never do the dishes!" "I did the dishes last night!" What is the real argument here? Maybe one feels taken advantage of?

Put it in Perspective – Stop catastrophic thinking, reduce anxiety, and improve problem solving by identifying the worst, best and most likely outcomes of a situation. Some of this is just seeing things from someone else's view.

Real-time Resilience – Shut down counterproductive thinking to enable greater concentration and focus on the task at hand. For example, before an athletic event, repeat to yourself, "I have practiced; I am proficient; I deserve to win," versus "What if I lose?" These are the quick statements we say to ourselves to change our perception of an event or our ability.

Resilience can be summed up with the analogy of a rubber ball and an egg; when thrown, you want to be resilient and bounce back not break like the egg. You can learn to bounce back and thrive through adversity from the Army Resilience Program. ■



Local Radio Announcer Honored for His Support of the Military

By Colonel Robert Doehl, Alaska National Guard Officers Association

CAMP DENALI, Alaska ... A strong advocate of the Alaska National Guard was recognized with a prestigious national award for his unwavering support of the military throughout the years.

Jim Robbins, a longtime radio announcer in Anchorage, received the Patrick Henry Award in recognition for his support to the military in Alaska. After being nominated by the Alaska National Guard Officers Association and endorsed by Major General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, he received the award at the 133rd Conference of the National Guard Association of the United States in Milwaukee, Wis., in August 2011.

Since first becoming a radio announcer in 1968, Robbins has leveraged his duties on the air waves to increase public support for the military. A former Air Force survival, evasion, resistance and escape instructor with 12 years of active duty service and the father of an Alaska Air National Guard pararescueman, Robbins combined his military awareness with his fine communication skills and a ready access to the public to educate the public about service member issues and to garner support.

While working at his latest radio stint at KBRJ-FM in Anchorage, he built into his morning show every Thursday a segment called "On Guard," which featured a guest from the Alaska National Guard speaking about the latest missions. This provided an invaluable venue to build public awareness and support.

In a way that has singularly attuned the general public to key military leaders in Alaska, Robbins interviewed every general officer who had served in Alaska since he started his show here. Capitalizing on his knowledge of the military, Robbins promoted public understanding about the military and military families by humanizing news stories about the services. He also incorporated live broadcasts and interviews from military venues such as the Marine Corps boot camp in San Diego and the USS Constellation and USS Nimitz, among other U.S. Navy vessels, to increase public appreciation for the military.

Robbins has also been master of ceremonies for numerous military events and has used his stature in the community to directly enhance unit morale. He has served in the Elmendorf Honorary Commander Program so he could personally thank Airmen and Soldiers for their service. When serving as the "Lord Trapper" for the annual Fur Rendezvous in Anchorage, he played a pivotal role in ensuring that an Army unit, recently returned from a difficult deployment in Afghanistan, was able to participate in the annual Reindeer Run, a tremendous morale-building event for the Soldiers. Likewise, he ensured that service members were recognized throughout the festival.

To help Guardsmen become more successful in their careers, he offers a class on public speaking. This has become his new calling. He left the radio station in 2011 and is now offering a variety of courses to improve public speaking and communication skills. ■



High Honor. Jim Robbins, a longtime radio announcer in Anchorage, displays his Patrick Henry Award, which he received in August at the 133rd National Guard Association of the United States General Conference in Milwaukee, Wis., in recognition for his support of the military in Alaska. From left: Brigadier General John Walsh, NGAUS vice chairman-Army; Brigadier General Bill Burks, NGAUS vice chairman-Air; Jim Robbins, Patrick Henry Award recipient; and Colonel Murray Hansen, NGAUS Awards Committee chairman. Photo: Paul Gaertner, NGAUS



Who We Are...

What is your personal mantra?

**First Lieutenant
Anthony Rivas**
Recruiting and Retention



"Never take life too seriously – nobody gets out of it alive anyway."

**Senior Airman
Arielle Achkio**
168th Force Support Flight



"Live every day with no regrets."

Larry White
Recruiting and Retention



"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you always got."

**Specialist
Esther Maka**
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade



"Don't back down from expectations – chase them down."

**Staff Sergeant
Robert Harris**
2-196th Infantry



"Live every day like it's your last."



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 SSG Charles Boldt JFHQ-AK (Army)
 CPT David Jurva 49th GMD
 CPT David Moss 49th GMD
 SGT Claudio Bantan 49th GMD
 CW2 Jere Just 297th BFSB
 CSM Pamela Harrington 38th TC
 SFC Jerome Arisman 207th CSC
 SFC Charlotte Olito 1-959th Contracting

LtCol Nathan Braspeninckx 249th AS
 Maj Christopher Rishko 176th ACS
 TSgt Matthew Carse 176th ACS
 Maj Maralee Omeara 176th AMXS
 SMSgt Roland Lemieux 176th MXS
 SMSgt William Gotti 176th MDG

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 SFC Curtis Stull 103rd CST
 CW4 Albert Ostrowski JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SPC Lily Fox 297th BFSB
 SGT Cody Spry JFHQ
 SSG Albert Burns 1-297th R&S
 SPC Jonathon Sholl 1-297th R&S
 1SG Charles Hooper 297th CSC

SPC Anthony Sousa 297th BFSB
 SPC Joy Petway 297th CSC
 1LT Jeremy Neilson 297th NSC
 SSG Rodney Spaulding 297th BFSB

Air Force Commendation Medal



SMSgt Danielle M. St Laurent 168th MDG
 MSgt Marlene Windel 176th AMXS

Army Achievement Medal



MSgt Kristian Muak 103rd CST
 SFC Jason Rode 103rd CST
 SGT Robin Munnlyn 103rd CST
 SGT Trent Lee 297th BFSB

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal



TSgt Charles D. Hamby 168th MDG

Alaska Legion of Merit



BG Julio Banez JFHQ-AK (Army)
 COL Jerry Kidrick JFHQ-AK (Army)
 LTC Peter Savage JFHQ-AK (Army)
 CW4 Ronald Gilson JFHQ-AK (Army)
 MSG Jerauld Troupe 761st MP

Alaska Distinguished Service Medal



CPT David Moss 49th GMD
 SGT Claudio Bantan 49th GMD
 SFC Melissa Hollingsworth . . JFHQ-AK (Army)
 LtCol Nathan Braspeninckx 249th AS

Alaska Commendation Medal



SSG Rebecca Pilmore JFHQ-AK (Army)
 SPC Lily Fox 297th BFSB

Alaska Domestic Emergency Ribbon



SPC Balinda O'Neal 134th PAD

Alaska State Partnership Medal



CPT William Yeo 103rd CST

Alaska First Sergeant Award

MSgt Janet Lemmons 176th MSG

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First Sergeant of the Year

Master Sergeant Thomas Gregory
 176th Security Forces Squadron

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 Gregory Kopp176th MDG

Captain

Walter Hotch-Hill1-297th R&S
 Noah Wisecarver1-297th R&S
 Joshua McKinley144th AS

First Lieutenant

George McMillen Jr249th AS

Second Lieutenant

Holly Adamson144th AS
 Brent Kramer211th RQS
 Whitney Wigren144th AS

Chief Master Sergeant

William G. Dixon168th AMXS
 Lance Jordan249th AS
 William Yockell Jr176th WG

Senior Master Sergeant

Christine R. LeMieux168th MXS

Sergeant First Class

Joseph David ThibaultJFHQ-AK (Army)
 Michael Adam Nelson1-143rd IN ABN
 Harry Thomas AlexieR&R

Master Sergeant (Air)

Gary L. Critchfield168th MXS
 Tyler T. Toth Jr.168th FSF
 Argenis Sambois168th OSF
 Michael J. Goodwin168th MXS
 Conrad Rojas168th MXS
 Nicolas R. Blace213th SWS
 Andrew R. Webster213th SWS
 Kelly R. Merrell213th SWS
 Jeffrey Rairdon176th MXS
 Mark Turton176th SFS

Staff Sergeant (Army)

Richard Gates Murphy49th GMD
 Christina Myeshia Watson297th BFSB
 Aaron Michael Angol1-207th AVN
 Khris Craig Wangrud1-297th R&S
 William Dennis Zagrocki297th BFSB

Technical Sergeant

Reginald L. Fleming168th LRS
 Audrey Lei B. Palacious168th LRS
 James W. Hudnall168th ARS
 John M. Palomo168th AMXS
 Benjamin McCulloch176th MXS
 Leonard Reloza176th SFS

Sergeant

George Michael Kendall49th GMD
 Julana Marie Jameson49th GMD

Miguel Angel Mateo49th GMD
 Rebecca Alexandra Devito1-207th AVN
 Nicholas Berin Hann1-207th AVN
 Justin Michael Ables1-207th AVN
 Flanity Mina Briones49th GMD
 Kenneth Leo Wilson1-207th AVN
 Cody Grant Bjorklund1-207th AVN
 Joshua Michael Vanderzon1-297th R&S
 Steven Amarak Ernst1-207th AVN

Nicholas Anthony Phillips1-143rd IN ABN
 Michael Stephen Luper1-297th R&S
 Michelle Deann Brown134th PAD
 Christopher Lewis French1-297th R&S
 Track Palin1-297th R&S
 John Bates1-297th R&S

Staff Sergeant (Air)

Dayton Osborn176th CES

RETIREMENTS

Lt Col Andrew D. Loomis168th OSF
 CMSgt Tran Brunsberg168th ARW
 TSgt Billy G. Brown Jr.213th SWS
 SFC Steven Branham49th MDB
 COL Jerry KidrickJFHQ-AK (Army)
 SFC Michael Albertson297th R&S
 MAJ Wesley Smith297th R&S
 MSgt Jimmy P. King168th CPR FT
 SSgt Trenton L. White168th LRS
 CW2 Jere Just297th BFSB
 SPC Lily Fox297th BFSB
 Lt Col Erik Ohlfs211th RQS
 Lt Col Frank Meeds176th OSS
 Lt Col Reece Baldwin176th ACS

CMSgt David Mertens11th RCC
 CMSgt David Streit176th WG
 SMSgt Roland Lemieux176th MXS
 MSgt Crystal Garris176th WG
 MSgt Jason Doty176th CES
 MSgt Jeffrey Schwengler249th AS
 MSgt Marlene Windel176th AMXS
 MSgt Steven Bills176th ACS
 MSgt Terry Smith176th ACS
 TSgt Sheila Jones176th WG
 TSgt Laveita Portakal176th WG
 SSgt Kevin Guthrie176th MXS
 SrA Lawrence Giron176th MXS

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program

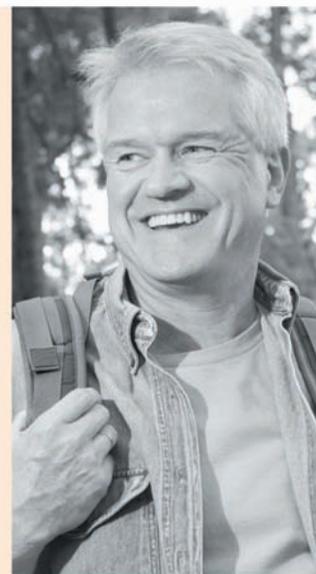
Available for Retired Guard/Reserve members — regardless of age!*

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program offers retired members of the National Guard and Reserve great benefits and features, such as:

- An expansive nationwide network of dentists for maximum cost savings and program value
- Affordable rates, low deductibles and generous maximums
- An opportunity to skip the waiting period by enrolling within four months after transferring to Retired Reserve status!*

Visit us online to learn more about this valuable dental benefits program available to all Uniformed Services retirees — including “gray-area” retired Guard & Reserve members*, too!

*Proof of Retired Reserve status required



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Start of the Trail

Welcome our newest members & employees

176th Wing

Neil Scott Kircher
 Dakota Kyle Olsen
 Galen Kieran Coulter
 Brian Eugene Musselman
 Demetri James Dillon
 Michael Aron Beaver
 Jeremiah Daniel Mengel
 Levi Peter Kowunna
 Daphne Edeline Rippy
 Elijah Jackson Hartley
 Sean Christian Wulf
 Benjamin Bernard Davis
 Benjamin J. Webber
 Christopher Michael McKnight
 Crystal-Lynn Marie Giske
 Siam MNM Onkonburi
 Russell Lewis Marsh
 Sammy Pugay Delacruz
 Jerri Elizabeth Lineberry
 Robin Michael O'Brien
 Dominic Timothy Lee Ivanoff
 Arvin Ted Ting
 Eric M. Olson
 Corey Andrew Herbert
 James Nathan Walker
 Tyler David Larimer
 Ryan Alcides Beatriz
 Eric Thomas McComb
 Theodore Nathan Leonard
 Jay A. Casello
 Justin Alan Cuccarese,
 Ryan Thomas Swiderski
 Paul Daniel Carter
 Raymond Chase Clement

168th Air Refueling Wing

Daniel Martinez
 Shandi Higgins
 Kevon Davis
 Chadwick Atwood
 Micah D. Hanauer
 Marc Smith
 Daniel McCulley
 Sean J. Sheridan
 Brooke Mosdal
 John Hammack
 Kristopher M. Luddington
 Mark Lockwood
 Cody Albert
 Todd Jeffress
 Jason Taylor

207th Brigade Support Company

Danny Ray Canlas Jr.
 John Paul Schauer

Pona Tinora Faaaliga
 Igor Victor Galit
 Eric Andrew Hewitt
 Mindy Kaye Cason
 Brittany Nicole Horner

1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance

Norman Arnold Kashatok
 William Bowdre Copeland
 Michael J. Anthony Rust
 Kyle Edward Scheibe
 Sierra Javier Valdovinos
 Gavin Thomas Strahan
 Cody Wyatt Gilroy
 David Oliveira Luther Jr.
 Timothy James Scott Stevens

297th Signal Company

Keith Eric Chasse
 Jessica Lynn Hake
 Nathaniel Jerome Green

1-207th Aviation

Meagan Rezia Johnson
 Leah Elena Redmon
 Joshua Louis Vanderlooven
 Francis Willard John Bebey

Sergio Devante Green
 Brian Joseph Pederson
 Jerianne Elizabeth Evans
 Damien Anthony Tserlentakis
 Bethany Sunshin Bouthillier
 Zachary Michael Hutchins
 Hunter Davis Zach
 Arthur Jacob Hernandez
 James Thomas Bevan
 Forrest McKinley Morgan
 Trever Lloyd Nickerson
 Daniel Kenneth Pau
 Lori Ray Morgan Dallman
 Beverly Anne Laroz Delacruz
 Wallin Cassandra Gagnon

297th Military Police Company

Grant Conner Endres
 Roman Anatolyevich Morozov
 Brandon D. Elkins
 Sunya Dupree Maxwell
 Trevor Foote Martin
 Rodriguez Jeralmys Santana
 Joseph Jerome Staunches
 Brandon Eric Galvin
 Jordan Patrick Rymer
 Chanel Christina Khoury

1-297th Cavalry

Catalina Louise A. Rivas
 Chase Alan Kaschnigg
 Aurel Veaceslav Sram
 Leo Junior Felix Ortiz
 Harris Doyle Graves II
 Ryan Carlton Burnham
 Joseph Michael E. Comolli
 Kaleb Nathaniel Kimberley

297th Support Battalion

Ryan Adam Hunte
 Joel Andrew Riojas
 Nancy Aldeza Libao
 William Dennis Zagrocki Jr.
 Zachary Thomas Metzger
 Thor Lewis Kahekili Soder
 Alicia Lynn Larsen
 Logan Tanner Dowling
 Jerad Scott Mertens
 Stephen Mathew Butler Jr.
 Christopher Migu Kalilikane
 Michael Seaver Crane

Joint Forces Headquarters

Juan Miguel Medina

Warriors Training Schedule

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

	May	June	July
Alaska National Guard			
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Air)	19-20	9-10	14-15
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Army)	19-20	9-10	No Drill
Alaska Army National Guard			
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	4/28-5/12 AT	8-10	No Drill
38th Troop Command	19-20	8-10	No Drill
Alaska Air National Guard			
168th Air Refueling Wing	19-20	9-10	14-15 (Make Up)
176th Wing	19-20	9-10	14-15 (Make Up)
Alaska State Defense Force			
Headquarters	12-13	23-24	21-22



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