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Commander in Chief



Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
& Commissioner of the DMVA

Ms. Kalei Rupp  
Managing Editor/DMVA Public Affairs

CONTRIBUTORS

Bob Doehl  
Deputy Commissioner, DMVA

Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead  
Staff Sgt. Balinda Dresel  
Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay  
Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

Ron Clarke  
Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

Maj. John Callahan  
Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton  
176th Wing Public Affairs

Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann  
168th Wing Public Affairs

Verdie Bowen Sr.  
Veterans Affairs

Jeremy Zidek  
Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Capt. (Alaska) Melissa HOLL  
2nd Lt. Jack Harrison  
Alaska State Defense Force

Nathanael Nielsen  
Roman Schara  
Alaska Military Youth Academy

Magen James  
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

Chaplain (Col.) Rick Koch  
Alaska Army National Guard

Sgt. Julio Velez  
49th Missile Defense Battalion

Capt. Ronald Bailey  
100th Missile Defense Brigade

Staff Sgt. Christopher Blue  
Senior Airman Allen-Mikel Armstrong  
212th Rescue Squadron

Master Sgt. Jonathan Brizendine  
Air National Guard

Staff Sgt. William Banton  
Senior Airman James Richardson  
Senior Airman Jake Carter  
U.S. Air Force

Linda Adye-Whitish  
City of Cordova

Stephan Hinman  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

Darel Carey  
LiHai Art

# WARRIORS

Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



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**On the Cover.**  
Homer, Alaska, April 27. The scenario involved an injured member of a fishing vessel that required immediate treatment and extraction from the boat. Pararescuemen with the 212th RQS loaded into an HC-130 King aircraft flown by the 211th RQS, and launched out of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to conduct the training. Upon finding the vessel on the waters near Homer, the pararescuemen parachuted into the water, and linked up with the fishing vessel using a small watercraft they also dropped in with a parachute. When they reached the boat, they located the casualty, and then assessed and treated his injuries. Afterwards, an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter flown by the 210th RQS hovered over the boat, hoisted the patient and pararescuemen onboard, and then transported them back to Homer. Photo: Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton, U.S. Air National Guard



**Proficiency Evaluation.** Staff Sgt. Michael Buck and Senior Airman Eric McComb, both with the 103rd Civil Support Team, Alaska National Guard, evaluate a mock hostage during the unit's training proficiency evaluation at Kulis Air Park in February. Civil Support Teams must take part in a training proficiency evaluation every 18 months, testing their ability to react and coordinate efforts in chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives scenarios. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

<http://dmva.alaska.gov>

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INFORMATION AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

This will be our last printed issue of Alaska Warriors magazine. Future press releases can be found on our website at <http://dmva.alaska.gov>. Information and items of interest will be posted to our various media accounts. (See page 33 for details).

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Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs  
Office of Public Affairs  
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Quality Image Publishing, Inc.  
8537 Corbin Dr. • Anchorage, AK 99507  
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Info@AmericasPublisher.com

Robert Ulin, President  
Tim Bradner, Editor  
Gloria Schein, Graphic Designer  
Jeremy Agee, Advertising Sales

[www.AmericasPublisher.com](http://www.AmericasPublisher.com)



# Governor's Message

Gov. Bill Walker  
Commander in Chief

## Pulling Together as a Team

I talk a lot about the Walker/Mallott Administration “pulling together” with all Alaskans to tackle the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities before us. Alaska National Guard Soldiers and Airmen know that concept very well, because they already live it.

The Alaska National Guard pulls together every day to prepare for an astounding variety of tasks that most Alaskans never need to consider. Well-trained teams of National Guard service members anticipate possibilities many cannot imagine, as they deal effectively with every eventuality. National Guardsmen and women execute the actions for which they have trained and prepared, always remaining flexible enough to adjust, staying alert to changing conditions, and anticipating new circumstances. Time and time again, the Guard saves lives, minimizes property damage in the face of emergencies and natural disasters, and protects Alaskans – all by pulling together as a team.

I am proud to see Guard leadership pushing the organization to new levels of responsiveness in a pursuit of excellence. Our National Guard continually challenges

the status quo and encourages service members to new heights of preparedness and professional development.

With increasing global attention to the Arctic, our leadership’s vision for the future and working together will be vital to Alaska. Proper preparation of effective teams will keep the Guard right in the middle of critical situations – exactly where we should be. After all, who knows better how to thrive in the North than people whose ancestors have lived here for generations? We may not always know exactly how future stories will unfold, but I am supremely confident that whatever situations arise, our Guard will be ready and eager to address them.

The Alaska National Guard is working hard with rural Alaskans to revitalize partnerships that have benefited us all in the past. Diversifying Alaska’s military will not only help us address military, commercial and environmental challenges of increasing human use of Arctic regions, but will enable broad-based response to a variety of natural disasters and emergencies. National Guard Soldiers are on scene, hard at work, stabilizing the situation, assessing immediate needs and providing relief.

I want to rebuild our capacity for the service of rural Guardsmen, so that we are simultaneously pursuing national-level changes to help increase Guard presence in rural Alaska, and building state-level initiatives to bolster the Alaska State Defense Force, its ability to respond in times of need, and its ability to prepare interested citizens for a career in the National Guard. It is a complex effort, but by pulling together, we will energize our rural military to the benefit of all Alaskans.

I am extremely proud of the men and women who serve all of us as members of the Alaska National Guard. It was my honor once again this year to officially declare July 30 as “National Guard Day” in Alaska. I am enormously grateful for the Guard every day of the year. I hope all Alaskans take the time to recognize and express gratitude for the service of our National Guard.

Sincerely,



**Arctic Airlift.** (Above) A C-17 Globemaster III aircraft flown by the 249th Airlift Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, flies over Ice Camp Sargo on the Arctic Circle, March 15, during Ice Exercise 2016. ICEX 2016 is a five-week exercise designed to research, test, and evaluate operational capabilities in the region. ICEX 2016 allows the U.S. Navy to assess operational readiness in the Arctic, increase experience in the region, advance understanding of the Arctic Environment, and develop partnerships and collaborative efforts. Photo: Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton, U.S. Air National Guard

**Sling Load.** (Below) A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from 1-297th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, sling loads equipment from Ice Camp Sargo on the Arctic Circle, March 17, during Ice Exercise 2016. ICEX 2016 is a five-week exercise designed to research, test, and evaluate operational capabilities in the region. ICEX 2016 allows the U.S. Navy to assess operational readiness in the Arctic, increase experience in the region, advance understanding of the Arctic Environment, and develop partnerships and collaborative efforts. Photo: Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton, U.S. Air National Guard





# The Adjutant General

**Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel**  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
Commissioner, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

## Alaska National Guard's Joint Staff Concept

Our Alaska Army and Air National Guard units train every day for their war-time missions as part of the U.S. military's operational ready reserve. Any part or all of the Alaska Guard could be called to federal status, yet we know we would not deploy in a single combat formation. In reality, our units would come under control of disparate higher headquarters. There is zero possibility that our Army and Air Guard forces would be task organized together for combat. Why then do we need a joint staff?

Joint staff capability is critical to our success for a variety of reasons. A well-trained and effective joint staff is necessary for achieving our vision of implementing an integrated Arctic strategy, increasing emergency management capacity and engaging our Alaska communities, all while maintaining federal mission assurance.

Seeing the need for integrated planning and cross-organizational communication, I ordered the AKNG to stand up a joint staff. AKARNG and AKANG leaders selected the initial set of officers and noncommissioned officers; most have reported to their new positions and have completed several drill periods together.

Joint staff key leaders are: Director, Brig. Gen. Brent Feick; Chief, Col. Kimberly DeRouen-Slaven; and Operations Director, Lt. Col. Tony Stratton. We have 21 full-time members (including temporary details) and 24 drilling members. I fully understand we receive no additional personnel authorities and that joint staff members come from our units. My vision includes a reduction from this initial robust number when we have accomplished the basics: create processes, procedures, and plans for the most dangerous and/or most likely situations with potential effect to the entire Alaska National Guard; establish key collaborative external partnerships; and set up an enduring program to train and exercise for success.

Our joint staff has many key roles, to include advising on Defense Support to

Civil Authorities, security cooperation, as well as emergency/disaster preparation and response. Our joint staff develops, maintains, and executes plans such as our All-Hazards plan (known as CONPLAN 3500) and associated threat hazard annexes; DSCA exercises in support of the state; Innovative Readiness Training; all activities and events common to the Alaska National Guard, the State Partnership and Security Cooperation programs; the Civil Support Team; common elements of the Rural Engagement Initiative and the Counterdrug Program.

Additionally, our joint staff serves as the AKNG primary liaison to all outside divisions and agencies and engages externally in support of our mission set and vision. Supporting all these activities, our joint staff will set conditions for success in the Joint Operations Center during exercises and real world operations.

As we enhance the AKNG's ability to support civil authorities through JOC and State Emergency Operations Center fusion, our organizational value to Alaska will continue to increase. Maturing the joint staff is a top priority for the Alaska National Guard and a vital part of my strategy to build capacity.

My intent is and will always be to select the most qualified individuals to fill these positions. I am confident the Soldiers, Airmen, State Defense Force personnel, and Naval Militia personnel selected for joint staff positions will find these assignments both challenging and rewarding. Every joint staff officer and NCO will return to their unit with enhanced skills and broader experience. Assignments to joint staff are an important part of career development and provide service members a valuable broadening experience that will serve them well as they advance their careers. Specifically, joint experience is widely seen as necessary for today's senior military leaders.

If you are a collaborator and critical thinker interested in a unique challenging and broadening assignment, please talk with your chain of command about opportunities. The joint staff will set the course for the Alaska National Guard for the coming years and needs our best and brightest.

Your teammate,



**Constant Collaboration.** Col. John James, commander of the Alaska State Defense Force, briefs members of the Alaska National Guard Joint Staff and personnel from the State Emergency Operations Center in the AKNG Joint Operations Center. Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, ordered the formation of a joint staff to integrate planning efforts and cross-organizational communication. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs



# Deputy Commissioner

**Bob Doehl**

Deputy Commissioner, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

## Pulling Together with Shared Goals

The Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shares Gov. Bill Walker’s commitment to “pulling together.” This becomes evident when looking at how we are implementing DMVA’s goals:

- 1) Implementing an Arctic strategy supporting the state’s policy
- 2) Expanding emergency management capacity
- 3) Engaging Alaska communities
- 4) Assuring completion of our federal mission assurance

Each division could develop plans on how each would separately address the components of DMVA’s strategy, but the result would be silos of effort performed by the Alaska Air National Guard, Alaska Army National Guard, Alaska State Defense Force, Alaska Naval Militia, Alaska Military Youth Academy, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Division of Administrative Services and Office of Veterans Affairs. We would surely

see redundancies, gaps in delivery of services and inefficiencies.

“Synergy” is working together so the total power achieved is greater than the sum of each element working separately. DMVA pulls together as a team across the department’s various units on common “lines of effort” to implement department-wide strategy, resulting in a blended approach to DMVA activities. Frequently, teams drawn from across DMVA pull together on wide-scale initiatives.

One example is when DHS&EM staff recently used space on an AKANG training flight to take a team to Shishmaref to assist local officials with disaster planning. Because a disaster response would be logistically challenging and likely require aviation assistance, AKARNG and AKANG planners were part of the team that spent a day meeting with village leaders. By gaining a boots-on-the-ground perspective, these staff, who would be crucial to providing military assistance, better understand

environmental challenges, community strengths and local priorities.

In April, the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade wrapped up its annual training in Barrow with a cultural day and invitation to the local community. The Office of Veterans Affairs provided a luncheon and had veterans service officers on hand to assist community members with benefits. They pulled together and drew increased participation from the community, including veterans who had been missing out on medical care and other assistance – benefits they earned but were not collecting.

AMYA cadets hail from across this great state, providing unique opportunities to all of DMVA. This year, for the first time, the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Teen Citizen Emergency Response Team is available to cadets. DHS&EM is leveraging access to a statewide pool of Alaskans to increase front-line emergency preparedness statewide.

*“We will not be able to accomplish what we need to do without working together. Several months ago, the lieutenant governor brought me a gift. It was a picture taken in the village of Metlakatla in the early 1900s. In the picture, there are folks in rain gear standing in a streambed with a rope. Back then, when Metlakatla residents needed to remove tree stumps, the entire community gathered with a single rope and pulled. The picture is titled ‘Pulling Together.’ Lt. Gov. Mallott wrote at the bottom of the picture, ‘Governor, pulling together – it is what we do.’”*

– Gov. Bill Walker, State of the State Address, Jan. 21, 2016



**“Pulling Together.”** Artwork depicting the effort of Metlakatla village residents banding together to remove a tree stump in the early 1900s. This piece, entitled “Pulling Together,” was given to Gov. Bill Walker from Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott to symbolize the efforts to work together. Photo: Courtesy of Office of Gov. Bill Walker

Similarly, the AKANG recognized that access to this statewide pool provides unparalleled opportunity to engage Alaska communities. When a request went out for mentors for the current AMYA class, the AKANG, at the urging of Chief Master Sgt. Steven Calvin (a cadet mentor), signed up six volunteers almost instantly.

The Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training program allows service members to conduct real-world training on activities and projects that benefit local communities. IRT is invaluable to the Alaska National Guard for federal mission assurance to organize, train and equip service members to perform their missions. Working closely with DHS&EM staff, the Alaska National Guard and federal military reserve units have carried out Operation Arctic Care for 20 years, using the IRT program to provide medical and dental care to some of Alaska's most under-served communities.

The AKANG and DHS&EM pulled together to support IRT efforts in building Mertarvik, the new location for the residents of Newtok, a village threatened by flooding and erosion. As efforts to relocate several at-risk communities go forward, and new risks arise from accelerating climate change, AKANG and DHS&EM efforts will surely identify more opportunities to pull together.

The DMVA will never hesitate to enlist another mission partner to pull together to serve Alaska. Because of limited resources, the AKARNG has been unable to station helicopters in its hangar in Kotzebue. Besides providing an outstanding training environment for air crews, stationing aircraft there provides a significant asset for medical evacuation and dealing with other emergencies. For instance, a helicopter in Kotzebue can reach coastal communities such as Shishmaref or Kivalina in under an hour – rather than seven hours from Anchorage.

Although the AKARNG still lacks the resources to establish an aviation detachment in Kotzebue, it is partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard to provide needed emergency aviation services to this region. The AKARNG has agreed to upgrade and lend its hangar to the Coast Guard for five years. In exchange, residents of Northwest Alaska will see a considerable expansion of emergency management capacity.

The Great Land of Alaska is a place of unparalleled potential for the United States. It is also a place of daunting challenges: weather, terrain, distance and limited infrastructure. To do right by Alaskans, DMVA can and will continue to pull together. ■



**Situation in Shishmaref.** A Shishmaref resident explains the condition of the deteriorating sea wall that protects the community to Mike O'Hare, director of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, and an Alaska Army National Guard Soldier during their visit in May. Decreasing sea ice, rising water levels and intense sea storms pose significant threats to the coastal community. Photo: Ron Clarke, Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

JASON EHRHART,  
WOUNDED VETERAN

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## “MY INJURY HAS TAUGHT ME WHAT’S IMPORTANT ABOUT LIFE.”

Master Sergeant John Hayes arrived at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in January 2011. He’d lost both legs to an improvised explosive device blast in Afghanistan on his fourth deployment. An explosive ordnance disposal expert, he was in his 11th year as a Marine.

“This whole experience...it’s taught me what’s important about life,” says John. “I want to spend time and have fun with my family. You talk about support networks – Semper Fi Fund is a huge part of that.”

The Semper Fi Fund’s support to John and his family included an Action Trackchair™ that provides him with freedom and mobility he wouldn’t otherwise have and help with the purchase of an adaptive minivan. “I was up and driving before I was even a year out. That was huge for my independence!”

With assistance from The Home Depot Foundation, John also received a special attic lift in his home. John can now easily organize his house and garage on his own.

“Marines by nature are a very strong-willed, proud and confident bunch,” he says. “Before the injury, I could do anything easily. After the blast, though, I have to ask for help daily, and that’s tough for me to do. Semper Fi Fund doesn’t make me ask.”

“I know of no other organization that does what the Semper Fi Fund does. I feel like they’re my own family.”

**Read more of John’s and other hero stories at [www.SemperFiFund.org](http://www.SemperFiFund.org).**



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# NATIVE CULTURAL DAY

## DMVA Highlights Alaska Native Culture

Photos by Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay,  
Alaska National Guard Public Affairs



**Cultural Event Kick Off.** Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott gives opening remarks for an Alaska Native cultural event, hosted by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, held at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. The occasion included Alaska Native food samplings and dance performances, Alaska Native artists, cultural exhibits and craft activities.



**Village Life.** Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead, public affairs officer for the Alaska National Guard, visits with Dustin Newman, a culture host at the village sites of the Alaska Native Heritage Center, during an Alaska Native cultural event in May. The event was planned under the Equal Employment Opportunity Special Emphasis Program and the Department of Defense Special Observance Program.



**Scenic Site.** Alaska National Guard members walk the campus of the Alaska Native Heritage Center during a Department of Military and Veterans Affairs special emphasis program event on Alaska Native culture in May. The Alaska Native Cultural event ties in with one of the department priorities of Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, that is to increase engagement with Alaska communities.



**Tasty Treats.** Lt. Col. Christopher Borger, human resources supervisor for Joint Forces Headquarters, Alaska National Guard, samples the salmon mouse and puff pastry during the Alaska Native cultural event at the Alaska Heritage Center in May.

## Soldiers Deploy Alongside Mongolians

By Staff Sgt. Balinda Dresel,  
Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Two Alaska Army National Guardsmen deployed to Afghanistan in March as U.S. liaisons in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces there.

Capt. Collin Welch, 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron, and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Ring, 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), are the twelfth team from the AKARNG to pair with the METF since the arrangement began in 2009. They serve as tactical advisors and liaisons in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

"We will be the direct link between U.S. Central Command and the Mongolian Armed Forces," said Welch, who deployed for a similar mission in Africa as a member of the Kansas Army National Guard in 2010. "I've never been to Mongolia, but I love learning about new cultures."

Since 2003, the Alaska State Partnership Program has continuously developed and maintained a relationship with the MAF. From deployments to Iraq, where the AKARNG provided liaison officers to partner with METF there, to many joint military exercises and personnel exchanges, Alaska Guardsmen have provided helpful and relevant insight and training to the METF.

"I am very excited about this opportunity," said Ring, who worked with the MAF in 2013 and 2014 during the multinational peacekeeping exercise, Khaan Quest, held annually near Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

"I have worked alongside the Mongolians in both command post and field training exercises," Ring said. "It's great that I can take what I've learned training there and apply it to a real world mission in Afghanistan."

The strong relationship between Mongolia and the AKARNG prompted the MAF, when they volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan, to request liaison officers from the AKARNG to facilitate their communication and cooperation between the United States and NATO elements there. ■



**Afghanistan Deployment.** Capt. Collin Welch, left, 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron, and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Ring, 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), stand in front of the National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in March before deploying to Afghanistan. The two Soldiers are deployed as U.S. liaisons in support of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Forces in Afghanistan. Photo: Staff Sgt. Balinda Dresel, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**Great Day for a Jump.** Senior Airman Jason Hughes, a pararescuer with the 212th Rescue Squadron, jumps from a C-17 Globemaster III over the Pacific's warm waters near Honolulu, Hawaii, in February. Nearly 50 Alaska Air Guardsman from the 249th Airlift Squadron, 212th Rescue Squadron and 176th Wing support units participated in a search-and-rescue exercise during their two weeks of training in Hawaii. Photo: Staff Sgt. Christopher Blue, 212th Rescue Squadron



**Red Flag.** Master Sgt. Bishop Bailey, a weapons section chief with the 176th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, tightens a cargo strap during Red Flag 16-1 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, in February. Bailey was part of approximately 50 Air Guardsmen from the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Operations Group and 176th Maintenance Group who participated in the combat training exercise. Photo: Senior Airman Jake Carter, U.S. Air Force

## Airmen Return from Middle East

By Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton, 176th Wing Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Seventeen Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 176th Wing returned home to Alaska in May after a two-month deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Most of the returning Guardsmen were members of the Wing's 144th Airlift

Squadron, which operates the C-130H Hercules tactical-airlift aircraft. Additional returning Guardsmen were from the 176th Operations Support Squadron and the 176th Medical Group.

Tactical airlift has been one of the 176th Wing's core missions since 1957, when the Air Guard's emphasis shifted from air combat to airlift. However, a current proposal at

**Alaska Territorial Guard Veteran.** Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, speaks with Wesley Atkin, an Alaska Territorial Guard veteran, retired Alaska Army National Guardsman and World War II veteran, during a cultural exchange in Barrow in April. Hummel and Col. Charles "Lee" Knowles, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade commander, Alaska Army National Guard, led a recognition ceremony for Atkin and David Leavitt, the two remaining Alaska Territorial Guard Soldiers of Barrow. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs



## Cultural Exchange at Top of the World

By Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – More than 40 Alaska Army National Guard members assigned to the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade participated in an April cultural exchange at the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow.

The cultural exchange included an interactive traditional dance demonstration by the Ovluaq Dance Group; educational presentations on subsistence living and hunting; traditional Inupiat food samplings including muk tuk, Eskimo donuts, and caribou soup; and a crafts exhibit held by local artisans.

Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, and Col. Charles "Lee" Knowles, 297th BfSB commander, also attended the festivities, and together they performed a recognition ceremony for the two remaining Alaska Territorial Guard Soldiers of Barrow.

"We were able to honor living members of the Alaska Territorial Guard during the community gathering after displaying the relevance of our current force through our annual training," stated Capt. Ronald Desjardins, commander of the 297th BfSB Headquarters, Headquarters Company. "In addition, this cultural day has allowed us the opportunity to hear from elders and local leaders and learn more about the community's rich culture and history."

The cultural day event followed a week of vigorous cold-weather training and Defense Support to Civil Authorities preparedness, as the Army Guardsmen partnered with the North Slope Borough risk management team in support of the statewide exercise Alaska Shield. ■



**Dance Demonstration.** Soldiers from the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, participate in a traditional dance demonstration with members of the Ovluaq Dance Group during a cultural exchange at the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow at the completion of their annual training in April. The cultural day event followed a week of vigorous cold-weather training and Defense Support to Civil Authorities preparedness.

Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**Rescue Efforts.** Four pararescuemen assigned to the 212th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, ski across Harding Icefield in search of two skiers who needed rescue after adverse weather conditions left them stranded for four days in April. For more than 13 miles, the rescue team hiked and skied up a glacier and over the icefield to within less than two miles of the survivors before weather cleared, making a helicopter retrieval possible.

Photo: Senior Airman Allen-Mikel Armstrong, 212th Rescue Squadron



the national level has been put forth to divest the 176th Wing of its C-130H tactical-airlift aircraft.

The current proposal was put forward and recommended by retired Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke III, director of the Air National Guard, to the Total Force Continuum (a board of Active, Reserve, and Guard members tasked to try to balance requirements, capabilities, risk, and cost regarding strategic plans and programs). The Total Force Continuum is taking action to push forward Clarke's proposal. As such, this deployment could conceivably be the last for the 144th Airlift Squadron, at least in its current form.

This group of returning Guardsmen was part of a larger group that deployed in February; they are scheduled to return to Alaska in late summer. ■

# Operation Ghost Tests Leadership Skills

By Capt. Ronald Bailey, 100th Missile Defense Brigade

**FORT GREELY, Alaska** – Alaska Army National Guard military police validated their Soldier leadership skills here during Operation Ghost in March.

Normally charged with the mission of protecting the ground-based midcourse defense system at Fort Greely's Missile Defense Complex, Soldiers of A Company, Military Police, 49th Missile Defense Battalion assessed their capabilities to respond to realistic scenarios that all military police officers face.

Soldiers from the company's 1st and 2nd Platoons stepped away from their normal duties for "Operation Ghost 2016," a four-day exercise designed to test small-unit leadership skills and assess their Army Warrior Task annual training requirements. The exercise also helps prepare A Company for participation in other exercises that are also used to evaluate the 49th Missile Defense Battalion's ability to execute its mission essential tasks in support of U.S. Northern Command's ballistic missile defense mission.

"This exercise was designed to develop squad leaders with respect to their troop leading procedures," said Capt. Kendall Greenleaf, commander of A Company. "The MP mission is a squad leader fight each and every day. As such, we must empower our squad leaders to lead while

building a platform of trust that their Soldiers are willing to stand on."

The 24/7/365 operations on the Missile Defense Complex do not always allow A Company to train and assess some of the more typical MP and Army warrior tasks. Operation Ghost allowed the MPs the freedom to train in an environment with less operational restrictions, therefore giving greater freedom and flexibility to train on the desired tasks.

For two days, 1st and 2nd Platoons were evaluated by observer controller trainers using a master scenario events list, which contained both expected and variable injects including tasks at the individual, team and squad level at Fort Greely's Combined Arms Collective Training Facility. The expected and variable injects from the list allowed the team and squad leadership to execute

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*"The exercise raised our awareness and level of tactical skills. It built team cohesion and team awareness. It provided a morale boost for the entire platoon and provided different scenarios to provide mental agility and sound judgement."*

– Staff Sgt. Robert Monteith

company-level operation orders, perform troop-leading procedures, as well as pre-combat checks and inspections.

"As a platoon leader, this exercise really provided me the opportunity to understand the planning and execution aspect of the MP training," said 1st Lt. Sharmila Lever of 1st Platoon. "It allowed me to demonstrate my sound judgement and mental agility in different types of scenarios and



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**Warrior Tasks.** Members of A Company, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, Alaska Army National Guard participate in exercise Operation Ghost at Fort Greely, Alaska, in March. The Alaska National Guard members were put to the test and simultaneously able to meet their army warrior task annual training requirements. Photo: Sgt. Julio Vélez, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

allowed my squad leaders to provide input and gave them the ability to see that I trust in their domain knowledge and tactical skills.”

Several of the more experienced noncommissioned officers supported the exercise by serving in the role of neutral civilians or opposing forces. These experienced Soldiers were able to provide their assessment to company leadership during after-action reviews, highlighting areas for sustainment or improvement.

Although some of the situations Soldiers encountered during Operation Ghost are not necessarily the same as those they would face performing their real-world missile defense security mission at Fort Greely, the vast majority of individual and collective tasks do have a direct correlation to that mission. As to those that don't directly support the 49th's security mission, they were all specifically designed to support the Army Warrior Tasks that all MPs perform, enabling them to maintain proficiency.

“The exercise raised our awareness and level of tactical skills,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Monteith of 1st Platoon. “It built team cohesion and team awareness. It provided a morale boost for the entire platoon and provided different scenarios to provoke mental agility and sound judgement.”



**Road Warriors.** Alaska Army National Guard military police assigned to A Company, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, participate in Exercise Operation Ghost, March 2016. The exercise measures leadership skills and capability to respond to realistic scenarios. Photo: Sgt. Julio Vélez, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

Other members of the company agreed that the exercise provided a unique opportunity to work together and assess small-unit military police leadership.

“It provided a realistic approach to operations, the first time for the platoon to work together on a military police skill set,” said Spc. Travis Hall, also of 1st Platoon. “It identified the strengths and weaknesses of the platoon so we can continue to improve where needed.”

A Company's Soldiers at the geographically remote Fort Greely perform their presidentially-directed national security mission 24/7/365 under some of the harshest environmental conditions in North America. With daylight ranging from a scant three hours per day and -60 degrees Fahrenheit to +80 degrees Fahrenheit and 24 hours of sunlight, these Soldiers guard some of the most critical defense infrastructure in the Department of Defense. ■

## Alaska Missile Defender of the Year Awards



**Award Winners.** Alaska Air and Army National Guard members assigned to 49th Missile Defense Battalion, Fort Greely, and 213th Space Warning Squadron, Clear Air Force Station, are recognized during the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance's Alaska Missile Defender of the Year awards ceremony in May. The “Best Air National Guard Crew” award was presented to Alpha Crew assigned to the 213th Space Warning Squadron. The “Best Army National Guard Crew” award was presented to Charlie Crew, assigned to the 49th Missile Defense Battalion. Also recognized were Sgt. Robert Stamper and Sgt. Derick Butler, with 49th Missile Defense Battalion, as Military Police of the Year. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

# Alaska National Guard's Senior Enlisted Leader Takes the Road Less Traveled and Goes the Distance

By Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Command Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson recently became the command senior enlisted leader of the Alaska National Guard, replacing Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hildreth in February.

Prior to being selected by Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, commander of the Alaska National Guard, Nelson served as command chief for the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard.

As the command senior enlisted leader, it is Nelson's responsibility to oversee the health, welfare, development and quality of life for more than 4,100 Guard members who make up the Alaska National Guard.

"I'm really happy that General Hummel has executed this position, because not all adjutants general have done so," explained Nelson. "There are approximately 38 senior enlisted leaders within the 54 states and territories."

As Nelson settles into the job, recently passing the 100-day mark, he has also been writing his own job description to ensure his efforts support the adjutant general's vision, while being a voice for the enlisted force.

"I am essentially writing the job into the future," chuckled Nelson, who, as a career pararescueman, has had a job history of making long-lasting and life-altering impacts on his organization and community. "I'm

creating the structure for this position and for what this position will do for our organization, not only now, but 10, 20 and 50 years down the line."

Throughout his influential career, Nelson's wife, Amanda, of 27 years, has been right at his side, along with his children, Tech. Sgt. Colton Nelson with the 176th Operations Group, and Carson, a student at University of Alaska Anchorage, whose goal is to become a nurse.

Nelson also has four other extended family members who are enlisted Airmen in the 176th Wing.

"We are definitely a military family, there is no doubt about it," said Nelson. ■



**Senior Enlisted Leader.** Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson takes responsibility for the NCO core of the Alaska National Guard here March 6, 2016, during a joint forces ceremony. Nelson is the first Airmen in this Senior Enlisted Leader position, assuming the role from Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hildreth. Photo: Tech. Sgt. N. Alicia Halla, 176th Wing Public Affairs



**Cultural Day.** Command Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson, the senior enlisted leader for the Alaska National Guard, alongside Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, commander of the Alaska National Guard, and other AKNG leadership, listen as Alaska Territorial Guardsman and community elder, Wesley Atkin, leads Soldiers and locals in the singing of 'My Country 'Tis of Thee,' during the cultural day event held at the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, April 6, 2016. The cultural exchange marked the conclusion of a vigorous week of annual training by Guard members assigned to the Anchorage-based 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Army National Guard



**Let's Talk.** Command Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson, the senior enlisted leader for the Alaska National Guard, speaks with Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, commander of the Alaska National Guard Soldiers, as they travel to Barrow for the cultural exchange at the Inupiat Heritage Center, an event marking the completion of the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade's annual training, April 6, 2016. The cultural day event followed a week of vigorous cold-weather training and Defense Support to Civil Authorities preparedness, by partnering with the North Slope Borough risk management team in support of the statewide Exercise Alaska Shield. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Army National Guard



**Changing Hands.** Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hildreth relinquished responsibility as the senior enlisted leader to the adjutant general of Alaska to Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson during a March 6, 2016, change-of-responsibility ceremony at the Talkeetna Theater. Photo: Sgt. David Bedard, Army National Guard

# Alaska Airmen Trigger Honors at National Competition

By Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann,  
168th Wing Public Affairs

**EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska** – More than 40 Soldiers and Airmen from across the country competed as machine gunners and assistant gunners at the Winston P. Wilson Machine Gun Championship at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas, in May.

Staff Sgt. Anthony Deppe and Staff Sgt. Justin Smythson represented the Air National Guard overall during the competition. Deppe and Smythson are security forces personnel assigned to the 168th Wing, 213th Space Warning Squadron, at Clear Air Force Station, which is 78 miles southwest of Fairbanks.

“I’ve developed my skills more in this week than my entire career of shooting a machine gun,” said Deppe of the time he spent in Arkansas. “We left Arkansas with confidence in ourselves and each other.”

Using the M240-B machine gun, contestants were pitted against each other in a series of tests. Graded elements of the competition included a 500-meter sprint, running one-half of a mile with weapons and gear, followed by a firing test where shooters had to hit moving targets, and a “blind” shooting stage where no competitor was told the location of the target.

For “Team Alaska” Deppe was team captain with Smythson the assistant gunner.



**Team Alaska.** From left: Staff Sgt. Justin Smythson, Alaska’s 213th Space Warning Squadron; Maj. Gen. James K. Brown Jr., commander of 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard; and Staff Sgt. Anthony Deppe, 213th Space Warning Squadron, pose with the Alaska state flag on the last day of competition after the Run Down match at the 2016 Machine Gun Championship at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas, in May. Photo: Master Sgt. Jonathan Brizendine, Air National Guard

They walked away from the competition with several accolades.

They placed first in Field Fire and Range Estimation and fifth in the Rifle and Pistol competitions. In addition to the team

awards, Deppe placed second in the Basic Machine Gun Target match – a 10-meter firing exercise that tests the shooter’s ability to hit a series of targets using controlled-burst fire techniques, where the targets surrounded a prisoner of war, with points taken away if the POW is hit.

The first Winston P. Wilson Rifle and Pistol matches were conducted in 1971 at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock, Arkansas, with 32 states and Puerto Rico competing. This year was the first time since 2004 that the machine gun competition was held. Event planners are confident they’ll be able to expand next year’s contest to include teams from all 54 states and territories, hoping to field two to three teams per state.

The Winston P. Wilson Machine Gun Championship is for National Guard units only. Deppe said that it served as an excellent training opportunity because they learned to master existing skills.

“We hope to carry this knowledge on to our units and train those who follow and hope to have an even better prepared team to represent Alaska at the 2017 competition,” Deppe said. ■



**Teamwork.** Staff Sgt. Anthony Deppe and Staff Sgt. Justin Smythson, both of the 213th Space Warning Squadron, representing Team Alaska, use their optics and math to determine the range of 10 targets spread out from 100 meters to 1,000 meters. For this part of the competition, participants had to run up a hill, get into position, then adjust their sites and fire/hit each target as fast as they could within a 10-minute window, using 200 rounds or less. The winning team was selected based on correct ranges, speed in engaging all targets and using the least amount of rounds. Team Alaska won.

Photo: Master Sgt. Jonathan Brizendine, Air National Guard



# Chaplain's Corner

**Chaplain (Col.) Rick Koch**  
State Command Chaplain

## Empowered and Encouraged

Senator John McCain, a former Navy pilot, was captured and held prisoner of war for several years by the North Vietnamese. In 1971, the North Vietnamese, under political pressure from around the world, changed their policy of holding American POWs in solitary confinement. McCain and other captives were moved to large quarters, which housed 30 to 40 prisoners. This transition boosted prisoner morale, as they were able to form community and find strength in fellowship with each other.

McCain told the story of fellow POW Mike Christian, who found some white cloth and red cloth. With a homemade bamboo needle, Christian began to fashion an American flag, which, when finished, he attached to the inside of his shirt. Every afternoon before the prisoners ate, they would hang Christian's shirt on a wall and together recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This simple act represented a moment of empowerment and encouragement for the POWs. This unified act of devotion enhanced community and reminded each man present of the values of liberty and spirit of perseverance embodied in being an American.

The North Vietnamese discovered Mike's shirt one day when doing a routine

*Choosing God draws us together to work toward the common good of better character, higher values, and a giving to one another that mimics Divine love, a sense of meaning and a place of purpose.*

search. They took him outside and beat him for hours, purposefully well within hearing range of the other prisoners. Christian was badly hurt when he was thrown back in the cell and his comrades tried to help him the best they could. McCain remembered as he lay down to go to sleep that night, he looked to the corner of the room and saw Christian bravely and defiantly making a new flag, sewing new pieces of red and white cloth to the inside of his shirt.

Christian's courageous action helped all the POWs with him to be reminded of who they were and where they were from. The simple act of gathering around a homemade flag and reciting the pledge helped complete them as Americans, as a fraternity of military and as a community.

My three previous contributions to Warriors magazine encompassed,

respectively, the themes God loves us, God calls us and God rescues us. This fourth offering represents our turn, our response to everything God is doing for us. Our answer, if we're willing, is to choose God. We have the perfect freedom to do so. When we do, we find ourselves completed in the love, community and fellowship God offers.

The bible tells a story of the once great leader of Israel, Joshua, who gathered the tribes together and reminded them all of the magnificent things the Lord had done to lead them to the Promised Land. Each tribe prepared to settle their allotted portion and Joshua encouraged them to not take for granted the powerful relationship they had with God.

He recognized the people had many choices to make as they moved forth into the land. Chief among those choices, according to Joshua, was to choose God above all the other idols, distractions and temptations of life. He closed with these powerful words: "Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:14-15).

Our society today sometimes seems adrift, often battling ideas competing for our attention. The process of life in such environs may leave us feeling fragmented and broken. The pathway God offers leads us to being complete. Whether individually or corporately, our choosing the Lord makes us whole again.

It's not a matter of us all agreeing on everything and being the same. That is not expected, nor desired. Choosing God draws us together to work toward the common good of better character, higher values, and a giving to one another that mimics Divine love, a sense of meaning and a place of purpose. To me, that seems a pretty good choice. ■

**SOMETIMES THE HARDEST FIGHT COMES AFTER THE BATTLE.**

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SHANE PARSONS, WOUNDED VETERAN

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# Alaska State Defense Force

## Supporting Alaska Shield 2016

By Capt. (Alaska) Melissa Holl, Alaska State Defense Force

**WASILLA, Alaska** – The Alaska State Defense Force participated in the Alaska Shield 2016 exercise, held in early April, in a variety of roles, testing its support capabilities in the face of a homeland security incident.

Fifteen communities and more than nine state agencies, 12 federal agencies, and 27 non-governmental organizations took part in the exercise, which assessed Alaska's homeland security response mechanisms.

The Alaska State Defense Force, headquartered in Wasilla, was activated in response to the exercise scenarios. At the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer, the Alaska State Defense Force supported communications. Other ASDF personnel participated as mock, moulaged casualty victims and were transported from the fairgrounds to the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center for simulated treatment and recovery. As mock casualties were coming in by ambulance and helicopter, the ASDF military police detachment was on hand to assist with security at the hospital and to support

the Alaska Army National Guard's 297th Military Police Battalion, which was set up at a simulated temporary morgue.

An alternate care site was set up at Colony High School after the exercise scenario dictated that the hospital was unable to handle the flow of casualties from the fairgrounds. The Alaska State Defense Force provided a surgeon and a registered nurse at the site to care for incoming patients.

In addition, an ASDF liaison officer was stationed at the Alaska National Guard Joint Operations Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Two ASDF members supported functions in the State Emergency Operations Center, and two more ASDF members supported the Mat-Su Borough Emergency Operations Center at the Wasilla Fire Station.

The ability of the Alaska State Defense Force to support agencies and military forces involved in this exercise led to a greater cooperation, planning and effectiveness to protect the people of our state. ■



**Field Communications.** The Alaska State Defense Force operates its portable Emergency Operations Center, set up at the Alaska State Fairgrounds during Alaska Shield 2016. Among its capabilities, the system has satellite internet, HF/VHF/UHF radio, Alaska Land Mobile Radio base station, and direct communication to the Alaska National Guard Joint Operations Center and State Emergency Operations Center. From left: Chief Master Sgt. Paul Nelson, Alaska National Guard senior enlisted leader; Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard; Col. (Alaska) Doyle Holmes, Alaska State Defense Force; Lt. Col. (Alaska) David Stevens, ASDF; and Lt. Col. (Alaska) Morgan Benson, ASDF.

Photo: 2nd Lt. Jack Harrison, Alaska State Defense Force

## Honor and Thank Veterans

By Verdie Bowen Sr., Veterans Affairs

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** – Since the first Memorial Day on May 30, 1868, we as a nation have expressed our commitment that we will never forget those who serve our country.

I believe we take to heart one of the great quotes from President Calvin Coolidge: “The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten.”

When I walk through the war memorials in Washington, D.C., I can hear this quote ring true. Just one stop at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is proof enough that our nation has not forgotten our fallen.

We, in Alaska, are blessed with the highest per capita veteran population in the nation.

Throughout Alaska’s history, men and women from every corner of the state have courageously given their youth and sometimes their lives defending our country. Today, living in our great state, we have a total of 58,023 war-time and 15,374 peace-time veterans. We have living in Alaska thousands of veterans who have served in various conflicts: 36,254 in the Gulf War and Afghanistan; 20,538 Vietnam War era; 2,388 in the Korean War; and 1,078 World



**Memorial Day.** Brig. Gen. Karen Mansfield, Alaska Air National Guard assistant adjutant general, speaks at the Memorial Day ceremony in Anchorage. Photo: Staff Sgt. William Banton, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Public Affairs

War II veterans. Those who answered our nation’s call, whether by choice or draft, dutifully served in the place of others so all can enjoy the freedoms we have today.

I am concerned that too many Alaskans believe Memorial Day is just another three-day weekend, the beginning of the Alaska fishing and summer activity season. We, as veterans, can do something about that by keeping our promise to those who have given their all. Take the time to let

everyone know what Memorial Day is all about. Don’t just start on Memorial Day, share your stories throughout the year with your family and friends about your battle buddies or family members you lost while serving in uniform. The stories of their courage will never grow old and bears repeating so that the memory of their service spans the generations.

Remember without those we lost, their dedication and sacrifice, we would not have the opportunity to enjoy our summers as we choose. For those who we honor on this day, please thank their families as well. Their strength to persevere has carried many of our deployed troops through tough times.

Perhaps we should think about what Abraham Lincoln said: “Gold is good in its place, but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold.”

When our national anthem is played, I can always find a tear or two shed for lost comrades and pride of country. I am honored and touched by the emotions of our veterans. One could not find a finer group of people to stand with when remembering lost family members, friends and Alaskans. ■



**Honoring the Fallen.** The community gathers in Anchorage with military and government officials to honor those who died serving their country at a Memorial Day ceremony in downtown Anchorage. Photo: Staff Sgt. William Banton, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Public Affairs



**The Moving Wall.** Names of military members killed-in-action during the Vietnam War are listed on “The Moving Wall,” a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. The Wall is shown here on display in 2012 at the Delaney Park Strip in Anchorage. Joseph N. Fields, III, who was presented with the Alaska Distinguished Service Medal in June, helped bring the tribute to Alaska in 2006.  
Photo: Capt. Bernie Kale, U.S. Air Force Reserve

## Veteran Honored, Alaska Distinguished Service Medal

By Kalei Rupp, DMVA Public Affairs

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** – A Vietnam veteran, who helped bring a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to Alaska and served other veterans for more than a decade, received the Alaska Distinguished Service Medal in June.

Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, presented the Alaska Distinguished Service Medal to Joseph N. Fields, III during a ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory in Fairbanks.

Fields distinguished himself through exceptional meritorious service as a member of the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council. He was first appointed to the council in 2003 and honorably served until November 2015. Fields served several years as the vice chairman of the Alaska Veterans Advisory

Council, and in 2010, he was selected by his fellow council members as the chairman, a position he was re-elected to each year until his most recent term expired.

In 2006, Fields earned the Governor’s Veterans Advocacy award for his service to veterans. A major part of this selection was his significant contribution in bringing to Alaska “The Moving Wall,” a half-size replica of the Washington, D.C., Vietnam Veterans Memorial. He guided nearly 1,500 volunteers in coordinating this effort.

“Joe is most deserving of this recognition,” said Verdie Bowen Sr., director of the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs. “His leadership on the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council was instrumental in shaping many of the state benefits our veterans enjoy, and his service to his community and state will never be forgotten.” ■



**Distinguished Service.** Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, presents Vietnam veteran Joseph N. Fields, III with the Alaska Distinguished Service Medal during a May ceremony at the Alaska National Guard Armory in Fairbanks. Photo: Courtesy Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs

## ‘Welcome Home’ Event Recognizes Vietnam Veterans

By Kalei Rupp, DMVA Public Affairs

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** – A March event in Seward honored America’s Vietnam veterans as part of the Vietnam War 50th Anniversary.

The Department of Military & Veteran Affairs joined forces with the Vietnam War Commemorative Partners Program and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Alaska to put on the “Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans” event at Seward High School. This collaboration is organized to help a grateful nation thank and honor Vietnam veterans and their families for service, valor and sacrifice.

“We are elated and proud that the State of Alaska joined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to honor veterans and their families who have sacrificed so much for this nation,” said Verdie Bowen Sr., director of the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs. “Many have given their lives, to include those who returned with a large portion of their innocence forever gone.”

The Vietnam War Commemorative Partnership Program started in Alaska on March 29, 2014. Ceremonies have been held in Anchorage, Craig, Fairbanks, Homer, Kodiak, Unalaska, Wrangell and Sitka.

“I give our Vietnam veterans tremendous credit for their leadership and for their willingness to ensure that all veterans have total access to earned benefits,” Bowen added. “Our Vietnam veterans have passed a legacy onto this nation that we will always respect and honor the returning warrior and support each one individually and stand behind their families collectively. I believe their bravery, their resourcefulness and their patriotism marks them as America’s finest citizens. I am honored to ‘Welcome Home’ Alaska’s Vietnam Veterans.” ■

# Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management



**Mass Care.** Cordova emergency response personnel and medical providers practice their mass care capabilities during the simulated active shooter incident as part of Alaska Shield 2016. Photo: Linda Adye-Whitish, City of Cordova

## HOMELAND SECURITY Scenarios Test Communities

By Jeremy Zidek, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Alaska is a state diverse in geography, rich in resources and has a natural beauty unlike any other place in the world. At the same time, it is a state that has its own natural hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, forest fires and avalanches. Human caused disasters, accidental and intentional, are also hazards that can affect the state.

The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has the responsibility for oversight of the State's Emergency Operations Plan, which guides the state's response to disasters. The EOP establishes a system for coordinating the operational phases of emergency management in Alaska and specifies how the state will organize in response to disaster emergencies.

Every two years, the State of Alaska conducts a statewide, full-scale exercise called Alaska Shield, which is designed to test the EOP. Three earthquake-centered exercises were held between 2010 and 2014 and tested Alaska's ability to respond to various catastrophic earthquake scenarios. This March and April, Alaska Shield 2016 was conducted and focused on homeland security-related incidents such as active shooter, cyber attacks and other

human caused incidents. Fifteen communities around the state, and various state and federal agencies participated in Alaska Shield 2016. Each community had its own scenario that tied into the main statewide scenario based on the homeland security theme.

Active-shooter incidents rarely occur, but when they do, the loss of life can be significant. They often happen in a short time period but leave behind a trail of destruction. Sadly, the motivation behind an active shooter is seldom rational or easily identified before the attack. Similar to other no-notice natural disasters, such as earthquakes, active-shooter incidents can happen anywhere, at any time, and we cannot completely predict or prevent them from occurring. While unpredictable, we can still train people, communities and emergency responders to act quickly.

During the build up to the exercise, some communities trained to respond to an active shooter using the "Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate," also referred to as ALICE, system. This is a response curriculum designed for law enforcement agencies, schools, business, hospitals, universities and places of worship. The training provides actionable steps that law enforcement,



administrators, adults, children, and others can follow before, during and after an active-shooter incident. This holistic approach provides all participants with the best practices learned from active-shooter tragedies that have occurred in the recent past.

“We are very good at responding to natural disasters. As a state we needed to train for some of the man-made events that require intense cooperation between many agencies. That is exactly what we did with Alaska Shield 2016,” said Mike O’Hare, director of DHS&EM. “With 15 jurisdictions and dozens of state, federal, National Guard, and non-governmental partners participating in the exercise, we were able to really test how plans and procedures would work together, or find out what doesn’t work. Finding out what doesn’t work during a real-world incident is called failure, and we simply cannot fail this mission.”

One such community, the City of Cordova, received ALICE training, then exercised an active-shooter response during Alaska Shield 2016. Cordova simulated the actions of a lone gunman who traveled through a local school shooting students. Students and faculty had been trained to recognize the beginning of an active-shooter incident and learned about the actions they should take to best protect themselves. Students practiced evacuating the building and moving to a reunification site in the community, while school faculty initiated their emergency lockdown procedures to deny the shooter access to areas of the school.

Local law enforcement, who had rigorously trained their response to a shooter prior to the exercise, quickly entered the school and searched for the simulated gunman to stop his actions. Role-playing victims in the school added to the realism of the event for the Cordova Police Department, as they located and neutralized the gunman.

Active-shooter exercises like the one in Cordova were conducted throughout the state, but Alaska Shield 2016 was not limited to active shooters. Some jurisdictions simulated cyber attacks, and DHS&EM used the exercise to test its own internal plans.

During Alaska Shield 2016, the division activated the State Emergency Operation Center to test its ability to support local jurisdictions in the exercise. In addition, DHS&EM practiced its ability to respond to an “incident within an incident” by simulating the death of a critical employee at the onset of the exercise.

“The incident within the incident taught us a great deal. We looked at how to notify family members about an employee’s death, deal with our staff’s emotional needs and continue to fulfill the responsibilities of the employee without compromising the rest of the response effort,” said Mark Roberts, SEOC manager. “Exercises like Alaska Shield give us the opportunity to examine contingencies that must be experienced to be understood. By working through the process in the exercise, we gain knowledge that makes our response stronger.”

As part of the DHS&EM’s bi-annual preparedness conference, held at the end of April, the participants in Alaska Shield 2016 met in Anchorage with the goal of capturing the lessons of the exercise. An after-action review is an essential element of any exercise or real world incident, as it identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each exercise participant. This, in turn, allows for the revision and improvement of processes and plans written to respond to emergencies.



**Hazmat Symposium.** In conjunction with Alaska Shield 2016, hazardous materials response community members were gathered by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to conduct training in April. Photo: Jeremy Zidek, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

“If we did not conduct the after-action review in a mass setting, we would lose so much valuable knowledge,” O’Hare said. “Discussion in a group setting allows exercise participants to hear others speak to their strengths, weaknesses and problem areas in responding to emergencies. Communities use the discussion to discover solutions for fail points in plans and improvements for issues uncovered in the exercise. Solutions to the problems, shared together, can be used by all parties.”

On the final day of DHS&EM’s preparedness conference, a Training and Exercise Planning Workshop was conducted. The information gathered during the workshop will be used to establish community and statewide training initiatives and exercise plans for the next three years.

“Alaska’s emergency management community does a great job responding to disasters, but we must always strive to improve,” O’Hare said. “Through planning, training and exercises like Alaska Shield, we get better, and that is a good thing for all Alaskans.” ■



**Military Support.** A U.S. Army Soldier from an explosive ordnance disposal unit shares bomb disposal expertise with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough during Alaska Shield 2016. Defense Support of Civilian Authorities, by active-duty military and National Guard units, is a mainstay of Alaska Shield exercises.

Photo: Stephan Hinman, Matanuska-Susitna Borough



**Dual Roles.** Working as a full-time crew chief with the Alaska Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Sgt. Brianna McMillen still finds spare time to be the only female competitive breakdancer in Alaska. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**Crew Chief.** Sgt. Brianna McMillen, a crew chief with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, works on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Bryant Army Airfield on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in February. Photo: Staff Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

# From Sikorskys to Sneakers

## Soldier Breaks Stereotypes with Style

By Staff Sgt. Balinda Dresel, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – When not wrenching on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter for 40 hours a week, one Alaska Army National Guard member trades in her flight suit for a pair of sneakers and the dance floor.

Sgt. Brianna McMillen is a crew chief with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, and has served five years in the AKARNG. The crew chief seat however, takes a backseat to her true passion, breakdancing.

“I saw a couple kids breakdancing at my high school, and I thought that the moves they were doing were really cool and crazy,” explained McMillen, an Anchorage native and 2010 graduate of South Anchorage High School.

McMillen began breakdancing eight years ago alone in her garage. Breakdancing or breaking is a musical art form that incorporates a style of street dance typically danced to certain ranges of tempo and beat patterns like hip hop and funk music.

“I was shy about it at first,” McMillen said. “I’ve always been athletic and liked music, but never really had any natural groove.”

There is depth, culture, and thrill to the breakdancing scene which encompasses graffiti, djiing, rapping and dancing, explained McMillen. The terms b-boy, b-girl and breaker are used to describe the performers.

“I go by B-Girl Snap One,” McMillen said. “Snap because I’m actually double jointed, and one was added because I am the only b-girl up in Alaska.”

The style of acrobatic dancing has been around since the mid-1970s, growing in worldwide popularity as it made its appearance in countries like the United Kingdom and Japan. However, McMillen explained that breakdancing is minimal in Alaska.

“The hip hop scene in Anchorage is very small. We are so very far away from the rest of the hip hop scene in the United States and in the world,” said McMillen, who hopes to one day represent the United States at an international competition.

McMillen believes everyone can do incredible things if they put enough time and passion into their craft.

“Some people do it on their own, but 90 percent of breakdancers have a group or crew that they’re with,” said McMillen, an only child who longed for sibling connection. “You train, travel, practice and ultimately, grow up with them. When it gets hard and you want to quit, you’re with all these people who you’ve been through so much with and you don’t want to leave.”

McMillen explained that the connection with her breakdancing crew is not the only thing that parallels with the Army.

“We are all athletes and need to treat our bodies right,” said McMillen, who credits her Army job with teaching her self-discipline.



**B-Girl Snap One.** Sgt. Brianna McMillen, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew chief with the Alaska Army National Guard, breakdances at the Fairview Recreation Center in Anchorage, Alaska, in 2015. Photo: Courtesy of Darel Carey, LiHai Art

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*“I go by B-Girl Snap One. Snap because I’m actually double jointed, and one was added because I’m the only b-girl up in Alaska”*

– Sgt. Brianna McMillen

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“I think breakdancing helps with my [Army] physical training,” said McMillen, who often exceeds a perfect score on the Army physical fitness test. “A lot of females have difficulties lifting their own body weight and that’s all that I do when breakdancing is lift my own body weight.”

“The Army National Guard gives great opportunities for those who are seeking to better themselves in their own way,” McMillen said.

She underlines self-discipline as the key to success both in breakdancing and the military. McMillen joined the military with a deep admiration for family members who had gone before her. An added bonus was the help in paying for her education, which she puts into use as a part-time college student studying to be a personal trainer and later, a physical therapist.

McMillen has excelled with an established path of accomplishments in her military career. She graduated with honors from basic combat and advanced individual training and continued with success through her noncommissioned officer leadership development, graduating with honors from Warrior Leader Course.

With her military and civilian worlds being predominantly male, McMillen has made it her goal to show women that they are both physically and mentally capable.

“Just because you’re a girl doesn’t mean that you have to limit yourself. That doesn’t mean that you can’t become the best that you can be at something,” McMillen said. “If that means that I’m not going to be a world champion then that’s fine. I just want to know that I’m the best that I can be at that one thing.” ■

# Hats We Wear

The more than 4,000 men and women of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs are a diverse group, bringing many strengths and experiences to the workplace. Their on-duty missions are varied, their personal talents are numerous and their interests are great. These are just some of the “Hats We Wear.”



**Commander,  
1-207th Aviation Regiment**

**Lt. Col. Britt Reed**  
Home Brew Best of Show Winner (Traditional Bock)  
2015 Humpy's Homebrew Competition

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Military Members with I.D.

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# Military Youth Academy



**Splash of Color.** Nothing like a little color to add to the fun; Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets of 2nd Platoon, Class 2016-2 show off the result of throwing powder paint during part of the USO Color Run on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May. Photo: Nathanael Nielsen, Alaska Military Youth Academy



**Blood Donation.** Cadet Leuta Aso, of Anchorage, donates a pint of life-saving blood during a blood drive at the Alaska Military Youth Academy in May. The Alaska Military Youth Academy routinely leads small schools in the amount of blood donations.

Photo: Roman Schara, Alaska Military Youth Academy



**Relay for Life.** Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets participate in the 2016 Anchorage Relay for Life in May. Cadets joined service members to volunteer their help with the setup and breakdown of the event and walked the track in support.

Photo: Staff Sgt. Balinda Dresel, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs



**Respect.** Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets of 3rd Platoon, Class 2016-2 render honors at the Memorial Day services on the Park Strip in Anchorage.

Photo: Roman Schara, Alaska Military Youth Academy



**Guard and Reserve Supporters.** Employers, military members and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve volunteers gather in an Alaska Air National Guard hangar in front of a HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter before boarding an HC-130 Hercules for a trip to Kodiak in May.

## “Bosslift” Brings Employers to Kodiak

Story and photos by Magen James, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

**KODIAK, Alaska** – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve hosted several employers in Kodiak on what is known as a “bosslift” in May.

A bosslift is designed to showcase what Guard and Reserve members do when serving their typical one weekend a month and two weeks a year of military duty. Area employers are able to participate in briefings, simulations and fly on military aircraft.

During the most recent bosslift, employers flew to U.S. Coast Guard Base Kodiak on an HC-130 Hercules aircraft. Employers were briefed by U.S. Coast Guard Reservists on their duties and what a standard day is like for them. They also toured USCGC

Munro and USCGC Spar, a Coast Guard cutter and buoy tender, respectively. They capped their time with a tour of the Alaska Aerospace Corporation and Fort Abercrombie, a decommissioned Army base from World War II.

The employers originated from the Anchorage and Fairbanks areas but are with companies that have a statewide focus, such as the U.S. Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Services, North Star Behavioral Health Hospital and the Alaska Division of Forestry. Employers are educated on what it means to employ a Guard or Reserve member, how to handle deployments and training weekends, as well as how they can

# Who We Are

## Why did you choose your profession?

**1st Lt.  
Hannah Hanson**

Personnelist,  
207th Multi-Functional  
Training Regiment



*"It's my personality – paperwork, structure, organization and going by the regulation."*

**1st Lt.  
Lane Williams**

Pave Hawk Pilot,  
210th Rescue Squadron



*"I like the style of flying. We get to fly around in a helo and save people. That's pretty cool. That's really what I wanted to do."*

**Kalei Rupp**

Communications Director,  
DMVA Public Affairs



*"I originally went into sports broadcasting because I loved sports, then transitioned to general news reporting before jumping into Public Affairs. I enjoy helping shape stories."*

**Spc. Trayton Dendy**

Intelligence Analyst,  
297th Battlefield Surveillance  
Brigade



*"I knew there was an applicable side to being an intelligence analyst. Being all-sources (intelligence), we get a lot of information, we problem solve, and we piece it all together to create a product."*

**Senior Airman  
Amber Still**

Security Forces,  
168th Security Forces  
Squadron



*"I knew I was really shy, and I wanted to challenge myself. Also, for those who come forward about domestic and sexual abuse, I wanted to be that light in a too often dim world."*

further support the Guard or Reserve employee.

"Bosslifts give employers a first-hand look into the important missions their National Guard and Reserve employees support," said Aaron Gustafson, state director for the U.S. Department of Labor-VETS program.

"Employers are often amazed at the excellent training their employees receive during their weekend and annual military obligations, and they realize that their employees return with improved leadership, technical and soft skills," said Gustafson. "It's important for employers to understand they play an important role in the readiness of their service members by supporting their activities."

The Alaska ESGR program hosts approximately 25 volunteers who continue to improve employer relationships with their Guard and Reserve employees through military outreach, employer outreach and ombudsman activities. Individuals interested in volunteering can email [AlaskaESGR@gmail.com](mailto:AlaskaESGR@gmail.com). ■

**Up Close.** Employers receive a briefing from the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve aboard the USCG Cutter Munro stationed in Kodiak, Alaska.





# Commander of Alaska Air National Guard Receives Star

Story and photos by Maj. John Callahan,  
176th Wing Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Karen Mansfield, who as assistant adjutant general–Air serves as commander of the Alaska Air National Guard, was promoted to brigadier general at a ceremony at the Arctic Warrior Events Center here in March. She became the third female member of the Alaska Air National Guard to receive a general’s star.

“I’m honored,” Mansfield said. “But this promotion, it’s not for me; I don’t view it that way. It’s for the Airmen. It will give me the ability to do more for the organization.”

As the commander, Mansfield ensures the training and equipping of more than 2,000 Alaska Air Guard members at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, at Eielson Air Force Base and at Clear Air Force Station, the latter two both near Fairbanks.

“General Mansfield is, first of all, scary smart,” said Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. “She is a forceful advocate for the men and women under her command and for the mission of the Alaska Air National Guard. She questions assumptions and speaks her mind. She is truly the right person at the right time for the Alaska Air Guard.”



**Proud Family.** Brig. Gen. Karen Mansfield, assistant adjutant general – Air, receives her general’s stars from her husband, Scott, and son, Lucas, and with a little help from Lt. Col. Becky King, behind, during a ceremony in March. Mansfield became the third female general officer in the history of the Alaska Air National Guard.

“I am excited about moving forward,” Mansfield said, “We will continue to follow General Hummel’s vector and continue to build on the foundation we established over the last year.”

Mansfield’s April 2015 assumption of command of the Alaska Air National Guard represented a coming home of sorts.

From 2000 to 2010, she served in the Guard’s Anchorage-based 176th Wing before departing to serve in a variety of staff positions with the Washington Air National Guard. She returned to take command of the Alaska Air National Guard at Hummel’s request.

Mansfield was commissioned as a distinguished graduate from Officer Training School in 1989. Her first operational assignment was as a weapons controller with the 601st Tactical Control Squadron, Zwiebrucken Air Base, Germany, where she deployed in support of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. She was then assigned to the 962nd AWACS, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, executing airborne counterdrug missions and participating in operations throughout the Pacific theater.

In 2000, she transitioned from active duty to the Alaska Air National Guard as the 176th Maintenance Group executive officer. Ten years later, she joined the Washington Air National Guard, eventually being named that organization’s director of staff, before transitioning back to the Alaska Air National Guard.

Her service has earned her numerous awards and distinctions, including the Meritorious Service Medal with four devices. ■



**A Star Among Us.** Chief Master Sgt. Steven Calvin, state command chief for the Alaska Air National Guard, unfurls the general’s flag for Brig. Gen. Karen Mansfield, right, assistant adjutant general – Air, with Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, looking on during the ceremony.

# Awards and Decorations

## Meritorious Service Medal



CW4 Peter Smith . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 LTC Eric C. Barlow . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
 MAJ Kyle D. Holt . . . . . 49th MDB  
 SFC Curtis B. Stull . . . . . 103rd CST  
 SFC Corwin G. Viglione . . . 1-207th AVN  
 SFC Russell E. Overman . . . . . R&R  
 SFC Paul E. McDavid . . . . . 49th MDB  
 SFC Scott A. Wesierski . . . 207th MFTR  
 SGT Henry Pagan . . . . . MED DET  
 Col Patty Wilbanks . . . . . 176th MSG  
 Col Marvin T. Ee . . . . . 168th MXG  
 Col Scott A. Howard . . . . . 168th MSG  
 MSgt Matthew T. Sutton . . . 168th MSG  
 CMSgt William G. Dixon . . . 168th AMXS  
 SMSgt Frederick G. Adams  
 . . . . . 168th MXG  
 CMSgt Joseph T. Debanco . . 168th MXG

## Air Force Commendation Medal



SSgt Charles C. Hill . . . . . 168th CF  
 TSgt Douglas K. Weber . . . . 168th CF  
 Cpt Dave M. Valdez . . . . . 168th MXG  
 SSG Ezra S. Pitzer . . . . . 168th MXS  
 TSG Daniel W. Sutton . . . . . 168th MXG  
 SSG Joshua L. Thompson . . . 168th MXG

## Air Force Achievement Medal



SSgt Alyssa C. Lehman . . . 168th MXS  
 SSgt Brent A. Garrison . . . . 168th MDG  
 SSgt Ezra S. Pitzer . . . . . 168th MXS  
 TSgt Daniel W. Sutton . . . . . 168th MXG

## Air Reserve Force Meritorious Service Medal



CMSgt Kevin Brown . . . . . 176th MXS

SrA Paul Carter . . . . . 176th CES  
 MSgt Laurence Clyde . . . . . 176th MXS  
 SrA Britani Dostal . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 MSgt Steven Duwa . . . . . 176th SFS  
 Capt Stephanie Fox . . . . . 176th MDG  
 Capt Jeffrey Hicks . . . . . 144th AS  
 MSgt Shane Higby . . . . . 176th MXS  
 TSgt Casey Hill . . . . . 211th RQS  
 TSgt Shane Jolly . . . . . 176th AMXS  
 MSgt Kenneth Kotelman  
 . . . . . 176th ADS  
 TSgt Kenneth Morris . . . . . 176th CPTF  
 MSgt Brad Nelson . . . . . 176th CES  
 Capt Scott Owen . . . . . 249th AS  
 Capt Paul Rauenhorst . . . . . 176th OG  
 SMSgt Lolly Reid . . . . . 176th MOF  
 MSgt Ricky Schweim . . . . . 210th RQS  
 Maj Robert Stratton . . . . . 176th WG  
 TSgt John Swanson . . . . . 176th LRS  
 TSgt Christopher Tidwell . . . 176th MXS  
 SMSgt Jeffrey Watson . . . . . 249th AS  
 MSgt William Younking . . . 210th RQS

## Korean Defense Service Medal



Lt Col Keenan Zerkel . . . . . 210th RQS

## Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal



SrA Tab A. Key . . . . . 168th MDG

## Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device



Capt Joshua Flye . . . . . 176th OSS  
 MSgt Barron McLain . . . . . 176th CF  
 SMSgt Dennis Mobley . . . 176th AMXS  
 Lt Col Howard Potton . . . . . 211th RQS  
 CMSgt Daniel Siekawitch . . . JFHQ (Air)  
 SSgt Samantha Smith . . . . . 176th LRS

Capt Joshua Flye . . . . . 176th OSS  
 SSgt Christopher Khamphady  
 . . . . . 176th CES  
 SSgt Theodore Leonard . . . 176th CES  
 SSgt John Pahkala . . . . . 176th CES  
 Capt Paul Rauenhorst . . . . . 176th OG  
 TSgt Scott Toms . . . . . 176th MXS

## Alaska Legion of Merit



Kalei Rupp . . . . . DMVA PAO  
 COL John F. Woyte . . . . . JFHQ (Army)

## Alaska Distinguished Service Medal



LTC Eric C. Barlow . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
 LTC Paul T. Darling . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
 MAJ Kyle D. Holt . . . . . 49th MDB  
 CW4 Peter Smith . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
 SFC Scott A. Wesierski . . . 207th MFTR  
 SFC Russell E. Overman . . . . . R&R

## Alaska Air Medal



SFC Arthur S. Honea . . . 1-207th AVN

## Alaska Commendation Medal



MAJ Michael D. Jones . . . . . 103rd CST  
 SFC Dutchy A. Inman . . . . . 103rd CST  
 SSG Charles W. Howard . JFHQ (Army)T  
 SSG Ryan K. Baqui . . . . . 93rd CSTI  
 SGT Aaron S. Gough . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 SGT Hans J. Kohler . . . . . 297th BfSB  
 SGT Henry Pagan . . . . . MED DET  
 SPC Joshua S. Murphy . . . 297th BfSB  
 SPC Trayton L. Dendy . . . 297th BfSB  
 SPC Nephi E. Soper . . . . . 1-297th LRS  
 MSgt Nina V. Kolyvanova . . 103rd CST  
 SSgt Michael O. Buck . . . . 103rd CST

## Master Aviation Badge

1SG Todd E. Cooper . . . 1-207th AVN  
 SSG Jacob A. Nay . . . . . 1-207th AVN

## Senior Aviation Badge

SGT Alex G. Barnes . . . . . 1-207th AVN

## Master Recruiting Badge

SSG Caleb E. Funk . . . . . R&R

## Basic Recruiting Badge

SGT Travis M. Selner . . . . . R&R  
 SPC Cambria M. Spring . . . . . R&R



**Top Notch.** Lt. Col. Dave Breun and Maj. Rodger Nelson, with the 210th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, give a TV news interview on the rescue of two Royal Saudi Air Force pilots. That rescue won "Rescue of the Year" for 2015.  
 Photo: Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

## RESCUE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th and 211th Rescue Squadrons. They were awarded the coveted "Rescue Mission of the Year" by the Jolly Green Association for their heroic rescue of two Royal Saudi Air Force pilots from Yemen's contested territorial waters, March 26, 2015.

Members of the 210th and 211th Rescue Squadrons were deployed to Camp Lemonnier, Republic of Djibouti, when they performed the combat search and rescue mission.

The Jolly Green Association is an organization of former or current crewmembers of United States military helicopter units with the primary or secondary mission of rescue.

## AWARD WINNING MAGAZINE

Congratulations to the DMVA-Alaska National Guard public affairs team, all Warriors magazine contributors, and the publisher for winning first place in the 2015 Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Awards media contest, for the category of civilian enterprise news publication. To win at the DoD level, the DMVA-Alaska National Guard public affairs team was awarded First Place in the U.S. Army's 2015 MG Keith L. Ware Public Affairs competition, as well as the top spot in the Army National Guard Media Contest.

# Promotions

## Lieutenant Colonel

Wayne King . . . . . 249th AS

## Major

Peter Poray . . . . . 144th AS  
James Trusdell . . . . . 176th AMXS  
Luke Davis . . . . . 176th FSF  
Bernard Smith . . . . . 49th MDB

## Captain

Christopher Brunner . . . . . 144th AS  
Benjamin Montes . . . . . 144th AS  
Robert Nelson . . . . . 211th RQS  
Melkart Hawi . . . . . 103rd CST

## Second Lieutenant

Steven Cherry . . . . . 176th LRS

## Chief Warrant Officer Five

Pamela Vitt . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
Jason Faulk . . . . . 297th SPT

## Sergeant Major (E-9 Army)

John Phlegar . . . . . JFHQ (Army)

## Chief Master Sergeant (E-9 Air)

Danielle M. St Laurent . . . 168th MDG  
Edmund Weatherford . . . 168th AMXS

## Master Sergeant (E-8 Army)

Erwin Durano . . . . . 207th BSC  
William Hayes . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
Travis Kulp . . . . . 207th RTI  
John Nobles . . . . . 1-297th CAV

## Senior Master Sergeant (E-8 Air)

Frederick G. Adams . . . . . 168th MXG  
Bryan Spake . . . . . 176th CES  
Ryan Voigt . . . . . 176th MDG  
Michael Long . . . . . 176th LRS  
Dustin Loughman . . . . . 176th FSF  
Armando Soria . . . . . 176th WG

## Sergeant First Class (E-7 Army)

Brian Frink . . . . . 38th TC  
Daniel Garner . . . . . 49th MDB  
Carlos Gonzalezramirez . . . 49th MDB  
Larry Martin Jr. . . . . 49th MDB  
Stephen Mich . . . . . 49th MDB  
Duane Ostrowski . . . . . 49th MDB  
Andrew Pfeiffer . . . . . 49th MDB  
Daryl Palembang . . . . . 1-297th R&S  
Albert Schoonover . . . . . 1-207th AVN

## Master Sergeant (E-7 Air)

Jeffrey C. Marsh . . . . . 168th MXS

Michael Beaver . . . . . 176th MDG  
Benjamin McCulloch . . . . . 176th MXG  
Andrew Swanston . . . . . 176th MDG  
Diane Thomas . . . . . 176th CES  
Clarence Smith . . . . . 176th LRS  
Ray Marshall . . . . . 176th ADS  
Stephannie Chambers . . . . . 176th OSS  
Justin Bradley . . . . . 176th SFS  
Jeffrey Skaggs . . . . . 168th MXS  
Gregory Lutrell . . . . . 168th MXS  
Anthony Leslie . . . . . 168th LRS  
Scott Gracik . . . . . 168th MXS  
David Haupt . . . . . 213th SWS

## Staff Sergeant (E-6 Army)

Daniel Adrian . . . . . 1-20th AVN  
Elliott Besh . . . . . 1-297th CAV  
Josef Carstens . . . . . 49th MDB  
Dustin Hayden . . . . . 297th SIG  
Jarrod Kelderman . . . . . 49th MDB  
Gerardo Lopez . . . . . 49th MDB  
Israel Mercadorobles . . . . . 49th MDB  
Jamie Montesrivera . . . . . 49th MDB  
Denis Sajaev . . . . . 297th BfSB

## Technical Sergeant (E-6 Air)

Cody S. Nelson . . . . . 168th MXS  
Rachel Dye . . . . . 176th ADS  
Duncan Harris . . . . . 210th RQS  
Timothy Munoz . . . . . 176th ADS  
Darren Hill . . . . . 176th CES  
Jeimy Martinez . . . . . 176th LRS  
Michael Hofmann . . . . . 176th MOF  
Allen Hartley . . . . . 176th CES  
Matthew Powell . . . . . 176th AMXS  
Cynthia Grosshuesch . . . . . 176th MDG  
Anthony Fletes . . . . . 212th RQS  
Daniel Munoz . . . . . 176th FSF  
Lyle Langston . . . . . 176th MXS

James Saling . . . . . 176th MXS  
Timothy Davidson . . . . . 176th SFS  
Henry Estrada . . . . . 176th SFS  
Ji Song . . . . . 168th SFS  
Thomas Elliott . . . . . 213th SWS  
Ashley Hembree . . . . . 168th AMXS  
Joshua Thompson . . . . . 168th SFS

## Sergeant (E-5 Army)

Erik Bacod . . . . . 49th MDB  
Yethcika Cruz . . . . . 207th BSC  
Gabriel Gonzalez . . . . . 49th MDB  
Matthew Myers . . . . . 49th MDB  
Bradley Olson . . . . . 103rd CST  
Daniel Pruski . . . . . 207th CS  
Sirithone Sourivong . . . . . 1-207th AVN

## Staff Sergeant (E-5 Air)

Mollie L. Vice . . . . . 168th MDG  
Luke I. Sjoblom . . . . . 168th AMXS  
Del Juan Avila . . . . . 176th LRS  
Blake Carter . . . . . 176th LRS  
Shawn Everett . . . . . 176th SFS  
Christopher Frazier . . . . . 176th AMXS  
Donald Frenchik . . . . . 176th OSS  
Anthony Gugino . . . . . 176th MXS  
Chatham Holt . . . . . 176th OSS  
Tyler Hoskins . . . . . 211th RQS  
Joshua Krawczyk . . . . . 176th OSS  
George Offenhauser . . . . . 176th AMXS  
Jacob Richey . . . . . 176th OSS  
Jeffrey Sison . . . . . 176th OSS  
Samantha Smith . . . . . 176th LRS  
Chanique Wilson . . . . . 213th SWS  
Jonathan Riveracalderon . . . 213th SWS  
Kevin May . . . . . 168th OSS  
James Hannis . . . . . 168th MXS  
Zachary McGhee . . . . . 168th MOF

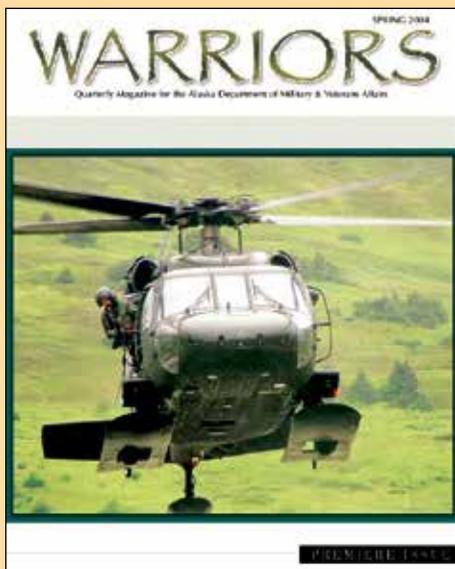
# Retirements

SSgt Jason De Heus . . . . . 168th FSF  
SMSgt Paula Parrish . . . . . JFHQ (Air)  
Lt Col James Van Hooissen . . . . . 176th ADS  
SMSgt Mark Brauneis . . . . . 176th CES  
SMSgt James Assenmacher . . . . . 176th CF  
Lt Col Jay Fuller . . . . . 176th MDG  
SMSgt Frank Bauder . . . . . 176th MOF  
MSgt Andrew Butz . . . . . 176th OSS  
MSgt Mark Eaker . . . . . 176th OSS  
COL John F. Woyte . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
CPT Sarah L. Tully . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
SPC Richard Beck . . . . . 38th TC  
SGT Pablo Pradamontenegro . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
SGT Wyndell Nash . . . . . 207th BSC  
CW4 Peter Smith . . . . . 1-207th AVN  
SSG Daniel Garner . . . . . 49th MDB  
CPT Nathan Cornilles . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
SSG Joseph Robinson . . . . . JFHQ (Army)  
SSG Edward Soolook . . . . . 1-143rd IN ABN

# Changes of Command and Responsibility

Col David McPhetres *from Col Marvin Ee* . . . . . 168th MXG  
Col Marvin Ee *from Col Patty Wilbanks* . . . . . 176th MSG  
Maj Jessica Pisano *from Lt Col David Ham* . . . . . 176th AMXS  
Lt Col Kenneth Radford *from Lt Col Chaz Fitzgerald* . . . . . 249th AS  
Lt Col Shane Holmberg *assumed command* . . . . . 168th MXS  
CMSgt Lance Jordan *from CMSgt Steven Calvin* . . . . . AKANG State Command Chief  
CMSgt Danielle St. Laurent *replaced CMSgt Kenneth Latham* . . . . . 168th MDG  
CMSgt Edmund Weatherford *replaced CMSgt Mark Renson* . . . . . 168th AMXS

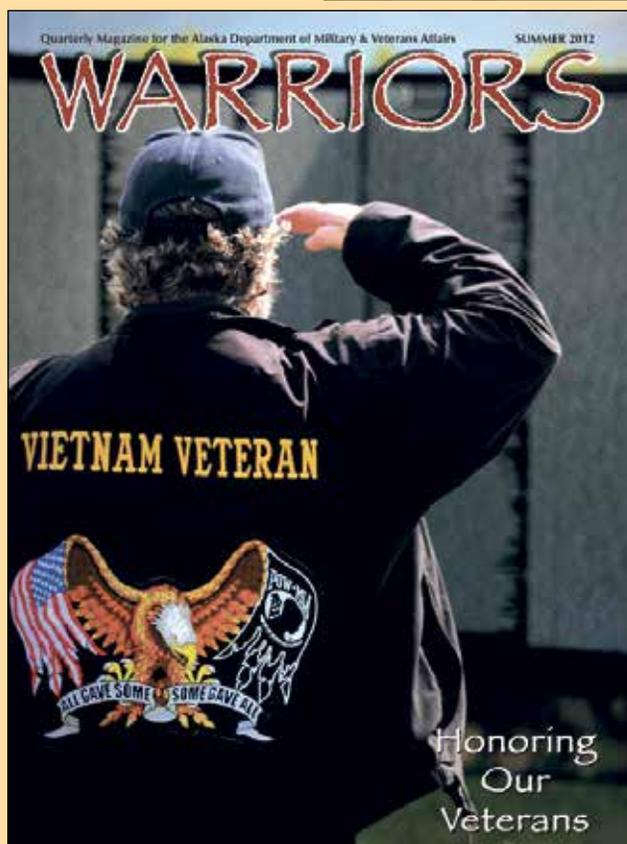
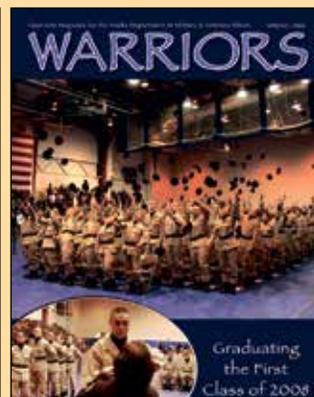
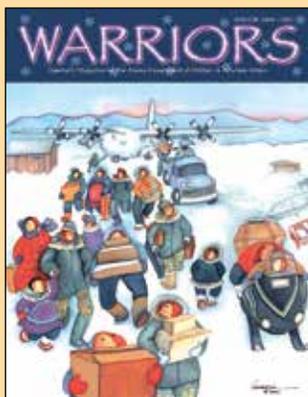
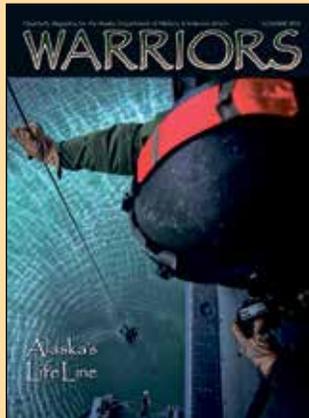
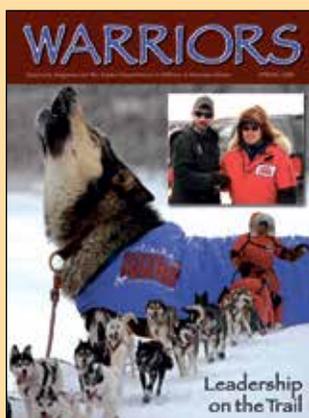
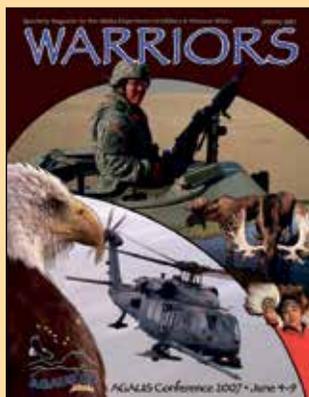
# Warriors Final Print After 12 Years of Publication



By Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead,  
Director, Public Affairs

The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs has published Warriors quarterly magazine since 2004. After 12 years of collaboration between all divisions in the DMVA to highlight priorities, achievements and activities in the department, this is the last printed issue. State budgetary constraints and the need to prioritize efforts with decreased manning and resources have resulted in a need to shift efforts from producing the publication, which has served as a valuable means of messaging for our staff and members, mission partners, civic leaders and community members throughout the state.

Although the magazine was managed by the DMVA-Alaska National Guard public affairs office, it has been a combined effort made possible by many contributors. Primary writers for the publication have been public affairs staff in the Joint Forces Headquarters, AKNG/PA office, but the magazine would not have been a success all of these years without the hard work and dedication of public affairs staff from the Alaska Air National Guard's 168th Wing, 176th Wing and the Alaska Army National Guard's 134th Public Affairs Detachment. Other divisions in the department, including the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Veterans Affairs, the Alaska Military Youth Academy, and Alaska State Defense Force have continually contributed quality content for the publication as well. The variety of content from contributors has been key for ensuring that Warriors represented the department and communicated our diverse and relevant roles to our readership.



A special thanks goes to retired AKNG public affairs officer, Maj. Michael Haller, for his leadership, vision and effort in establishing the magazine and taking it to first print in 2004. Recognition and great credit go to Ms. Kalei Rupp, Warriors managing editor since 2007. Her expertise and attention to detail were instrumental in helping to earn Warriors the 2015 Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Awards Media Contest for the category of civilian enterprise news publication. Sincere appreciation is also extended to Quality Image Publishing, Inc. (formerly Alaska Quality Publishing, Inc.), the local publishing company who has made this magazine look good since the premier issue in 2004. QIP's sales team ensures the magazine has

relevant advertising, which helps fund the cost of printing and distribution, their graphics team expertly designs every issue, and their print team produces an attractive, quality product every time.

DMVA news and events will continue to be communicated through various channels, including our webpages and social media. Internal communications with members will also be distributed through our official email network.

To follow us on social media or find links to our webpages, visit [dmva.alaska.gov/socialmedia](http://dmva.alaska.gov/socialmedia) for a catalog of options for our divisions and units. To receive Air and Army Alaska National Guard news, highlights and notifications, please join our distribution list at [dmva.alaska.gov/distrolist](http://dmva.alaska.gov/distrolist). ■

# Start of the Trail

## Welcome to Our Newest Members and Employees

### 761st Military Police Battalion

SPC Jeffrey L. Brown  
SGT Blake S. Hart

### 297th Military Police Company

PVT Heather L. Byrd  
PVT Raymond T. Edwards  
SPC Fabrain Alexander  
SPC Jevon Robinson  
SPC Jeffrey Brown  
SPC Levi Eslinger  
SPC Zong Xiong

### 297th Signal Company

PVT George G. Yang  
SSG Nicholas K. Smith  
PV2 Alexander W. Beehler  
SSG Nicholas Smith

### Joint Forces Headquarters (Army)

Joleen D. Garciani  
SSG Hector Clintron

### 1-297th Reconnaissance & Surveillance

PVT Zachary A. Berg

### 1-297th R&S Long Range Surveillance

PV2 Leo C. Parsley  
PVT William P. Lieberman  
PV2 Yee L. Khang

### 1-143rd Infantry Airborne

PVT Arvid R. Jones  
PFC Collin J. Johanknecht  
PV2 Rosario Y. Bermudez  
PVT James B. Leavitt  
PVT William J. Cholok  
PFC Jerry B. Willingham  
PVT Colink F. Napoka  
PV2 Mitchell G. Ebertz  
PVT Aaron M. Olson

PVT W.G. C. Anaruk  
PVT Robert R. Cline  
PVT Dimitri D. Zacharof  
SPC Joshua Prellwitz

### 1-207th Aviation

SPC Joshua R. Holifield  
PVT Kiana J. Alcantara  
PFC Justin W. Dorsey  
PVT Melissa R. Demit  
PVT Marvin A. Caparas  
SPC Deadra E. Zeller  
PVT Chase B. Booth  
PVT Donald S. Lincoln  
SPC Kenneth Boyer  
1LT Richard Collins  
1LT Cade Cross  
PFC Autianna Johnson  
SGT Dustin Knight  
SPC Hector Maldona

### 207th Equipment Support Platoon

PVT Kevin E. Hartman  
PVT Jacob K. Obrien  
SGT David Silva

### 1-297th Cavalry

PVT John K. Tabbada  
PVT Drew R. Peterson

### 207th Battle Support Company

PVT Jessica J. Shields  
PVT Biko C. Burford  
PFC Nicholas M. Vickrey  
SPC Terrance Hendley  
SPC Michael McGovern

### 1-297th Infantry

PVT Mary P. Okitkun

### Medical Detachment

PVT Aleck J. Bayless  
SPC Stephanie Rodriguez

### AKARNG Training Site

SSG Hector L. Citron

### 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade

2LT Jennifer Miller  
SGT Bryan Wentz  
SSG Tara Church  
SGT Paul Flaks  
SSG Aaron Smith  
SPC Anthony Nicolls

### 176th Wing

SSgt Brandon Vice

### 176th Medical Group

A1C Loida Roman Torres  
TSgt Toni Curry

### 176th Mission Support Group

Col Marvin Ee

### 176th Comptroller Flight

SrA Juan Nunez Gonzalez

### 176th Force Support Flight

SSgt Lucy Dieterich

### 176th Security Forces Squadron

SSgt Brian Sears  
AB Cassandra Crone

### 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron

A1C Colton Hittle  
A1C Mason Olson

### 176th Maintenance Group

Maj Jessica Pisano  
A1C Judy Phommthep  
SSgt Eric Abes Guzman  
Amn Nicholas Abrams  
SSgt Jason Trexler  
A1C Alec Bouslaugh  
A1C Trevor McRae  
SrA Gavin Schwartz  
A1C David Espino

### 176th Operations Group

Capt Allison Snow

### 176th Operational Support Squadron

SrA Gordon Fickett

### 144th Airlift Squadron

A1C Ryan Haskins  
A1C Dalton Galindo

### 210th Rescue Squadron

A1C Peter Reddington

### 212th Rescue Squadron

Lt Col Thomas Paynter

### 168th Wing/Headquarters

SMSgt Paul Mann  
Capt Raymond Lowdermilk

### 168th Maintenance Squadron

Lt Col Shane Holmberg  
SSgt Alex Chace  
SSgt Nicholas Purdy  
AB Alfaz Khan  
SSgt Daniel Kaufmann

### 168th Mission Support Group

TSgt Jason Dandurand  
AB Zachary Hausmann  
AB Charles Marchuk

### 168th Air Refueling Squadron

Capt Julie Keeney  
SSgt Kevin Spears

### 213th Space Warning Squadron

TSgt Gersom Rivera  
SSgt Meut Chantha  
2Lt Shannon Gragg  
SSgt Luis Maldonadoaquino

### 168th Force Support Flight

SrA Haley Crum

### 168th Security Forces Squadron

A1C Robert Chastain  
A1C Gavin Davis  
A1C Aiyana Pangelinan  
A1C Tony Crane  
A1C Xavier Navidad-Stepp

### 168th Comptroller Flight

TSgt Tony Crank  
AB Angus Pospisil

### 168th Medical Group

SrA Jeflon Reyes  
SrA Emily Higginbotham  
SSgt Seth Rodriguez

### 168th Civil Engineering Squadron

AB Darius Robinson  
A1C Saskia Harrison  
TSgt Brian Woodard



**Air Field First.** A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III from the 517th Airlift Squadron lands at Bryant Army Air Field on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, in March. The event marked the first time a C-17 has landed at the airfield since its construction in 1958. This was an initial pilot test to determine whether Bryant Army Airfield could provide C-17 pilots with an additional nearby airfield that they can divert to, as well as provide a capability to conduct assault landings, which is a mission requirement for all C-17 pilots that they weren't able to do close by previously. Photo: Senior Airman James Richardson, U.S. Air Force



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## 2017 Iron Dog Raffle

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today by calling (907) 227-5997 or email [usoalaska@uso.org](mailto:usoalaska@uso.org) with your name and contact information.

**Only 2,500 tickets will be sold.**

**Top prizes include:** Toyota truck from Kendall Toyota, side-by-side or snowmachine and a trailer from White Spruce Trailer Sales, \$1,000 Cabela's gift card, \$900 GCI technology prize, \$800 Vision X lighting package, and a \$500 gift certificate from Klim.

Prize drawing is February 25, 2017. You do not need to be present at the drawing to win.

**The 2017 Iron Dog Raffle will benefit USO Alaska,** which supports Alaska's active duty service members, reservists, Alaska National Guard members and their families. For **75 years**, the USO has worked to strengthen America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country throughout their service to our nation.



(U.S. Air Force photo/Alejandro Peña)

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Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson  
**USO Alaska Wellness Center**  
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson  
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A TIP FROM A  
**FORMER  
SMOKER**

**18 years in the military  
and my biggest battle  
was against cigarettes.**

Brian, age 60  
Air Force Veteran  
Texas

*Brian smoked and got heart disease. He went from serving his country overseas to spending his life in emergency rooms and operating rooms. Finally, he quit smoking and, years later, got a heart transplant that saved his life. **You can quit smoking.***

**For free help, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.**



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