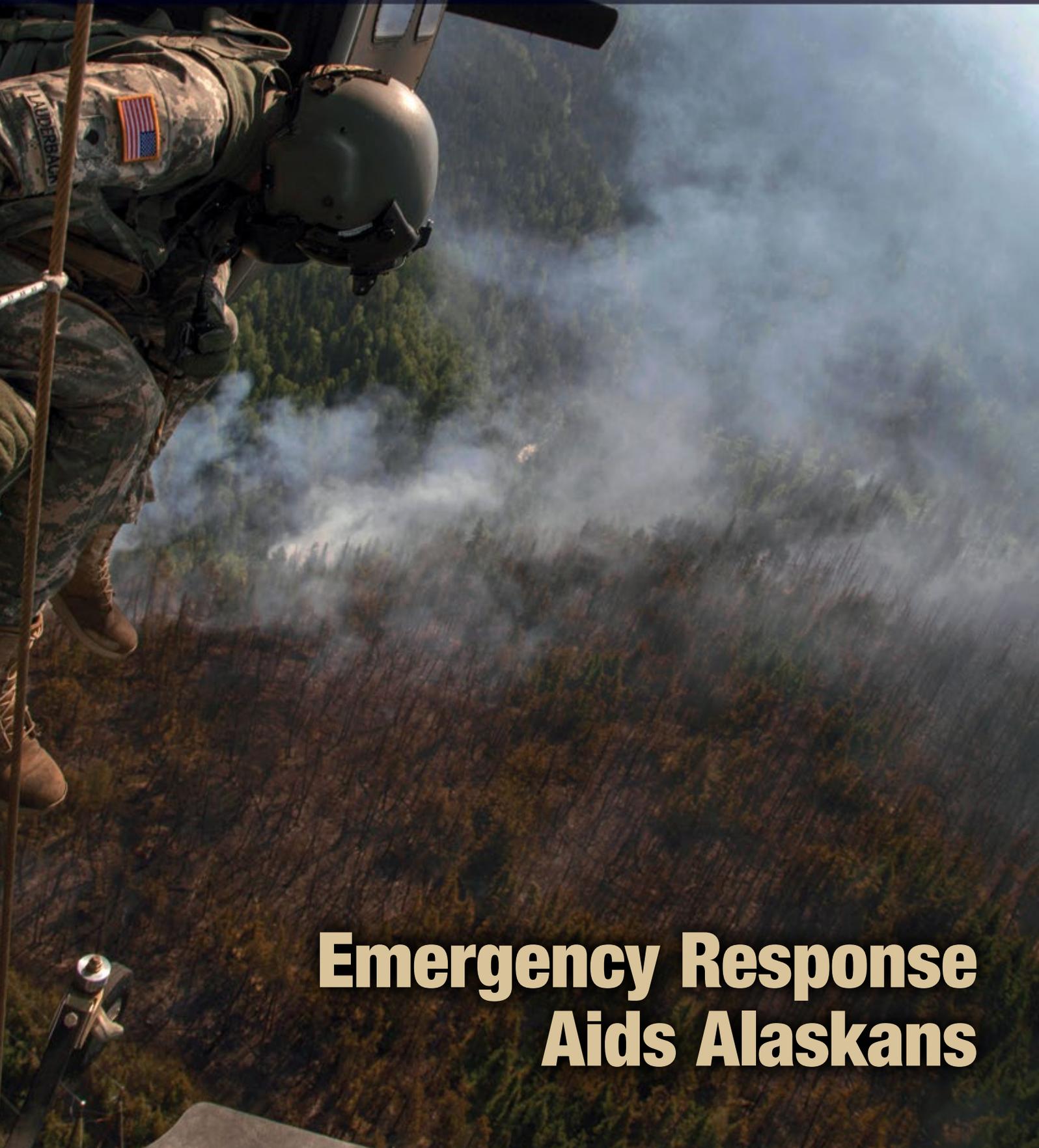


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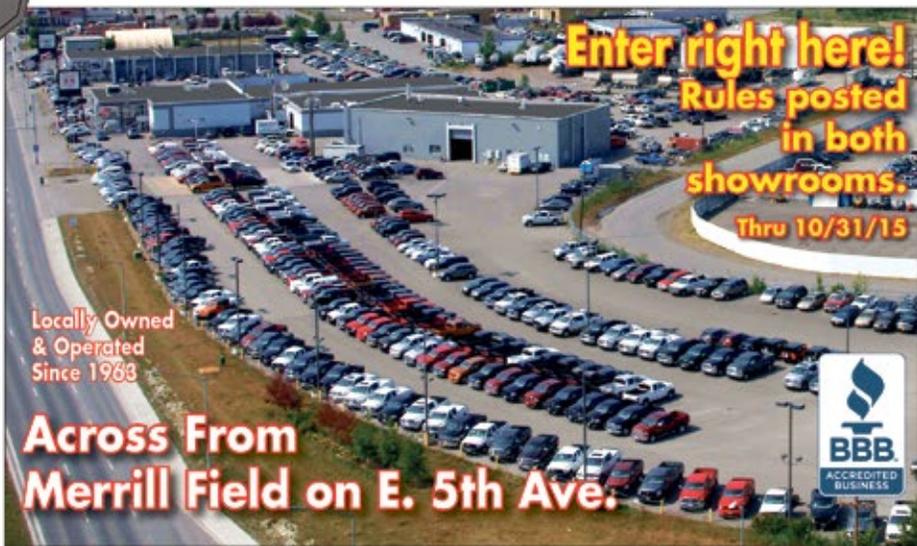


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Gov. Bill Walker
Commander in Chief



Brig. Gen. (AK) Laurie Hummel
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard
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Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



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Cover. Alaska Army National Guardsman Spc. Tanner Lauderback, a crew chief with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, keeps a line of sight on the "Bambi Bucket" attached to a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as he prepares to release water during a firefighting mission near Cooper Landing, Alaska, in June. The Alaska National Guard helped wildfire suppression efforts across the state this summer. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Congressman Honored. Alaska Congressman Don Young, fourth from left, stands with members of the Alaska National Guard Officers Association and the Military Officers Association of America, after being presented the 2014 Charles Dick Medal of Merit award in Anchorage in May. The award was given by the two organizations in recognition of Young's long-lasting contributions to the National Guard throughout his legislative service. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



<http://dmva.alaska.gov>

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Governor's Message

Gov. Bill Walker
Commander in Chief

As governor of Alaska and commander-in-chief of the Alaska National Guard, I am proud of the Soldiers and Airmen of the Alaska National Guard and the service you provide to our state and nation every day. I was honored to participate in the official change-of-command ceremony held at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson May 26 welcoming Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel to her new post. We look forward to turning a new page and seeing what the AKNG is able to accomplish under her leadership. At the same time, I am grateful for the leadership of Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges during a difficult time and wish him well in his retirement after many years of service.

As we work to learn from the mistakes of the past and make continual improvements to the Alaska National Guard, retired Judge Patricia Collins released her report to the public June 15, relating to her special investigation into allegations of sexual abuse, harassment and wrongdoing in the Guard. Maj. Brian Fuchs was administered the oath that same day as the first credentialed provost marshal of the Alaska National Guard. In that capacity, he will be able to work closely and seamlessly as a liaison between the Guard and law enforcement officials across the state to improve the exchange of information. With this action, a painful chapter in the history of the Alaska National Guard has been completed, and I thank Judge Collins for her work and recommendations which will be implemented in the days ahead.

We are all pleased to welcome home more than 100 Alaska Air Guardsmen who recently returned to Alaska from deployments overseas. Guardsmen from the 176th Wing returned from a four-month deployment to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa. Their primary mission was to provide a personnel-recovery force, and they also used their time while deployed to sharpen their skills and train with partner nations. Also returning home are Guardsmen from the 168th Air Refueling Wing after a six-month deployment supporting security operations in the Middle East.

In addition to honorable service overseas, the Alaska National Guard is playing an active role in keeping Alaskans safe at home. With wildfire season encompassing a large portion of the state, the Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and aircrews from the 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment helped fight the Sockeye Fire in the Willow area and fires on the Kenai Peninsula, to include the Stetson Creek Fire and Card Street Fire, in addition to wildfires in the Fairbanks area by conducting water bucket drops. The 1-207th currently has 11 qualified crews who are trained in water-bucket fire suppression.

Twice a year, Alaska's Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management hosts a statewide preparedness conference. The groundwork laid during the Spring

2015 Preparedness Conference to enhance the abilities of local emergency managers to respond to disaster have proved particularly important in the midst of a tough fire season. The staff of DHS&EM instructed timely sessions on assessing damage during a disaster event and knowing when to seek assistance.

I want to thank each and every Guard member, your families and all those who work in the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs for your service to Alaskans every day. Alaska is grateful for your efforts to keep us safe at home and abroad and to serve veterans and their families. Our prayers and best wishes are with you continually.

Bill Walker



Provost Marshal. Maj. Brian Fuchs, the new Alaska National Guard provost marshal, stands with Gov. Bill Walker, who administered the oath of the position to Fuchs in the governor's office in June. Fuchs, also an Anchorage Police Department officer, has been given a special commission as a state police officer and works as a liaison between the Guard and law enforcement officials across the state to improve the exchange of information. Photo: Courtesy of the Office of Gov. Bill Walker



The Adjutant General

Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard
Commissioner, DMVA

Dear Retiree,

As a retiree you are an important component of our Alaska National Guard team. I would like to introduce myself and my vision for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs and give you some updates on the Guard and department. I hope you will gain confidence that we are moving forward with renewed purpose from the Guard's recent well-publicized troubles.

As the new adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, I wanted to take this opportunity to first tell you a bit about myself since I was an "outside" selection for the position. I am a third-generation Soldier and the proud daughter of a retired active-duty noncommissioned officer, a helicopter crew chief. My own career in the Army started at West Point and spanned 30 years of active duty, during which I served at forts Huachuca, Stewart and Leavenworth; Hunter Army Airfield; the U.S. Military Academy; Korea; Afghanistan; Iraq; and most importantly, Alaska. After retiring as a colonel in 2012 and moving back to Alaska as my "forever" residence, I believed my military service was complete. Then, Governor Walker asked me to serve in this position.

This tour for me started at a time when issues raising questions about the ethical and moral climate in the Alaska National Guard overshadowed the amazing accomplishments of this group of patriots. We are in the midst of great change in the Alaska National Guard as we address how we got to this low point and focus on establishing paths to excellence in serving this great state and nation. We continue to strive to make this organization one that everyone can take pride in, with each decision at every level based in applicable doctrine and on a foundation of moral, ethical and legal correctness. We will strive to achieve fairness for all and transparent processes. Our uniform and nonuniform employees deserve a workplace and culture that promote honesty, integrity and teamwork.

One of my first changes was one of nomenclature. Instead of talking about "federal," i.e., National Guard and "state" employees in the DMVA, we talk about "uniform" and

"nonuniform" employees. When the National Guard is not mobilized, its commander-in-chief is Governor Walker, who is also the senior executive for all other state employees. To recognize our roots as the state's militia and emphasize that we are all one team, we have made this change.

Many of the faces in senior positions have changed in addition to me and Bob Doehl as the new DMVA deputy commissioner. Many of our senior leaders had reached the end of their tours, albeit ones through particularly tumultuous times, and it was a natural and appropriate time for change. Col. Joe Streff has replaced Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges as the Army National Guard commander. Col. Karen Mansfield has replaced Brig. Gen. Tim O'Brien as the Air Guard commander. Mike O'Hare has replaced John Madden as the division director of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. Susan Colligan is still in place as the director of Administrative Services; Bob Roses has stayed on as the director of our Alaska Military Youth Academy; and Verdie Bowen remains at the Office of Veterans Affairs.

My vision for our department is: "Through constant collaboration internally and with external partners, DMVA implements a viable Arctic strategy, increases emergency management capacity and expands engagement with Alaskan communities, all while achieving federal mission assurance."

Arctic strategy addresses the strategic significance of the Arctic region to our state and to national security. The federal government has identified appropriate lines of effort to support the national strategy. The State of Alaska, through various entities, is creating our state's Arctic policy and supporting implementation plans. DMVA will actively partner with them to create new opportunities to uniquely serve Alaska. By nesting our activities with the Arctic strategies of the federal and state governments, DMVA creates increased relevance for our divisions. Relevance equals funding. Funding equals opportunities for new training and missions.

Emergency management is what makes our department different from its federal counterparts. Before, during and after emergency events, we will all lean in to help our fellow

Alaskans. Increasing emergency management capacity is a major facet of ensuring safety and security, and we will engage in various ways across the department to enhance preparedness and response options. Enhancing the resilience of Alaskans will contribute to Alaskans' security and wellness.

Whatever we do within DMVA must be done with an eye toward maximizing engagement with Alaskan communities. We exist to serve communities of Alaskans, be they geographical communities such as Bethel and Barrow, or communities of people such as our 70,000 Alaskan veterans and their families, at-risk Alaskan youth, a flooded neighborhood or our National Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

Developing partnerships will be key to attaining our organizational vision and serving Alaska well. Across the department, we will constantly engage with state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and community groups of all sizes and type. As a retiree, your partnership is vital, and you serve as a bridge to connect our past and our future.

If you would like to sit down and chat or possibly explore how you can help move our Guard and our department toward continued success, I or a member of my leadership team would be honored to meet with you.

Sincerely,





Deputy Commissioner

Bob Doehl
Deputy Commissioner, DMVA

Shaping Change

It is impossible to open a newspaper or news website without reading about big changes under way in matters which deeply affect us as an organization.

The Budget Control Act of 2011 mandates a reduction in federal funds available for many programs, including the National Guard and the disaster relief activities, in which the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is heavily involved. The collapse of state revenues consistent with the 50-percent price drop in the price of oil is likewise mandating reductions on state funds available to DMVA. Most likely, this budget shrinkage will persist over several years and is not a one-time event.

As more than 200,000 service members leave the military and become veterans each year, Alaska is experiencing robust growth in its veteran population, which is already the highest per capita in the United States.

Different weather patterns, as most recently reflected in unprecedented icing and flooding of the Dalton Highway simultaneous with

leadership to advocate that we get the right missions, right force structure and right operational relationships.

New Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management Director Mike O'Hare is heavily focused on finding new ways to increase rural community engagement to assure disaster preparedness despite a reduced budget. Our Alaska Military Youth Academy Director Bob Roses led the charge for AMYA to provide a post-graduation apprentice training program and continues to seek new opportunities. State Veterans Affairs Office Director Verdie Bowen recently received the national Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for his tireless efforts on increasing access for veterans to health care and other services.

Administrative Services Director Susan Colligan and I are working with senior leaders of the other departments in the State of Alaska to determine how our programs could collaborate to increase effectiveness for all. We also reached out to the University of Alaska Anchorage

“If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside, the end is near.”

By Jack Welch, Former CEO of General Electric

Red Flag wildland fire conditions across more than a third of the state, highlight the potential emerging disaster risks which we must be able to address.

In a recent hearing, the Secretary of Defense told U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski that the United States is 40 years behind the Russians in developing Arctic military doctrine and infrastructure.

Although we continue to deploy Guardsmen to Afghanistan and other trouble-spots, the requirement to mobilize and deploy Guardsmen continues to require fewer and fewer Guardsmen.

Through laws passed by the Alaska Legislature, Alaskans have specified our mission set: to provide a state militia; to administer an at-risk youth intervention program; to direct homeland security and emergency management measures for the State of Alaska; and, to provide assistance to veterans. It is our opportunity to show innovation and initiative to meet these changes while performing these tasks for Alaska.

Winston Churchill once said, “We are out of money, now we have to think.” Our senior leadership team in DMVA gets it. We are all leaning forward to adapt our programs to these fiscal and other changes.

Both component commanders in the Alaska National Guard, Col. Karen Mansfield and Col. Joe Streff, are engaged with national

School of Social Work about internship opportunities for its masters-level students in two of our divisions. Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Roger Holl continues to work with his ASDF team to reshape to meet Alaska's needs.

Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, our commissioner and adjutant general, guides these transformation efforts. First, she assures that these efforts are transparent and compliant with applicable law and regulations. Second, she assures that they are consistent with the DMVA priorities: development of an Arctic strategy; engagement with Alaska's communities and increase in emergency management capacity.

We have all heard the adage that change is inevitable. We see change afoot constantly around us. We are resolved to change DMVA where necessary to keep it relevant and meeting the tasks assigned to it by Alaskans.

As the fiscal, operational, and social environment in which DMVA exists continue to evolve, Commissioner Hummel and I will enable our dedicated staff here to evolve its practices as well. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your thoughts on where we need to be going.

Moving Forward

By Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, DMVA/AKNG

On June 15, the Department of Law released retired Superior Court Judge Patricia Collins' independent investigation of the Alaska National Guard to the public. Like many Alaskans, I greet its release with a sense of anger and frustration that over several years some members of the Guard mistreated people and misused public funds. Also like many Alaskans, I am relieved the report contains no new examples of improper behavior.

As the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, it's up to me, my leadership team, and all the members of the Alaska Army and Air National Guard to ensure this doesn't happen again. Moving forward, we will be the force Alaskans want us to be, executing critical federal missions, ready to deploy abroad to defend our nation and well-trained to respond to emergencies here at home.

Through this past legislative session we made important progress toward updating an Alaska Code of Military Justice that gives commanders the tools to maintain a disciplined military force. We owe thanks to Representatives Gabrielle LeDoux and Chris Tuck in particular for their help so far, and look forward to passage of legislation next year that will enable the regulations and processes to keep our house in order.

We also have installed the first provost marshal of the Alaska National Guard, Maj. Brian Fuchs, who is on military leave from the Anchorage Police Department. His job is not to investigate crime but to ensure criminal activity within the Guard isn't hidden behind the cloth of uniform or the armory door. Instead, it will be handled by the appropriate Alaska law enforcement agency. On June 15, Gov. Bill Walker personally gave Maj. Fuchs his special commission from the state to further this seamless communication.

These are important practical steps, but the real transformation will happen operationally. I commit to you that we will rely on a few basic principals in everything we do. Using the core values of professionalism, commitment and teamwork, we will:

- **Adhere to doctrine.** Every action we take will be grounded in law, regulation and policy. If it's not, we won't do it.
- **Employ sound and transparent processes for everything we do.** Guard members will know why they are doing something and can expect the outcome to be consistent and appropriate.

- **Focus on our customers, the people of Alaska.** Alaskans will know our actions are moral, legal and ethical.

My first few months on the job have confirmed my faith in the character of the men and women of the Alaska National Guard. When they see leadership live these values and commit to these principles for doing business, they will respond.

While it only takes a few bad actors to tarnish the reputation of a large agency, making the Alaska National Guard whole again will be the work of many, not just a few. Real transformation is possible even in large organizations such as the Alaska National Guard, but it takes commitment and effort. We can do it; I have seen firsthand the early results of the reforms put in place last fall, and additional positive changes have been made since then.

With the findings from Judge Collins' report in hand, Gov. Walker's unqualified and continuing support, and the leadership team in place today, we will move beyond these serious problems.

While Judge Collins' report covers a period of time prior to my appointment, Alaskans deserve an apology for what was allowed to happen. On behalf of the Guard, let me apologize to a number of individuals, and Alaskans more broadly, for this organization's mishandling of complaints about serious offenses and for betraying the confidence of people who sought help and justice. While going forward the Guard will care for those individuals, we must continue to take serious and broad sweeping steps to be a better force for Alaska. We were wrong, we can do better, and we're on the path to making things right.

The history of the Alaska National Guard is not that long, but it is unique and noteworthy. With its roots in the men of the Alaska Territorial Guard who provided practical, Alaskan "know how" to defend our nation's coastline in World War II, the Alaska National Guard has a host of skills and talents to offer our nation and state.

As we prepare ourselves to face the challenges ahead, we will build on our history and engagement with all Alaska communities, increase our emergency management capacity and prepare for a changing Arctic. I commit to you that the Alaska National Guard will once again be a source of pride for Alaskans. ■



Dispatches from the Front ...

GUARD MEMBERS AND CA



Bike to Work Day. Alaska National Guard members participate in the Anchorage-wide Bike to Work Day event in May. Not only was it a great day to get outside, the event promotes healthy lifestyles and cycling safety. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



Tug of War. Members of the Alaska Air National Guard team "Midnight Sun Guardians" pull with all their might in the tug-of-war competition during the 2015 Hero Games in downtown Anchorage. "Midnight Sun Guardians" took fourth place in the competition overall. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Alaska Run for Women. Cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy participate in the annual Alaska Run for Women in Anchorage in June. The Alaska Military Youth Academy is an annual participant in this five-mile run. Cadets support numerous military and community events throughout Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Valley as part of their eight core components. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

DETS IN THE COMMUNITY



Ready to Run. Sgt. Melinda Dawson, left, and Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, both of the Alaska Army National Guard, get ready for the 5-mile Alaska Run for Women in May. They both ran in the event as members of the "Pretty in Pink - Friends of the Alaska National Guard" team. Photo: Courtesy Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Hero Games. The Alaska Army National Guard team "Task Force 49" sprints down Fourth Avenue in Anchorage during the 2015 Hero Games in June. The team won third place in the games that pits Alaska service members and first responders against each other during the Summer Solstice Festival. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Soldiers Help with Airfield Expansion

By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay,
DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Alaska Army National Guardsmen with the 207th Engineer Utility Detachment travelled to Old Harbor, Alaska, to assist with a joint-forces airfield expansion project as part of their annual training in June.

The project to extend the current airstrip by 2,000 feet for safety and expanded services, is federally funded under the “Innovative Readiness Training” program. IRT helps afford training and readiness for the military in conjunction with providing a service to underserved communities.

The recipient of the assistance is the rural town of Old Harbor, which is home to more than 200 residents, a large portion whom belong to the Alutiiq tribe, and sits on the southeastern coast of Kodiak Island.

“It’s really an epic win, being able to help Alaskans in remote communities, support mission partners like the Marine Corps, Navy and Army Reserve, and allow our Soldiers to gain additional experience in their military career fields,” said Maj. Mark Kelliher, the 208th Construction Management Team commander that houses the 207th EUD. “This joint experience will help us both with our state mission to support the people of Alaska in times of need, as well as our mission to defend America when called upon.”

The Soldiers worked alongside the Navy and Marines in a rare joint-service exercise mission and utilized equipment and machinery that are typically unavailable in their Anchorage-based training environment.

“The training our Soldiers received during this IRT project was unmatched — even in comparison to the schoolhouse in regards to real-world experience — and is more than our engineers could have asked for,” said Sgt. 1st Class Seth Gordon, the readiness noncommissioned officer in charge for 207th EUD and a project participant. “Particularly with the multiservice relationships that our newer Soldiers were exposed to, on top of their one-on-one equipment training — the value is unmatched.” ■



Airfield Expansion. Private Brodie Smith, walks ahead of Private Lamara Lainei, both heavy equipment operators with the 207th Engineer Utility Detachment, as she maneuvers a vibrating compactor while moving dirt for the airfield expansion project completed in the town of Old Harbor, Alaska, during their annual training in June. The project, which extended the current airstrip by 2,000 feet, was federally funded under the “Innovative Readiness Training” program, meant to afford training and readiness for the military in conjunction with providing services to underserved communities. Photo: Courtesy Alaska Army National Guard



Welcome Home. Tech. Sgt. Peter Gardella, 168th Air Refueling Wing boom operator, is greeted by his children after returning to Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks, Alaska, from Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, where he was deployed.

Photo: Master Sgt. Cornelius Mingo, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

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Construction Projects.

Airman 1st Class Phillip J. Gifford, center, Senior Airman Aaron Brehm, top, and Senior Master Sgt. Anthony Liberty, all of the Alaska Air National Guard’s 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, level a drainage ditch at a remote base on Australia’s western tip in 2014. The unit recently deployed to the Middle East, where Guardsmen will be supporting U.S. Central Command with minor construction projects.

Photo: Capt. John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

Airmen Return from

By Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton,

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Approximately 80 members of the Alaska Air National Guard’s 176th Wing returned here in June after a four-month deployment to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa.

The Guardsmen from the 210th Rescue Squadron, 176th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 176th Maintenance Squadron, 176th Operations Support Squadron and the

176th Logistics Readiness Squadron deployed in January in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as part of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa mission.

As part of the 81st Expeditionary Rescue Squadron while there, their primary mission was to provide a personnel-recovery force. They also used their time while deployed to sharpen their skills and train with partner nations.

Air Guardsmen Deploy to Middle East

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



Homecoming Excitement. Maj. Patrick McBride, an HC-130N pilot with the 211th Rescue Squadron, is full of excitement to be home with his family after a deployment to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He returned with approximately 30 other Alaska Air National Guard Airmen from the 176th Wing in April. While deployed, the Guardsmen's primary mission was to provide a personnel-recovery force for the Combined Joint Task Force mission. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



Wildfire Work. Sgt. Philip Peter, a crew chief with the Alaska National Guard's 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, looks out from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter after dropping water from a "Bambi Bucket" to support firefighting efforts near Tok, Alaska, in June. For more on the Alaska Army National Guard's efforts to fight the wildfires around the state this summer, see Page 12.

Photo: Sherman Hogue, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs



Nice to Meet You. Master Sgt. Lucas Yuill, a helicopter maintenance technician with the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, shares a quiet moment with his son John, upon returning from his deployment at the Joint Mobility Complex on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in June. John was born Feb. 11, exactly two weeks after Yuill left for his deployment to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and this was their first meeting.

Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Approximately 26 members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Civil Engineer Squadron departed Alaska in May for a six-month deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Before heading overseas, they conducted additional training for a month in Texas, said Chief Master Sgt. Keith Wilson, chief of plans and programs, 176th CES. There they participated in the Evasion and Conduct after Capture course, then spent time training on their combat skills.

The primary mission of the 176th CES is to support U.S. Central Command with minor construction projects in their area of operations, according to Lt. Col. Jack Evans, commander of the 176th CES.

"This is a unique mission," Evans said. "Typically, when we deploy, we go to a static location and do maintenance for established facilities. This time, we're sending guys to eight different countries outside the wire. They will be doing construction projects, instead of maintaining established bases."

Senior Airman Amado Cordero, a heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration specialist, is one of the 176th CES members going on this deployment. Like many Guardsmen, Cordero works full-time in the civilian workforce and performs his part-time Air National Guard career one weekend per month and two weeks per year.

He said that his full-time job working in construction closely ties in with his job in the Guard.

"On the civilian side, I stick with construction," he said. "That's why HVAC works well for me because I do a little bit of everything. I do plumbing, insulation, heavy-equipment operation, and structural and electrical work. This is all pretty familiar to me."

Cordero said that he feels driven and enjoys deploying.

"For me, it's being in uniform and doing this job that I enjoy most," he said. "Doing this job on either the civilian side or in uniform are two totally different feelings. I feel more of a sense of accomplishment because I feel like I'm contributing to something greater." ■

than war, including civil search and rescue, medical evacuation, disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

In addition, approximately 30 members of the 211th Rescue Squadron, 176th Operations Group and 176th Maintenance Squadron who were deployed to Djibouti returned home in April after a four-month deployment. ■

Africa Deployment

176th Wing Public Affairs

Along with personnel from the 176th Wing, the deployed unit also took several HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters that belong to the 210th Rescue Squadron. The primary mission of the Pave Hawk is to conduct day or night personnel recovery operations in hostile environments to recover isolated personnel during war. The HH-60 is also tasked to perform military operations other

Alaska Army National Guard Fights Wildfires

By Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and aircrews from the 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, conducted water bucket drops in support of wildfire suppression efforts throughout the state in June and July.

“We’ve flown more than 132 hours, dropped more than 1,100 buckets of water, and dispensed nearly 900,000 gallons since we began supporting the effort on June 14,” said Lt. Col. Robert Kurtz, the Alaska Army National Guard state aviation officer.

After fighting several fires in the Matanuska Valley and on the Kenai Peninsula, the 1-207th Aviation was reassigned to support firefighting efforts for the Tetlin Fire near Tok and fires near Northway, Tanacross and Chena Hot Springs.

“The aircraft and aircrews are basing out of Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks and refueling there and at the Tok airport, depending on which fire they are on,” Kurtz said.

1-207th AVN accepted their first mission to support wildfire suppression efforts June 14 to fight Willow’s Sockeye Fire. The fire that began that day was 98-percent contained, as of mid-July, and burned more than 7,220 acres according to the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management’s State

Emergency Operations Center. The Black Hawks and aircrew were transferred from the Sockeye effort June 17 and tasked to perform

operations on the Kenai Peninsula after several spot fires began as a result of lightning strikes.

Later, they were reassigned and began water-bucket missions to fight fires in the Interior region with Anchorage and Fairbanks crews, and then added Bethel crews to the rotation. The Alaska Army National Guard has 19 Black Hawks that are shared among aviation units in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Bethel, Nome and Juneau.

“We swap crews out once they’ve worked three consecutive days, and we swap aircraft out as needed for unscheduled or routine maintenance,” Kurtz said.

Per the agreement with the Alaska Division of Forestry, the National Guard provides stand-by availability seven days a week for a 12-hour work day, when there is a current request for assistance.

Throughout the firefighting mission, 1-207th Aviation continued to provide multiple daily round-trip transportation support for a federal personnel recovery mission for a crash in 1952 on Colony Glacier. They also provided a medevac for a local U.S. Army Soldier who received minor injuries during a training exercise.

Providing domestic emergency response is part of the National Guard’s dual state and federal mission. Crews will continue to provide support as needed.

“It’s important to help the state of Alaska and its citizens,” Kurtz said. “It is why many Soldiers join the Guard, and they look forward to opportunities to use their training and skills to serve and protect others.” ■



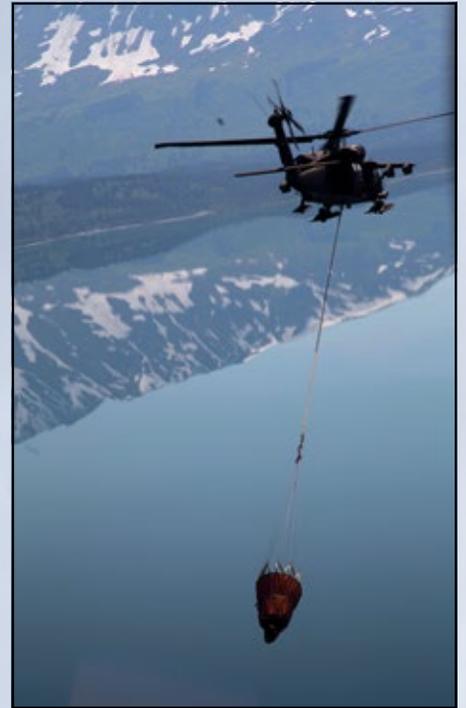
In the Smoke. An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, drops approximately 700 gallons of water from a “Bambi Bucket” on the Stetson Creek Fire near Cooper Landing, Alaska, in June. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O’Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

Ready to Help. Sgt. Sonny Cooper, a crew chief with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, supports firefighting efforts from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter on the Sockeye Fire near Willow, Alaska, in June.

Photo: Courtesy Sgt. Kevan Katkus, 1-207th Aviation



Eyes on the Fires. Sgt. Philip Peter, crew chief with 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, monitors the “Bambi Bucket” that is used to drop water onto wildfires. This fire, near Tok, Alaska, was one of several that burned throughout the state this summer. Photo: Sherman Houge, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs



Ready for Water. An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, prepares to refill a “Bambi Bucket” in Cooper Lake while on a firefighting mission in June. The Black Hawk can carry up to 900 gallons of water, which they retrieve from local lakes and reservoirs. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O’Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Wildfire Suppression. The Alaska Army National Guard supports fire suppression efforts in June near Willow, Alaska. UH-60 Black Hawks from the 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment flew multiple missions, dipping their orange water buckets into waters east of Willow Lake and dropping thousands of gallons of water over the east side of the fire, about five miles north of Willow Airport. Photo: Courtesy Chief Warrant Officer Two Cody McKinney, 1-207th Aviation



Black Hawk Support. The Alaska Army National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment supports wildfire suppression efforts across the state. Photo: Sherman Houge, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs



Flames and Smoke. An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter drops water from a “Bambi Bucket” onto a wildfire that has spread near Tok, Alaska, in July. Photo: Sherman Houge, Fort Wainwright Public Affairs

Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Preparedness Conference Gathers Emergency Managers

By Jeremy Zidek and Julie Baker, DHS&EM

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Twice a year, Alaska's Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management hosts a statewide preparedness conference. The Spring 2015 Preparedness Conference combined the traditional conference speakers with an emergency management skills workshop to enhance the abilities of local emergency managers to respond to disaster.

More than 170 people attended the April conference, held in Anchorage, which was followed by the bi-annual State Emergency Response Commission and Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings.

The conference began with featured speaker and lifelong Alaskan Pat Shier. Shier is the chief information officer and associate vice chancellor at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He spoke about cybersecurity and how it relates to individuals and organizations in Alaska.

Many Alaskans mistakenly believe they will be protected against cyber threats because they lack cyber infrastructure or do not use electronic data structures. Shier relayed the message that no matter how remote or physically disconnected from these systems, even the most rural Alaska community stands at risk from this hazard.

"The responsibilities of Alaska emergency managers are great; each remote community has its own set of logistical challenges and risks," said Mike O'Hare, director of DHS&EM. "This year we offered funding



Brewing up Teamwork. DHS&EM's Erv Petty, left, and Cordova's Dick Groff sample Kopi Luwak coffee during the 2015 Spring Preparedness Conference. Groff is Alaska's oldest active volunteer firefighter and an integral part of Cordova's emergency management team. An important function of the preparedness conference is building relationships between the local, state, federal and nongovernmental emergency managers.

Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM



Playing to a Packed House. Emergency managers from across the state gather in Anchorage to receive the latest information on disaster response and recovery. Having well-trained and current responders is essential in Alaska's remote communities. Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM

for 23 rural communities outside of those funded by grants to attend the conference."

Attendees had their choice of rural- or urban-focused sessions. Many rural community members attended the three-day session entitled "Emergency Management for Small Community Leaders," which covered initial management response, emergency protective measures, requesting assistance, evacuation planning, flood response planning and debris management. Other rural-community-specific sessions included the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium's Dealing with the Media: A Short Course for Rural First Responders, Flood Mitigation for Rural Communities, Mitigation Grant Development for Rural Communities, and Scheduled and Preventative Maintenance for Rural Utilities.

Urban communities were offered information on flood mitigation and mitigation grant development in separate sessions.

Day two of the conference opened with speaker Mary Schoenfeldt, who has worked in the field of emergency management and crisis response with a specialty in school systems for more than 20 years. Her background includes a combination of law enforcement, emergency management, education and disaster mental health. Schoenfeldt served as the subject matter expert for an acclaimed interactive software program, called Aftermath: School Edition, and authored several books on crisis response and numerous magazine articles for publications such as National School Safety Journal, Student Assistance Journal and Pittsburgh Parent Magazine. Schoenfeldt's conference presentation explained how to build a culture of

preparedness and motivate people to prepare for disasters.

The staff of DHS&EM facilitated many of the course offerings at the conference, including sessions on updating local hazard mitigation plans, using social media, applying for grants, understanding the Alaska Intrastate Mutual Aid System, and assessing damage during a disaster event and knowing when to seek assistance.

DHS&EM's partners from the American Red Cross of Alaska and The Salvation Army Alaska assisted with presentations about establishing sheltering operations and best utilizing volunteers during an incident.

A tour of the Department of Health and Social Services warehouse was offered to showcase the deployable resources available from State of Alaska agencies.

A favorite session among conference-goers was the Cultivating the Next Generation of Emergency Managers session, which detailed the best practices of mentoring and developing staff members.

"The Next Generation of Emergency Managers session was wonderful; there is no well-defined pipeline for the next generation of Alaska emergency managers," said Craig Malloy, Fairbanks North Star Borough emergency manager. "We all have different funding, training programs and community assets to call upon. Lots of ideas were brought forward that I will be exploring for my program."

The final day of the conference featured speaker Chief Thomas Richardson, a battalion chief for the Seattle Fire Department and the leader for the Washington Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Task Force.



Missile Defense

2015 Alaska Missile Defender of the Year

Richardson was deployed to the site of the massive 2014 Oso, Washington, mudslide for a search-and-recovery mission. He spoke about the efforts and lessons learned in the search, which included planning of the search, safety, communications, public-private partnerships, volunteer management, and dealing with human and animal remains.

Richardson was deployed in response to many catastrophic events including Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. He was also involved in the response for the 2001 World Trade Center attack, the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

“Through the years, the preparedness conference has featured keynote speakers who are at the forefront of emergency management. From the school superintendent who led the effort to rebuild schools destroyed by tornados in Joplin, Missouri, to the emergency manager who managed response after a large earthquake ravaged Christchurch, New Zealand, to an academic who presented data accumulated on active shooter situations, we aim to bring the very best speakers to our conferences and this year was no exception,” O’Hare said.

The Fall Preparedness Conference in October 2015 will prepare participants for DHS&EM’s biennial Alaska Shield exercise in the spring of 2016. Alaska Shield 2016 will exercise the state’s response to terrorism. ■



Building Emergency Response. Roberta Carney, left, retired DHS&EM deputy director, presents Mary Schoenfeldt with a token of appreciation after Schoenfeldt’s presentation on *Creating a Culture of Preparedness, which focused on building effective community-level emergency response campaigns.* Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM

The Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, a nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to educate the American public about missile defense issues and to recruit, organize and mobilize citizens to advocate for the critical need of missile defense, presented the following awards in May.

“Best Air National Guard Crew” Alpha Crew

1st Lt. Micah Hanauer
Tech. Sgt. Brian Rowbotham
213th Space Warning Squadron

“Best Army National Guard Crew” Alpha Crew

Maj. Jeremy Shepherd
1st Lt. Cody Hennelly
Capt. Gilberto Ortiz
Staff Sgt. Michael Diachenko
Sgt. Josef Carstens
49th Missile Defense Battalion

Ted Stevens Memorial Award

Capt. Eric L. Vantrease
213th Space Warning Squadron
Master Sgt. Thomas E. Wright II
13th/213th Space Warning Squadron



Top Notch. Winners of the 2015 Alaska Missile Defender of the Year awards gather at the Hotel Captain Cook in May for the award ceremony presented by the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance. The mission of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance is to make the world safer by advocating for the development and deployment of missile defense systems to defend the United States, its armed forces and its allies against missile threats. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

Exercise Khaan

By 2nd Lt. Michael Maggitti, III Marine Expeditionary Force



Eye Exams. Maj. Andrew Adamich, an optometrist with 176th Medical Group, Alaska Air National Guard, shakes hands with a resident of Mongolia after conducting an eye exam following the opening ceremonies for the health services support engagement at the 79th High School, 9th Subdistrict, Bayanzurkh District, 9th Khoroo, during Khaan Quest 2015 in Ulaanbaatar. Photo: Cpl. Hilda Becerra, III Marine Expeditionary Force



Medic Skills. Alaska National Guardsmen Pfc. Taylor Shackelford, left, and Spc. Michael Crane, both with the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, treat a simulated casualty during Exercise Khaan Quest 2015 at Five Hills Training Area in Tavantolgoi, Mongolia, in June. Khaan Quest is a regularly scheduled, multinational exercise hosted annually by Mongolian Armed Forces and cosponsored by U.S. Army, Pacific, and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific.

Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Perimeter Security. Alaska Army National Guardsman Spc. Matthew Millette, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, conducts perimeter security during a search and cordon field training exercise as part of Khaan Quest 2015 at the Five Hills Training Area in Tavantolgoi, Mongolia, in June. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

FIVE HILLS TRAINING AREA, Mongolia – For two weeks in June, the Mongolian Armed Forces hosted more than 20 nations in the 13th iteration of Exercise Khaan Quest, an annual multinational exercise cosponsored by U.S. Pacific Command. Khaan Quest 2015 is the latest in a continuing series of exercises designed to promote regional peace and security in Northeast Asia.

Multinational and multiservice forces enhanced regional interoperability and mission effectiveness while training side by side in both the rural training area and urban Ulaanbaatar capital. The computer-based scenario decision making of the command post exercise complemented the tactical actions executed during the field training exercise. Both training evolutions developed operational skill sets necessary during international peace support operations.

Engineering civic action program projects and health services support engagements enhanced Mongolian-U.S. medical capabilities while providing outreach to underserved communities. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in late June to commemorate the successful completion of all engineering and medical projects. Throughout the course of seven days, approximately 480 patients were screened and treated

Quest 2015



Command Post Exercise. Chief Warrant Officer Four Marcia Harrison, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, participates alongside fellow Guardsmen in the command post exercise portion of Khaan Quest 2015. The command post exercise trains participants to establish and globally deploy battalion assets during peacekeeping operations through exercising scenario-based missions.

Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



Field Training. Sgt. Alexander Catevenis, U.S. Army Alaska's 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, and lead instructor for the medical field training lane, conducts an after-action review with Alaska Guardsmen from the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade during Exercise Khaan Quest 2015 at Five Hills Training Area in Tavantolgoi, Mongolia, in June.

Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

for acute or minor surgical conditions while more than 20 individual home visits were made for nonambulatory patients. Services provided include dental, pediatrics, ophthalmology, neurology and cardiology among other specialties. Additionally, veterinary specialists treated nearly 330 animals.

Engineering projects completed at the 55th Special Needs School, Bayanzurkh District, include installing more than 100 new doors, remodeling two bathrooms, building a physical therapy room, remodeling an indoor gymnasium, and building an outdoor basketball court complete with fencing and lighting. In total, engineers installed 9,500 feet of perimeter fencing, poured 55 cubic meters of concrete and used 125 cubic meters of gravel.

More than 1,200 service members contributed from 22 nations to KQ15 completion. Approximately 300 U.S. participants included Soldiers from across U.S. Army, Pacific, primarily from the Alaska Army National Guard and U.S. Army Alaska, along with Marines from Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment. Of the remaining 900 participants, approximately 600 were from the host nation of Mongolia. ■

Alaska, Mongolia Partnership Flourishes

By Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – The state of Alaska partnership between the Alaska National Guard and the country of Mongolia spans more than a decade and has evolved into a strategic nation-state relationship.

The two were paired in 2003 under the National Guard State Partnership Program, which began pairing states and countries in 1993. The program was implemented to couple foreign countries with states to develop unique security partnerships that ensure U.S. strategic access and a sustained presence in countries worldwide.

Alaska and Mongolia share similar geography, Arctic climate, isolated rural population and vast mineral wealth. These commonalities and the parallel challenges both face, allow for a better understanding of each other.

“Mongolians and Alaskans face similar social, economic and climate-related opportunities and challenges, particularly in rural areas,” said Maj. Adam Negri, the AKNG bilateral affairs officer. “Mongolia and Alaska have vast mineral wealth, but have a hard time accessing it because of lack of infrastructure. Most of Alaska’s population lives in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna area, while most of Mongolia’s population is centered on Ulaanbaatar with the rest of both populations dispersed and largely rural.”

Mongolia is a stable democracy sandwiched between China and Russia and is supportive of the United States. Since 2004, Mongolia has been deploying its soldiers alongside U.S. troops in Iraq and now Afghanistan. Additionally, the Mongolian Armed Forces have more than 950 soldiers participating in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

“The Mongolian Armed Forces are tailored to the peacetime needs and the economic potential of the country,” explained Negri. “They participate quite heavily in peacekeeping operations in Africa supporting the United Nations. Mongolia has realized the tangible benefits of being a global partner in peace and security and enjoys a voice at the international table far greater than it would otherwise.”

Since 2004, AKNG personnel have embedded with the MAF and have served along-side them in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen have traveled to Mongolia for training and exercises in support of Mongolia’s peacekeepers and first responders.

“Because of the success of the Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership, the Alaska National Guard is continually asked to participate in U.S. Pacific Command exercises and subject matter expert exchanges,” Negri said. “The active-duty military has recognized that the State Partnership Program is effective and leverages it to enhance stability in the Asia-Pacific region.”

The State Partnership Program is designed to be mutually beneficial. Alaska National Guardsmen get the chance to share expertise, practice their teaching and training skills, experience another culture and learn how a foreign military force organizes and operates.

The military-to-military relationship between the AKNG and MAF has been a catalyst for the nation-to-state initiative. The Alaska-Mongolia partnership has expanded to include relationships between the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, the University of Alaska system, U.S. Army Alaska, and the Alaska District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and their Mongolian counterparts.

The U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia, Piper Campbell, made her first visit to Alaska in April to help strengthen the already positive relationship and recognize the great work Alaska has done in Mongolia to promote peace and security, assist in disaster preparedness and partner for better education.

“The Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership has grown from a modest cooperation between the Alaska National Guard and the Mongolian military to much more,” affirmed Campbell.

The Alaska-Mongolia partnership is looking to expand in two areas: defense support to civil authorities and arctic maintenance and operations.

“As a National Guard, we work very well with our first responders and emergency managers to support the needs of Alaskans in times of disaster,” Negri said. “The Mongolian army has the same mission and they are working to take best practices from Alaska and include them in how they prepare for and respond to disasters.”

Alaska has been working with the Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency since its establishment in 2004. Earlier this month, the AKNG and U.S. Army Alaska joined 100 participants from 30 agencies across Mongolia, the United States and other countries, to participate in a disaster response exercise and exchange called Gobi Wolf, hosted by NEMA.

Future exchanges between engineers from the AKNG and Mongolian military, which would focus on maintenance and operations in the arctic, are being reviewed.

The Alaska-Mongolia partnership is so imperative that the National Guard Bureau and U.S. Pacific Command assigned an Alaska National Guardsman to the embassy as the bilateral affairs officer and chief of defense cooperation.

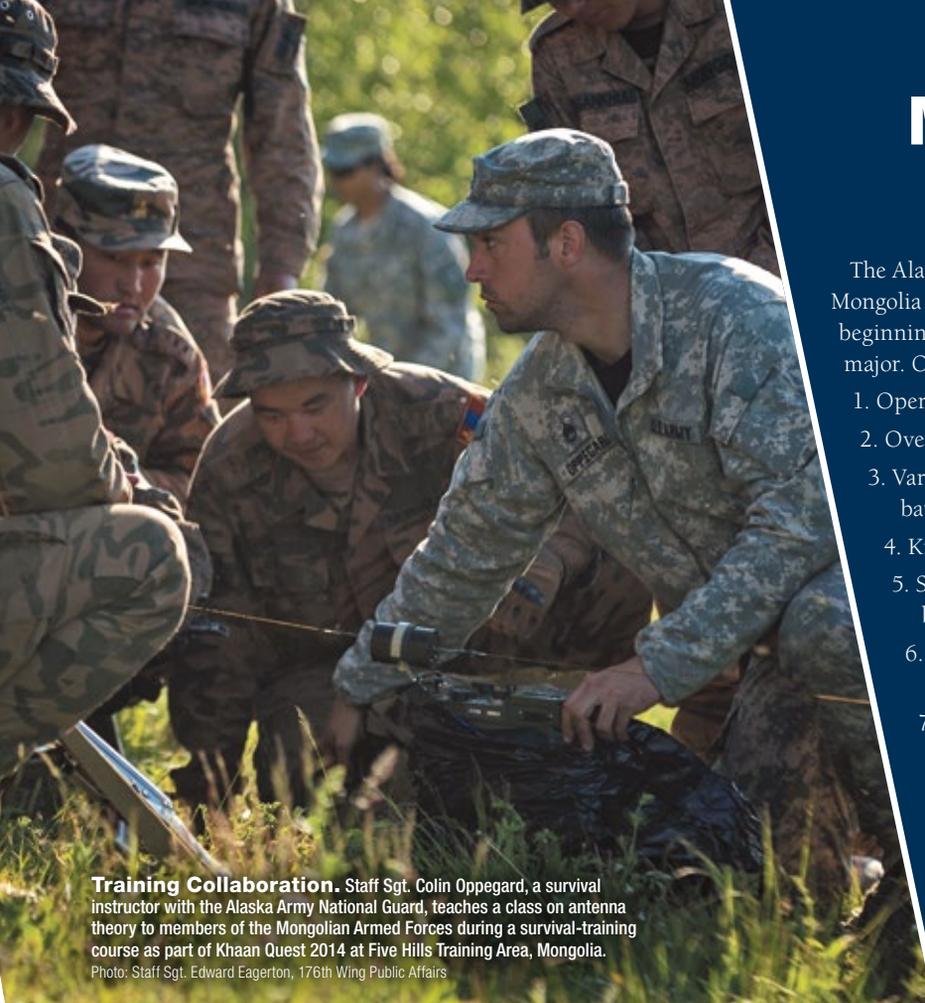
“As the bilateral affairs officer for the Alaska National Guard, I coordinate all aspects of the Alaska – Mongolia relationship and make sure all activities are complementary to the embassy, USPACOM and Mongolia’s goals,” Negri said. “I am also the chief of defense cooperation, which leads the DOD and USPACOM military security cooperation program and serves as the liaison of humanitarian assistance matters with Mongolia.”

“Alaska has contributed greatly in Mongolia,” added Campbell. “Whether building hospitals or schools, providing medical and dental treatment in underserved areas, working with students, or training with Mongolia’s military, Alaskans have made a difference in the lives of Mongolians.” ■



Medical Observations. Staff Sgt. Ned Tri, right, Alaska Medical Station clinical noncommissioned officer-in-charge, explains to Maj. Ariunaa Chadraabal, left, and Col. Ulambayay Nyamkhuu, representatives from Mongolia, the contents of a medical bag used at the Alaska Medical Station during Exercises Alaska Shield and Vigilant Guard-Alaska 2014.

Photo: Staff Sgt. Megan Leuck, Wisconsin Army National Guard



Mongolia Bilateral Affairs Officer

The Alaska Army National Guard is seeking applicants for the next Mongolia Bilateral Affairs Officer. This is a two-year Title 10 tour beginning in April 2016. Candidates must be a promotable captain or major. Other criteria for selection are:

1. Operations and logistics staff experience (or equivalent)
2. Overseas duty training experience
3. Varied and extensive staff and operational experience at the battalion/squadron and brigade/group levels
4. Knowledge of State Partnership Program
5. Served as commander of a company/flight and/or battalion/squadron sized unit
6. Proven organizational experience in handling multiple tasks
7. Proven capacity to coordinate and facilitate events
8. Proven communications skills (oral and written)
9. Knowledge of diplomatic protocol
10. Military deployment/combat experience

Please contact Maj. David Jurva for additional information and consideration at 907-428-6435 or david.m.jurva.mil@mail.mil.

Training Collaboration. Staff Sgt. Colin Oppegard, a survival instructor with the Alaska Army National Guard, teaches a class on antenna theory to members of the Mongolian Armed Forces during a survival-training course as part of Khaan Quest 2014 at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia.
Photo: Staff Sgt. Edward Eagerton, 176th Wing Public Affairs

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Working in Tight Places

Photo Story by Senior Airman Francine St Laurent, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Teamwork. Airmen in the 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop work on KC-135s, doing tasks such as removing manifolds and troubleshooting to locate leaks. On this particular aircraft, a leak was detected that was the result of a large crack between two fuel tanks in the wing. It will be sent to a depot in Oklahoma to be repaired.



Prep Time. Airman 1st Class Benjamin Davis, 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop fuel system mechanic, prepares his tool bag before climbing into a fuel tank in the wing of a KC-135. The fuel shop Airmen take turns working and inspecting each other's work.



Mask Up. Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Skaggs, 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop fuel system mechanic, puts on an oxygen mask before climbing into the fuel tank. Fuel system mechanics take turns working, for an hour or more at a time, because the environment requires focus and concentration. "You've got to hunt," said Tech. Sgt. John Phoenix, 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop fuel system mechanic. "You can't follow a wire down the line to find a problem. It takes a lot to be in there and crawl around and eyeball it when finding a leak." This can be especially difficult when working with your arms scrunched in front of your face. "It looks kind of like a T. rex. when you're working up there," Phoenix said.



Headed into Darkness. Donned with his headlight, Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Skaggs, 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop fuel system mechanic, enters a fuel tank in the wing of a KC-135 in March. "Sometimes when we ask for a tool and someone's getting it and we know it's going to be a minute, we're not going to climb out. We're going to wait there," Skaggs said. "Sometimes I just turn my headlamp off. We're bladders away, 90 degree angles, from the door. The only light we get comes up from the floor, and we aren't getting any of it. It's scary and strange but kind of peaceful. You can't see your hand in front of your face. You can't see anything. It's pitch black and your eyes never adjust."



Small Spaces. Fuel system mechanics must be unafraid of small spaces. Senior Airman Julia Meyer, 168th Fuel System Maintenance shop fuel system mechanic, enjoys them. "Before I joined the Guard, I was doing a tour of all the shops and when we came in they had an engine open," Meyer said. "I got to stick my head up there and it just reminded me of a little clubhouse. That was the kid in me. That's what I like about it."

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Former Air Guardsman Honors Veterans and Alaskans

By Chuck Volanti, Alaska Air National Guard veteran

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – I was born Jan. 3, 1940, on the lower west side of Cleveland, Ohio, and raised by loving immigrant Italian grandparents, who instilled in me values they held dear — respect, honor, truth, fairness, compassion and to love thy neighbor.

I graduated high school in the summer of 1958, and by fall that year, had enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. After basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, I went on to tech school in Biloxi, Mississippi, where I trained to be a Morse code intercept operator before I was sent to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, in 1959, the same year Alaska became a state. By coincidence, the state of Alaska and I enjoy the same birthday — January 3.

When my four-year enlistment ended, I was fortunate enough to become employed as a U.S. Air Force active reserve/civilian employee at Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage in September 1962. There I was reminded of other important values — duty, responsibility, integrity, self-sacrifice and the belief that no Airman should be left behind, or his or her sacrifice forgotten.

I became the flight dispatcher at the Guard, and we were known as the 144th Air Transport Squadron (Medium). We had 10 C123-J aircraft and enough flight crew to put them in the air at any given time. My duties dictated that if it had anything to do with organizing a flight crew, a mission, passenger and cargo loads, or virtually anything to do with the aircraft, it was my responsibility.

Fast forward to Good Friday, March 27, 1964, 5:36 p.m. and the epic 9.2 earthquake that would change Alaska landscapes and lives forever.

I have often been asked what the intensity of the quake was like. Most of us know what a professional bull riding contest looks like. A rider sitting atop a massive, jumping,

jolting and twisting beast that is doing everything it its power to dislodge the rider who is attempting to stay on for the required eight seconds. That is what the experience was like for me and countless thousands of other Alaskans, not for eight seconds, but for almost four minutes.

When the quake started and then stopped for a few moments, I thought just another temblor. Living in Alaska, one gets used to that. But moments later, it started up again and continued building in strength. As it did, I sprang for the front door. That was as far as I got. My hands firmly gripping the door knob, I was slammed to the floor and spent the rest of the time holding on and praying as I was tossed about like a child whipping a rag doll around; all the while, I was listening to my next-door neighbor and her daughter screaming for help.

When it finally ended I ran next door, gave their twisted entryway door a sharp jolt with my shoulder and entered. Seeing that they were shaken but alright, I ran back outside just in time to see my wife and son pulling into our driveway. They were two blocks from home when the quake hit. My wife pulled to the curb at first thinking it was a flat tire but quickly realized this was no flat.

After escorting my wife and son into our home, checking for structural damage, and finding none, I told her I had to get to Kulis because I knew our unit would be needed.

That night, Kulis would become a hub of unimaginable activity. Yes, we had a lot of internal disarray and some structural damage

to the hanger, but outside, the aircraft sat like silent sentinels waiting to be dispatched to serve the dire needs of Alaskans in distress. Quickly, Air and Army National Guard troops converged on the base, in mass, waiting to be assigned.

Soon, many of the Army National Guard troops who had arrived at Kulis, were transported into Anchorage to assist in recovery, search and rescue and to maintain civil order.

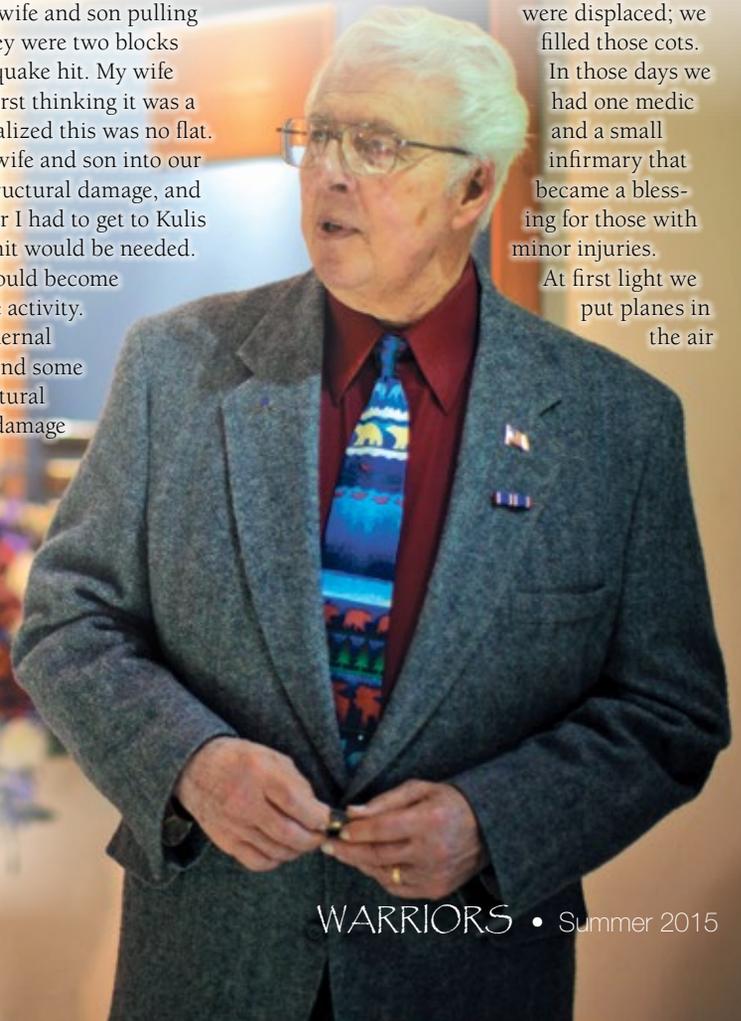
Meanwhile the 63-foot Anchorage International Airport tower had collapsed, killing one and trapping two in the rubble. We dispatched a truck to the site where we extracted those who were trapped. And, because the tower was lost, two of our pilots moved one of the aircraft toward the runway and began broadcasting to incoming civilian aircraft to divert to other locations for landing, pending an inspection of the runway.

At Kulis we setup a temporary morgue location, and in another area, setup 100

cots for civilians who were displaced; we filled those cots. In those days we had one medic and a small infirmary that became a blessing for those with minor injuries.

At first light we put planes in the air

Memorial Wreath. Former Alaska Air National Guardsman Chuck Volanti speaks with Alaska Guardsmen after laying a wreath at the memorial wall in March 2014 to honor his friends and fellow Alaska Guardsmen who were killed in a plane crash in April 1964. Four of his fellow Guardsmen were killed when they were flying out on a humanitarian relief mission in Alaska. Volanti was one of the first responders during the “Good Friday” earthquake in 1964 when he worked as a flight dispatcher for the Air Guard. Photo: Capt. Bernie Kale, U.S. Air Force Reserve



Quake Damage. Chuck Volanti, former Alaska Air National Guardsman, stands near the corner of 7th Ave. and L St. in downtown Anchorage on March 30, 1964. He was taking photos of the damage the 1964 "Good Friday" earthquake caused when it struck just three days prior.

Photo: Courtesy Chuck Volanti

destined for Seward, Valdez and other hard-hit towns that were in desperate need. In the aftermath of all the death and destruction, and when the dust had settled, it was discovered that an estimated 130 lives were lost.

The Kulis Air National Guard family would soon also experience the tragic loss of life.

That tragedy would occur three weeks later, April 25, 1964, while flying a humanitarian relief mission and transporting Gov. William Egan and his entourage to Valdez. Shortly after takeoff, the Alaska Air National Guard lost a flight crew and its adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Thomas P. Carroll, when their aircraft crashed on takeoff into the Bay of Valdez.

The flight crew included my boss and pilot, Lt. Col. Thomas Norris Sr., and good friends, Maj. James Rowe and Tech. Sgt. Kenneth Ayers. These were not ordinary men. They were all heroes, patriots and dedicated to the citizens of Alaska. Because we were a small unit, we were more like family than a formal military command. Their loss was devastating to us all.

Because of the impacts these men had on my life, last year I contacted the governor of Alaska and all Alaska state legislators to seek



support for legislation honoring all citizens of Alaska who endured the greatest tragedy in state history, while remembering these men, and recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the "Good Friday Earthquake."

My request was accepted and legislation was introduced as House Joint Resolution 23, "Proclaiming March 27, 2014, as Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day." The names of these are written within the legislation that was signed into existence March 4, 2014.

And finally, during this 2015 legislative session, I asked the legislature one last time to make the date of March 27th a "day of remembrance, each year," and they came through and passed House Bill 35, March 27, 2015, the 51st Anniversary of the quake. The bill is entitled "Great Alaska

Good Friday Earthquake Remembrance Day," and forever memorializes generations and thousands of Alaskans of the past, along with the men I have already mentioned.

I have never forgotten those selfless giants of the past — their dedication, their commitment to the citizens of Alaska, their integrity, their sense of honor and the ultimate sacrifice they made. Nor have I ever forgotten the selfless sacrifices of those Alaskans from the past who displayed tremendous resilience, in rebuilding their lives, cities, towns, villages and communities. Like the Phoenix of old, they arose from the ashes of death, destruction and despair to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles to make life better for all who would follow. And to all of them, I wish Godspeed. ■

Serving Veterans

By Verdie Bowen, Veterans Affairs

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – We are blessed here in Alaska because our veteran community continues to provide honors to our veterans from past conflicts.

Recently, at an event celebrating World War II and Korean War veterans who visited the war memorials in Washington, D.C., Colony High School JROTC cadets honored these veterans by performing a sword salute for them to pass under.

Honors such as these do not start and stop on just one day a year. They occur every day. Alaskans are some of the best at honoring our veterans.

Alaska is the first in the nation to have the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and 27 Alaska Tribal Health Programs sign a medical sharing and reimbursement agreement. The agreement strengthens both the VA and ATHP, helps increase access to care, and enhances continuity of treatment for eligible Native and non-Native veterans close to ATHP services; particularly those in remote and rural areas. The best way to think of this initiative is our veterans in Alaska will finally have VA-covered health care where they live.

Prior to this agreement veterans only had access to five VA facilities in the state, and after the agreement, our veterans have access to 127 facilities that provide urgent and basic care. This program has helped us greatly in the enrollment of eligible veterans in our most remote areas and because of these enrollments we are seeing an increase in disability claims as well.

This shows again that Alaska has revolutionized the way the VA and community providers work together to deliver care to our veterans. This new transformation has proven that with enough innovation, a solution can be found. The program is easily ported to other states and American Indian tribes looking to sustain a quality health care program that provides equality to their veteran population.

This program allowed us to receive the 2015 U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award for increasing access to VA benefits and services.

The great thing about Alaskans is we are different than the others in our nation and are committed to serving our veterans, one veteran at a time. ■

Territorial Guard Defense of Alaska Recalls American Revolution

Story and photo by David Bedard, JBER Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Breed’s Hill. June 17, 1775. Peter Brown, a private in the colonial militia, clutched his muzzleloader close while he surveyed Boston Harbor for enemy activity. Having helped repel two waves of British soldiers, Brown was running critically low on ammunition and didn’t think he would survive another assault.

Now reinforced by Royal Marines, British forces would smash through the American-dug redoubt and push out any Colonial threat to British-occupied Boston.

Though beaten, the Americans inflicted twice as many casualties as they had sustained.

In a letter to his mother, Brown recalled how afraid he was during what would become known as the Battle of Bunker Hill. Still, the Westford, Massachusetts, native wrote of his determination to continue the fight for his homeland.

“... If we should be call’d again to action I hope to have courage and strength to act my part valiently in defence of our Liberties and Country,” Brown’s letter related through creative spelling and grammar.

Nearly 170 years later, 12-year-old Sam Herman heard about the Alaska Territorial Guard during an enrollment drive to recruit Alaska Natives in the effort to abate Imperial Japanese operations in the territory.

Like Brown, Herman was compelled to volunteer to protect his home.

Like Brown, the Yupik boy knew he would potentially fight a military force far more powerful than what could be mustered by the villagers. Still, the Native wanted to fight.

Herman’s nephew, Alaska Army National Guard Lt. Col. Wayne Don, 103rd Civil Support Team commander, remembers how Herman — who passed away in January — led a life of service that was a life-long example for the officer.

“Into his later years, he spent a lot of time ministering to the sick and the woebegone at the hospital,” Don said. “He felt especially called to minister to families who fell on really hard times. It reflects on his character as a Soldier and his desire to serve.”

The colonel said, for years, he didn’t know any of his relatives had served in the ATG until the self-described World War II buff was reading “Men of the Tundra: Eskimos at War,” a book written by ATG architect Army Air Corps Maj. Marvin “Muktuk” Marston.

At the back of the book, Don found the rolls for all of communities Marston had canvassed. When he thumbed to his home village of Mekoryuk, Nunivak Island, he was surprised by what he found.

“As I got to the end of the book, and I started looking specifically at Nunivak Island, I saw my grandfather [and] some of the old men in the community who never uttered a word about having wartime service,” Don recalled. “I had always considered myself a first-generation military person in my family.”

The Guard officer discovered both of his grandfathers served with the ATG, as did just about every one of his uncles.

“Everybody volunteered, even men into their 60s and 70s who didn’t miss the opportunity to serve, because it was the right thing to do and their country and community needed them,” Don explained. “They all — to a man — answered the call.”



A Legacy of Service. Lt. Col. Wayne Don, Alaska Army National Guard 103rd Civil Support Team commander, holds a photo of his uncle Sam Herman, who served with the Alaska Territorial Guard during World War II. Herman is pictured during his subsequent service with the Alaska Army National Guard. A statuette of an ATG scout keeps vigil on Don’s desk.

Don said Herman had to lie about his age to enroll as a member of the ATG.

Though too young to vote or drink, the young recruit could wield a rifle.

“If you were able, if you could carry a weapon, if you could carry your own weight, then that was the criteria,” he said. “[Herman] was drawn to service. I’m sure, at some point, somebody challenged him about his age, but he was successfully able to argue that.”

Don said Mekoryuk Natives were recruited to patrol the east side of Nunivak Island looking for any Japanese activity.

Though the ATG was disbanded in 1947, Herman would continue his service with the Alaska Army National Guard as an infantry scout beginning in 1953, even before Alaska’s statehood.

Herman moved to Bethel, and then to Anchorage where he worked for the Alaska Railroad.

Following the devastating 1964 earthquake, Herman was activated as part of the state’s response.

Though he wasn’t fighting the British or reporting Imperial Japanese activity, Herman again answered the call to serve his community.

Don said this commitment to community is a common thread between the colonial militias, the ATG and today’s National Guard.

“The Alaska Territorial Guard and the modern-day National Guard both have very similar roots,” Don said. “The modern-day National Guard — as we know it — started out as a militia during the Revolution and has carried on for years.

“These are examples of the type of organization where someone recognized that the most committed Soldiers and the most committed volunteers are people who live in the area,” he continued. “History has shown us that this type of Soldier is your best eyes and ears. They’re very committed to a cause that involves their families and their communities.”

Alaska State Defense Force

Rock and a Hard Place

Story and photos by Capt. Melissa Holl, ASDF



Don continues the tradition of serving his local community with the 103rd CST, a small unit charged with augmenting local and regional terrorism response capabilities in events known or suspected to involve weapons of mass destruction.

Don's service didn't go unnoticed by his uncle.

"He always told me he was proud of me, and he always told me how it was important to serve," he said. "He very much appreciated people who continued to serve, and he had a very special place in his heart for Soldiers, even into advanced age."

Enscenced on Don's desk is a small statuette of an ATG scout, keeping vigil with his Springfield rifle.

The figure evokes the Minuteman seen in National Guard insignia. It evokes the long tradition of citizens serving their communities in a military capacity.

Before the Declaration of Independence, Brown served Massachusetts when he stood up to a professional European army.

Today, Don serves Alaska and the United States by keeping 103rd CST ever ready to respond to WMD.

More than seven decades ago, Herman served Nunivak Island by carrying a rifle that was almost too heavy for him. For Don, Herman's example is one he will never forget. ■

HOMER, Alaska – The Alaska State Defense Force participated in a major exercise in March with multiple agencies including but not limited to the U.S. Army, Alaska National Guard, State of Alaska Health and Social Services, City of Homer, Kenai Peninsula Borough, and two Peninsula hospitals and their staff.

The exercise, Rock and a Hard Place, was designed for state and federal resources to respond and assist the community of Homer and the Kenai Peninsula Borough following a large notional mudslide that caused damage to the South Peninsula Hospital. This mudslide was also to have closed travel routes and lines of communication.

The mass casualty exercise was created to use swift medical response of the state's

Health and Social Services emergency response capabilities and patient movement by way of UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to Central Peninsula Hospital in Soldotna from the damaged hospital, South Peninsula Hospital in Homer.

The Alaska State Defense Force augmented the effort in multiple support roles in the exercise including aiding setup of shelters at the Homer Airport, providing backup communications as needed, directing traffic and assisting in transporting mock victims to the helicopters for transport to Soldotna.

The Alaska State Defense Force was privileged to augment the National Guard and first responders to practice expediting aid to the people of southcentral Alaska. ■



Communications Capabilities. Col. Doyle Holmes, Alaska State Defense Force, assists with backup communications equipment at the Homer Airport during Exercise Rock and a Hard Place. The Alaska State Defense Force served as a liaison to the Joint Operations Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.



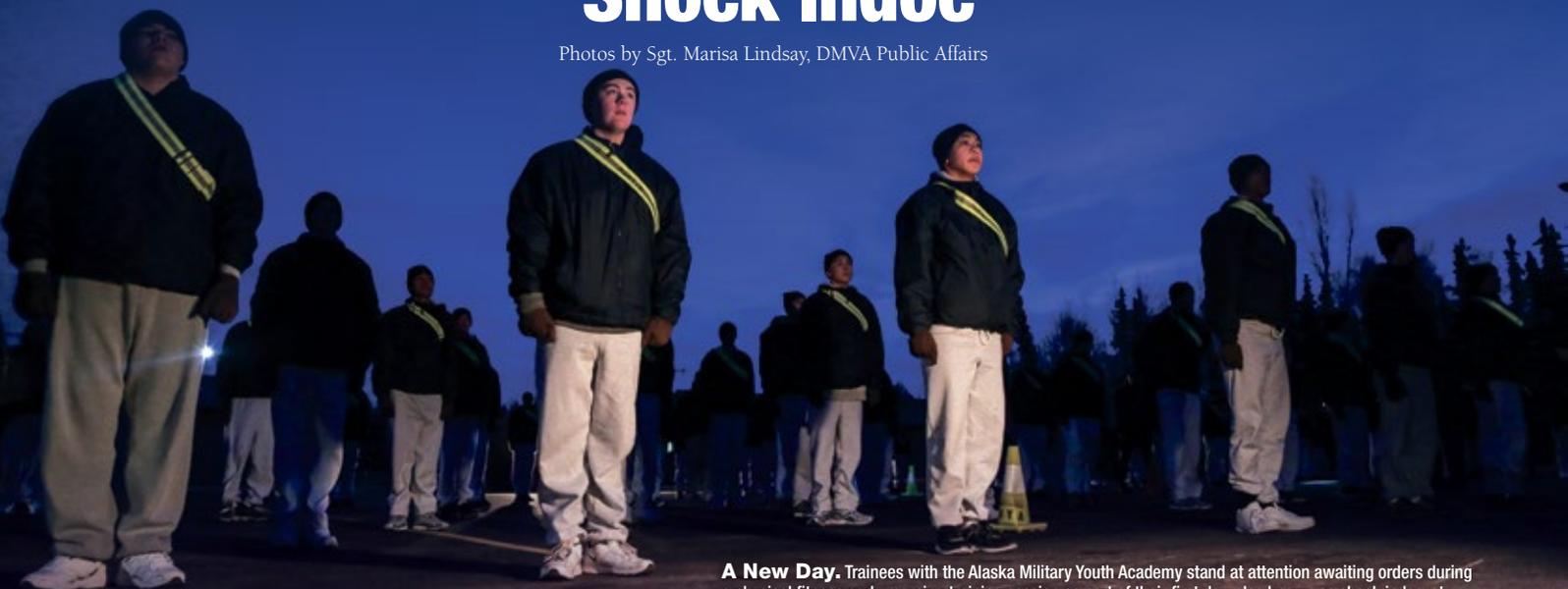
Patient Transfer. An Alaska State Defense Force member helps deliver a mock patient to an awaiting UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter for transportation to Soldotna from Homer during a disaster exercise that simulated a notional mudslide.



Directing Emergency Vehicles. Lt. Col. John James, Alaska State Defense Force, directs ambulances for offloading simulated patients at the Homer Airport during Exercise Rock and a Hard Place in March.

Alaska Military Youth Academy Shock Indoc

Photos by Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



A New Day. Trainees with the Alaska Military Youth Academy stand at attention awaiting orders during a physical fitness early morning training session as part of their first day, also known as shock indoc, at Camp Carroll, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, in April. The AMYA is a program for 16- to 18-year-old Alaskans that leads, trains, and mentors while providing values, skills, education and self-discipline. In addition to these skills, cadets work toward the completion of a GED, high school diploma or credit recovery.



Push Up, Push On. Alaska Military Youth Academy cadre team leader Prissilla Burns demonstrates the correct way to execute a push-up during the physical training portion of the first day, better known as shock indoc, at Camp Carroll, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, in April.



Day One. Trainees with the Alaska Military Youth Academy line up in formation after a morning of physical fitness training during shock indoc, also known as Day One. The AMYA Challenge program focuses on academic excellence, leadership and followership, physical fitness, life coping skills, responsible citizenship, vocational training and service to the community.



Physical Strength. A trainee with the Alaska Military Youth Academy positions himself in the push-up starting position during a physical-training filled morning as part of his first day, or shock indoc, in April.

Learning About Life at the Academy



Lunch with Cadets. State of Alaska Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott learns about life at the Alaska Military Youth Academy while having lunch with more than 170 cadets as part of a visit to the academy on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May. The Alaska Military Youth Academy, a division of the Department of Military & Veterans, continues to help intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Partners in Care Provides Support to Service Members

Story and photo by Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



A Collaboration of Care. A memorandum of understanding between Partners in Care and the Alaska National Guard was signed during a workshop at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage in April. Partners in Care is a program that links faith-based organizations that provide specific services with the more than 4,000 Guardsmen and their families to address the unique challenges service in the Guard presents. In attendance were, from the left, Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ted McGovern, Alaska Army National Guard; JP Ouellette, program administrator and family mediator for the Conflict Resolution Center; Joel Brown, family pastor at Faith Christian Community; Col. Joseph Streff, commander of the Alaska Army National Guard; and Don Marson, senior pastor at Grace and Truth Community Church.

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – A newly formed partnership between the Alaska National Guard and faith-based organizations is benefiting Alaska National Guardsmen who are in need of support.

Partners in Care is a program that links faith-based organizations that provide specific services with the more than 4,000 Guardsmen and their families to address the unique challenges service in the Guard presents.

“We are building a network of support,” said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ted McGovern, Alaska Army National Guard. “Instead of all these different agencies working independently to support service members, we are trying to synchronize the support.”

McGovern referred to the support network as a web that will hopefully catch more of the service members who fall through the cracks and do not receive help.

From grief and marital issues to financial hardships and parenting struggles, PIC facilitates an efficient referral opportunity for chaplains to help Guardsmen receive assistance. Guard members can go through their unit chaplain for support.

“The need is great and the hurt is great,” explained McGovern. “There are a lot of people who struggle with life’s challenges and we want to do everything we can to reach and help them.”

In the last seven months, chaplains have been contacted by more than 1,000 Alaska Guard members. This has generated more than 100 counseling sessions.

Five faith-based organizations have signed an agreement of partnership with the AKNG since its inception in October 2014: Eagle River Grace Church, Eagle River Presbyterian Church,

Faith Christian Community, Grace and Truth Christian Church and the Conflict Resolution Center.

To further assist efforts, Partners in Care has linked up with the Alaska Forget-Me-Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families. The coalition’s focus is on statewide collaboration, community outreach, identifying gaps in services, minimizing duplication and maximizing use of existing funding.

Some of the services that Partners in Care can refer Guardsmen to include addiction recovery, mediation, youth and adult fellowship groups, pastoral care and counseling, grief support and conflict.

“We are really looking forward to the possibilities this program has to offer in terms of creating a mutual appreciation and growing understanding between Alaska communities and the military members serving here,” said State Command Chaplain (Col.) Richard Koch.

If you are a Guard member or family, or you know someone in need, please contact the full-time chaplain staff:

- State Command Chaplain (Col.) Richard Koch, richard.j.koch14.mil@mail.mil 907-428-6904
- Army Guard Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Theodore McGovern, theodore.j.mcgovern.mil@mail.mil 907-428-6547
- 176th Wing Chaplain (Capt.) Angela Erickson angela.erickson.2@us.af.mil 907-551-0268
- 168th Wing Chaplain (currently in the process of hiring) ■

Alaska Army National Guard Commander Retires

By Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges retired after nearly 35 years of National Guard service during a ceremony held at the Alaska National Guard Armory in May.

A career National Guardsman who served in Oregon, Washington and Alaska units, Bridges started his journey by enlisting during the Cold War — a post-World War II rivalry between the United States and the then-Soviet Union.

“I enlisted to be an infantryman,” Bridges said. “I wanted to be ready to fight the Soviet Union and the Iranians who had taken Americans hostage.”

A year after enlisting as a private in the Oregon Army National Guard Sept. 9, 1980, Bridges was commissioned as an infantry second lieutenant. The decision to commission was based on following a path that his uncle, who had been killed in Vietnam in 1967, had embarked.

“My uncle had enlisted in the Guard, made platoon sergeant and then commissioned through officer candidate school,” explained Bridges. “I wanted to follow his path and replace him in the ranks. I also wanted to be an enlisted member first to know what it was like.”

Between pinning on his first pair of mosquito wings and star, Bridges served in a number of command and staff assignments.

In 2005, Bridges graduated from the U.S. Army War College and was awarded a Master of Science degree in strategic studies. He also deployed for a year in Iraq, serving as deputy team leader and governance advisor of an

embedded provincial reconstruction team in Baghdad during 2007 and 2008.

Bridges's favorite part of his journey has been serving beside amazing people and watching them thrive and figure out ways to accomplish hard tasks he assigned.

“I'm going to miss the people and being around a large population of very like-minded individuals who want to serve. The National Guard has been an amazing team to be a part of,” Bridges said. “Being able to be in the woods, on firing ranges and then in combat, side by side with the same incredible people, has been so rewarding.”

After serving as the deputy chief of staff for logistics, Bridges was chosen to be the assistant adjutant general and commander of the Alaska Army National Guard. While serving as the ATAG, Bridges was also selected to be the first National Guard deputy commanding general for the Combined Arms Support Command and Sustainment Center of Excellence in Fort Lee, Virginia, where he was a liaison for Army Guard and Reserve students going through transportation, quartermaster and ordnance schools and the Soldier support institute.

“My greatest accomplishment has been convincing young people that service is bigger than themselves,” Bridges said. “Service to one's state and nation is the most honorable calling I know, and I have had the privilege to witness these young people raise their hand and enlist or commission them along the way.”

From anti-armor platoon leader and recruiting and retention manager to his first



Honorable Service. U.S. Army Alaska Commander Maj. Gen. Michael Shields presents Alaska Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges with a certificate of appreciation for his service in the armed forces during Bridges's retirement ceremony. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

command of the 1st Battalion (Scout), 297th Infantry, in rural Nome, Alaska, Bridges's diverse career has taken him across the world, to all 50 states and several countries.

Most recently, Bridges was asked to step up as the acting adjutant general during a period of time that the Alaska National Guard needed a strong leader to help steer the command climate and organization in a different direction.

“The opportunities I have had as a Guardsman blows me away. It's been a remarkable opportunity to do what I have done for nearly 35 years,” Bridges said. “I served, and no one can ever take that away from me.”

Before diving back into the civilian workforce, Bridges plans on taking a couple of months to spend time with his wife, Anne, and concentrate on volunteer work.

“There are a lot of career opportunities in this state; I just have to feel like I'm helping others in that capacity,” Bridges said. “In addition to my work with Rotary, I will be chairing a steering committee with other community members to support service members, veterans and their families through the Alaska Forget-Me-Not Coalition.”

“I'm not ready to put my feet up on a desk or drink mimosas on the back deck,” added Bridges. “I feel like I have plenty of productive years ahead of me.” ■



Casing the Colors. Alaska Army National Guard State Command Sgt. Maj. Pamela Harrington prepares to case Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges's one-star flag during his retirement ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May. Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs



Official Portrait. Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, and Gov. Bill Walker present retired Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges and his wife, Anne, with his official adjutant general portrait during the Alaska National Guard change of command ceremony a few weeks after Bridges's retirement. The portrait is hanging in the Alaska National Guard armory next to the drawings of the Alaska National Guard's legacy of adjutant generals who came before him. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

Blessing and Cleansing. Gov. Bill Walker, center in red and black Tlingit button blanket, and Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott, left of governor, followed by Alaskan Command Lt. Gen. Russell Handy, Alaska National Guard Adjutant General Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, and retired Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges participate in a Blessing and Cleansing ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson prior to the Alaska National Guard change of command ceremony. The Blessing and Cleansing ceremony is a complex and symbolic event to reinvigorate the spirit of the National Guard that is embodied in the honor pole, which was carved by George Bennett and his son James Bennett in Sitka, Alaska, to honor the Alaska National Guard's past and present military service, seen in the background. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



Alaska National Guard Welcomes New Commander

By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – The Alaska National Guard officially welcomed its new commander during a change-of-command ceremony held at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May.

The ceremony was presided over by Gov. Bill Walker.

Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, ceremoniously accepted the passing of the colors from retired Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges, symbolizing the history and loyalty of the servicemen and women and the incoming commander's commitment and responsibility of the unit.

Hummel, a 1982 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, its third class that accepted females, retired from the active-duty Army in 2012, after serving 30 years as a military intelligence officer.

Hummel's military life predates her attendance to West Point, however. The daughter



Bright Future. Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel shares a laugh with Gov. Bill Walker after the official change-of-command ceremony in which she ceremoniously accepted the passing of the colors and took charge of the Alaska National Guard.

Photo: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal, DMVA Public Affairs

of a career Soldier, she was born in an Army hospital in Vicenza, Italy.

From the age of seven, I was very intrigued by the Profession of Arms, Hummel explained. Although this was in the 1960s era, my family was very open to anything that my sister or I wanted to do.

Through the duration of her military career, Hummel served in a number of staff and command capacities, both in-garrison and overseas, to include several assignments as a professor at West Point.

"I didn't start out saying that I was going to stay in the military for 30 years," Hummel revealed. "What I said was, 'I'm going to stay in the Army until I don't enjoy my job, I don't enjoy my organization, or I have a bad boss' – and 30 years later, I retired."

This past January, Hummel was given an opportunity to don the uniform once again after Gov. Bill Walker named her Alaska's new, and first female, adjutant general.

"It was not a difficult decision for me to tap her on the shoulder and ask her," Walker said. "Alaska's fortunate to have her at the helm of the Alaska National Guard."

Hummel said, right now, the Guard is extremely resilient and that everyone is becoming more comfortable with the new leadership.

"I looked at it from the very first day as we cannot change what happened in the past, but we can reflect and make sure that similar problems don't occur in the future," Hummel said. "We're looking throughout the organization to see everything that we were doing, why we are doing it, is it legal, is it ethical, is it in doctrine, does it make sense for our forces, for our organization."

Hummel's organizational vision focuses on three main areas: implementing a viable Arctic strategy, increasing emergency management capacity and expanding engagement with Alaska communities.

"They are learning that the new leadership has a vision and we are communicating the vision, we are communicating our core values," Hummel said. "I will work very hard to ensure the Alaska National Guard is properly resourced, trained, supported and respected. My job is to create conditions for their success."

Bridges, who was the acting adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard from Sept. 2014 until Feb. 5, 2015, retired in May. ■



Passing the Colors. Gov. Bill Walker, Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hildreth and retired Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges conduct a rite of passage when one assumes command. The passing of the colors, which represents the commander's authority and commitment to the Soldiers, is passed from the outgoing to the incoming commander. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs



Appreciation. During the Alaska National Guard change-of-command ceremony, Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, left, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, shakes hands with retired Brig. Gen. Mike Bridges, outgoing acting adjutant general, at the Alaska National Guard armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in May. Gov. Bill Walker presided over the ceremony while officially welcoming Hummel to her position. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

Alaska Air National Guard Commander Retires

Story and photos by Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien retired after 31 years of National Guard service during a ceremony held at the Kulis Theater in April.

Unique to most National Guard journeys, O'Brien's career has taken him throughout the United States, including California, Alabama and Washington, D.C., as well as many deployments overseas.

But O'Brien spent a good portion of his career as a member of the Alaska Air National Guard. He served as a pilot and commander with the 210th Rescue Squadron at Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage prior to the 176th Wing's move to JBER. He was also commander of the 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, and for the last two years, he has served as commander of the Alaska Air National Guard and assistant adjutant general — Air.

"I always say that regardless of where my travels with the military have led me, Alaska

has always found a way to bring me back home," O'Brien said. "That's how I've come to know Alaska ... as home."

O'Brien has had a diverse military career. He began his career as a bassoonist with the California Air National Guard's 561st Air Force Band, then earned his wings in 1989 as an HH-3E helicopter pilot. His military legacy includes flight time with eight aircraft, more than 3,000 flight hours, numerous combat deployments, aircraft safety and modernization and crafting long-term relevancy within Alaska.

"I couldn't have asked for a better career and better people to serve with," O'Brien added. "I have been a part of an exceptional force and an exceptional team, and I'm so honored."

Col. Karen Mansfield took over as Alaska Air National Guard commander and assistant adjutant general — Air.

"I cannot think of a finer officer to lead the Alaska Air National Guard," O'Brien said of



Supportive Spouse. Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, former commander of the Alaska Air National Guard and assistant adjutant general — Air, smiles with his wife, Catherine, after presenting flowers to her in recognition of her support of his 31 years of military service.

Mansfield during the change of command ceremony.

Confident leaving Alaska Air Guardsmen to their new commander, O'Brien did impart some final advice to his troops.

"To all of our Airmen, always remember, we are American Airmen. We do not falter and we do not fail," O'Brien said.

Post-retirement, O'Brien looks forward to going back to school. He and his wife, Catherine, along with their dogs, will move closer to their parents in the Pacific Northwest. They plan to relax, travel and find ways to continue serving the military through veterans organizations. ■



Legion of Merit. Alaska National Guard Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general, presents the State of Alaska Legion of Merit award to Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, former commander of the Alaska Air National Guard and assistant adjutant general — Air, during his retirement ceremony at Kulis Theater on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in April.

Who We Are ...

Where is your favorite place to hike?

**Chief Master Sgt.
Wink Hinkley**

176th Logistics Readiness Squadron



"Thunderbird Falls because it is the No. 1 family hike, and I like to take my kids. You can push a stroller all the way to the falls."

**Chief Warrant Officer
Four Pamela Vitt**

1-207th Aviation



"Hatchers Pass is right out my back door. It's beautiful and doesn't get any better on a nice day."

Hans Klodt

Alaska Military Youth Academy



"I do most of my hiking in the winter and Turnagain Pass has the best snow."

**Staff Sgt.
Laurel Foster**

176th Security Forces Squadron



"Flattop has a great view, and it is easy to access in Anchorage. I take all of my out-of-town friends up there for the best view of Anchorage."

**Staff Sgt.
Ivan Cuevas**

Recruiting and Retention Battalion



"Twin Peaks Trail because it is very challenging yet achievable. The view from the top is amazing and has an overview of Eklutna Lake. I often see Dall sheep and wolves there."

Alaska Air Guard Leader Takes Command

By Tech. Sgt. N. Alicia Halla, 176th Wing Public Affairs



New Commander. Col. Karen Mansfield, center, receives the Alaska Air National Guard's flag of command from Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, at the Talkeetna Theater on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in April. Mansfield assumed command from Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, right, who had led the organization for the last two years.

Photo: Tech. Sgt. N. Alicia Halla, 176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – A new commander for the Alaska Air National Guard officially took charge at a change-of-command ceremony here in April.

The outgoing commander, Brig. Gen. Timothy O'Brien, returned the organization's command flag to the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, Brig. Gen. (Alaska) Laurie Hummel, after more than two years of holding command.

Hummel, in turn, passed the flag to Col. Karen Mansfield, signifying Mansfield's acceptance of responsibility.

"I cannot think of a finer officer to head the Alaska Air National Guard," O'Brien said of Mansfield.

As assistant adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard-Air, Mansfield will ensure the training and equipping of more than 2,000 Alaskan citizen Airmen in two flying wings, here and at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks.

Mansfield returns to the Alaska Air Guard, where she served from 2000 to 2010, after

serving more than four years with the Washington Air Guard, most recently as the director of staff.

"Gen. O'Brien, congratulations on a job well done," Hummel said. "One of the signs of your success will be the ability of your organization seamlessly to adapt to new leadership, and I have confidence they will. Col. Mansfield, I look forward to working with you for our Airmen, our state and our nation." ■



Back in Alaska. Col. Karen Mansfield takes the oath of office upon her return to the Alaska Air National Guard in April. She returned to the Alaska Air National Guard to become the assistant adjutant general. Photo: Sgt. Marisa Lindsay, DMVA Public Affairs

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

Alaska Railroad Honored

By Jamie Abordonado, ESGR



Pro Patria Award. Alaska Railroad Board Chairwoman Linda Leary, left; Alaska Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve State Chairman Craig Campbell President, center; and Alaska Railroad President and Chief Executive Officer William O'Leary display the coveted ESGR Pro Patria Award, which was given to the Alaska Railroad for its unwavering support of its Guard and Reserve employees. Photo: Courtesy ESGR

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Pro Patria Award is presented annually to one small, one large and one public sector employer in each state or territory by its state committee.

Recipients have demonstrated the greatest support to Guard and Reserve employees through their leadership and practices, including adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to serve in the National Guard and Reserves. This is the highest level award that may be bestowed by a state ESGR committee, further awardees are selected by the state chairman.

Alaska Railroad received this award in April.

"My supervisors' professionalism and constant communication has made the process for attending scheduled training simple and has given me the confidence that my employer supports me and my training efforts," said Spc. James King, 297th Engineer Company, U.S. Army Reserve. "There were never any questions about my military time or orders, only support! My supervisor understands and appreciates all the employees of the Alaska Railroad who are also in the military and expresses appreciation often to myself, and I'm sure others as well."

Throughout the past eight years, the Alaska Railroad has also received six "My Boss is a Patriot" awards through direct nominations by employees who are also members of the National Guard or Reserve. ■

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- .5 Vocational Education/CWE

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WWW.AKMYA.ORG



My Boss is a Patriot. From left, John McDonald, co-owner and founder of Carlile Transportation Systems, Inc.; Shawn Rall, Alaska ESGR employer support specialist; and Sgt. Bryan Kruse, Alaska Army National Guard. Congratulations all around to Carlile Transportation Systems, Inc. for receiving the "My Boss is a Patriot" award for outstanding employer support of an Alaska Army National Guard member. Kruse said about Carlile: "I receive amazing support for my drill weekends and even with a busy work schedule, they work around it no questions asked. They have taught me a very valuable skill set, which showed through during my deployment." This is the fourth "My Boss is a Patriot" award for Carlile. Photo: Courtesy ESGR

Awards • Decorations • Promotions

Meritorious Service Medal



Maj Ryan D. King 168th OG
 Robin R. Barrett 168th ARW
 Walter D. Ames 168th MXS
 Daniel J. Hauer 168th MOF
 CMSgt Chad E. Parsons..... 168th SWS
 SMSgt Jeffrey Watson..... 249th AS
 Maj Anna Fischer 249th AS
 MSgt Carrie Curtis 176th ADS
 Maj Wayne King 249th AS
 Capt James Campbell..... 249th AS
 Maj Matthew Harper 210th RQS
 LtCol Richard Watson..... 210th RQS
 MSgt TL Stanbro..... 176th OSS
 TSgt George Lewis..... 144th AS
 SMSgt Brian Richmond 176th MXS
 MSgt Denny Wallette..... 176th AMXS
 SMSgt Dennis Mobley..... 176th AMXS
 COL Chad J. Parker 297th BfSB
 MAJ Mark A. MelsonJFHQ-Army
 MAJ James V. Siedenburg..JFHQ-Army
 CPT William J. Yeo..... 103rd CST
 MSG William K. Schwenke... JFHQ-Army
 MSG Megan K. SimonoJFHQ-Army
 SFC Noli C. Batac..... 38th TC
 SFC Kevin C. Earl 207th ENG
 UTILITIES
 SFC Jason C. Rode..... 103rd CST
 SFC James N. WhitmoreJFHQ-Army
 SSG David C. Hockin..... 297th BfSB
 SSG Frederick V. Moore..... 1-207th AVN

Army Commendation Medal



MSG Andrew C. Kennedy ...JFHQ-Army
 SSG Luis J. ElizaortizJFHQ-Army
 SGT Dakota J. Volkman..... 38th TC
 SGT Dusti R. Weekly.....JFHQ-Army

Air Force Commendation Medal



MSgt Robert W. Carr..... 168th ARW
 TSgt Julie A. Kobernuss 168th MSG

Sarah J. Willey 168th LRS
 Daniel F. Kennett..... 168th CF
 Dusty L. Spencer 168th MXS
 SSgt Timothy Lezama 176th OSS
 SMSgt Thomas Cubit 176th AMXS
 MSgt Gary Ahlstrand 176th AMXS
 MSgt Mark Patricks 176th MXS
 MSgt Elizabeth Bloomer... 176th AMXS
 TSgt Corey Largo 212th RQS
 Maj Matthew Harper 210th RQS
 Capt Kevin Kelly..... 210th RQS
 1Lt Christopher Brunner..... 144th AS
 MSgt Troy Freeman..... 176th MXS
 SSgt Scott Toms 176th AMXS
 MSgt John Hendrick 176th MXS
 MSgt Michael Sicotte 176th MXS
 Daniel Green..... 210th RS
 TSgt Arlene Carlos 176th OSS
 SSgt Erin Soellers 176th AMXS
 Aaron Hug..... 176th MXS
 SSgt Edward Lee 176th MXG

Air Force Achievement Medal



SrA Mollie L. Vice 168th MDG
 TSgt Robert J. Albaugh 168th AMXS
 SSgt Matthew W. Cavan ... 168th AMXS
 TSgt Justin M. Freling 168th AMXS
 SSgt Robert A. Segla..... 168th AMXS
 TSgt Shawn C. Bush 168th AMXS
 SrA Luke I. Sjoblom..... 168th AMXS
 A1C James C. Turpin..... 168th AMXS
 TSgt Christopher L. Moore 168th AMXS
 TSgt Brian Cable..... 176th AMXS
 SSgt Rachel Kelty 249th AS
 SSgt Michael Kelty..... 249th AS
 SSgt Quinn Williamson..... 176th OSS
 SrA Raymond Clement..... 176th AMXS
 SSgt Ferdie Villaflores 176th OSS
 TSgt Taggart Hooper 176th AMXS
 SrA Daniel Reinhart..... 176th AMXS
 MSgt Joseph Dirksen..... 176th AMXS
 MSgt Francis Nelson..... 176th AMXS
 SSgt Michael Hofmann 176th AMXS
 SrA Danielle Johnson..... 176th AMXS
 SrA William Vera 176th AMXS

SSgt Eric Johnson..... 176th MXS
 TSgt Shane Jolly 176th AMXS
 MSgt Paul Deguzman..... 176th AMXS
 TSgt Silverin Bilbao..... 176th AMXS
 SSgt Matthew Powell..... 176th AMXS
 SSgt Carolos Gonzalez..... 176th AMXS
 SrA Nicholas Hoffer..... 176th AMXS
 TSgt Stephan Walker 176th AMXS
 MSgt Steven Medina..... 176th AMXS
 SrA Tobias Morgan..... 176th AMXS
 TSgt Robert Dubinsky 176th MXS
 TSgt Darick Butman..... 176th MXS
 Capt Benjamin Leonard..... 210th RQS
 TSgt Francis Henderson 176th CPTF
 SrA Melissa Romero 176th OSS
 SrA Robert Wasser..... 176th WG
 Lt Col Guy Hayes..... 176th WG
 SSgt Jacob Eibeck..... 176th MXS
 SSgt Mark Llaneza..... 176th MXS
 SSgt Arnel Ramos 176th MXS

Alaska Legion of Merit



BG Leon M. BridgesJFHQ-Army
 COL Hunt W. Kerrigan.....JFHQ-Army
 LTC Frank L. Veith 207th MFTR
 SCSM Pamela B. HarringtonJFHQ-Army
 Ms. Roberta D. Carney AK DHS&EM
 Mr. John W. Madden..... AK DHS&EM

Alaska Distinguished Service Medal



LTC Timothy G. AbrellJFHQ-Army
 MAJ Robert A. Gawrys 38th TC
 MAJ Mark A. MelsonJFHQ-Army
 MAJ James V. Siedenburg..JFHQ-Army
 CPT William J. Yeo..... 103rd CST
 MSG William K. Schwenke .JFHQ-Army
 MSG Megan K. SimonoJFHQ-Army
 SFC Kevin C. Earl 207th ENG
 UTILITIES
 SFC Jason C. Rode..... 103rd CST
 SFC James N. WhitmoreJFHQ-Army

Alaska Commendation Medal



LTC Timothy M. BrowerJFHQ-Army
 LTC Theodore J. McGovernJFHQ-Army
 Lt Col David C. McPhetres..... JFHQ-Air
 Lt Col Candis A. Olmstead JFHQ-Air
 MAJ Brian R. Fuchs.....JFHQ-Army
 MAJ Michael Jones..... 103rd CST
 MAJ Richard Mohammadi... 103rd CST
 CPT Alan M. Kelly..... 103rd CST
 CPT Gregory E. Vanison.....JFHQ-Army
 2LT Joy R. Petway..... 297th BfSB
 MSG Holi Holi..... 2-196th INF
 MSG Charles Kidd 2-196th INF
 MSG Alexander Ketterl German
 Armed Forces
 MSgt Nina Kolyvanova 103rd CST
 MSgt Earl J. Singleton..... JFHQ-Air
 SFC Nicholas J. Dutton..... 103rd CST
 SFC Dutchy Inman 103rd CST
 SFC Ivan Sanchez 2-196th INF
 SFC Curtis Stull..... 103rd CST
 SSG Jason Rafael 103rd CST
 SSG Anthony C. Senko 207th MFTR
 SGT Ira M. Chikoyak 1-207th AVN
 SGT Balinda M. O'Neal..... 134th PAD
 SGT Dakota J. Volkman..... 38th TC
 SGT Tosca M. Yeager..... 297th BfSB

Alaska Community Service Medal



SSG Michelle D. Brown 134th PAD
 SSG Sean M. Murphy 49th GMD
 SGT Jamie Montes..... 49th GMD

Alaska State Service Medal



SFC Xavier Bird..... 207th MFTR
 SFC Scott A. Wesierski 207th MFTR
 SSG Christina M. Watson..... MED DET

Promotions

Lieutenant Colonel

Chad Haman..... 207th MFTR
 Robert Seymour..... 1-207th AVN
 Jennifer Casillo..... 176th MOF
 Shane Wallace..... 176th ADS

Major

Benjamin Eby..... 144th AS
 Brittany Vancil..... 144th AS

Captain

Eric Kelly..... 761st MP
 Matthew Crossman..... 249th AS
 Matthew Soukup..... 144th AS

First Lieutenant

Gerren Blair..... 249th AS
 William Bullock..... 144th AS
 Zachary Darnell..... 176th ADS
 Daniel Dickman..... 210th RQS
 Casey Dockstader..... 144th AS
 Gregory Keffer..... 176th ADS
 Wesley Ladd..... 211th RQS
 Renaye Lavin..... 176th ADS
 Desiree Perham..... 176th AMXS
 Stephanie Wilson
 (Manning)..... 210th RQS
 Adam Wabrowetz..... 211th RQS

Warrant Officer Two

Matthew Melvin..... 1-207th AVN

Senior Master Sergeant (E-8 Air)

James A. Johnson..... 168th SFS
 John R. Duhaime..... 168th ARS
 Thomas Cubit..... 176th AMXS
 Terry Friend..... 176th MXS

Patrick Hancox..... 176th LRS
 Dennis Mobley..... 176th AMXS
 Creighton Moore..... 176th MXS
 Douglass Patchin..... 176th ADS

Sergeant First Class (E-7 Army)

John Krajzynski..... 297th BfSB
 Angela Carelock..... 207th MFTR
 Orlando Morera Jr..... 1-297th R&S
 Jason Giese..... 207th CSC

Master Sergeant (E-7 Air)

James Sjoblom..... 168th MXS
 Justin Stuart..... 168th ARW
 Kenneth E. Lewis..... 213th SWS
 Adam Baylor..... 176th MXS
 Leslie Darnell..... 176th MDG
 Kristy Dawbarn..... 176th AMXS
 Joseph Dirksen..... 176th AMXS
 Jess Franco..... 176th SFS
 Christopher Geisler..... 176th MXG
 James Rash..... 176th FSF
 Richard Rauckhorst..... 176th ADS
 John Stone..... 249th AS
 Gregory Walters..... 176th AMXS
 Elijah Wamack..... 210th RS
 James Whitlock..... 176th CES

Staff Sergeant (E-6 Army)

Jayson Garber..... 38th TC
 Jason Schlegel..... 49th MDB
 Kristopher Fager..... 38th TC
 Martin Shockey..... 207th CSC

Joshua Ellis..... 49th MDB
 Robert Haas Jr..... 49th MDB

Technical Sergeant (E-6 Air)

Jasmine Gallatin..... 168th MDG
 Daniel Sutton..... 168th MOF
 Mary Evans..... 168th LRS
 Anthony Robinson..... 168th LRS
 Linda Kubacki..... 168th MXS
 Tristan Rebanal..... 168th MXS
 Christopher Moore..... 168th AMXS
 Michael N. Nash..... 168th AMXS
 Randy L. Reese..... 168th SFS
 Kit D. Dawson..... 168th MOF
 Vincent M. McKiernan..... 168th LRS
 Robert A. Segla..... 168th AMXS
 Jimmy L. Rice..... 168th LRS
 Seth A. England..... 168th ARW
 James P. Brown..... 213th SWS
 Matthew Moore..... 213th SWS
 Kerry N. Miller..... 168th MXS
 Melanie M. McManus..... 168th FSF
 Harvey J. Campbell..... 168th OPS
 Richard Alexander..... 212th RS
 Ryan Burke..... 211th RS
 Kristina Elliott..... 249th AS
 William Fellman..... 176th MXS
 Nancy Halla..... 176th WG
 Christopher Johnson..... 176th MXS
 Dixon Phillips..... 176th LRS
 Michelle Plastow..... 176th MXS
 Megan Stone..... 176th AMXS
 Gloria Thompson..... 176th FSF
 Philip Valenta..... 249th AS
 Robert Williams..... 176th ADS
 Edward Wilson..... 176th MXS

Sergeant (E-5 Army)

Michael Richeal..... 297th BfSB
 Christopher Maclee..... 49th MDB
 Shiloh Bethk..... 49th MDB
 Christina Ramirez..... 49th MDB
 Dakota Volkman..... JFHQ (Army)
 Bryan Kruse..... 1-207th AVN
 Chantz Gaither..... 297th R&S
 Anne Toms..... 1-207th AVN
 Stephen Fritts..... 297th MP

Staff Sergeant (E-5 Air)

Patrick Wilson..... 213th SWS
 Leslie Hamrick..... 168th MXS
 Timothy Wright..... 168th AMXS
 JeanPaul Williams..... 168th FSF
 Megan L. Schreder..... 168th FSF
 Julia M. Meyer..... 168th MXS
 Shaun M. Hageman..... 168th LRS
 Anthony R. Crisostomo..... 168th AMXS
 Crystal A. Telling..... 168th ARS
 Eric Andersen..... 176th MXS
 Calvin Bradley..... 176th LRS
 Kimberly Daugherty..... 249th AS
 Zachary Gowin..... 176th MSG
 Eric Johnson..... 176th MXS
 Sequoya Joseph..... 176th FSF
 Michael Kelty..... 249th AS
 Beaugard Loggins..... 176th MXS
 Derek Ostrom..... 249th AS
 Ryan Pierce..... 176th LRS
 Timothy Shutler..... 176th AMXS
 Levi Tressel..... 176th CES
 Quinn Williamson..... 176th OSS
 Allen Wilson..... 176th FSF

WARRIORS Training Schedule

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

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Air)	19-20	3-4	7-8
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Army)	26-27	17-18	14-15
ALASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD			
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	26-27	17-18/23-25	14-15
38th Troop Command	25-27	17-18	14-15
ALASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD			
168th Air Refueling Wing	19-20	3-4	7-8
176th Wing	19-20	3-4	7-8
ALASKA STATE DEFENSE FORCE			
Headquarters	5-6	10-11	7-8

Governor's Denali Peak Performance Awards

Each year, hundreds of state employees from across Alaska are nominated by their coworkers and the public for a prestigious recognition — the Governor's Denali Peak Performance Awards. Evaluated in six different categories, the individuals and teams who are selected as winners and honorable mentions truly represent the best of state service. Congratulations to the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs honorees.

Leadership Award
Winner

Verdie A. Bowen, Veterans Affairs

Coworker Recognition Award
Honorable Mention

Jeremy Hegge, Alaska Military Youth Academy

Customer Service Excellence Award
Honorable Mention

Forrest E. Powell III, Veterans Affairs



Leadership. Verdie Bowen, center, director of the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs, is presented the Leadership Award by Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Larry Hartig, right, and Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Deputy Commissioner Bob Doehl. Photo: Courtesy Office of Gov. Bill Walker

Customer Service. Forrest E. Powell III, State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs, is awarded the Honorable Mention for the Customer Service Excellence Award by Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Deputy Commissioner Bob Doehl in May. Photo: Courtesy Office of Gov. Bill Walker



Coworker Recognition. Jeremy Hegge, of the Alaska Military Youth Academy, receives the Honorable Mention for the Coworker Recognition Award by Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Deputy Commissioner Bob Doehl in May. Photo: Courtesy Office of Gov. Bill Walker

Changes of Command and Responsibility

Brig. Gen. (AK) Laurie Hummel Alaska National Guard
 Capt. Kate Merriam B Company, 1-207th Aviation
 Capt. Krista Paul 297th Military Police Company
 Lt. Col. James Palembas 761st Military Police Battalion
 Lt. Col. Charles "Lee" Knowles 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade
 Lt. Col. Eric Barlow Recruiting and Retention Battalion
 Col. Joseph Streff Alaska Army National Guard
 1st Lt. Brandon Bowden 1-297th Long Range Surveillance Company
 1st Lt. Eric Kelly HHD, 761st Military Police Battalion
 Lt. Col. Chad Haman 207th Multi-Functional Training Regiment
 Capt. Ronald Desjardin HHC, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade
 Maj. Britt Reed 1-207th Aviation
 1st Lt. Jill King E Company, 1-207th Aviation
 Col. Karen E. Mansfield Alaska Air National Guard
 Lt. Col. John R. Oberst 213th Space Warning Squadron
 Lt. Col. Scott A. Howard 168th Mission Support Group
 Col. Bryan S. White 168th Operations Group
 Lt. Col. Kevin T. Clifford 176th Air Defense Squadron
 Lt. Col. Michael S. Griesbaum 176th Maintenance Group
 Col. Craig R. Thomas 168th Medical Group

Lt. Col. Sheila A. Lange 176th Operational Support Squadron
 Master Sgt. Matthew Roeber 297th Military Police Company
 Sgt. Maj. George Juelch HHD, 761st Military Police Battalion
 Sgt. Maj. John Valasek Recruiting and Retention Battalion
 Master Sgt. Julie Small Joint Forces Headquarters (Army)
 Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hildreth Senior Enlisted Leader,
 Alaska National Guard
 Sgt. Maj. John Drew 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade
 Sgt. 1st Class Rusell Throckmorton C Company, 1-297th Reconnaissance
 and Surveillance Squadron
 Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Hanson E Company, 1-207th Aviation
 Master Sgt. Stephen Blair B Company, 1-297th Reconnaissance and
 Surveillance Squadron
 Command Sgt. Maj. Marc Petersen State Command Sergeant Major,
 Alaska Army National Guard
 Chief Master Sgt. John R. Duhaime 168th Air Refueling Squadron
 Chief Master Sgt. Robert W. Carte 176th Air Defense Squadron
 Chief Master Sgt. Christopher F. Wilson 211th Rescue Squadron
 Chief Master Sgt. Winfield S. Hinckley 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron
 Chief Master Sgt. Gordon J. Heinen 144th Airlift Squadron

Retirements

START THINKING AHEAD.

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- BG Mike BridgesJFHQ-Army
- Brig Gen Timothy O'Brien JFHQ-Air
- MAJ Mark MelsonJFHQ-Army
- SFC Marc Wiltfong1-207th AVN
- SSG Michael Wassilie297th BfSB
- SFC Kevin EarlJFHQ-Army
- SFC James WhitmoreJFHQ-Army
- PV2 Ebony Dekine1-207th AVN
- SSG Dennis Stankewich297th BfSB
- SSG David Hockin297th BfSB
- MAJ James SiedenberglJFHQ-Army
- CW4 Andrew JensenJFHQ-Army
- SFC Megan SiminoJFHQ-Army
- Col Brian L. Fulkerson168th OG
- Lt Col Bradley E. Gerken168th MDG
- SrA Gerardo Day213th SWS
- MSgt Brian C. Harlan168th OSS
- MSgt Daniel J. Hauer168th MOF
- TSgt Alvin L. Baker168th OSS
- Capt Kevin Asher176th WG
- TSgt George Lewis144th AS
- Lt Col Russell Hedden144th AS
- SSgt Nathan Suel176th MXS
- MSgt George Waters176th CES
- CMSgt Gerald Mcaleavey176th LRS
- SMSgt Melissa Lindman211th RQS
- Maj Robert Brumby249th AS
- SMSgt Beverly Robotkay JFHQ-Air
- MSgt Derek Costen176th ADS
- TSgt Jerry Yow176th ADS
- TSgt William Patton176th ADS
- MSgt Jeffery Austin176th ADS
- Lt Col Jon Thornton176th ADS
- MSgt Jeremy Lilly212th RQS
- CMSgt Joseph Dibenedetto212th RQS
- SMSgt Christopher Widener212th RQS
- MSgt Dean Kalbfleisch176th CF
- Lt Col Richard Watson210th RQS



ROTC Ruck March. University of Alaska Army Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets from Anchorage and Fairbanks ruck to their next training facility during a four-day joint field training exercise on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in April. Approximately 40 cadets, including Alaska National Guardsmen, participated in the exercise which simulated several deployed scenarios.

Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Kevin McGaha, Alaska Army National Guard

STATUS OF DISCIPLINE ACTIONS

In the interest of transparency, these are the actions that the Alaska Air National Guard has taken this year.

Rank	Category	Action
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards x Four	Retirement in lieu of demotion
Airman	Misconduct – Government Travel Card Misuse	LOR
Airman	Misconduct – Drug Use	General discharge
Airman	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards x Four	Demoted one grade; Retained (subsequent passing Fitness Assessment)
Airman	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards x Four	Demoted one grade; Retained (subsequent passing Fitness Assessment)
NCO	Misconduct – Reckless Driving	LOR, Referral EPR
Officer	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Officer	Misconduct – Conduct Not Conducive to Good Order and Discipline	LOR
Officer	Misconduct – Conduct Not Conducive to Good Order and Discipline (Inappropriate Relationship)	LOR
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR; Recommendation for discharge
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR; Recommendation for discharge
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Senior NCO	Failure to Maintain Personal Readiness	LOR
Senior NCO	Substandard Duty Performance	LOR
Senior NCO	Misconduct – Conduct Not Conducive to Good Order and Discipline (Inappropriate Relationship)	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR; Demotion
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Obey a Lawful Order	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Certification	LOR
Junior NCO	Inappropriate Conduct	LOR
Junior NCO	Non-participation	Discharged
Junior NCO	Failure to Return to Duty; Disrespect to a Superior	Demotion
Junior NCO	Positive Urinalysis	Demotion; Recommended for retention
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Failure to Maintain Fitness Standards	LOR
Junior NCO	Substantiated Commander Directed Investigation for Integrity Violation	LOR
Junior NCO	Failing to Meet Standards; Disrespect of an NCO	LOR
Airman	Substance Abuse; Non-participation	Discharged
Airman	Failure to Meet Fitness Standards	LOR; Recommendation for discharge
Technician	Supervisory Misconduct	LOR
Technician	Inappropriate Conduct	Three-day suspension
Technician	Failure to Follow Leave Procedures	One-day suspension
Technician	Late for Work	LOR

DEFINITIONS – LOR: Letter of Reprimand

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Ready

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EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: _____

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ready

Family Emergency Plan

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE: _____
 TELEPHONE: _____

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: _____

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ready

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PERMIT #537

What's in the cloud?

Nicotine — Addictive

Ultra-fine particles — Asthma

Acetone — Nail polish remover

Lead — Brain damage

Formaldehyde — Embalming fluid

E-cigs. Not harmless. Not healthy.



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