



official newsletter of the 124th Fighter Wing

THE BEACON



February 2013 • Idaho Air Guard • Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho • "First Class or Not at All" • www.idaho.ang.af.mil

124th Civil Engineering Squadron completes six-month OEF support in Afghanistan



Lt. Col. James Heuring, 124th Civil Engineering Squadron Commander--Base Civil Engineer, right, and Senior Enlisted Advisor Chief Master Sgt. Mark Nelson, left, lower the American and unit flags on January 14, the last day of the squadron's six-month deployment to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo courtesy Lt Col James Heuring.

By Lt. Col. Gary A. Daniel

124th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

BOISE, Idaho, The last of over 50 members of the 124th Civil Engineering Squadron from Gowen Field, Idaho returned in mid January after six months service supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Lt. Col. James Heuring led the 124th CES while deployed to Bagram AB, Afghanistan for six months. 124th CES maintained existing facilities and constructed some new ones on the vast base.

They were the primary movers and fixers of U.S. Air Force facilities, an-around-the-clock operation that supported 700 to 900 flight operations each day.

"Take-offs and landings were usu-

ally two minutes apart," Heuring said. "The sorties had to fly!"

Over half of the engineers were traditional Idaho Air Guardsman from every specialty that the 124CES brings to the combat zone. To prepare for the change of venue and shift from civilian life for many, the squadron completed two drills per month for six months leading up to their deployment.

According to Heuring, this was the first deployment for roughly one-third of the squadron. 124CES workdays ranged from 12 to 16 hours—seven days per week.

"It was like a six-month ORI," Heuring said. "Every one in every shop showed up early and wanted to work hard. The days were long and the weeks were short."

Lt. Col. Heuring was quick to point out that as commander of the deployment's lead unit he valued the contributions of civil engineering professionals from Wisconsin, Texas, Maine, Puerto Rico, and Maryland.

124CES worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and support staff of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing as over \$100 million in military construction was in progress to sustain future Air Force operations.

124CES professionals were the consulting engineers to local Afghan contractors, ensuring quality control and compliance to USAF building code standards for numerous buildings critical to continued operations in Operation Enduring Freedom.

During his transfer of authority ceremony with the incoming Vermont Air National Guard civil engineering unit, Heuring summarized the deployment. He told his squadron, "You are the heart of the spear, you served your country well, and you didn't leave anything on the table."

Upon returning to Idaho, Heuring reflected on the experience, "I got to go with my home squadron to a deployed location and serve with them every day and return home with them when it was done. (It was) by far the most rewarding thing I've ever done in my life."

THE BEACON is the official newsletter of the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard. It is published monthly by the wing public affairs office. Views expressed may not be those of the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, Department of Defense or U.S. government.

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Contribute!

We welcome articles and captioned photos relevant to members of the 124th Fighter Wing. Submissions must be accurate in fact, and will be edited for clarity and length. Articles will be published as space permits. They are due on Sunday of the UTA prior to the month the article will be published. Submit articles as e-mail attachments on Microsoft Word. Photographs must be non-copyrighted prints of 300 dpi or higher TIF or JPG images. Articles and images can be sent to:

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COMMANDER'S



CALL

CCAF Requirements:



Col. Mike Nolan, 124th Wing Commander, met with all enlisted members of the wing in December. Several in attendance wanted to know more about new CCAF requirements in future years that affect senior NCO promotions.

Over December drill, I had the opportunity to meet with our wing enlisted members. One topic that deserves further discussion is the new requirement to have a Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) degree for promotion to Senior Master Sergeant and Chief Master Sergeant in the ANG.

Lets start by discussing how this requirement evolved. Chief Master Sgt. Fenicottero and I met with Chief Master Sgt. Glick to gain a deeper understanding of this policy. According to Chief Master Sgt. Glick, education of the enlisted force has been an agenda item of the ANG Enlisted Field Advisory Council (EFAC) for the past several years. The EFAC felt that it is now critical for our Airmen to maintain parity with Active Duty (AD) and Reserve Airmen, as the ANG has become an integral part of the total force.

On active duty and in the Air Force Reserves, a CCAF degree is a determinate for promotion to SMSgt and CMSgt. Currently, 99.5% of AD E-8's and E-9's have a CCAF degree compared to 33.2% in the ANG.

Further, AFI 36-2618, THE ENLISTED FORCE STRUCTURE, identifies the pursuit of a CCAF degree as a primary responsibility of every Senior NCO. After polling the enlisted forces across the ANG, the EFAC voted unanimously to pursue the requirement of the CCAF degree as a condition for promotion to E-8 and E-9. This is not intended to be immediate, but is planned for a Jan 2015 effective date.

Two frequently asked questions I have received regarding this requirement are: 1) why do I need a CCAF degree if I already have an associate degree (or higher); and 2) AD Airmen have educational benefits that I am not entitled to, how am I supposed to cover this financial burden?

Regarding the first question, the EFAC referenced parity with AD as the primary factor. When dealing with AD and Reserve Airmen, ANG senior guardsmen must have a common point of reference. The EFAC believes the CCAF provides that reference through its core courses: Oral Communication, Written Communication, Mathematics, Social Science and Humani-

CCAF

ties. If you have a civilian degree that includes these five core courses you will receive full credit toward a CCAF degree. If not, you will have to earn those credits.

Regarding the second question, it is true that there are greater educational benefits for the active component. The good news for AGR's is they receive those same benefits. For Technicians and Traditional Guardsmen, you will have to pay for the five core courses. Unfortunately, there are no State educational benefits available this year to help defer those costs.

One option that will reduce your out-of-pocket expense is to "CLEP out" of the core courses through the College Level Examination program. Additionally, if you have served in a Title-10 status for at least 90 aggregate days after September 10, 2001, you are entitled to some Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Again, if you have already taken the core classes at an accredited institution you will receive full credit toward the CCAF degree. Interested Airmen should make an appointment with the Base Education and Training office to find out where they stand and make a plan to fill the gaps.

I understand that the time and financial commitment required to earn a CCAF degree will be an additional stressor for many of you. I do believe in the value of education for our enlisted Airmen. Personally, I believe that any associate degree should suffice and have provided that feedback to our leadership.

Historically, the EFAC has provided outstanding advice and guidance. They have given this topic due consideration and believe a CCAF degree for our senior enlisted will improve the quality of the ANG and the total force.



Gowen Broadcaster completes solemn special-duty assignment

After completing a special-duty assignment that few qualify for and that the general public is largely unaware of, the 124th Fighter Wing's multimedia manager witnessed the pride and pain of our nation's highest calling.

Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle practiced his craft as an Air Force broadcasting specialist at the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations, Dover, AFB, Delaware, in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He joined a staff of just five PA professionals who continually document the return of all U.S. service personnel remains as they arrive from across the world. Without prejudice to circumstances of death the families of the fallen are offered a documentary movie of the Dignified Transfer ceremony.

The movie has no narration, nor editorial agenda. This is known as the "media option" among the public affairs team at Dover. The movie is only for the family, "as is everything we do during that assignment," said Master Sgt. Gloeckle.

Gloeckle explained even if a family opts to allow the news media to cover the solemn movement of the service member's remains, photos of the families during that sensitive time are strictly forbidden. Still "the emotional impact of the family can catch you off-

guard," he said.

During his 150-day tour (which is considered a deployment because of the assignment's rigor) Gloeckle described his duties as unique. He briefed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey, and the Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Mark A. Welsh during separate official visits.

Sometimes high visibility events required him to take his skills on the road. He shot video, edited and produced media for repatriated U.S. Air Force pilot's remains from Vietnam (that now rest in Arlington National Cemetery). When tragedy struck in Libya, he served in a similar role a few days later at Andrews AFB, MD.

Most of the Port Mortuary mission is completed on short notice. There was nothing that resembled a routine. This rotating cast of public affairs specialists has served in this role since 2009 to bring greater overall transparency to the Dignified Transfer process.

"(It was an) incredible honor to do what we do—to video the transfer, edit, and produce the tribute video for the families," he said. "It is documented evidence that the fallen family member returned home to America."

--Beacon Staff Report

*124th Civil Engineer
Operation End
June 2012-Ja
Bagram Air Ba*



Engineering Squadron during Freedom January 2013 Base, Afghanistan



"You are the heart of the spear, you served your country well, and you didn't leave anything on the table." -Lt Col Jim Heuring





Family Readiness 2013

Your quick reference page

RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Idaho Air National Guard

Chaplain Bldg 400

OFFICE: 208-422-6468 CELLULAR: 208-841-9723

ANG Family Support Bldg 400

OFFICE: 208-422-5374 CELLULAR: 208-599-4758

ANG Yellow Ribbon Support Specialist Bldg 400

OFFICE: 208-422-6788 CELLULAR: 208-360-1487

ANG Director of Psychological Health Bldg 400

OFFICE: 208-422-5377 CELLULAR: 208-863-3015

ANG Finance Office Bldg 400

OFFICE: 208-422-6121

Legal Bldg 440

OFFICE: 208-272-5474

Human Resource Office (HRO) Bldg 480

OFFICE: 208-422-4806

Gowen Field, Building 270

Military One Source Bldg 270

1-800-342-9647

www.militaryonesource.com

Transition Assistant Advisor Bldg 270

OFFICE: 208-422-4408 CELLULAR: 208-794-5870

State Youth Coordinator Bldg 270

OFFICE: 208-272-8397 CELLULAR: 208-890-5268

Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR):

208-272-3743

Allied Agencies Benefits and Resources

TriWest (Tricare)

888-TRIWEST 1-888-874-9378

American Red Cross: 877-272-7337

United Concordia Toll Free 800-866 8499

Veterans Benefits Administration

call 1-800-827-1000 or visit www.va.gov

For information on various

Veterans Benefits Administration programs,

call 1-800-827-1000 or visit www.va.gov

ID Division of Veteran Services

Phone: 208-577-2310

Vet Center for Counseling

Phone: 208-342-3612, 1-800-726-0525

Veterans Education Coordinator

208-577-2298

<http://www.gibill.va.gov>

Idaho Department of Labor

208-332-3575 ext. 3272

US Department Of Labor/VETS

P.O. Box 2697, Boise ID 83701

208-332-8947

National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

Assists in locating and possibly providing aid for quality childcare. 1-800-424-2246 www.naccrra.org/militaryprogram

Veteran Resource Network

includes the Pack A Box Program

www.vrnonline.org 208-376-0753 or 208-322-2673

<http://NationalResourceDirectory.gov>

<http://Militaryhomefront.dod.mil>

SAFE HELPLINE

www.Safehelpline.org

877-995-5247 Text: 55-247
(CONUS) or 202-470-5546
(OCONUS)

JFHQ SARC (Capt. Colleen Walker) Office: 208-272-8400
Cell: 208-447-6166

Assist. JFHQ SARC
(Mr. Terry Williams)
Office: 208-272-4306
Cell: 208-949-7583

124FW SARC
Lt. Col. Beverly Bracewell
Office: 208-422-6162
Cell: 208-954-3369



Family Readiness 2013

It's the Total Package

By John Spurny,

124th Fighter Wing

Airman and Family Office

When one has the opportunity to inform, communicate and educate the feeling of making a positive contribution cannot be ignored. Have you made a contribution lately? We often take time do it for strangers so why wouldn't we do it for our own families? Ask yourself if your loved ones know what it is you do for the Air National Guard. More importantly why you do it, and what you specifically bring to your section, unit or team. Where do you and they (your family) fit in?

The world situation is changing today as much as any time in recent history. Guardsmen from all walks of life in all ranks are routinely stepping up to the challenges of change, while continuing the proud traditions of the "Citizen Soldier" on a worldwide scale. Bottom line is they are doing the mission at hand with no frills and little fanfare. Transparent and seamless are descriptive ways our National Guard men and women blend into the total force concept. They know it and they train for it, but do our families really understand it and their own critical connection to the National Guard? I hope so, as there is a lot to be proud of once you understand the dynamics of National Guard service. Commitment, balance and training are all rolled up into the typical Guard member's service.

Guard families are also stepping up to a myriad of challenges and change...Just as they have throughout history when necessary and as they will certainly again in

future contingencies. Families are at the center of readiness...the old adage heard in many venues pertains very much to Guard families: "If they aren't happy, nobody's happy" and you can bet this trickles down to the unit level. Mission accomplishment is dependent upon personal, professional and family readiness. It's the total package!

Make and take the time to introduce your family to the halls and walls of the place you spend your "one weekend a month and two weeks a year" while serving this great nation. Introduce them to your co-workers and supervisors. Many of the family members of the 124th Fighter Wing know what sacrifices they make and certainly see, feel and understand the sacrifices made by their uniformed member. That's great, but think about those that do not understand!

Parents, siblings, wives, husbands and children are all contributing in their own ways to the national defense of this country through the support they give their respective Guard member. Why not take and make the time and invest in your family's well being by providing them with the answers to these three simple questions below so their sacrifices and yours is more clearly understood? This will help them fully realize the extent and level of commitment put forth by those that serve.

Q) Does your family know and understand what their benefits are?

SUGGESTION: Everybody loves perks! Share your knowledge of the benefits associated with your status in the Guard. Provide your family updated information and changes

accordingly.

Q) Has your family been shown where to go to find out specific information that would make the stress of a deployment easier to endure?

SUGGESTION: A quick tour of your duty section followed by the once over of Building 400 will save your loved ones time, effort and stress in the event they may need to seek assistance during a deployment or in your absence. Many of the helping agencies have offices in Building 400.

Q) Do they know whom to contact if there are issues to resolve beyond the normal scope of daily life during a deployment?

SUGGESTION: Information and referral is something the 124th Fighter Wing does exceptionally well. Next time your loved ones happen to visit don't hesitate to introduce your chain of command and the various helping agencies designed for direct problem solving. The unknown causes stress, especially under deployment conditions. Knowledge is power... share the knowledge today and power down the stress of the unknown!

Make a difference on how your service affects your family. Family awareness and support are a large part of the puzzle for a successful military career. Take the time to inform, communicate and educate. The burden you lessen could well be your own! For more information on family programs contact John Spurny at 422-5374 or john.spurny2@ang.af.mil Are you really ready?



124th Fighter Wing
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 Boise, Idaho 83705-8103

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 Permit 764



Field Grade Officers & Senior NCOs
Plan now for
TAG Leadership Day
March 9, 2013
ngaid.org & facebook.com/ngaidofficers

Dining Facility Menu--February

Saturday-

- Roast Pork W Onion Gravy
- Mustard W Dill Fish
- Au Gratin Potatoes
- Rice Lyonnasie
- Peas W Mushrooms/ Onions
- Corn Obrien's
- Chicken Noodle soup
- Wisconsin Cheese Soup
- Fast Food Line:
- Cheeseburgers
- Hamburgers, French Fries
- Chicken Wings
- Chili
- Mozzarella Sticks W Marinara
- Sauce

Sunday-

- Chicken and Dumplings
- Cajun Meatloaf
- Mashed Potatoes
- Chicken Gravy
- Rice Pilaf--Bean Combo
- Cauliflower Combo
- Broccoli Cheddar Soup
- Vegetable Soup
- Fast Food Line-
- Cheeseburgers
- Hamburgers
- Onion Rings
- Meatball Sandwich
- Sloppy Joe

Free Ballet Idaho Tix!
 Friday, Feb 8 at 8pm
 Morrison Center--BSU
 Enter the
 Random Drawing at
<http://bit.ly/124tickets>

**BIOENVIRONMENTAL
 ENGINEER OFFICER**
*Traditional Opening at the
 124th Medical Group*
 Read more at
Bit.ly/124Beacon