



Cowboy Guard

Volume 4, Number 1

2nd Quarter Fiscal Year 2016





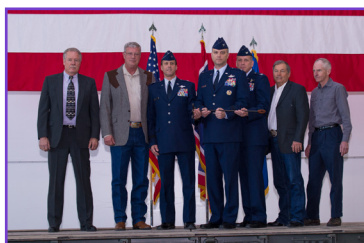
4 Partnering
with our
neighbors is
a big part of the job



10 Bravo
2-300 gets
set to jet



14 Guard
mechanics
keep us
running



18 153rd Airlift
Wing adds
leadership
with legacy



Cowboy Guard, a Wyoming National Guard news publication, is produced quarterly by the Wyoming National Guard Public Affairs Office, Cheyenne, Wyo., in accordance with AR 360-1 and AFI 35-101.

Contents of Cowboy Guard are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, Department of the Air Force, Department of the Army, National Guard Bureau or the State of Wyoming. Submissions are accepted via email at ng.wy.wyarng.pao-distribution@mail.mil. All submissions will be edited.

Cowboy Guard

Wyoming's Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Luke Reiner

State Public Affairs Officer Deidre Forster

Public Affairs Staff Maj. Tom Blackburn
Capt. Megan Hoffmann
Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire
Brett Kahler

Contributing Maj. Rebecca Walsh
Lt. Eve Neisen
Master Sgt. Charles Delano
Master Sgt. Leisa Grant
Staff Sgt. Amanda Preddice
Staff Sgt. Meredith Vincent
Staff Sgt. John Galvin
Spc. Dustin Robertson
Senior Airman Nichole Grady

Mail Cowboy Guard
Wyoming Military Department
5410 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Phone 307-772-5253

Email ng.wy.wyarng.pao-distribution@mail.mil

On the cover

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Heather Smith, 153rd Communications Flight, connects cables to a row of desktop computers, March 29 at the Air National Guard base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Smith manages the help desk as the NCOIC of client services. Photo by Master Sgt. Charles Delano



Wyo. National Guard still fights for the ROK

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire
Wyoming Military Department
Public Affairs

Wyoming National Guard soldiers have had a dog in the fight on the Korean Peninsula since 1951's arrival in Pusan.

After 805 days of combat, the 300th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, out of Sheridan at the time, fired 514,036 105 mm howitzer rounds and played a crucial role in bringing about the armistice that still makes it possible for South Koreans to live in peace, according to Army historian Matthew Seelinger from the Army Historical Foundation.

The soldiers of the 300th earned 12 Silver Stars, 63 Bronze Stars, and numerous other medals. The unit itself was award two Presidential Unit Citations, a Meritorious Unit Citation and two Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations. Eight soldiers from the 300th were killed in action and 175 wounded.

Wyoming soldiers still play a role in keeping the peace here, just in a virtual environment, like in the recently completed international exercise Key Resolve.

For three years, Brig. Gen. Steven Mount has worn two hats in the Army. He is the Wyoming Army National Guard commander, and for a few weeks a year, the wartime deputy chief of staff of operations for Eighth United States Army, in South Korea. His first trip to the South came in 1987 as a second lieutenant. He's taken part in seven exercises in Korea, including four Key Resolves.

"I'm very proud of Wyoming's connection here starting with the 300th AFA and the stellar job they did fighting. And, I'm very proud I was kind of able to reconnect with Korea and now seeing all of you (Wyoming soldiers) here," Mount said. "This is one of the most important and most volatile areas of the world right now. We've got a guy up north that we've got to worry about. Deterrence is what's keeping him in check, and what we do when we're here helps maintain that deterrence."

The North and South are technically still at war since 1953 when an armistice was signed. No peace treaty ever followed and tensions flare regularly.

The general alluded to a situation last year when North Korea fired two missiles

into the South and later two South Korean soldiers by the Demilitarized Zone lost legs to landmines.

"It's a big deal, and it pays dividends," Mount said of the annual exercises. "You look at the tension and what happened last August when it heated up, and then you look at what we rehearsed and how it played into it; it really is a big deal."

Maj. Robert Lejeune also continued the legacy of Wyoming artillerymen in Korea. The operations officer

*"I'm very proud of Wyoming's connection here starting with the 300th AFA and the stellar job they did fighting."
-Brig. Gen. Steve Mount*

from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery was part of Key Resolve's Combined Joint Fires Element that coordinated virtual missile fire from air, sea and land for the exercise.

"That included Korean military and all of our components too," Lejeune said. "It's a lot of coordination, but we'd have final chop if support was needed in this area or that area."

It has been 65 years since the first Wyoming Guard soldier set foot on the Korean peninsula. The combat may have stopped but Wyoming continues to play key roles in deterring aggression against a long-time ally. ∞



For history buffs visiting Seoul, the War Memorial (pictured) and Museum of Korea in Yongsan-dong offers an excellent opportunity to learn about the Korean War.

Community support: *Partnering with our neighbors a big part of the job*

By Capt. Megan Hoffmann
Wyoming Military Department
Public Affairs

The melee that ensues during community support visits by local and statewide civilian groups can only be described as organized chaos.

Observers would see one person in charge of 30 or more, confusion on where to go or what to do, excited chatter, safety concerns left and right, and that one person who is always asking where the bathroom is.

Despite this, the Wyoming Military Department hosts civic leader groups annually, exposing Wyoming residents to Guard missions, personnel and equipment to see, hear and experience agency capabilities while building mutual partnerships.

“I think it is important for the citizens to understand what the Guard does and how they operate,” said Gail Lofing, finance director at the Gillette Chamber of Commerce, who visited National Guard facilities Feb. 11 and 12 as a member of Gillette Area Leadership Institute. “I don’t know if most people know that in the face of disaster, it is usually the guard who responds and helps communities recover.”

Rules, regulations and policies set forth by the Department of Defense determine what is permissible in the realm of the National Guard community relations programs. But within those guidelines the Guard has continued to host a plethora of community groups, allowing them to learn about the missions and people and experience training activities, like UH-60 Black Hawk flights and virtual combat trainers.

The unique partnership has evolved, educated and benefitted everyone involved.

“We enjoy being able to see and interact with the military personnel, hearing what the guard does for the state and county, understanding the different roles of the branches of the military and the differences between the branches. This year during our visit, we were able to Skype with the troops from Gillette which was awesome. Of course, the highlight of the trip this year was to fly in the Black Hawk,” Lofing said.

The Wyoming National Guard also hosted civic leaders from Sheridan and Johnson counties in February.

“Partnerships require the skills and efforts of all involved, and the relationship between the guard



Shooting turkeys at the Simulation Center is a hit with these Gillette Area Leadership Institute members that visit Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center as part of their leadership curriculum. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire



Johnson County Leadership and Sheridan County Leadership tour the Wyoming Air National Guard base where they were introduced to the state and federal missions of the Wyoming National Guard and had the opportunity to tour a C-130H aircraft and view a Modular Airborne Firefighting system. Photo by Master Sgt. Charles Delano

and the communities isn't any different," said Kristen Jennings, operations officer at Sheridan Community Federal Credit Union and first-time member of the Sheridan Country Leadership group who visited the Wyoming Air National Guard Feb. 23. "I think that the guard offers tremendous support for the citizens of Wyoming. The part I enjoyed the most was meeting the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect us. Everyone was so friendly and ready to explain any questions we had and I truly appreciated the time everyone took to make our experience so amazing."

Annually the Wyoming National Guard directly hosts, or indirectly supports, more than 40 community groups. Among them the Red Cross; elementary, middle and high schools; Rotary clubs; senior centers; Boy and Girl Scouts; legislators; various civic leaders and tourists visiting Cheyenne Frontier Days.

Activities ranged from inviting thousands of people to the Air National Guard base for the annual open house where various aircraft and equipment, to supporting parades, touring facilities, and speaking at local schools.

Historically, February marks one of the busiest months on the calendar for community support events and this year proved to be no exception. Hundreds of community members from groups such as Gillette Area Leadership Institute, Leadership Wyoming, Sheridan and Johnson County Leadership, and Fort Casper Academy visited the Air National Guard, Army Aviation Support Facility and Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center.

The mutual benefits of this partnership aren't forgotten by guard members either as they quickly recall the friendships, community ties and networking that this program provides.

"Without a doubt, we couldn't execute our mission if it wasn't for the great people in our state who support us day-in and day-out," said Maj. Gen. Luke Reiner, Wyoming's adjutant general. "We feel extremely fortunate to receive the support we do from communities around Wyoming and enjoy hosting them at our facilities where we can show and tell them about what we do while also learning how we can better support them. It is, and always has been, a great partnership." ∞

Multitasking C-130s for hire

By Master Sgt. Charles Delano
153rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

The mission of the 153rd Airlift Wing C-130 Hercules aircraft is to move people and equipment during times of conflict, calamity and calm.

The Air Force categorizes these missions as tactical, which refers to the aircraft's ability to deliver soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines from airport to austere locations around the globe.

"The operator on the ground is truly the tip of the spear," said Lt. Col. Ryan Scofield, 187th Airlift Squadron director of operations.

"Tactical airlift, particularly the C-130, is a support function to those operators, not unlike the close air support role of the A-10. As tactical airlifters, we understand our purpose very clearly and strive to provide the utmost level of support to our customers."

Aircrews flying the Cheyenne-based C-130s use different types of missions and tactics to deliver people and cargo depending upon customers and their requirements.

One such type of airlift, which represents the greatest number of undertakings flown by the wing, is the Joint Airborne Air Transportability Training mission which consists of personnel and cargo airdrops.

"The JA/ATT program provides vital combat training for C-130 aircrews and users from other services," said Lt. Col. Jeremy Schaad, 187th Airlift Squadron commander. "These missions are an integral part of a joint

training program sponsored by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They directly contribute toward our ability to execute real-world combat airlift and airdrop missions. They are truly our bread and butter,"

JA/ATT missions mainly enable paratroopers to practice dropping into an area to complete ground missions that are too difficult to reach, or require a quick presence. For the aircrew, it provides opportunities



Top, Wyoming C-130s help drop hundreds of paratroopers during the Golden Coyote exercise in Guernsey last summer. Photo by Master Sgt. Charles Delano. Below, airmen from the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron from the Wyoming Air National Guard and interagency partners triage a simulated mass casualty patient through a full spectrum of personnel recovery capabilities. Photo by Staff Sgt. John Galvin

to train and become more proficient at missions that will be required during state emergencies or conflicts overseas.

A typical mission may involve dropping platoons of fully-equipped personnel into a designated drop zone or dropping a water craft for a U.S. Navy SEAL team.

Other missions the 153rd performs include mission-ready airlift or guard lift, where C-130s are tasked to deliver goods and personnel from one location to another.

These types of missions include transporting fighter wing personnel from their home unit to deployed location, bringing critical parts to an aircraft in need of repair, or counterdrug enforcement, among others.

Wyoming's C-130s also turn into flying hospitals, as needed. During aeromedical evacuation flights, C-130s provide movement of severely injured patients to a medical facility.

A team consisting of a medical crew director and two in-flight medical technicians ensure the treatment and stabilization of patients during air transport.

Critical Care Air Transport Teams consisting of a physician, critical care nurse and respiratory therapist provide additional medical support for gravely ill or wounded patients who require intensive care.

Finally, C-130s equipped with Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems prevent the spread of wildfires when a fire cannot be contained using traditional ground firefighting tactics. MAFFS-equipped C-130s are able to contain these fires by discharging up to 3,000 gallons of fire retardant over a one-quarter mile length and 100-foot wide surface. As with the other types of missions flown by the 153rd Airlift Wing, aerial firefighting also requires special training.

At the beginning of each fire season aircrews train with the U.S. Forest Service and other MAFFS units to practice dropping lines of water simulating retardant.

Next time you look up in the sky and see one of the gray C-130s flying over Cheyenne, consider the myriad of missions flown by the Wyoming Air National Guard and give them a friendly wave. 🤠

Marksmananship clinic teaches valuable skills

Brig. Gen. completes final assignment in South Korea

By Spc. Dustin Robertson and
Staff Sgt. Meredith Vincent
197th Public Affairs Detachment

On a mild Sunday afternoon in March, Brig. Gen. Steven Mount, commander of the Wyoming Army National Guard, sat at a picnic table in Yongsan, South Korea. After 42 years in the United States Army,



Mount will retire in May. And he's culminating his four-decade long career with one last assignment around the world, to a culture he has become intimately

familiar with during his lifelong tour.

Mount began his career in 1974, enlisting into active duty right at the end of the Vietnam War. The military was a family business, as he followed in his father's footsteps, and his grandfather's before him.

He was assigned to Company H, 1st Battalion, 3rd US Infantry Regiment (the Old Guard), but eventually left active duty, taking a short separation. He said he learned very valuable lessons during those early days as an enlisted soldier.



"You can't worry about the next promotion," he said. "You've got to worry about, 'What do I need to do, am I doing it to the best of my abilities, and am I doing what the organization needs me to do?' And if you focus on that, the promotions will come. That's been my philosophy, just do what you need to do, take the hard jobs, take the hard assignments that nobody else wants, and you'll do fine."

During his break from the military, Mount found himself missing the camaraderie of the Army. Five years after leaving, he enlisted again, this time into the Wyoming Army National Guard's B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 49th Field Artillery, in 1982.

After graduating from the Wyoming Military Academy in 1984, Mount was assigned as the communications platoon leader in that unit. His career has included a number



of command positions in Wyoming field artillery units, as well as garrison commander of the Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center. He also continued to expand his education, earning his bachelor's degree from Liberty University, in Virginia, and his master's in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

Currently, the general is serving in a dual status assignment as the Wyoming National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Army, and the wartime deputy chief of staff of operations for Eighth United States Army, in South Korea. It is this last title that brought Mount to the Yongsan picnic table.

"My experience here in Korea has been very rewarding," he said. "I've gotten to know a lot of Korean officers and serve with them in a four-star (general) headquarters. Being able to operate at that level is something not every soldier gets to do."

Mount's first assignment in Korea was in 1987. Wyoming already had a rich history in the region, dating back

to the Wyoming National Guard's 300th Armored Field Artillery's long list of combat honors earned during the Korean War. Mount said the soldiers of the 300th helped build a lasting relationship with Korea and he was honored to help advance it.

"It's just a fascinating area," he said. "When you think about the Korean War and what it's meant, with the 300th AFA having done such a stellar job while they were here. I'm proud of our connections with Korea. And I'm very proud of the fact I was able to reconnect Korea with the Wyoming National Guard."

Despite his impending retirement, Mount is still invested in a future relationship between Wyoming and Korea. He said he looks forward to seeing his work continued after his exit.

"My hopes are we will continue to maintain that connection," he said, "because this is one of the most important areas of the world right now, as far as the Pacific Rim goes."

Sitting at that picnic table, the mild early March weather was more typical of what Wyoming's temperature will be when, in May,



Mount will hang up his Army boots. He said it began to dawn on him as he goes through some of the daily motions that soldiers tend to take for granted. Like many things, this assignment will be his last.

"It's probably a good way to end my career. It's a good way to go out," he sighed heavily. "It's like everything else, when I took my last PT test, it was hard to register. When I did

my last weigh-in, when I did my last (periodic health assessment). Everything right now, I'm doing is my last."

But Mount said he knows that he is making the right call.

"My mentors, when they retired, I always asked them, 'How do you know when it's time?' And they always told me, 'You'll know.' And they were right," he chuckled. "This is a young person's game. I'll be 60 this year. And I'm very pleased with where I'm at.

"This is the natural evolution of a soldier's career. I know I'll be even more sentimental in two months. Right now, I'm more excited, because it's a new phase of my life I'm getting ready to step in to." ❧

Airman makes family, fitness come together

By Master Sgt. Leisa Grant
153rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

There are only 24 hours in a day. Not one person on the planet gets more time; not one gets less. Military members often have to strike a balance between meeting mission objectives and spending time with family and friends. When it comes to incorporating fitness into their daily lives—part of being mission ready—some find themselves sacrificing family time for fitness.

Wyoming Air National Guard Master Sgt. Jennifer Yack, 153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron deployment and training manager, has found a way to bring family and

fitness together in more ways than one.

Yack and her husband, Tech. Sgt. Avery Yack, also a 153rd member, researched and eventually started doing CrossFit at CrossFit Frontier, in Cheyenne, in October 2013. More than two years later they are still working out there together. Before that, they were growing bored of their fitness routines.

"We were stuck in a rut of going to [traditional] gyms," said Jennifer Yack.

They wanted to change things up, she said. With CrossFit they were able to easily accomplish that, as the premise of the activity is to constantly change exercises up to challenge the body. An aspect of CrossFit that they had not expected was the "family" they would soon create there, similar to how airmen in the guard often build second families.

"CrossFit is not just going to work out," she said. "It's a huge group of family and friends."

She said from the first month of being there members of her box, a common CrossFit gym reference, were not only pushing and cheering one another on during workout

sessions, they were also gathering outside of box hours for barbecues, birthday parties and other social activities.

"This was when we realized it was a big family, and there is a lot of camaraderie that comes with it," she said. "It's a big community."

Fortunately, even with her dedication to excelling in fitness she still manages to see her own family more than most who work out solo. It just so happens that her family also participate in CrossFit.

"I used to think of fitness as something that I had to do because I was in the military," said Avery Yack. "I had to do it to pass my PT test. Now, fitness to me means being healthy, being active and living life. Going to the gym has taken on a whole new meaning for me and my family and is something we can enjoy doing together."

With or without them Jennifer Yack said she still makes it a priority to do at least 30 minutes of fitness almost daily. But instead of using family as an excuse for not having workout time she takes a unique overall approach to it.

"I incorporate my family into it." ❧



U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Jennifer Yack, deployment and training manager in the 153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, Wyoming Air National Guard, performs an exercise during a CrossFit workout. Photo by Master Sgt. Leisa Grant

Bravo 2-300 gets set to jet

Soldiers from B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery spent a few days on the Improved Explosive Devices training lanes at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center as part of their preparation for deployment to Afghanistan. Urban Operations Tactics is part of that training, and while the troops receive more specialized training at mob station, the Camp Guernsey facilities and the 2/300th headquarters personnel get them primed to receive it.

“We conduct more of the crawl and walk training

here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Swanson, HHB 2-300th operations NCOIC. “We get them ready.”

In addition to the urban ops, the soldiers also learn what to look for while patrolling, on foot or in a convoy. After his vehicle was disabled and he and his crew sustained injuries from a mock attack, Spc. Paul Rairamo had to be medevaced out of the area.

“When they were carrying me under the rotors, I thought ‘I never want to see these from this position again,’” he said with a relieved smile.



Wyoming Army National Guard Spc. Terry Pritchett guards a landing zone perimeter as a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from C Company, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment comes in for a landing to conduct a medical evacuation during a training event at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center March 2. Pritchett and other members of his unit, B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, are conducting pre-mobilization training at the training center. Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire



Above, soldiers of B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery come under fire from OPFOR while patrolling on foot in the Improvised Explosive Device Village. While conducting a convoy mission, a mock IED blast disables vehicles and personnel, necessitating an air evacuation. The convoy team worked efficiently and simultaneously to secure the area, evaluate and move the injured, get the vehicles towed out and call in a MEDEVAC report.

Wyoming Army National Guard receives aviation additions

By Capt. Megan Hoffmann
Wyoming Military Department
Public Affairs

Wyoming Army aviation, which is highly utilized across the state, nation and abroad, is growing. The Wyoming Army National Guard is standing up a second helicopter unit.

A command aviation company will reside alongside the C Company, 5th Battalion 159th Aviation Regiment medical evacuation unit at the Army Aviation Support Facility and will execute missions that were previously impossible due to legal or operational limitations, said Lt. Col. Stacy Roth, state army aviation officer.

“Wyoming has always been a medevac-only unit and there are restrictions on medevac aircraft imposed by the Army, so (there have been) many missions we have been unable to do or must ask special permission to do,” Roth said. “Since we are picking up a CAC unit, none of those intricacies will apply which will better enable us to support domestic operations missions.”

The new 30-person unit will receive its four UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters courtesy of Los Alamitos Armed Force Reserve Training Base in Los Alamitos, California, and federal budgeting and military policies.

Army National Guard aviation has been a staple in Wyoming since the 1970s. In 1975 the 1022nd Medical Detachment was federally recognized. It later became the 1022nd Medical Company, and was finally transformed into Charlie Med Company in 2007.

Charlie Med also known as Cowboy Dustoff, is the most deployed unit in the Wyoming Army National Guard. Its missions include aeromedical evacuation, movement of patients, medical personnel, equipment and supplies to include blood products, combat search and rescue, and air crash rescue support.

When in Wyoming Charlie Med’s missions include assisting with Domestic Support to Civil Authorities tasks.

Those missions may be firefighting or, like one of its more recent tasks, search and rescue of lost snowmobilers.


“If we want to put sheriffs on our aircraft to help with a search mission (now), we can’t do that – not with our red-cross aircraft. Since we are picking up a CAC unit, none of those intricacies will apply which will better enable us to support domestic operations missions,” said Roth.

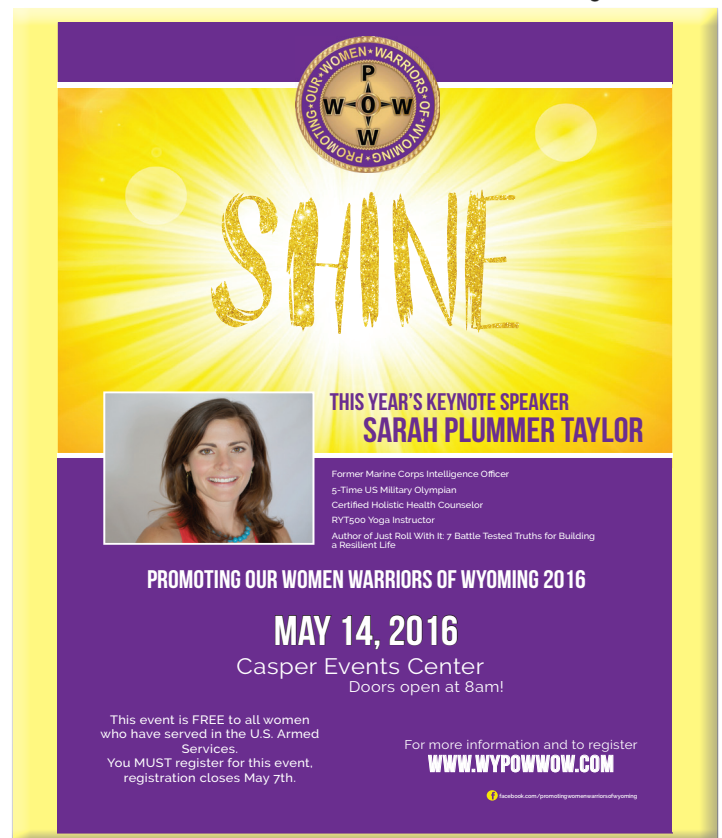
The new unit comes to Wyoming thanks to guidance set forth in the February 2014 Aviation Realignment Initiative. ARI required the Army conduct a reorganization of aviation units in order to modernize the fleet and make it more capable and efficient. This guidance came as a result of budget cuts mandated by the 2011 Budget Control Act.

“We were one of two or three states in which the National Guard gained aircraft. One of the major determining factors for who would receive UH-60 aircraft was whether each state was a medevac only unit or not, which Wyoming was,” Roth said.

In order to acquire the unit, the Wyoming Army National Guard had to do some creative restructuring with units and personnel, which was also a result of personnel cuts mandated in the BCA.

“We lost one platoon out of our Charlie Med medevac unit, but then we gain 30-some soldiers to support this new company,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Rich Burger, Wyoming Army National Guard force integration officer.

The addition of aircraft, personnel and missions will only aide in expanding the already impressive mission set that is characteristic of Wyoming Army National Guard aviation. It will better allow the organization to closely serve and support local and statewide missions that better assist Wyoming communities while also carrying out an important federal mission. 



PROMOTING OUR WOMEN WARRIORS OF WYOMING

SHINE

THIS YEAR'S KEYNOTE SPEAKER
SARAH PLUMMER TAYLOR


Former Marine Corps Intelligence Officer
5-Time US Military Olympian
Certified Holistic Health Counselor
RYT500 Yoga Instructor
Author of Just Roll With It: 7 Battle Tested Truths for Building a Resilient Life

PROMOTING OUR WOMEN WARRIORS OF WYOMING 2016

MAY 14, 2016
Casper Events Center
Doors open at 8am!

This event is FREE to all women who have served in the U.S. Armed Services.
You MUST register for this event, registration closes May 7th.

For more information and to register
WWW.WYPOWWOW.COM

 facebook.com/promotingourwomenwarriorsofwyoming

Wyoming Guard's legacy soon to be in print

By Maj. Tom Blackburn
Wyoming Military Department
Public Affairs

The Wyoming National Guard's history spans two centuries and produced countless stories shared from generations around the state.

Guard members were mobilized to fight in the Spanish-American War, in the trenches of World War I, and the fields of Europe in World War II. The state's artillery lineage was chiseled into the U.S. military's chronicles with the actions of Wyoming Guardsmen in Korea. Later, deployments to the recent conflicts during the Global War on Terror and domestic operations like MAFFS continue the Wyoming Guard's legacy.

But where to find that history? Currently there isn't a book that combines the experience and events of the Wyoming National Guard into a one-stop resource.

That's changing soon.

By the end of this year research will be complete for a book detailing the Wyoming National Guard's history from 1870 to present. It will be available to current and prior service guardsmen.

"There has been discussions about a book for some time," said Wyoming Veterans Commission director Larry Barttelbort. "Now we have a great author in place, a great review team, and the funds to support the research. It's going to be something the Wyoming Guardsmen will be proud to have to show their families."

Funds are only available for the research and completion of the manuscript. A timeline for publishing has not been approved yet.

The writer contracted to complete the project is Mark Hufstetler, a historian from Montana with an expansive background in the Old West and experience in Wyoming's culture.

He will be responsible for conducting interviews with veterans and current Wyoming Guard members to learn

about the organization, as well as do research into earlier time periods. Unfamiliar with the Wyoming Guard's history prior to the project, in four months he has already taken in a wealth of information that will help tell the story.

"I'm finding the personal stories are very interesting and what will make this more interesting for people to read," he said. "(Those stories) are more pronounced than other military projects. There is something about the guard, it's a unit of the nation, state, and it has a spirit to it."

Hufstetler's father was a federal park ranger, and for a time while he was a kid, his family lived in Kemmerer, Wyoming, while his father was assigned to a station nearby. There, his family's interest in history led him to many weekend trips to Wyoming's countryside.

"Every weekend as a kid, we'd head out to the middle of nowhere to go look for ghost towns," he said. "That's where it started. Exploring the West. The Old West is my favorite subject."

Part of that Old-West history is the emergence of the Wyoming National Guard, starting with its founding in the 19th century and its importance to the state. Growing up in Kemmerer, Hufstetler witnessed what the National Guard meant to the small town and close-knit communities.

"There is a stronger sense of participation in the guard," he said. "In a place like Wyoming and Montana, I don't know the precise numbers, it's a big part of people's lives. In Kemmerer, folks would drive to armories, there was a strong presence in school football teams and there was a big guard presence. It gave (the people) a focus for their lives. Even as a kid I remember that. It added purpose to their lives."

That sense of participation builds a personal kinship between the generations of guardsmen, a relationship that has revealed itself to Hufstetler.

"Every interview I've done, the people have emphasized that the guard is a family," he said. "I've gotten that more than any other project. It gives this organization its character."


That closeness has interested Hufstetler, even before he signed to author the book. One popular theme that stands out is the impact the guard has on its local community.

"I discovered this up in Montana, there is something about the history of a group in a state that doesn't have many people, events take on importance to the state," he said. "You send a few hundred people to Afghanistan in New York, no one cares. You send that many from Wyoming, and it impacts the community, it changes that. When you talk about that in a place like Wyoming, there is a special poignancy to it."

Hufstetler's work on the book is ongoing. An outline has been approved by the Wyoming Veterans Commission's council overseeing the project. Now Hufstetler will work to paint the guard's history in 200 pages or less.

"In terms of difficult, it's a huge story to write," he said. "I have a year here and it would take someone a lifetime to fill in all the blanks. It's a large and complex and important story. If I had a decade to write it, I would still have questions at the end."

To ensure he provides each time period a proper review, Hufstetler will break down the long history into pieces, and focus on key historical moments. Using the approved outline, he will create chapters covering chunks of time and then break those into more narrow topics. He has already found some difficulty in putting everyone's story into the book.

"You want to have a project that respects everyone's opinion," he said. "It's going to be difficult with this project because we don't have enough space for everything. It will have to be a summary, and I know folks will miss that personal experience." 

Guard mechanics keep us running on the road and in the air

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire
Wyoming Military Department
Public Affairs



Army Sgt. Phil Buettner, a crew chief at C Company, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, replaces a main rotor blade tip on a UH-60 Black Hawk at the Army Aviation Support Facility, in Cheyenne.

If you like turning wrenches, making engines purr or keep aircraft running well in the sky, the Wyoming National Guard might be a good place for you.

Both Army and Air National Guard units have aviation mechanics that work on fixed wing and rotary airframes, as well as wheeled vehicle mechanics.

Most come into the career field with some experience, but that is not always the case.

Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Read is making retirement plans now, but during his 35-year military career, he has had two military occupational specialties. He took a break in service after a few years serving as a field wireman. He rejoined the Guard in 1986 with a desire to try something new.

“I hadn’t worked on cars before, but I wanted to learn instead of having someone else do it,” Read said while working on a Humvee. “I think in the 80s, they were desperate to get people in. I came in on a ‘try one.’ I didn’t go to school. I just had on the job training, and when my year was almost up, they gave me the MOS.

Read has been a full time technician at the Field Maintenance #4 Shop in Cheyenne since 2007, and is still learning, as well as teaching others. He’s met his goal of learning how to work on his own vehicles, but is sensible about it.

“Sometimes it’s easier to take it somewhere to get a job done,” Read said.

Conversely, Wyoming Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Danny Elliott has been fascinated with engines and aircraft for a long time.

“When I was little, I used to collect those airplane cards. They had pictures and all the specifications on them,” Elliott reminisced. “I grew up on farms and was always working with my hands and working on tractors and stuff. My dad had a four-wheeler shop too, and I used to work in there.”

Now, he is into his second year as an aerospace propulsion technician working on C-130s with the 153rd Airlift Wing, in Cheyenne. He spent 10 years prior to that as a Hawkeye mechanic for the Navy.

“Because you had limited numbers of people that could go on the ship, you had to be able to cover quite a few specialties,” he said of differences between his current and former jobs.

The Army Guard’s UH-60 Black Hawk repairers start



Staff Sgt. Wayne Wheeler, an aerospace propulsion technician with the 153rd in Cheyenne, washes a C-130 engine panel.

out with a 16-week initial training school following basic training. Like their brethren on the Air side, who follow basic with a 14-week school, they receive a very broad education on aircraft maintenance. Elliott and Army Guard Aircraft Maintenance Supervisor Chief Warrant Officer 2 Paul Buettner agree most of the important training begins when new enlistees come back to home station.

Buettner said the crew chiefs, aboard all Black Hawk flights, are “flying mechanics.” He said the “preferred path” for a new aircraft mechanic to become qualified as a crew chief is two years.

“Most get there in about six months,” he added. “Once they have demonstrated an ability to inspect, troubleshoot, and repair a helicopter then they can advance to being a crew chief.”

Crew chiefs, most of whom are full-time employees, have overall responsibility for maintenance of the helicopter in addition to crew duties. They are responsible for operating the rescue hoist during medical evacuation and search and rescue missions; conducting hook-up and monitoring of sling loads and water bucket missions; providing airspace surveillance

during the flight; conducting passenger safety briefs, and are responsible for the safe entry and exit of passengers, among other duties.

If you are a gearhead, or know of one, that would enjoy tinkering on military vehicles and aircraft, go see a recruiter. Maybe they can give you a jump start. ∞



Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Read checks a wiring harness on a Humvee at the Field Maintenance #4 Shop in Cheyenne.

Meet the Military Department

Editor's note: Each quarter we spotlight two Wyoming Military Department employees by asking them a series of 10 questions. Meet Capt. Carly Rivera and Lt. Eli Varney.

How long have you worked for the Wyoming Military Department?

Rivera: It will be 10 years this July.

Varney: I joined the Wyoming Army National Guard in 2005.

What is your current job title/position in the organization?

Rivera: I am currently the officer in charge of plans and integration, 153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Varney: I am the executive officer of C Company, 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Company.

What other positions (to include prior military service) have you held in the organization?

Rivera: I began my career in the emergency management flight. About four years later, I accepted a full time job as a personnel specialist at JFHQ and less than a year after that I was selected for a commissioning opportunity. I served as a personnel officer for two years (DSG) and accepted a full time position in LRS. In a civilian capacity, I served as the Wyoming Hero2Hired Employment Transition Coordinator.

Varney: Gunner in C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Brigade; cadet in the 148th Signal Company; platoon leader in 133rd Engineer Company; and executive officer in the 1041st Engineer Company.

What is your favorite aspect about working for the organization?

Rivera: My favorite aspect of this organization is definitely the teamwork. In my role, I am able to see multiple organizations come together with the goal of ensuring our deploying personnel are fully prepared.

Seeing the deploying personnel come home is the best part of the process. It serves as a rewarding end-result of planning, collaboration, and hard work from everyone involved.

Varney: My favorite aspect of being in the Wyoming Army National Guard is training with soldiers. There is nothing better than being in the field as soldiers hone their skills to be the most efficient soldiers they can be.

What is the best piece of advice (personal or career-wise) you have ever been given?

Rivera: There are two pieces of career advice that have been the most valuable to me. Be a good listener and don't take things personally.

Varney: Keep your priorities in line.

What are your favorite hobbies?

Rivera: My time is mostly spent with my energetic 2-year-old daughter. However, I do make time for running, CrossFit, a little bit of singing, and visiting my family whenever I can.

Varney: Reading, hiking around Colorado Springs, hunting, mud races, and leathercraft.

If you were granted three wishes for whatever you want, what would you ask for?

Rivera: Endless energy, free travel, the ability to slow time or create more of it if I need to.

Varney: To have ceaseless energy, the ability to time travel, to fully understand all the intricacies of life.

If you could hold any job you wanted, what would it be, and why?

Rivera: I would enjoy being a professional event



Capt. Carly Rivera
Wyo. Air National Guard
Company Grade Officer
of the Year



Lt. Eli Varney
Wyo. Army National Guard
Company Grade Officer
of the Year

planner or possibly a mental health counselor. I enjoy planning and helping/motivating others.

Varney: I would like to be a therapist for those who have experienced trauma, in an outdoor therapy clinic where we spend weeks in the mountains working through past experiences.

Where do you see yourself in 20 years?

Rivera: Hopefully, retired with extra time to do the things I enjoy and seeing my daughter happy as a young adult.

Varney: I see myself married to my beautiful wife where we have successful careers and two children. I plan to have my PhD in psychology and to own my own clinic where I focus on trauma and addictions.

Finish this sentence: I think the most important thing in life is ...?

Rivera: Faith and surrounding yourself with positive people.

Varney: Family.



One of our organizational focus areas over the last quarter has been the Wyoming legislative process. Thanks to the hard work of many individuals and the unwavering support of the Governor and our State Legislature, this year's session, to include the overall impacts on our agency budget, were extremely positive.

In terms of bills and legislative initiatives, the process started a year ago. Over the last year, your legislative support team, synchronized by Maj. Robert Rickgauer, traveled a lot and attended multiple meetings in support of the Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs Committee as they worked to improve the lives of our guardsmen, their families, and the communities to which we belong. In the end, bills which modified Wyoming law relative to the Wyoming Military Department involved the following provisions: 1) allows private employers to grant hiring preferences to veterans without fear of lawsuit under Federal Equal Opportunity laws; 2) expands military service member protections to Wyoming employees who are members of other states' military departments; 3) provides lifetime game and fish licenses for Purple Heart recipients and 4) extend the sunset date of our Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy from 2017 to 2025 while fully funding the program.

In terms of budget impact, our agency will be affected across the board by a 1 percent cut in 2017 and an additional 2 percent cut in 2018. Our proposal to reduce two of our military member benefit programs to protect our most mission essential programs from mandatory cuts was accepted. Reimbursement of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance premiums will only be issued one year of this biennium and the First Responder Retirement Program was reduced to current needs. Given the economic situation in the state, the impacts could have been much larger.

I am happy to report that the state did authorize us to hire an additional four full-time security force members at the Air Guard and increased our funding in operations and maintenance and allowed us to hire a previously frozen position in support of the new Afton Readiness Center. Additionally, funding to allow us to support the veteran's claim process at the Cheyenne Veterans Affairs center was approved and added to our standard budget and authorization was granted for us to purchase much needed computers and information technology equipment.

As we work budgets and other programs, we continue to be guided by our highest priority, which is readiness. Each of us must be ready to respond as required throughout Wyoming and to the needs of this nation. The key component of organizational readiness is strength, because if we do not have the required number of members in our ranks, we will not be able to produce readiness. I have asked all of our leaders to approach the decisions they make from the sense of readiness. If it has to do with readiness – it is the priority. With that in mind, I ask all of you to help us recruit, train and retain a quality force. We owe it to ourselves, this state and this nation.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

The Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. Luke Reiner

Generally Speaking



153rd Airlift Wing adds leadership team with long-time legacy

By 2nd Lt. Eve Neisen
153rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs

Both Col. Paul Lyman and David Herder commissioned over 20 years ago through Reserve Officer Training Corps programs and became navigators on the C-130 aircraft piloted by the Wyoming Air National Guard. Today, they have combined over 7,300 flying hours and 40 years of military service, most with the Wyoming Air National Guard.

Now they are the 153rd Airlift Wing's newest leadership duo and their vision for the future is a true reflection of their past.

Not long ago, as the entire Air Force adopted a "total force" concept, Lyman helped evolve the Wyoming Air National Guard for the future. As the 187th Airlift Squadron commander, he was responsible for seamlessly integrating active duty operations with his Guard squadron.

"Different people handle change differently," said Lyman. "Merging two different cultures was very challenging."

Like a true professional, he merged the active duty Air Force's 30th Airlift Squadron with the 187th Airlift Squadron, prepared airmen to deploy overseas and employed the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems for stateside missions.

Herder's recent experience has also prepared him for his role as vice wing commander.

Prior to being the base inspector general, Herder served seven years as the deputy commander at the Wyoming Army National Guard's Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center, a first for an Air Force officer. Like Lyman, his job was to combine two different services, which he did well according to Army officials.



Incoming commander of the Wyoming Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing, Col. Paul Lyman (third from right), hands the officially registered branding iron for the Wyoming Air National Guard – the "flying wio" – to outgoing wing commander Col. Brad Swanson (center). Twenty-eight years of wing command joined him in the presentation at the Feb. 13, 2016, change of command ceremony. The former wing commanders are (left to right) Jim Winders, Bob Rodekohr, Brig. Gen. Steve Rader, Harold Reed and Dennis Grunstad. Photo by Master Sgt. Charles Delano

Herder experienced another big change when he transitioned from active duty Air Force and joined the Wyoming Air National Guard. He recalls his first drill weekend as being, "strange."

"Two totally different cultures," Herder said. "Active duty is very structured, very rigid, very rank oriented. Coming into the guard world, it's more of a family."

As Herder approaches 23 years in the guard, he and Lyman are using lessons learned to shape and prepare the airmen of the 153rd Airlift Wing into 2016 and beyond.

"Our mission is too important for the citizens of this great nation, we cannot fail," said Lyman as he gave his first speech as wing commander during a change of command ceremony in February.

"We must remain proven in combat and trusted at home," said Lyman. He presented four priorities his leadership team will set forth. First is operational readiness, followed by manning.

"All of us must continue to shape

our working environment, making sure the 153rd is the team everyone wants to join," Lyman explained.


The third priority will have a focus on airmen.

"Creating an environment where airmen can thrive is awesome," Lyman said. "In that statement, there's a lot that goes into it. That's one thing we've got to look at."

Lastly, Lyman intends to enforce a culture of compliance.

"We've always had successful results [with the commander's inspection program], but with diminishing resources and increased demand, there's simply no room for waste," Lyman said.

There is something to be said for a leadership team with deep roots in the Wyoming community. The connection between their past experiences and vision of the future is important to them and to the Wyoming Air Guard.

"No doubt about it, we will be successful and our legacy of greatness will continue," Lyman said. "After all, it's the cowboy way." 

Our jumbo jet wasn't yet on the ground in the Republic of Korea when I got the impression I was going somewhere special.

Prior to the trip to Yongsan Army Garrison for the Key Resolve exercise, I had few expectations of what was ahead. Though, some briefings and pre-departure training we received left me thinking it might suck.

My opinion started changing on the plane.

Making small talk with the gentleman sitting next to me on the 747, a sales executive for an international electronics company you've probably heard of, it became clear that he and his fellow South Koreans are very optimistic about their future and grateful for their past.

That past, spotlighted by the "Forgotten War," fought over 60 years ago, has not been forgotten by his people.

I told my new acquaintance, who's name I never got, that my father had been in the war, but I didn't know much else about it. I wasn't close with my dad, nor a good history student, but I soon became very proud of the old man and my fellow brother-in-arms.

"We could not live the way we do today without them," he said of American military members who repelled the Soviet-backed North Koreans and Chinese. "We are all very grateful."

Up until that point, I tried to avoid what I was going to Seoul for, but my OPSEC meter let me know my neighbor was a good man with love for his family, life and country and our involvement in its continued security and prosperity.

I told him I was going to take part in an exercise I knew very little about, (the truth). He thanked me, and shared his opinion of the North's leader and our country's continued military involvement with the South.

"(The North) is very conscious of your relationship with us," the father of three said, "and he is scared."

My history lesson continued the next morning, when our sponsor, the Eighth Army public affairs

sergeant major, led us on a hike to the Korean War Memorial Museum.

It was clear that this peace-craving, hardworking, often-attacked land would be just another communist dictatorship if the U.S. and other U.N. allies did not step up and counter the 1950 North Korean attack.

The museum's exceptional exhibits and chronological history of the war spurred my American pride, and I felt my bond with the country growing.

Korean men are now required to serve two years in the military and are an integral part of the alliance. We worked with quite a few of the "Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army" soldiers, known as KATUSA, during our two weeks at Key Resolve.

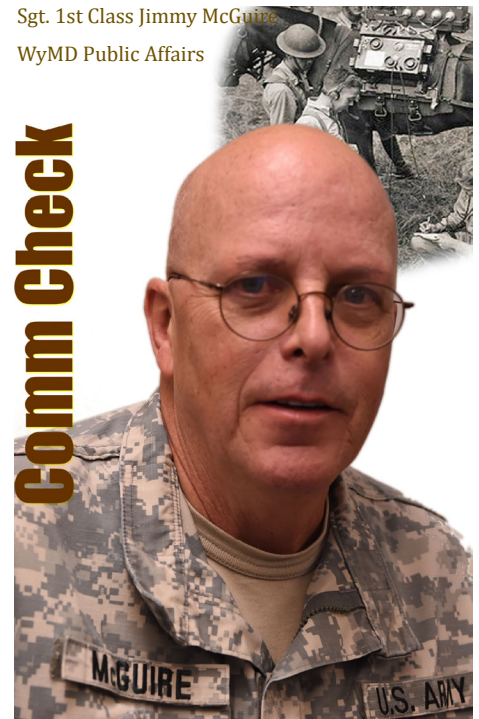
We were briefed about South Korean soldiers prior to going over. In a nutshell, I heard they are angry about their lot in life, fight a lot and are best to be avoided.

I experienced that they are friendly, accepting of their lot in life, respectful and they love and support America.

"I would like to go to America to live," said one of the KATUSA specialists working in our area. "But I love the food here too much."

I hope that the country north of the 38th Parallel doesn't mess with the friends to the South, because I know we are homies now, and I'm proud and happy to have their back.

Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire
WyMD Public Affairs



Help us make Cowboy Guard better

Let us know what you like about Cowboy Guard and how we can make it better. We've created a web-based form for you to provide inputs to our magazine. Please take a moment to fill out the form found at this link: <http://bit.ly/cowboyfb>.

Wyoming Military Department
5410 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82009
307-772-5253
wyomilitary.wyo.gov