



# Cowboy Guard

Volume 2, Number 4

4th Quarter Fiscal Year 2015







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## Cowboy Guard



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### On the Cover



Senior Airman Collin Holte, 153rd Emergency Management, and Brent Osborne, Cheyenne Region 7 Hazmat, remove a victim from a chlorine contaminated building during a simulation. Photo by Master Sgt. Charles Delano

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# It's official: restructuring on the horizon

## Bridge Co. deactivating, infantry coming in

By Capt. Tom Blackburn  
Deputy Public Affairs Officer  
Wyoming Military Department

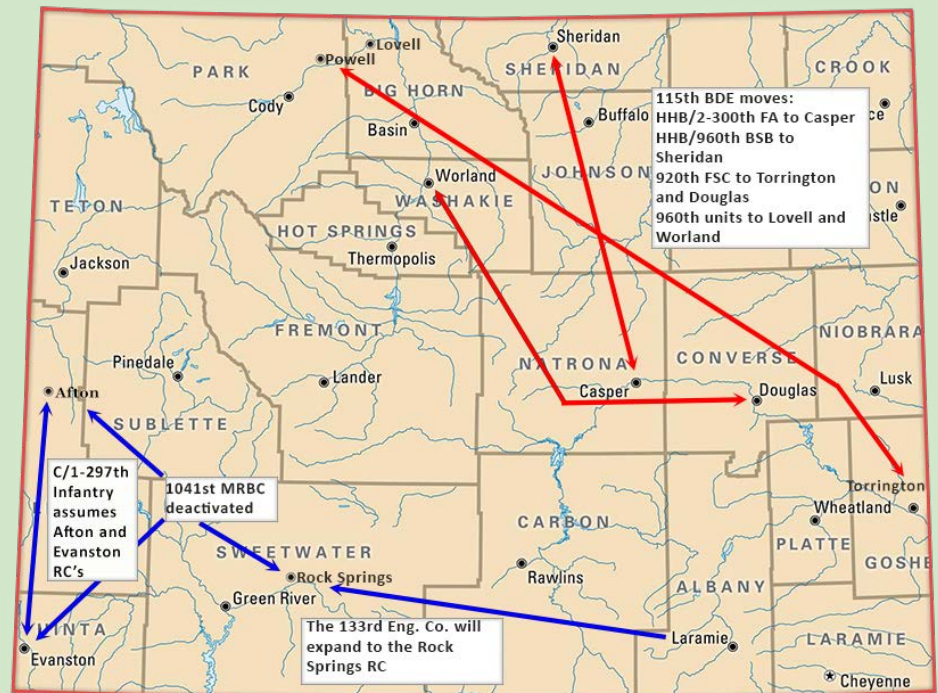
Changes are coming to some Wyoming Army National Guard unit's location and force structure.

With recent national budget control decisions decreasing the size of the National Guard and force structure updates by the U.S. Army, the Wyoming Army National Guard will make changes to meet the new guidance.

The most dramatic change will be the deactivation of the 1041st Multi-Role Bridge Company and the activation of an infantry company in Southwest Wyoming next year. These moves are based on national-level guidance with further analysis done by the state's Army operations office.

"Some of these changes are driven by the National Guard going from 350,000 to 335,000, some by the U.S. Army changing the structure of some units, which we have in the state, and some by the reorganization of units across the country," said Col. Jesse Kirchmeier, current Wyoming Army National Guard chief of staff, who oversaw the planning for the reorganization as the prior deputy chief of staff for operations.

The 183-person bridge company, which has been in the Wyoming Guard since 1997, will be deactivated as part of the downsizing



mandated by national budget control measures. That will occur by the end of the next federal fiscal year. The loss of the multi-role bridge company will have minimal impact on the Wyoming Army Guard's ability to perform its community response missions.

Soldiers in the 1041st will be given the opportunity to transition to the new infantry company or be assigned into units

Col. Jesse Kirchmeier

elsewhere in the state. Kirchmeier said if a soldier wants to maintain the same job they currently hold and that job is available in the Wyoming Army National Guard, then they will be reassigned. The state personnel office will work each case on an individual basis.

The new infantry company, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry, with its 131 available positions, will be stationed in the armories in

Evanston and Afton, which formerly housed the 1041st. The unit will fall under the 94th Troop Command, out of Laramie, but still maintain a training relationship with its parent battalion in Alaska. Personnel will start transferring into the Wyoming unit during fiscal year 2016.

Infantrymen are known for fighting on foot and their proficiency with fire-arms and other hand-held weapons.

"Having the new infantry company will help us with recruiting in that part of the state," said Kirchmeier.

Also, other units will see some change because of updates made to unit force structure by the U.S. Army. The 133rd Engineer Company will receive an additional platoon, expanding the Laramie-based company into the Rock Springs armory, formerly assigned to the 1041st, ensuring the Guard maintains a presence in Sweetwater County.

"They will receive a new vertical platoon, to go with the two horizontal platoons they have now," Kirchmeier said. "This will increase their capa-



# Opportunity knocks

One of the constants in life is change and we have the privilege to serve this state and nation in tumultuous and changing times. Not only is there increasing instability around the world; think Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, ISIL, etc.; we also face challenges here in this nation in terms of budget.

As the Army has wrestled with this budget issue, driven by the Budget Control Act, they have decided to reduce the size of the Army National Guard from 350,000 to 335,000. The net effect of that change will be felt in every state across this nation, to include Wyoming. On the flip side, the Air National Guard at the national level will actually grow.

By now most of you have heard about the coming changes to the Wyoming Army National Guard, both in 94th Troop Command and the 115th Field Artillery Brigade.

While I would have preferred to stay the way we were, that was not an option and I need to thank the team that worked to position units around the state and those that worked with National Guard Bureau to mitigate the potential losses to our formations.

For those of you that will be negatively affected in terms of being required to change unit locations, units or even Military Occupational Specialties, I ask you to look at this as an opportunity.

It may be your opportunity to learn new skills, drill closer to home, or to join the unit you have always wanted to be in.

We will work with each of you to find the right solution, but your attitude as we go through this change

The Adjutant General  
Maj. Gen. Luke Reiner

Generally Speaking



will matter. Our goal is to keep each of you in this formation because together we are a formidable force.

Our goal as the Wyoming Guard team is to come out of this change stronger than we were and ready to do this state and nation's bidding. Remember, we have the privilege to serve in tumultuous times and the nation will continue to call the Guard to deploy somewhere on this globe and the residents of Wyoming will be looking for us to respond to the next disaster. Our task is to be ready.

Thanks for wearing the uniform and for everything you do. It matters.

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Got a concern, question, comment, unresolved issue?



TAG Communication Action Line may be the place to call  
307-772-5330



# Change happens

**State Command Sergeant Major**  
**Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Tom Allan**

**A**s always the work our great Soldiers do in this dynamic ever-changing organization never ceases to amaze me. In fact in this quarter's article I want to discuss some more changes.

First of all we need to discuss the new Style NCO-ER. As G-1 has said, you will need to close out the old style this calendar year, and begin with the new form, rank dependent with your initial counseling.

I have looked at this from many angles, and it all seems to make sense. This descriptive method will allow us to better evaluate and mentor our troops.

Make sure you get on the EES Entry Evaluation System Website, and do the training, to better prepare yourself on this updated procedure:

<https://evaluations.hrc.army.mil/>

Next let's discuss the Army's new STEP promotion program. You with a few years under your belt will remember this as STPA, Select Train Promote Assign. Now the Army settled on their acronym that means Select Train Educate Assign.

Your Sergeants Major have been briefed on this, and will be getting with you. Basically gone are the days when you can get promoted before completing the required NCODPS; ah another acronym change.

Old NCOES, new NCOPDS Non-Commissioned Officers Professional Development System. Two things prompted this name change: WLC will now be called BLC Basic Leaders Course, and they added a requirement to make the rank of E-8 called MLC, Master Leaders Course.

The last thing I want to speak about is the upcoming MTOE change/relocation of units, that has been socialize the last few months. We at the headquarters have done our best to communicate this change, and try to alleviate any fears you may have as well as answer your questions.

This change is necessary for us to remain a vital cog in the defense of this great state and nation. As

**From My Foxhole**



always we will get through this with good leadership, so squad leaders, platoon sergeants, and 1SG's insure you communicate thoroughly, and do your best to create a win-win. That is to say what's best for the organization and what's best for the Soldier match's up as closely as we can.

Thank you so much for all you do not only for the state and nation, but for your families and yourself. I have said it many times, "being a guardsman takes moxie, intelligence, and superior time management skills'.

You have all these and more, that's why we are successful. Keep calm and go with the flow change is part of life...

With much respect your State Command Sergeant Major, Thomas Allan

## ***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>.

# Organizational Alphabet

I'm often astounded by how little we really know. We likely know less than 1 percent of the on-goings around us, which are often in the realm of politics, economics, technology and the military. Really, even the most educated person you know, in all likelihood, really doesn't know much at all — but how could they?

At the rate information is exchanged and the world is evolving, it would be impossible to keep up, even if you were waking up and reading the latest news and trends 24-7.

Several years ago I made the transition to Gmail as my main personal email server. Since that time Google, which was founded in 1998 and went public in 2004, has exploded, I, very ignorantly, felt like I knew something about their company — I have an email account with them and I use Chrome on a daily basis, so I considered myself pretty well versed in all things Google.

However Google recently announced that they will now be called Alphabet — a parent company which will now oversee Google as well as the hundreds of side-projects they have going on.

As I researched Alphabet, I was enlightened to find that Google has literally hundreds of projects in the works. Among them: Smart thermostats that program themselves and can be run from your phone, smoke detectors which can be run from your phone (alert you to a fire when you are not home), and home cameras that can be viewed 24-7 from your phone and have night vision; Google X, which includes self-driving cars, drones and contact lenses that measure glucose levels in tears; oh, and they also own YouTube and Android.

So yeah, Google pretty much seemingly owns the universe.

I find that many organizations are much like that and the Wyoming Military Department is no different.

We are made up of a parent company, which then funnels down to several sub-organizations. Much like Alphabet, which oversees thousands of projects

Public Affairs Specialist  
Capt. Megan Hoffmann

Comm Check



and personnel for Google, the WyMD functions to oversee thousands of personnel, and a plethora of projects and organizations.

It just isn't possible in this forum to address every office, program, or function in the Wyoming Military Department. Hopefully you have an understanding of how all-encompassing and diverse our organization is, as well as why it's hard to really comprehend how much you really don't know.

Is it possible to really understand the mission, purpose and capabilities of an organization without a firm understanding of its foundation, structure, and operational makeup? I certainly don't think so.

Therefore, I challenge you to research YOUR organization, be it the Wyoming Military Department, or elsewhere.

Learn what each organization's programs do, and how you can complement and capitalize on that information. At times, it may feel like an organizational alphabet soup, and a bit hard to piece together, but once you do, you are able to see the bigger picture and how you fit in and contribute to it.



# What's in it for me?

We in the Wyoming Military Department have many opportunities to volunteer within the department and the community. For the moment, let's look at a couple of volunteer opportunities within the 153rd Airlift Wing. We have the Outstanding Soldier and Airmen of the Year banquet, the wing picnic, Christmas party, mock interview boards, HADD and CCAF induction ceremony to name a few.

We are having a hard time getting volunteers to help with these worthwhile events.

Worse yet, we have individuals sign up to help with these events and are no-shows when the event happens.

If we continue down this path, there will come a time we will no longer be able to support these commendable causes.

It is okay to ask, "What's in it for me?"

There are many benefits of volunteering; here are a few that come to mind: self-satisfaction, socialization, career opportunities and service to your community.

Volunteering is a great way to broaden your horizons – getting out of your comfort zone and getting more diversified.

The question could be asked "How does volunteering get me more diversified?" It can be said any time you are getting out of your comfort zone, you are getting more diversified.

How many of you have been the POC or lead volunteer for something like the OSAY, wing picnic or

State Command Chief  
Chief Master Sgt. Bill Whipple

The Chief's Corner



wing Christmas party?

There is no doubt the first time you are the POC for something as large as one of these worthy causes you will be pushed out of your comfort zone. Are you going to make a few mistakes along the way? Probably, but it's all part of the growing process.

Volunteering is ultimately about serving others and having an impact on people's welfare.

The next time you get an e-mail or someone asks for volunteers, please consider giving some of your time for a worthwhile cause.

*The State PAO is presenting new internal communication products soon.*

*We intend to share pertinent information across the services, state employees and all in between.*

*Keep us posted on news and upcoming events that everyone in the Wyo. Military Dept. should know about, but only those in your network are getting.*

Upcoming events, ceremonies, jobs, Space A, safety, personnel, training opportunities. Send it to :  
[ng.wy.wyarng.list.pao-distribution@mail.mil](mailto:ng.wy.wyarng.list.pao-distribution@mail.mil)

# What it takes to be a Cyber Systems Operator

By Capt. Megan Hoffmann  
Public Affairs Specialist  
Wyoming Military Department



**T**ech. Sgt. Jaron Haines is no stranger to extensive travels and military assignments, although, if he had it his way, he would stay close to home.

A Nebraskan at heart, Jaron and his wife have been

away from their home state for the past 10 years as his nine-year stint on Active Duty took him to places such as Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina; Andrews AFB, Maryland; Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar; and Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Alabama.

The operations tempo and constant moving became almost overwhelming, and it was at that point when Haines found a job in the 153rd Airlift Wing's Command and Control Squadron, Wyoming Air National Guard, as a cyber systems operator – something that permitted him to be close to home in a passionate career field.

Last October, Haines made the official transfer to the 153rd CACS via an Air Force program called Palace Chase, which allowed him to leave his active duty service commitment early for an extended commitment in the Wyoming Air National Guard.

In order to become a fully-qualified cyber systems operator, Haines first had to complete eight weeks of training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and then attend Cyber Systems Operation technical training for three months at Kessler Air Force Base, Mississippi.

When his training was complete, Haines was afforded the opportunity to earn his 20-ton truck driver endorsement and additional security forces training to meet

mobile mission requirements. When he isn't gaining additional certifications and experience, his daily job requirements include performing system administration, operations and maintenance for a server infrastructure across the mission platform.

"I ensure that all of the servers are communicating and allowing the right people access to the systems, while maintaining the information that is stored on the servers," said Haines. "The job entails managing exchange servers, domain controllers, security servers, and application servers, along with the software that resides on each one. My job allows each user to accomplish their mission in the cyber world."

His military training and day-to-day job will benefit him in the future. "The certifications this career field offer go a long way on the outside after my career," said Haines.

An example is Security+, which is focused on securing networks and managing risk through appropriate mitigation and deterrent techniques to address network attacks and vulnerabilities. "The ability to get hands-on experiences, along with a quality education, provides me with skills I never thought I would have possessed. The technology I work with on a daily basis is something that the civilian world is beginning to switch to."

Haines has been able to be an active member in the delivery of a new platform that utilizes virtualization technology rather than standard desktops, and gets to work with a variety of people with advanced education and knowledge in the command, control and technology environment.

"I get to support one of the coolest missions I've ever seen and the level of responsibility I have is leaps and bounds above someone else my age," said Haines. "You will be provided training and opportunities that you've never seen or thought possible in the military before – and the mission is one that always keeps you engaged, excited to come to work, and employable after you leave the service."

If you are interested in becoming a member of the 153rd Command and Control Squadron, or learning about the career opportunities in the Wyoming Air National Guard, contact Wyoming Air National Guard recruiting at 307-772-6333. ∞



**Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James discusses current issues with 153rd Airlift Wing Commander Col. Bradley Swanson and his staff at Wyoming Air National Guard Headquarters, in Cheyenne, Wyoming July 17. She discussed the future of the Air Force and National Guard and conducted a question-and-answer session. James emphasized the importance of diversity and air power in meeting current and future challenges. The secretary also visited a number of facilities and offices around the base. (Wyoming Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire)**



# North Training Area with sign project

Gone are the days of relying on grid coordinates or your best guess to navigate the more than 50,000 acres of Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center's North Training Area, as a memorial project for 11 fallen military members was recently completed.

Not only did the JTC honor the Wyoming fallen, but it also increased command and control and safety on the sprawling facility that up until now had primarily unmarked intersections.

"We've been preparing all summer," said Matt Martin, North Training Range manager. "We planted 32 signposts out there and now they are all ready to go."

Preparation has taken longer than that, however, as many steps had to be taken including having the street names approved by National Guard Bureau.

"We can't just arbitrarily name streets," Martin said.

"We've got 98 percent of them named now, and we have more names for future roads out there."

Maj. Michael Fields, the camp's operations officer, said the culminating event also served as a team-building day for the camp's staff. Eight teams of employees ate breakfast, heard the history of the project, and honored a few key players before loading up the signs, tools and hardware.

"This is going to make it a lot safer out there, while honoring Wyoming soldiers," Fields said.

## **Lance Cpl. Canderlario P. Bustos**

From Rock Springs, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Marine Corps April 22, 1969

While serving with HS Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division as a mortar man, Bustos was killed in action on May 10, 1969, from

See SIGNS page 22





# Area honors fallen

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire  
Wyoming Army National Guard  
Public Affairs NCOIC



Sgt. Aubrey Schmidt fastens one panel of a new road sign at the intersection of Parrot and Emigrant Hill.







**R**ebekah Merlino is an artist.  
**S**gt. Rebekah Merlino is a war veteran who served in Afghanistan.

**W**atching her paint and interact with gallery patrons, you wouldn't guess she is a citizen soldier and a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter repairer in the Wyoming Army National Guard. Viewing her paintings, you would be surprised at the obstacles she overcame to become the artist she is today.

Merlino began her career with the Wyoming Army National Guard's 1022nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), 94th Troop Command in Laramie, Wyoming, in 2007.

Upon completing her training, she volunteered to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom but was not chosen due to the large pool of qualified mechanics.

Halfway through her enlistment, Merlino had still not deployed, so she transferred to Detachment 53, Operational Airlift Support Command, in Cheyenne, a fixed-wing aircraft unit deploying to Afghanistan.

"I was looking to join the public affairs detachment because they were deploying all the time," said Merlino. "It was my commander's recommendation to switch over to Det. 53 to keep me in the aviation realm."

The combined unit comprised with eight other fixed-wing units from around the country became Task Force Odin II and deployed to Afghanistan in 2010.

During that deployment, she completed several art projects, which included painting a mural on a bunker and decorating new aircraft parts, which replaced items that were destroyed by shrapnel from a rocket propelled grenade.

Merlino enrolled at Casper College's art program before deploying. She recalls that she felt she was one of the worst artists they had in the program. She overcame the feeling and kept going because she loved art and created things with her hands. When Merlino's commander in Afghanistan heard she was an artist, he told her to paint the bunker. She used this opportunity to sharpen her skills and was soon asked to paint on an aircraft.

By Tech. Sgt. John Galvin  
Public Affairs Specialist  
153rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

During her tenure in the desert, Merlino took notice of the culture and began thinking of ways to use her observations as inspiration for her future work. She became cognizant of the lack of women's rights and the second-class view of females throughout Afghanistan. She was bothered by the way the birth of a male child was celebrated while the birth of a female child was not.

"I had to do something to educate my circle of friends, but also for me," she said. "I never forget how lucky I am to have been born in the USA."

Upon return from her one-year tour, Merlino had a new outlook on life. During the early months stateside, her friends began to take notice in her behavioral changes. She recalls that her friends seemed to be acting different because they didn't know how to act around someone who was returning from a deployment. They assumed that she was mentally affected by the war and didn't treat her as the Rebekah Merlino who left a year earlier.

"They looked at me like I was a monster, yet they were so morbidly curious to hear about the war," said Merlino. "I was not in the mood to put up with anyone's issues or loaded questions."

She started spending more time with her art instructors from Casper College. But, in order for her to hang out with them, they required her to work on art projects. Eventually, she obtained a work-study position in the art building. At this time, she was still not diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Merlino re-registered for classes at Casper College to refine her artistic skills and began using her artwork to cope with her feelings of being a stranger in her own country.

She immersed herself with her artwork, focusing completely on her painting and photography classes, and would concentrate so intently on a certain project that things occurring in front of her would go unnoticed.



"One day in painting class I was so focused that I didn't notice an older woman spray down her drawing with this stuff that should not be used indoors and my classmates all started to run out of the toxic-filled room," said Merlino. "I didn't notice any of this until my painting teacher came in and asked why I didn't stop the woman from spraying that stuff inside. He had to dismiss class for the rest of the day."

As she completed more pieces, her talent was recognized by one of her instructors who encouraged her to become an art instructor.

Merlino transferred to the University of Wyoming in 2012 and while she was still a student, her paintings were featured at the Global Village Museum Hall Exhibit in Fort Collins, Colorado. Her gallery of paintings entitled "Women of the World" was on display through Labor Day 2015.

The series represented women and their cultures in modern times from all over the world. Merlino donated the first print of her painting titled "Afghani Women", featuring Afghan women, to the Wyoming Veterans' Memorial Museum, located at the Casper airport.

Museum director John Goss is planning to feature a collection of art by military members and has already collected several pieces, including

"Afghani Women".

"Visually, it was an immediate hit," Goss said, referring to the painting after its premiere at the museum. "Folks loved it and were extremely interested in its story, which when they learned the background of the painting they liked it even more."

In May, Merlino completed her bachelor's degree in fine arts at the University of Wyoming. She is actively engaged in mission trips to impoverished nations where she provides inspiration to young women across the globe.

"The women's series turned into something bigger than I could have ever imagined," said Merlino. "I get to educate men and women all over the country about the issues for women in Afghanistan, but it's hard because I have to keep revisiting one of my worst days in Afghanistan."

After her paintings were released from the museum in Fort Collins, they headed to a women's clinic in Utah. Her next series will be a commentary on how the American public treats soldiers returning home after being deployed. She says that she will harness her frustration and paint about it. Eventually, she wants to pay it forward and become an art instructor to help others channel their own emotions. ∞





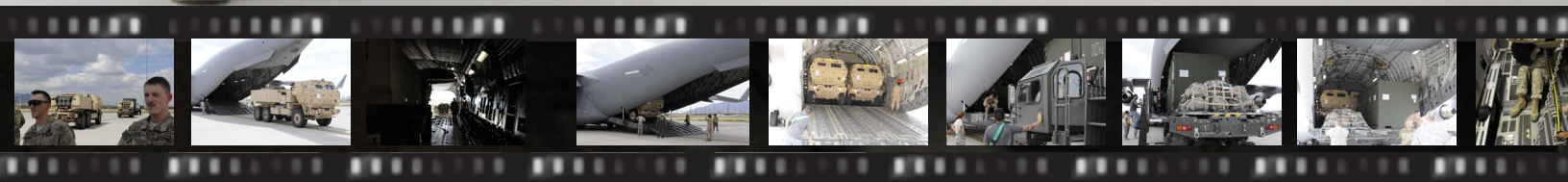
**Wyoming Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Austin Laffitte of A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery gets a good-bye boot bite from his dog Scout during a send-off ceremony at the Gillette armory August 8. Hundreds of family members, friends and community members joined Governor Matt Mead, U.S. Senator John Barraso and Wyoming National Guard leaders in sending off the artillery unit deploying to Afghanistan. Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire**





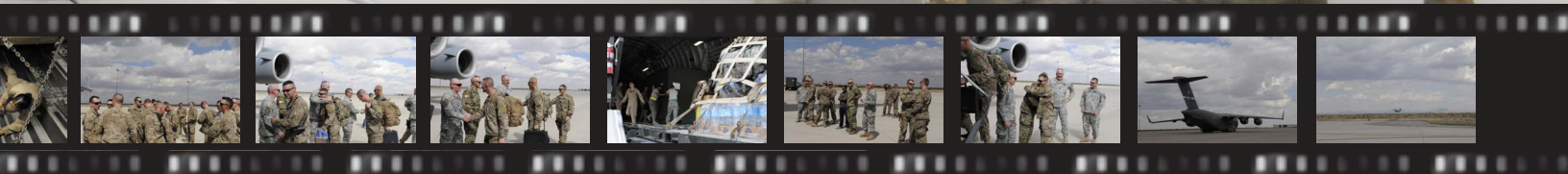
# BOHICA flies BENIC

Soldiers from A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery pose for a unit photo before leaving Fort Bliss, New Mexico, for Afghanistan. The unit, all of its equipment supplies and weapons systems flew together on a C-17 with a similar nickname. Photos by State Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Allan





CIA  
Texas for Afghani-





# 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. Amy Henry and Chief Master Sgt. Jeremy Nash*

**How long have you worked for the Wyoming Military Department?**

**Henry:** 9 ½ years

**Nash:** I have been a member of the Wyoming Air National Guard since Feb. 1, 2008.

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

**Henry:** Medical Detachment Officer in Charge (OIC)

**Nash:** I am currently the superintendent for the 153rd Medical Group.

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

**Henry:** As a technician, I have been the accounting supervisor for the United States Property and Fiscal Office, the training and development specialist for the Human Resources Office and the Human Resources Office supervisor. On the military side, I have been a budget analyst for Joint Force Headquarters, platoon leader for A Company, 960th Brigade Support Battalion, logistics officer for the 960th Brigade Support Battalion, and the commander for the 960th Headquarters, Headquarters Company.

**Nash:** Within the WyANG, I have also been assigned as a health services technician. Prior to the WyANG, I was active duty Air Force and assigned as a recruiter in Cody, Wyoming, from 2004-2008.

Prior to that, I was an aeromedical services technician assigned to Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, and Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota.

**What is your favorite aspect about working for the organization?**

**Henry:** The different challenges we face on a daily basis, it's always something new.

**Nash:** I really enjoy the family approach the Guard has towards its members. Other organizations did not emphasize this at all, and it's nice to work for a company that values the family as much as the employees.

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

**Henry:** Plan and take care of your career, no one else will.

**Nash:** Pick your battles. Contesting or complaining about every aspect you may come across can be a waste of time and energy – save those arguments for the things that really matter to you.

**What are your favorite hobbies?**

**Henry:** Archery hunting, anything outdoors with my husband and kids to include boating, fishing, camping.

**Nash:** I enjoy watching professional and college



**Capt. Amy Henry**  
Medical Detachment



**Chief Master Sgt. Jeremy Nash**  
153rd Medical Group



football, as well as watching movies. I also like hobbies including plastic models and cross-stitching.

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

**Henry:** Money – to help others with their struggles. To be an influential leader and positive role model for soldiers and my children.

An all-inclusive trip to Mexico to hang out on the beach, snorkel and deep sea fish.

**Nash:** Time – things seem to be going so much faster as we get older.

Health – I want to be able to actively enjoy the company of my future generations.

Space – I have a lot of other hobbies I want to do in the future.

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

**Henry:** Personal Trainer/Nutritional Coach – I love to help and teach others, and I enjoy fitness.

**Nash:** A dream job of mine would be a long-haul driver of some kind, either with a trucking or a charter bus company. I would love to see the country from behind a windshield.

**Where do you see yourself in 20 years?**

**Henry:** Retired from the Wyoming National Guard, working for another federal agency – in either a finance department or human resources. Hopefully have our house paid off, kids in college and spending time at a cabin.

**Nash:** In 20 years I hope to be past the halfway mark in my future career as a high school mathematics teacher.

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

**Henry:** Staying positive and being happy.

**Nash:** Personal happiness. Having a job that you dread going to each morning, or not really enjoying classes you are taking, or otherwise in a situation that is not making you happy – these detract from individual happiness, which leads to so many other great things. There is always something out there that will make someone happy.

**MOVES from page 3**

bilities. Before they could build airfields and roads, missions like that. Now they will also be able to build structures and buildings.”

Under the force structure changes, the Wyoming Army National Guard will also receive a new radar section assigned to the Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 115th Field Artillery Brigade, in Cheyenne and a legal team assigned to the Joint Force Headquarters.

Guidance is already being given to commands to support soldiers’ efforts in retraining for positions within their current units or in another Wyoming Army Guard vacancy.

“With these new units our soldiers will see their career options expand and offer new areas of professional development,” Kirchmeier said.

Another change to the Wyoming Army Guard force structure, not caused by budgetary issues, is a decrease in size to the nation’s brigade support battalions. Wyoming’s 960th will lose about 114 slots sometime in 2017 due to that mission change, Kirchmeier said.

“It sounds worse than it is for the state,” he said. “We’ve known that change has been on the horizon and we’ve been planning for it by moving soldiers out of the unit and not filling unit vacancies after enlistments end or soldiers retire.”


Furthermore, the brigade will shuffle the majority of its unit locations next calendar year to better situate them demographically to sustain recruiting pools for years to come.

Even with these changes, no armories will be closed; communities that have a Wyoming Guard presence now will still have one after the changes are completed throughout 2016.

“We are a heavily invested community organization,” said Brig. Gen. Steven Mount, commander of the Wyoming Army National Guard. “It was imperative to me during the planning of these moves and unit changes that we keep our folks in their local communities and keep our partnerships in those towns strong.”

When things are all said and done, the Wyoming Army Guard will go from an authorized strength of 1,707 soldiers to approximately 1,590 soldiers. Wyoming’s command team stressed that although the changes in force structure will mean some soldiers will be retrained and moved to fill vacancies in various units, no soldier will lose their military job.

The emphasis will be put on ensuring all Wyoming Guard soldiers affected will be assisted in transitioning throughout the change.

“We have been very soldier friendly throughout this process,” Mount said. “We have to take care of the folks in boots at the unit level.” 

# Denton Project

By Alexandra Poynter  
153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron

Rita Iverson stands next to boxes of clothing donations that are en route to Afghanistan. Iverson is providing clothing, blankets, medical supplies, linen, stuffed animals, toys, winter coats and shoes to the families at the Kabul Childrens House through the Department of Defense Denton Program. (Courtesy photo)



**B**uilding global partnerships, one of the National Guard's operational missions, is essential in strengthening and sustaining partnerships around the world.

That is exactly what members of the Wyoming Air National Guard did during late August as they loaded boxes and palletized cargo for a military cargo aircraft headed to Afghanistan in support of humanitarian efforts.

Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Collins, 153rd Airlift Wing Small Air Terminal supervisor, didn't hesitate to help when he received the request to assist transporting the humanitarian cargo to the Afghan Children's House in Kabul, Afghanistan, through the Denton Program.

The Denton Program, a Department of Defense approved project, allows U.S. citizens and organizations to use space available on U.S. military aircraft, ships and other transportation at no additional cost to the government, to assist with humanitarian efforts around the world.

"This is exactly the kind of mission we love and we are good at," said Collins. "We put the skills we learned and perfected, oftentimes in a combat zone, to use for the greater good. We are honored to bridge the gap between an amazingly generous American public as represented by Rita and Isabella's Little Miracles and a needy foreign ally. We are proud to serve."

On Aug. 26, two J. W. Morgan Trucking flatbed trucks loaded with 28 wooden pallets of boxes arrived in Cheyenne, at the 153rd Airlift Wing. Airmen assigned to the 153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron quickly began offloading the truck, keenly aware that the drivers were donating their time and vehicles in support of the cause.

After downloading the cargo, the airmen placed the boxes and loose items on seven pallets in preparation for loading onto planes. On Aug. 28, a total of 24,320 pounds of supplies were loaded on to a C-130 Hercules aircraft assigned to the 317th Airlift Group, Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, to begin their journey to Afghanistan.

The cargo, consisting of clothing, stuffed animals, toys, coats, blankets, linens and shoes, were received from the non-profit organization Isabella's Little Miracles, which is run by Rita Iverson of Casper, Wyoming.

In 2004, Iverson ran into problems with shipping items to Afghanistan, as a single container could cost up to \$7,000 and she had no guarantee the shipment would get to its final destination. She called the office of Wyoming's sole member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Barbara Cubin, and explained the situation. Two days later a member of Cubin's office returned her call and provided her with a way to ship the cargo through the Denton Program.

For more than a decade, Rita has put together shipments to be sent to Afghanistan's poor. Rita's husband, Ron Iverson, an emergency room doctor in Casper, finances her organization. He had a large storage building built to house all the donations and pays for shipping



# helps children in Afghanistan



Volunteers from J W Morgan Trucking, Inc. load pallets of donated clothing and supplies on a trailer in Casper, Wyoming. Rita Iverson of Isabella's Little Miracles gathered donations to send to families and children in Afghanistan through the Department of Defense Denton Program. (Courtesy photo)




items like boxes, tape, shrink wrap and metal banding.

The same year, Jim Morgan, owner of J. W. Morgan Trucking Inc., contacted Iverson and offered to transport the humanitarian supply shipments. Since then, he has helped her move more than half a dozen shipments of humanitarian supplies to Air Force bases in Wyoming and Colorado at no cost and said he and his truckers enjoy helping with such an important project.

In 2013, Iverson met with Dr. Najeeb Bina in Germany. Bina, a pediatric cardiovascular surgeon at the French Medical Institute for Children located in Kabul, told Iverson how the children at the Kabul Children's House, similar to the Ronald McDonald House, were in need of clothing, blankets and other supplies.

Soon after, Kate Rowland, a British citizen, who is involved in running the Kabul Children's House, told Iverson the parents of the children treated at FMIC and housed at the children's house were also in need of clothing and shoes. Iverson began collecting the items from second-hand stores and people who wanted to donate to the cause. After receiving enough items for a shipment, she began the process of sending the items to the children and their parents in Afghanistan.

Iverson is grateful to all the links in the chain who helped get the items from the hands of the donors to the children in Afghanistan.

As of this writing, 12 of her pallets arrived at an air base in Afghanistan and are awaiting delivery to the Afghan Children's House in Kabul. 



Above, U.S. Air Force Airmen assigned to the 153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, Wyoming Air National Guard assist aircrew assigned to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas with loading humanitarian cargo on a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft. Donations gathered by Rita Iverson are en route to Kabul Childrens House through the Department of Defense Denton Program. Right, Afghan soldiers unload the donations for distribution.



**SIGNS from page 11**

multiple fragmentation wounds received in and around Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam. He received the Purple Heart medal, Vietnam Campaign medal and the Vietnam medal.

**2nd Lt. Therrel S. Childers**

and completed Officer Candidate School in 2000.

While serving with the Wyoming Joint Forces Headquarters as a field artillery officer, he was killed in action on Sept. 17, 2008, of wounds sustained when his vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device in Gerdia Seria, Afghanistan.



After eating and receiving a brief history of the road naming project, teams of Camp Guernsey JTC staff members gather their signs and hardware in preparation for the trip north.

From Powell, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1991 and completed the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program in 2001.

While serving with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, he was killed in action on March 21, 2003, from a shot to the abdomen. He was the first American casualty in operation Iraqi Freedom.

Lt. Therrel Shane Childers was described as a born leader, serious and focused, who built his life around being a Marine.

**Capt. Bruce E. Hays**

From Cheyenne, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Army in 1984

Hays is the first Wyoming National Guard soldier killed in Afghanistan. Brig. Gen. Greg Porter called Hays an outstanding officer and said that he knew field artillery thoroughly and took on many other challenging assignments in his more than 17 years of service.

**Pfc. Jordan M. Byrd**

From Cody, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Army in 2008.

While serving with HHC, 1-506 Infantry, 101st Airborne Division as a medic, was killed in action while aiding a wounded soldier during a combat mission in Paktika Province, Afghanistan. Byrd passed away on the

battlefield selflessly aiding those around him. His fellow soldiers hailed him a hero and honored him in their own way at Forward Operating Base Shakana in Afghanistan.

**Staff Sgt. Michael C. Parrott**

From Timnath, Colo.

While assigned to the Wyoming National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters, he deployed with the 1-10<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team from Pennsylvania, where he was killed in action Nov. 10, 2005 of injuries sustained in Khalidiyah, Iraq, where his unit was attacked by enemy forces using small arms fire.

His wife, Meg Corwin said, "Mike went over there because he really had this notion ... his experience might actually save some young kid's life and he also wanted to feel that he was useful and a part of something."

**Lance Cpl. Sean M. N. O'Connor**

From Douglas, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Marine Corps May 2007.

While serving with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division as a rifleman, he was killed in action on June 12, 2011, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

He received the Purple Heart and the Combat Action Ribbon.

**Sgt. Jeremiah Wittman**

From Darby, Mont.

Enlisted in the Army in 2004.

While serving with 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division as a forward observer, died of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device.

He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Good



Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal w/Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal w/Campaign Star, Army Service Ribbon, two Overseas Service Ribbons, NATO Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

### **Sgt. Brendon C. Reiss**

From Casper, Wyo.

Enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1998.

While serving with 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade as a machine-gunner, was killed in action Mar. 23, 2003 when his unit came under heavy fire near Nasiriyah, Iraq.

### **Capt. Robert L. Lucero**

From Casper, Wyo.

While serving with the 4th Infantry Division, he was killed in action in Tikrit, Iraq by an improvised explosive device on Sep. 25, 2003.

Captain Lucero was a hero in life and remains a hero in death.

### **Staff Sgt. Theodore A. Spatol**

From Thermopolis, Wyo.

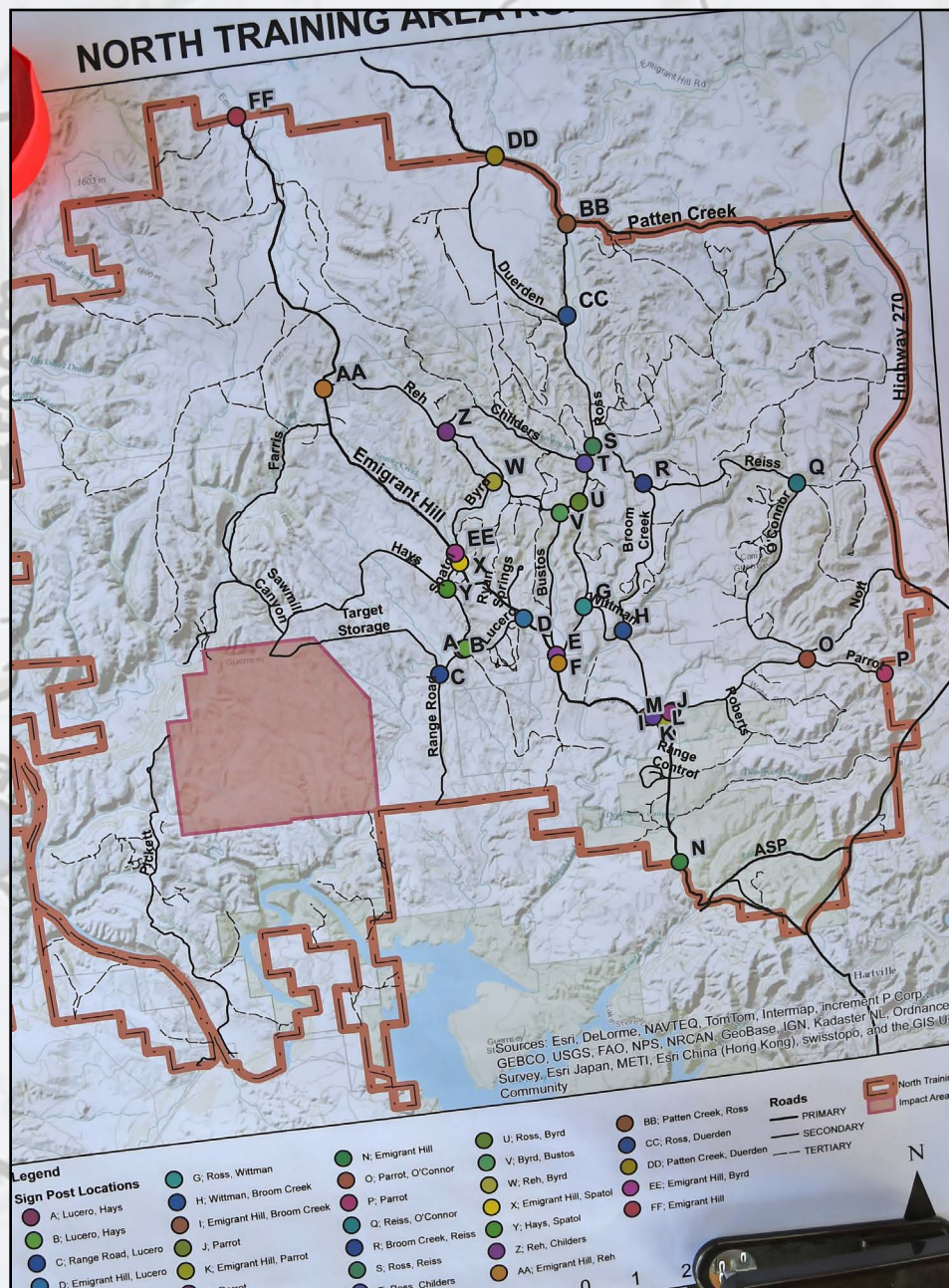
While serving with the 1041st Engineer Company in Iraq, Spatol became ill and passed away in Thermopolis after returning home.

### **Lance Cpl. Jacob A. Ross**

From Gillette, Wyo.

While serving with Marine Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment, 2nd Division, he was killed in action in Garmsir District in southern Afghanistan on Mach 24, 2010.

Camp Guernsey Operations Officer Maj. Michael Fields reads off the names and biographies of 11 fallen service members prior to launching a team-building memorial project that gave names to 32 intersections on Camp Guernsey's North Training Area.





**W**yoming Army National Guard's Medical Detachment saw Fort Laramie as a good place to look back at medical history in the area, take a tour, and to honor its own during several ceremonies near the end of its annual training.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site started out as a fur trading site in 1834, and was bought by the Army

in 1849 as part of a plan to establish a military presence along the emigrant trails. It grew to become the principle military outpost on the northern plains as well as the primary hub for transportation and communications in the Rocky Mountain region. The post was abandoned and sold at public auction in 1890. It became part of the National Park System in 1938.

"There isn't much recorded information about healthcare," company commander, Maj. Steven Gienapp, told his assembled unit at the start of the staff ride.

"But that's probably because there wasn't a lot of healthcare going on

here."

Gienapp was the first of several Med Det soldiers to share their research on the site and medical history of the era during training sessions with their colleagues.

Additional training came from park guide Will Hunziger, a local emergency medical technician, and medical history enthusiast, who shared many stories of medical care at the fort.

State Deputy Surgeon Karloyn Gafford said the group had no idea it would get extra lessons on health history, but she said afterward, "It was awesome."

Hunziger said he was thrilled to have the opportunity to share his

## MED DET GETS A TASTE OF OLD MEDICINE

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire  
Wyoming Army National Guard  
Public Affairs NCOIC





knowledge with a receptive audience.

"As part of my EMT training we had to study a little bit about the history of medicine. I got more and more interested in it, but it's a subject no one likes to talk about out here. So I started studying it in more detail for my own knowledge. I tried to do it with other groups, but the greater majority of the civilians and our visitors are not as interested in it as I am, and as for the little children, it's very crude and more graphic than some can handle."

Not the case for this audience of Army medics, doctors and surgeons.

In Fort Laramie's heyday, disease was rampant due to many conditions considered unacceptable by today's

standards. Soldiers were ordered to take a bath at least once a week during the summer and at least once a month during the winter. Windows in the infantry barracks were ordered to be left open year-round as soldiers shared twin beds in crowded quarters.

Army recruits were required to have just four teeth, according to Hunziger.

"Two on top and two on the bottom," he explained. "That was so they could load a musket."

Scurvy was a big problem for soldiers of the day according to Capt. Donnelle DeMaio, who addressed the topic in front of the bakery building. She said the standard cure for the malady that caused mouth infections and teeth to fall out was pickles

and vinegar.

Hunziger added that formula could not be transported this far West, and the Fort Laramie cure became prickly pear cactus with the spine removed, soaked in vinegar and administered with a shot of whiskey. Each soldier was ordered to take the cure every day.

Medicine was not the only thing that didn't travel well to the outpost. Food was generally rotten by the time it was served. The soldiers' daily diet consisted of a pound of meat, a pound of vegetables and 18 ounces of flour, according to Hunziger. He said the raisin bread, baked at the fort bakery, was at the top of the list of favorite foods.

"However there is no record of a shipment of raisins to Fort Laramie, so there's no telling what the raisins may have been," he added with a snicker. "The Army solution to pollu-



Lt. Col. John Passehl of the Wyoming Army National Guard's Medical Detachment at the ruins of the general sink, or latrine, explains to his colleagues why dysentery and cholera were common at Fort Laramie. The latrines on the fort, as well as Indians and animals upstream all added to unsafe levels of bacteria in the water.



tion was dilution. If you couldn't see it, it couldn't hurt you."

Lt. Col. John Passehl addressed what Hunziger alluded to at the ruins of the general sink, or latrine. Dysentery and cholera were common due to fecal matter in the water.

"What you'd want to do is boil the water before you drank or cooked with it," Passehl explained, "but I don't think many knew about that."

Sanitation was upgraded in the 1880s, but human waste still journeyed just a few yards from a receptacle to the Laramie River as well as from animals and people upstream.

Passehl shared statistics of how soldiers died during the period. During the Mexican War from 1846-1848, he said 1,500 were killed in battle and almost 11,000 died by disease.

During the Civil War, he continued, the range was almost 65 per 1,000 died from disease. Forty-four thousand died from dysentery and 4,200 died from measles. By the 1880s, death from disease was lowered to seven per 1,000.

He said it's estimated that 32,000 people died from cholera while travelling along the Oregon Trail.

Capt. Stacy York got a laugh when she started her talk on mental health with the statement, "there was no mental health."

York mentioned Dorothea Dix, the superintendent for Army nurses during the Civil War, and the person widely noted for spearheading the country's efforts to address mental health issues, including the first asylums.

According to York, "it was in the 1860s that we started to call PTSD something, and we called that 'soldier's heart,' or 'nostalgia.'"

She went on to list the terms for post traumatic stress used throughout our history.

"In World War I, it was called 'shell shock' and in World War II 'combat fatigue.'"

Lt. Col. Marshall Kohr, state sur-

geon, gave a lesson on veterinary medicine, a role relegated to the noncommissioned officer corps until the turn of the century.

"It all followed horse-shoers. Without the horse's feet being sound, you had no horse," he explained.

"In the 1790s, Congress authorized every cavalry troop unit to have a farrier. By 1836 that farrier got to be known as the veterinary surgeon, but there was no formal education at all."

By the 1860s, the lead veterinarian held the rank of sergeant major. Kohr said it wasn't until 1881 that

to remove it for further study. The soldier died during the operation and the surgeon subsequently put the removed tissue in a jar, and sent it back East.

"The jar was rediscovered in 1977, in the Smithsonian Institute," Hunziger continued. "They got curious what the lump was and they took a biopsy of it, and discovered it was cancer. It was the first cancerous polyp to have ever been successfully and completely removed from the human body. Given successful is in the eyes of the beholder."

Maj. Joanie Deatrich, physician,

Fort Laramie Park Guide Will Hunziger displays an 1800s-era medic's uniform to members of the Wyoming Army National Guard's Medical Detachment.




the veterinarian surgeon had to receive formal training.

Hunziger talked about post surgeons, who were feared by the local native population, which noticed how many soldiers died at their hands, and were widely mistrusted by the soldiers under their care.

One story, related by Hunziger while standing in front of the post surgeon's residence, involved a young soldier with a tumor that slowly spread from above his eye. It grew to cover most of one side of his head. The post surgeon did not know what the growth was, and tried

made it clear to her colleagues that their predecessors in the 1800s were just as prone to disease as the people they were charged to care for. She also noted that doctors came into the Army equivalent to first lieutenants. They were assistant surgeons for three to five years and then became captains.

"If they survived, they became the surgeon and moved up through the ranks," Deatrich explained.

Next time you're complaining at an hours-long military physical, consider what it was like to be a soldier in the 1800s. 

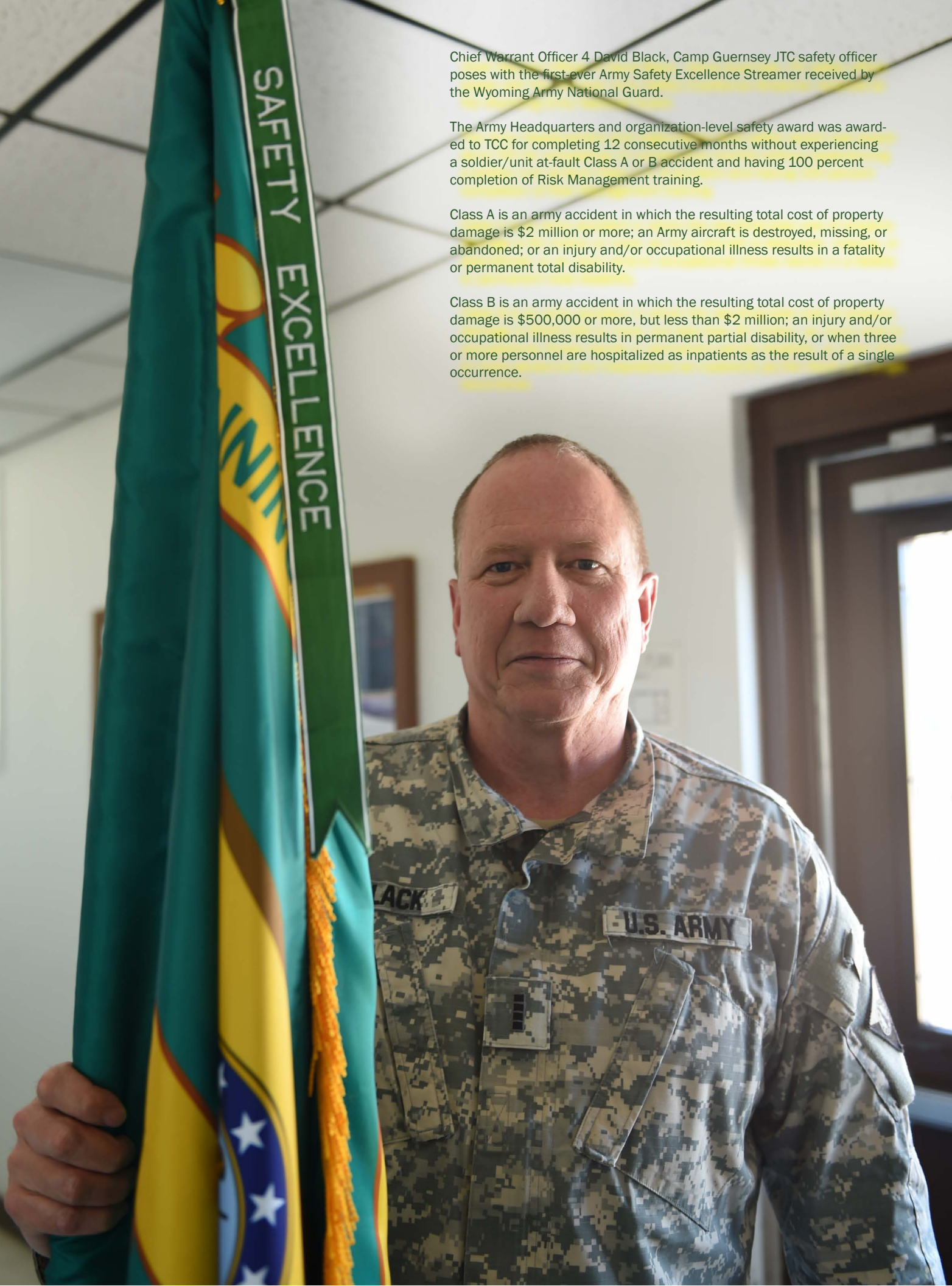


Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Black, Camp Guernsey JTC safety officer poses with the first-ever Army Safety Excellence Streamer received by the Wyoming Army National Guard.

The Army Headquarters and organization-level safety award was awarded to TCC for completing 12 consecutive months without experiencing a soldier/unit at-fault Class A or B accident and having 100 percent completion of Risk Management training.

Class A is an army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$2 million or more; an Army aircraft is destroyed, missing, or abandoned; or an injury and/or occupational illness results in a fatality or permanent total disability.

Class B is an army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$500,000 or more, but less than \$2 million; an injury and/or occupational illness results in permanent partial disability, or when three or more personnel are hospitalized as inpatients as the result of a single occurrence.





**Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire  
Wyoming Army National Guard  
Public Affairs NCOIC**

## **N**aomi Burns is the new director at the Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center.

She brings a wide variety of experience and education that should serve her well at the helm of the Guard-sponsored program that serves at-risk youth from Wyoming and neighboring states.

She comes from the Wyoming Department of Revenue office in Riverton where she worked the past four years.

Prior to that, she was executive director of the Big Horn County Health Coalition, a non-profit, grant-driven organization that supported various prevention programs and after-school programs in two school districts. Funding eventually became an issue and she decided to move on to state government.

"I really enjoyed that organization and what I did there, and when this became available, I was very interested as (the coalition) had a lot of the same missions, although a little bit different structure," she said.

She said the department of revenue offered many valuable lessons also.

"I was an office of one, covering Fremont and Hot

Springs Counties. I learned a lot about organization and how state government works," she said.

Burns had become familiar with WCCA while at the coalition, and learned a common language, the Cowboy Code of Ethics, at the same time as some academy staff.

Not only is it the adopted code of the Wyoming Military Department and the WCCA, but something she has been teaching as an adjunct professor at Northwest College as part of her ethics curriculum.

Burns expects to be challenged at the academy, but said the first few days have been


very nice. She is appreciative of "a great staff," that she anticipates will get her up to speed on the military side of the program, among other new experiences.

"I just bombarded them with questions like, how does this work? What is this acronym? What does this stand for?" she said.

Another request was for a flow chart and pictures of everyone on staff with names and titles so she could match up everyone's face to their name. She wants to get a good feel for the personnel and the culture at WCCA before making any changes.

"I'm sure eventually I will want to bring some new ideas and changes, but I think it's important first to learn and have a good understanding of how things work right now, and why they work that way," she said. "Until I have that understanding, I don't want to make any changes. I'm very fortunate to have a month overlap with the interim director."

Her education credentials include a Master's of Business Administration and degrees in communications and mission (biblical) studies. She and her husband Alex have two adopted daughters. She hopes her family will be able to join her in the Guernsey area before the end of the year. Right now she is focused on the young lives in the academy.

"Now I look forward to seeing these kids graduate and to succeed in life," Burns explained. "The ultimate mission is to ensure we give them the tools to help them continue to succeed." 



# ‘Red Tails’ receive standing ovation for their service and endless endeavors for equality

By Capt. Megan Hoffmann  
Public Affairs Specialist  
Wyoming Military Department

**A**s four men entered the auditorium, the crowd was moved from silence, to the uproar of applause, whistles and, for some, tears. The ovation lasted for what seemed to be forever, although it was just a minute or two, which didn't seem long enough to honor the men's service to our nation and truly say 'thank you' for a job well-done.

During a once-in-a-lifetime event, and a Wyoming first, four of the original Tuskegee Airmen, Col. Charles McGee, Lt. Col. George Hardy, Lt. Col. Harry Stewart and Lt. Col. James Harvey, were extended an invitation by members of the Wyoming Army and Air National Guard to travel to Cheyenne to visit our facilities, meet our soldiers and airmen, and give a presentation about their time in service.

The Tuskegee Airmen, commonly referred to as the 'Red Tails,' are the men and women, many of them African-American, who were involved in the so-called 'Tuskegee experience,' - the Army Air Corps program to train African-Americans to fly and maintain combat aircraft. The Tuskegee Airmen, who received their pilot training on airfields around Tuskegee, Alabama, included maintainers, pilots, navigators, bombardiers, instructors and any other personnel who worked to keep the aircraft in



Tuskegee Airmen, Col. Charles McGee, Lt. Col. George Hardy, Lt. Col. Harry Stewart and Lt. Col. James Harvey

the air.

The 'Red Tails' were aptly named, as Hardy explained, on the fact that most of the flying groups painted only the aircraft's rudder, but that the 332nd painted not only the rudder, but the whole tail of the aircraft, which really made it distinct and gave them the name 'Red Tails,' which soon took on a life of its own.

What set the Tuskegee Airmen apart was they wanted to fight the enemy from the air as pilots. Many applied to the U.S. Army Air Corps flight training program, but were initially rejected due to the color of their skin. However, in 1940, the USAAC reversed its position on the matter and accepted African-American flight program applicants - many of whom would go on to become the most decorated pilots in military history.

Hardy, who flew a B-29 in Korea, and then ended up in Vietnam, spoke candidly about racial equality.

"In the latter part of the 40s, racial integration started to take place. In April of 1947, the Air Force was first to declare racial de-segregation and said the new policy would be that personnel are to be assigned upon job requirements and qualifications - not the color of their skin - which caused quite a stir."

Awards amassed between these four gentlemen, who flew during World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War, and were pioneers for racial equality, include six Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Legions of Merit, 12 Air Medals, and six Presidential Unit Citations. Their awards were earned in the course of completing 535 aerial fighter combat missions and 43 bomber escort missions, including one where Harvey was the first African-American jet fighter pilot to fly in Korean airspace.

Though the group stockpiled accomplishments and awards, the members said that isn't what mattered. As men of true character, their ultimate goal was racial equality, in the military and at home.

"Col. Jefferson was shot down in his 19th mission over Germany and spent nine months in a German POW camp. During his tenure there he said he was treated under the International Geneva Convention, as an officer and a gentlemen and was afforded all of the privileges, accommodations

See TUSKEGEE page 37



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Farooq Durrani, 153rd Bioenvironmental Engineering, Senior Airman Collin Holte, 153rd Emergency Management, and Brent Osborne, Cheyenne Region 7 Hazmat tend to simulated chlorine contaminated victims at Cheyenne Air National Guard Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Durrani, Holte and Osborne are participating in Counter-CBRN All-Hazard Management Response training with civilian and military first responders to practice chemical, biological, radiological, first response, medical and incident command scenarios for possible threats in the region.

ment, emergency operations center and security forces completed morning training and three afternoon table-top exercises geared to highlight the capabilities and response actions of each organization.

“Last year we completed training for 60 wings and we are in process of completing 20 wings this year,” said Jeff Borkowski, CAMR course lead. “When we bring civilian and military first responders from the community together, they quickly realize that within the group, they have the capability to respond to a CBRN event.”

The combined effort of the participants resulted in the simulated casualties being rescued from imminent danger and decontaminated. The quick response of the EOC and Security Forces meant no more casualties after the initial set. ∞

# 153rd rocks CBRN eval

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Chuckie Delano  
153rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**I**t is over 95 degrees in the shade and smoke billows from one of two mobile homes sitting in the parking lot at Cheyenne Air National Guard Base.

A hazmat response team comprised of a bio-environmental engineering technician, emergency management technician and firefighter don hazmat suits to investigate the source of smoke. Nearby, 153rd Medical Group personnel erect a decontamination tent and suit up for possible casualties. The emergency operations center is stood up and coordinates communication and movement within the area. Security forces ensure the area is cordoned off and movement is limited to mis-

sion essential personnel.

This chemical exercise was the capstone to a four-day Counter-Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear All-Hazard Management Response course hosted by the 153rd Airlift Wing and taught by Air National Guard civilian contractors. Participants were tested in incident response, scene and personnel decontamination, emergency command, control and communication. An expert in each field of biological, chemical, and radiological hazards provided feedback for each aspect of the scenario.

Prior to the capstone event, first responders representing Cheyenne Region 7 Hazmat, AirLife Denver, Wyoming Public Health, Wyoming Emergency Management, 90th Missile Wing Emergency Management, 153rd Airlift Wing Bio-environmental Engineering, emergency manage-



Airmen assigned to the 153rd Medical Group decontaminate a simulated chlorine victim during a recent CAMR training event held at the Wyoming Air National Guard Air Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming.





The University of Wyoming Reserve Officer Training Corps marches onto the field at half-time, during the school's military appreciation game, Sept. 12, in Laramie, Wyoming. The game honored past and present military members. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Cody Hess)

## UW military appreciation day says 'Thank You' to military past and present

By Sgt. Ashlie Smith, 197th Public Affairs Detachment,  
and Sgt. Cody Hess, 920th Forward Support Company,  
Wyoming Army National Guard

**T**he University of Wyoming hosted a military appreciation day during its Sept. 12 football game against Eastern Michigan University.

The event welcomed numerous former and current military members to Laramie's War Memorial Stadium where they were honored for their service to their country.

UW football players took the field running through a tunnel made of past and present service members and their families.

Wyoming Army National Guard Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year Sgt. Eli Lilley, of Laramie, Soldier of the Year Spc. Ty Neiters, of Cody, and Wyoming Air National Guard Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Coryell participated in the coin toss.

"I have been a Cowboy fan my entire life," said Lilley, a UW graduate. "I was really glad I got to participate in anything on military day and I'm really glad they do this here at the University of Wyoming."

Chief Master Sgt. William Whipple, state command chief of the Wyoming Air Guard, and Col. Tammy Maas, the Wyoming Army Guard's director of joint manpower and personnel, presented the game ball.

Besides the presentations, the university went to great lengths to ensure service members were taken care of for the game, said the troops.

"To be frank I would have been content to just have a discounted ticket to the game or anything like that, but they really went above and beyond," Lilley said.

During the second quarter, Vietnam veterans were brought on to the field as part of a belated homecoming celebration.

Many Vietnam veterans did not receive warm welcomes when they returned home in the 1960's and

1970's. Wyoming has been making efforts to rectify that, said John Rawls, a Vietnam veteran.

"Wyoming has always been appreciative of its veterans and it's good for the university to do this," he said. "I have been to three military appreciation games. I appreciate the university and the state of Wyoming for respecting its veterans."

Rawls served for two years in Vietnam. He said the perception of Vietnam veterans has changed immensely since his first homecoming.

"Unbelievable difference," Rawls said. "Total complete different reaction to Vietnam veterans today compared to back then."

Following the recognition ceremony the cadets from UW's Reserve Officer Training Corps program opened and waved a giant American flag to the tune of "You're a Grand Old Flag," performed by more than 1,000 marching band members from UW's Western Thunder Marching Band, and middle and high school bands from across Wyoming. ♪





# A force like no other; family, friends and a finish line

By Master Sgt. Leisa Grant  
Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Media Operations  
153rd Airlift Wing, Public Affairs Office

**R**unning a race may seem like a simple concept to most. Runners gather up, put one foot in front of the other for a set distance and then cross a finish line. That said, not all races are equal. As such, not all of them can be done alone, especially if the distance takes more than a day to cover.

The Leadville Trail 100 running event, held each year in Leadville, Colorado, since 1983, is arguably one of the most difficult foot races in the United States. It also happens to be the first ultra-event Master Sgt. Thor Rasmussen, 153rd Medical Group first sergeant, decided to sign

up for after a memorable exchange between him and one of his sons.

Ironically, the exchange took place during the same event one year earlier while he was pacing another military member. After getting “his runner” through a checkpoint and on her way to the next, he said he was touched by the spirit of ultra-running and those who endure it.

“I looked at my boys and told them, ‘there goes a winner,’” said Rasmussen.

Brock, his oldest son, questioned his dad as any young boy might do in this situation.

“What makes her a winner?” he asked.

“Because she doesn’t quit. That’s what makes her a winner,” Rasmussen answered.

The next thing Brock said changed his dad’s path for the next year, and possibly for the rest of his life. Running, specifically ultra-distances, has been known to



become an addictive sport for some.

“Dad, you don’t quit so why aren’t you running the race?”

From that moment forward Rasmussen, also a member of the newly revived Wyoming National Guard marathon team, decided he had no excuses for not being able to run 100 miles.

As one might imagine, running this distance at elevations of 9,200 to 12,600 feet is not your everyday 5K fun-run. The training alone is long, with runs happening in the dark, during family time and early in the mornings.

It can be a rather lonely sport.

Fortunately for Rasmussen, he said his family has been exceptionally supportive of his running aspirations from the beginning, through it all and long before Leadville. He recalls a time when his wife, Jennifer, drove the boys 12 miles ahead of him during one of his training runs in Wyoming just so the boys could cheer him on upon his arrival. She would then continue to drive alongside him and provide aid every few miles.

During his mountain runs for elevation training, she found creative ways to make sure they all had quality family time. This involved planning out a specific fishing spot a few hours into one of Rasmussen’s runs so the boys could again cheer on their daddy.

“The way she was able to incorporate family time into my race training was incredible,” he said.

For a run like Leadville, “incredible” things seem to happen; even when it seems like the plan is going south.

Most runners have a crew and pacers, for which they sometimes have to bribe or beg to participate in the event. Having a list of a slew of pacers willing to help out five months before the event could all change in short time – and it did for Rasmussen.

This is when Rasmussen’s Guard family stepped up, or rather, laced up, and traveled to Leadville to support him in pursuit of his goal. Some of his previously designated pacers became injured within the weeks leading up to Leadville.

Throughout and after the August Unit Training Assembly, fellow 153rd Airlift Wing members happily came together and agreed to spend the weekend supporting Rasmussen as pacers and crew, and brought members of their own families along – making it a family affair like no other.

Every Guard member came to Leadville on his or her own time and dime, as did family and friends. He also had the support of many other Wyoming Guard members not in attendance.

“The support I received from the Guard was incredible,” he said.

Rasmussen said some Guard members were already familiar with the Leadville event. His commander,

**See RACE on page 37**







CST Survey Team Members Staff Sgt. Matthew Freeman and Sgt. Mikeal Barge check for radiation when approaching a suspected biohazard. The survey team makes an initial determination and communicates that to the science team and the public if necessary. Once the survey is complete and samples are secured, they are transported to the mobile lab where 1st Lt. Sarah Apel, Senior Science Officer, conducts a detailed sample analysis.

## Jackson provides scenic backdrop to multi-faceted training for 84th CST

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire  
Wyoming Army National Guard  
Public Affairs NCOIC

**M**embers of the Cheyenne based 84th Civil Support Team recently honed their skills in the water and on the banks of the Snake River near Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

The 22 active-duty Wyoming Army and Air National Guard soldiers and airmen are trained to respond to chemical, biological, and nuclear incidents; natural and man-made disasters and, among other events, environmental crimes.

Part of the recent Jackson training centered on the unit's environmental crime investigation and biohazard detection mission.

Training scenarios allowed survey team members in full protective suits and masks to determine what chemical or biological agent was used by a criminal at an environmental crime scene.

Other team members recorded every detail of the findings for potential use in a criminal prosecution. The team's medical personnel ensured team members were fit for the task at hand; and the team's analysts provided detailed analysis of the samples taken from the simulated environmental crime site, which was transferred by communication systems experts.

Sophisticated equipment is used on site to measure levels and types of hazards and the results are quickly sent to the CST's mobile lab where more detailed test-





Sgt. 1st Class Zachary Hauf practices throwing a safety rope prior to donning his dry suit at the river.



Sgt. Mikeal Barge throws a "throw bag" safety rope to Staff Sgt. Amanda Green.

ing takes place.

"If there is an immediate danger to the public, we can get the word out within minutes," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Freeman, a survey team member, who was evaluated on a training lane where a suspicious person was seen by a local fisherman leaving a bucket that emitted a strong chemical odor.

The CST's commander, Lt. Col. Chris Troesh said Jackson has been the real-world home to two environmental crimes the unit helped investigate. He said his team is able to send their mobile lab to the incident site and stay as long as needed. This enables the team to obtain samples as needed in the event the initial samples did not provide any information. The results are then given to the Incident Commander who then decides what to do with the findings.

The CST also responds to flood areas and in conjunction with the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security are among the first state assets on the scene to help evaluate the conditions and need for further assistance.

Jackson is home to the Swiftwater Safety Institute where CST members spend three days in the classroom and on the river gaining real world experience dealing with swift water hazards associated with a flood.

Troesh said his unit members need to have the skills and training necessary to either self-rescue or to put themselves in a position to be rescued.

"The intent is not to become swift water rescue technicians but to be trained to a level to be able to self or buddy rescue and to support swift water technicians if the need arises."

"We have teams that go out and do an initial assessment of a natural disaster site with Wyoming Office of Homeland Security personnel," Troesh explained. "They may be walking along the bank of a flooded river and it gives way. We want to be able to rescue ourselves or the other members of the Initial Assessment Team." ∞

Capt Kyle Higgins, Medical Operations Officer conducts a knot-tying review with a Swiftwater Safety Institute trainer.





# History corner

## 1041st to end 20-year run in FY 16

The Wyoming Army National Guard's 1041st Multi-role Bridge Company was federally recognized Oct. 1, 1996, as the 1041st Engineer Company, Assault Float Bridge, with 140 soldiers.

Its mission was to transport, build and maintain the engineer assault float bridge providing rafting, and/or bridging at one, or multiple sites; to provide engineer mission hauling of palletized cargo.

The soldiers in the unit were able to build a river crossing for assault battalions within 12 minutes of arrival. The unit is capable of clearing crossing areas, building launching ramps and demolishing the site after its use.

The unit's soldiers, housed in Rock Springs, Evanston and Afton, called themselves the "Bridge Trolls" and have received a number of awards and decorations for their service to Wyoming and the nation.

In 2006 the unit deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom to perform a non-standard mission providing convoy security. That mission garnered the unit a Presidential Unit Citation for its valor. Soldiers who deployed earned 386 awards including: 12 Army Commendation Medals with Valor Device, 37 Bronze Star Medals, three Bronze Star Medals with Valor, 114 Combat Action Badges, and 38 Purple Hearts.



Soldiers with the 1041st Engineer Company, Wyoming Army National Guard, begin the process of connecting bays of the Improved Ribbon Bridge, or IRB, July 21, 2010 at the Guernsey Reservoir, in Wyoming. The Soldiers work under the supervision of civilian instructors from AM General, the bridge's manufacturer. The IRB replaces the Standard Ribbon Bridge, developed in the 1970s. The bridge, which can be turned into a raft, can carry a heavy equipment transport loaded with an M1A2 Abrams tank. The 1041st is based in armories in the Wyoming cities of Rock Springs, Evanston and Afton. (U.S. Army file photo/2nd Lt. Christian Venhuizen)

## Energy conservation competition makes Game-on for new year

**By Jim Bob Schell**  
**Energy Manager**  
**Wyoming Army National Guard**

A resilient and ready force is one that has reduced its dependency on outside factors. A major outside factor is our energy sources, and being energy aware in your daily activities will help to reduce our energy use. Energy reduction is not only important from a force readiness standpoint, in order to curb rising utility costs, energy use reduction is a necessary step towards maintaining our budgets for operations and maintenance. When reductions in energy use lead to financial savings, those funds may be spent on other operational maintenance issues, again aiding readiness.

Fiscal year 15 has seen progress made toward our energy reduction goals, but we still have a long way to go in the Wyoming Army National Guard. Individual behavior collectively has a major impact on our energy use, and changes in behavior will have a major impact on our energy savings. In the coming year I have an "Energy Challenge" for all Wyoming Army National Guard full-time staff, and the champions will receive a three-day pass from the chief of staff. Staff at the facility that achieves the greatest percent reduction in energy use from FY15 to FY16 will be declared the champions.

An energy awareness training program is being developed and will be presented to all full-time staff in person or via video. In the meantime there are some simple energy actions that you can take to help us reduce our energy use, and hopefully help you win the challenge. Be aware of manual switched lighting and turn them off when they are not required. Reduce your wall outlet load by turning off non-essential equipment. It is important to leave your computers on for IT updates, but you can program your monitors to turn off at night. Electronics in sleep mode still draw power so turning them off helps, especially on long weekends.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any energy concerns or ideas for your facility. All of our facilities have different energy demands that need to be met. I will gladly listen to your specific issues and work to come up with solutions that meet your energy needs.



**RACE from page 33**

Col. Jeffrey Storey, had done the 100-mile mountain bike version of Leadville. Rasmussen was able to ask Storey about everything from nutrition to running as a mental game.

Additionally, Maj. Gen. Luke Reiner, Wyoming's adjutant general, learned Rasmussen would be running the famous event and talked about his own experience as a pacer a few years back. He told Rasmussen he would be eager to learn the outcome.

That outcome, while ultimately not the official finish line for Rasmussen, turned into a lasting memory for everyone involved. While disappointed in himself for not finishing the full distance due to his knees, he said he will take it as a learning experience and make necessary changes to his training routine – including different strength exercises, hill training and even different shoes.

The combined strength of his family, friends and fellow Guard members brought to light the similarities of the Guard and the ultra-running community.

"Looking at both communities, the ultra and the Guard, I find so many parallels," Rasmussen said. He added that one such common factor is both represent a small percentage of the overall population, with less than 1 percent of Americans serving in the armed forces and likely fewer running ultras (distances longer than a 26.2 mile marathon).

"That's where the sense of community comes in," he said.

Rasmussen plans to return to Leadville in 2017, if not earlier. His biological and Guard family are likely to show up to support in full force again. ∞

**TUSKEGEE from page 29**

tions and respect that came along with that, unlike how he might be treated in our country at that time," said Stewart.

Stewart went on to tell about a 1925 Army military report that in essence, said, a black man was not capable of anything over subservient, manual labor, and would not be successful in any type of training or performing highly technical jobs.

That rationale was destroyed by the numerous accomplishments of African-Americans in the 332nd during their missions overseas.

The cumulative record of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War proved that African-Americans could not only be pilots, but great ones at that.

"We just wanted a chance. A chance to prove ourselves to be equal – not only in the theatre of operations, but also on the home front for racial equality," said Harvey. ∞



U.S. Air Force Capt. Nathaniel Krueger assigned to the 153rd Airlift Wing diagnoses a simulated casualty, June 11, while completing a casualty scenario at Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona. Krueger provided medical support for personnel recovery during Angel Thunder 2015. Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Galvin



# Afton Readiness Center

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy McGuire  
Wyoming Army National Guard  
Public Affairs NCOIC

**T**he new Afton Readiness Center (ARC) was dedicated in September.

Built at a total project cost of \$13.5 million, it includes the readiness center and a vehicle storage building comprising 42,842 square feet of space on an 83,000 sq. foot compound.

Amenities include a 5,400 sq. foot assembly hall; sports floor; a complete audiovisual system; 1,380 sq. feet of classroom space, with sub divisible classrooms; video teleconferencing capability; 1,300 sq. feet of commercial kitchen space; 600 sq. feet of physical fitness space; a 1,200 sq. foot simulation trainer; an equipment cleaning station; vehicle fueling pumps; two vehicle wash bays and 12,000 sq. feet of en-

closed parking.

"A goal of the military department and the National Guard is to integrate with the local community," said Col. Jesse Kirchmeier, Wyoming Army National Guard chief of staff during the Sep. 16 dedication ceremony.

"We would like to recognize the land owners and the Star Valley High School for their eagerness and desire to work together to complete a multi-faceted and civic based building that will benefit the local community for many years to come."

Art work and taxidermy by local students, as well as local professionals is exhibited throughout the ARC, and reservations are already being taken for community events.

The facility was constructed under the design-build delivery method, which allows for a unique teaming between the owner, the architect and general contractor to work together

towards a common goal. It also meets the standard for a Leed Silver Certification for superior energy efficiency and sustainability.

Funding was provided by both the state and federal government. Kirchmeier thanked the state of Wyoming for the timely allocation of funds that allowed the project to start two years ahead of schedule.

The ARC replaces the 19,000 sq. foot Afton Armory, built in 1957. It was deemed sufficiently inadequate by units stationed there over the past 58 years, most recently Detachment 1 of the 1041st Engineer Company.

"It's night and day," said Staff Sgt. David Cox, 1041st readiness non-commissioned officer. "Even the communications system is something else. Emergency responders from any organization should be able to communicate with anyone should that need arise." ~g





# er Dedicated



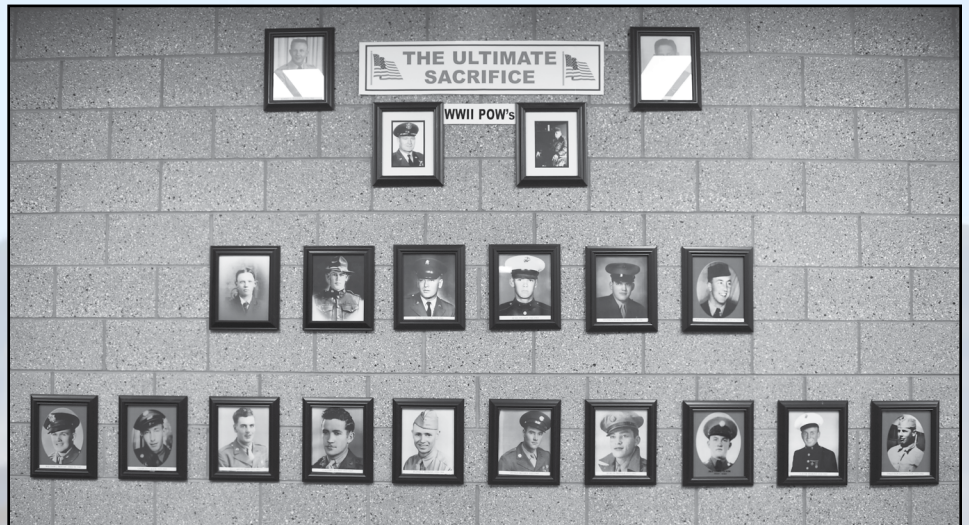
Mike Johnson, a local taxidermist has a number of pieces throughout the facility.



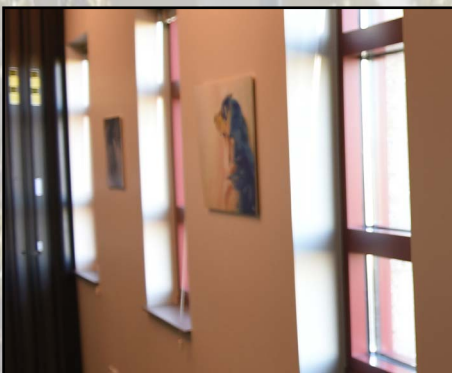
A 1,300 sq. foot commercial kitchen is available for soldiers.



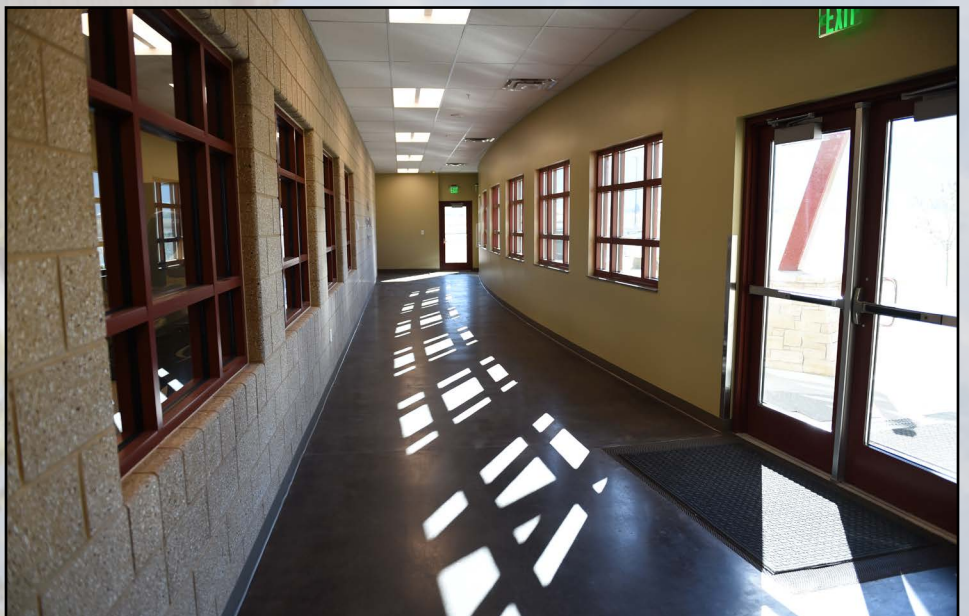
Footsteps with enlisted ranks lead the way to the platoon area.



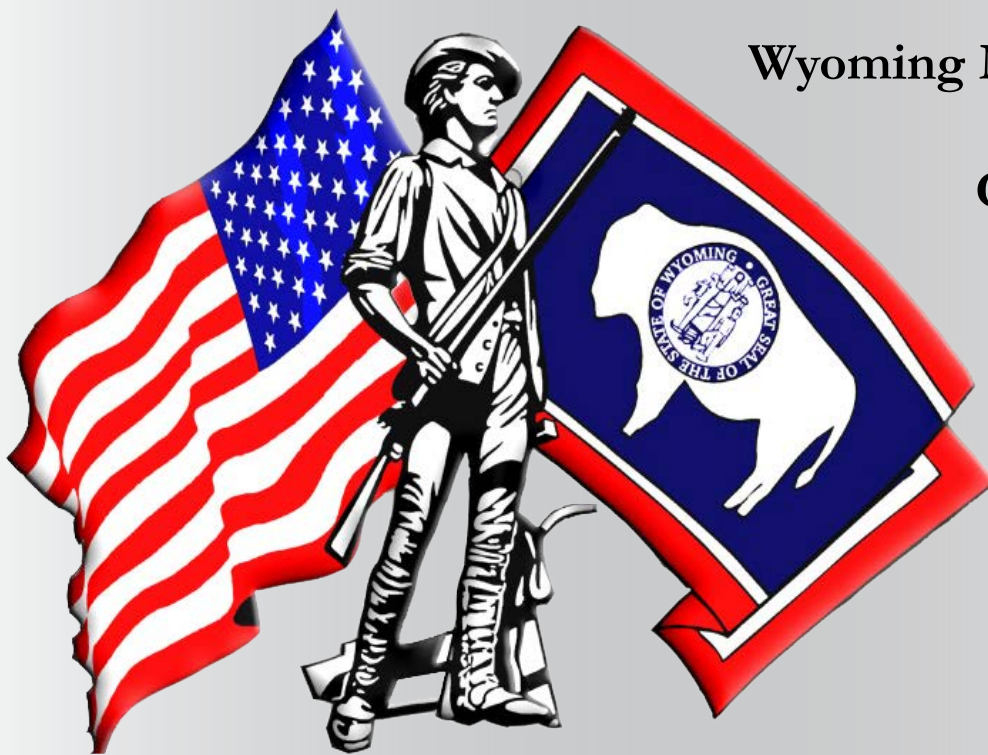
Local military members killed in action are memorialized on the VFW-sponsored Ultimate Sacrifice wall.



Art from high school student adorns the wall décor in the classrooms.







Wyoming Military Department  
 5410 Bishop Blvd.  
 Cheyenne, WY 82009  
 307-772-5253  
[wyomilitary.wyo.gov](http://wyomilitary.wyo.gov)

Use the links below to stay up to the minute on Wyoming National Guard news on our Facebook page and to see all the photos we don't have room for here on Flickr

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