



# NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN



THE  
Happy Hooligans

Volume 1, Issue 1

January 2008



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Rebuild Air Force*

*Sibling Symphony:  
Brothers Recall 20 Years in Band*

*Airmen of the Year*

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### Honor Flight:

*Maj. Allen K. Albright recalls escorting his father on an honor flight for WWII veterans. The veterans flew from Fargo, N.D. to Washington, D.C to visit the WWII memorial.*

**The Adjutant General**  
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## ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

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Also, please send digital photos of at least 300dpi.

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## On the Cover

**A Mighty Wind:** North Dakota Guardsmen participated in recovery efforts in Northwood, N.D. after the town of 950 was hit by a tornado. The twister was rated an F-4 on the Enhanced Fujita scale, which is one level below the worst possible tornado. Recently, print and broadcast members of The Associated Press voted the Northwood tornado as the top North Dakota news story of 2007. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing)





# VIEW FROM THE TOP

Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk

## A Time for Change: The Future of the N.D. National Guard

**T**he N.D. National Guard has come a long way in just a few short years. We have transformed from a strategic reserve to a war-fighting operational force fully prepared to fight and win our nation's wars while remaining capable and ready to respond to state emergencies on orders from the Governor.

In the Air National Guard, we've moved from fighter jets flown for over 50 years to new and exciting missions. Fully engaged in the War on Global Terrorism (GWOT), we now operate remotely piloted aircraft halfway around the world in a combat environment, saving lives. We are standing up a security forces squadron at Minot Air Force Base and we are flying the C-21 aircraft while waiting for the C-27 Joint Cargo Aircraft.

Our Army National Guard has also undergone dramatic change in 50 years, moving from "Cold War" era army units to the new modular force. We have mobilized many units in support of GWOT, earning the praise and respect of senior commanders and fellow Soldiers in other components and state national guards.

We've replaced the old STARC (State Area Command) structure, moving to a Joint Force Headquarters concept to increase our capability to respond to emergencies in the state and better serve our subordinate units on every mission.

Today we perform many of our tasks and missions in a joint environment. The way we fight our nation's wars and conflicts, how we respond to state emergencies, and our participation in warrior exercises and simulations all require inter-service cooperation on a scale unprecedented in military history. It's the way of the future and the future is now.

Our challenge and path is clear. We must continue to pursue ways to exercise jointness, yet keep our unique identities, culture and heritage. It was in this spirit that we decided to combine our two great publications, *The Straight Arrow* and the *Jet Letter*, into one publication,

to better serve our Guard family in this new joint environment.

Although our National Guard has recently undergone many changes, one important factor has never changed: the unwavering patriotic mettle, selfless service and volunteer spirit of our Guard. Always in demand, our Soldiers and Airmen are among the best warriors in the world. To honor this recognition, we will produce the very best joint publication to serve and inform our Guardsmen, active and retired, and their families and employers.

As Adjutant General, in the spirit of jointness, it is my privilege and honor to announce the first issue of what will become a well recognized symbol of the North Dakota National Guard, *The North Dakota Guardian*. Please enjoy the *Guardian* and thank you for your service to our state and nation.



**NATIONAL  
GUARD**  
*North Dakota*

# Martin Promoted to Brigadier General

Story by Capt. Penny Ripperger, 119th Wing Public Affairs

**Fargo, N.D.** – Patrick L. Martin, Chief of Joint Staff and Assistant Adjutant General for Air, Joint Force Headquarters, N.D. National Guard, was promoted this month to the rank of Brig. Gen. in a ceremony at the 119<sup>th</sup> Wing, N.D. Air National Guard.

Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. National Guard Adjutant General, presided over the ceremony. Brig. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann, Deputy Adjutant General, was the master of ceremonies.

Family, friends and fellow Guardsmen filled the room in order to witness the promotion. As part of the promotion ceremony, Martin's stars were placed on him by Sprynczynatyk, as well as by Martin's wife, Norma and their children.

"Pat Martin's promotion to Brigadier General is well deserved," said N.D. Governor John Hoeven. "Mikey and I extend our sincerest congratulations and best wishes to the entire Martin family on this special day."

As part of the ceremony, the Adjutant General read Martin the oath of office, which is traditionally administered to all commissioned officers in the N.D. National Guard each time they are promoted. This oath re-affirms the officer's commitment to the Constitution of the United States and the State of North Dakota.

"As a general officer, Brig. Gen. Martin's leadership will continue to greatly benefit

all of our Soldiers and Airmen of the N.D. National Guard," said Sprynczynatyk. "This promotion is a direct tribute to his many years of outstanding service to the Nation and State."

Brig. Gen. Martin is a native of Pelican Rapids, Minn.

He began his military career in 1974 when he enlisted in the Navy for five years.

In 1981 he joined the N.D. Air National Guard where he held several key positions including; Commander of the Logistic Squadron, Commander of the Mission Support Group, Commander of Support Group and Vice Wing Commander.

Martin attended North Dakota State University where he graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in 1983.

He also graduated from Squadron Officers School in 1990, he graduated from Air Command and Staff College in 1997 and he graduated from Air War College in 2002.

Martin's military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (2 awards),



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing

**General stars are placed on the shoulder epaulets of newly promoted Brig. Gen. Patrick L. Martin by Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N. D. National Guard Adjutant General, left, and Martin's wife Norma, at the North Dakota Air National Guard, Fargo, N.D. on Jan. 4. Martin serves as the Chief of Joint Staff and Assistant Adjutant General for Air, Joint Force Headquarters, N.D. National Guard, Bismarck, N.D.**

the Navy Commendation Medal, Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2 awards), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, N.D. State Commendation Ribbon, N.D. State Achievement Ribbon, N.D. Air National Guard OCONUS Ribbon and the N.D. National Guard Emergency Service Ribbon.

Martin is married to the former Norma Riley of Pelican Rapids. They have two children and reside in Pelican Rapids.



**This newly constructed sign outside of the Camp Grafton Training Center is located at the intersection of Highway 20 and Highway 2.**

## CGTC Gets Facilities Upgrade

Contributed by Staff Sgt. Kristi Hogness, CGTC

Significant strides have been made in completing the required facility maintenance and projects that were scheduled for fiscal year 2007 at the Camp Grafton Training Center (CGTC). The following is a roll-up of some of the work completed at CGTC:

The renovation of dining facility 3400 is complete.

This was a major project calling for a complete remodel of the interior of the building to include new walls and ceilings. New heating and air conditioning was installed and state-of-the-art appliances were added.

A major boost to the appearance

of CGTC occurred with the exterior renovations done to buildings 3400, 3500, 2440, 2380, 2370 and 2250. After extensive frame work and insulation, these buildings received rock face panel and steel siding exteriors providing maintenance free, attractive looking structures.

Dining facility 3480 had a new heating and air conditioning system installed. A project is being planned to spruce up the interior of this building and includes patching sheetrock ceilings and walls, replacing existing suspended ceilings and painting all sheetrock surfaces.

New asphalt was placed along the main entrance road to CGTC from Highway 20 to the new main gate security building.

# Tuition Assistance Available to Airmen

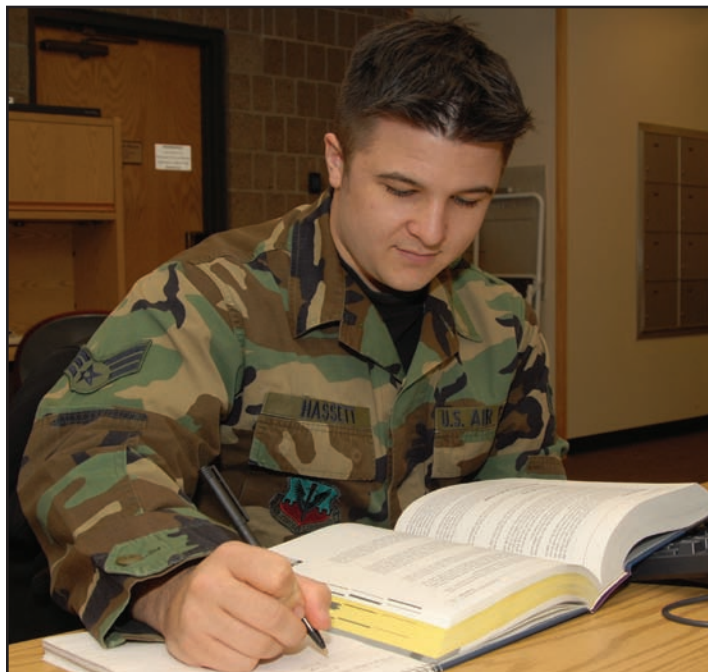


Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing

**Senior Airman Aaron Hassett, N.D. Air National Guard, is getting 100 percent tuition assistance at North Dakota State University and is also getting the Montgomery G.I. Bill (\$317 per month, tax free) and G.I. Bill kicker (\$350 per month, tax free). Contact the Air National Guard Retention office for more information.**

*Contributed by Capt. Penny Ripperger, 119th Wing Public Affairs*

**Objective:** To encourage the pursuit of higher education at a North Dakota state-funded school.

This includes trade or vocational training, associate programs and initial undergraduate degree.

**Eligibility:** Traditional Guardsmen and Technician Employees.

Members eligible to receive education benefits are responsible for the accuracy and timely submission of the Air National Guard State Tuition Assistance Application. The application should be submitted on-line to the State Tuition Assistance Office 30 days before the start of the semester/academic year, but no later than the day before the start of the

school semester.

New Air National Guard members can utilize this benefit prior to the completion of Initial Training and may submit a request for approval at the time of enlistment.

Please remember, a separate application is required for each academic year/term and for each summer session. Members will receive email confirmation of application status.

**LATE APPLICATIONS WILL RESULT IN DISAPPROVAL.**

For more information on the Air Guard tuition process please contact the Air National Guard Retention Office or apply on-line at: <http://www.ndguard.com/benefits/default.asp?ID=289>

## A Basic View of Veteran Affairs Disability Benefits

### What Is VA Disability Compensation?

Disability compensation is a benefit paid to a veteran because of injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, or were made worse by active military service. It is also paid to certain veterans disabled from VA health care. The benefits are tax-free.

### Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability and you were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

### How Much Does VA Pay?

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges from \$115 to \$2,471 per month, depending on how disabled you are.

Note: You may be paid additional amounts, in certain instances, if:

- You have very severe disabilities or loss of limb(s)
- You have a spouse, child(ren), or dependent parent(s)
- You have a seriously disabled spouse

### How Can You Apply?

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension.

If you have any of the following material, please attach it to your application:

- Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent) for each period of Active Duty.
- Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)
- Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports out side of the DOD and VA Systems)
- You should utilize a National Service Officer, such as myself to help with the paperwork and be your buffer with the Dept. of Veteran Affairs. It can make the process go smoother in the long run.

**For more information please contact:**

**Master Sgt. (Ret.) Daniel M. Dewey**  
**AMVETS National Service Officer**  
**Phone: (701)-451-4642**  
**E-mail: [dan.dewey@va.gov](mailto:dan.dewey@va.gov)**

# All Smiles With Retired Hooligans

THE  
Happy Hooligans

Contributed by Col. Tom (TLar) Larson (Ret.) and  
Chief Master Sgt. J. C. "Jack" Tietgens (Ret.)



**Tom "TLar" Larson and his father Duane "Pappy" Larson at the 1980 William Tell competition at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. During this competition, various commands of the U.S. Air Force compete in live-fire exercises. Tom Larson, former Happy Hooligan, was the high scoring team member that year.**

Over the years the Happy Hooligans, Jet Letter and the 119<sup>th</sup> Wing have come together and become one and the same. These "identities" by themselves each reflect a proud tradition and heritage.

They also amplify the blazing shield of excellence spawned years ago and continue up to the present time. Each of these "identities" has served as the adhesive to blend the three components together. This mindset, of course, has been passed down through the generations and remains steadfast as a trademark of today's active and retired 'Happy Hooligans'.

A retired Happy Hooligan is identified by the professional and family values we have shared and nurtured through our participation in this proud organization. These values continue to bond retired members together using the display of the recognizable 'Happy Hooligan' logo and the interactions with the Jet Letter and the 119<sup>th</sup> Wing.

It is through these shared and cherished values that we become one, from recruitment to retirement.

Maintaining ties with other retirees and with our outstanding unit, the 119<sup>th</sup> Wing, is everyone's option. The Fargo-Moorhead and surrounding area has a wealth of retirees nestled in these communities. Those that choose to do so may attend the retirees' monthly breakfast, take part in any 119<sup>th</sup> Wing events which may be extended to retirees or enjoy the social events sponsored by the Auger Inn.

Retired Hooligans do maintain a significant degree of visibility in the community.

Detroit Lakes, Minn. and the nearby communities also have an exceptional representation of retired Hooligans.

Their bi-monthly breakfasts draw a proud group of retirees. Attendance in June and August are especially high profile months as numerous "snow birds" return to enjoy the summer fishing and other

seasonal, recreational opportunities of the area.

Yes, the Hooligan retirees are also represented in Mesa, Ariz. and the surrounding areas. Here, too, there's a monthly breakfast from November through April.

The breakfast schedules for the groups noted above are:

Fargo-Moorhead, N.D.: The first Wednesday of each month (except November), held at the Northtown Grill, I-29 & 12<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Fargo, at 8:00 a. m. The annual NDANG Retirees' Breakfast is at the 119<sup>th</sup> dining facility in November.

Detroit Lakes, Minn.: The third Saturday of even numbered months (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec), at the Detroit Lakes Holiday Inn, 8:00 a. m.

Mesa, Ariz.: The first Thursday of the month, November through April, at Sossaman's On the Green Restaurant, 9:00 a. m.

There's hardly a corner of our great state (and surrounding vicinity) where a retired Hooligan isn't represented. When you meet someone wearing a garment of clothing displaying the Happy Hooligan logo it's common to be rewarded with a broad smile, a pat on the back and a gesture of friendship.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119<sup>th</sup> Wing

**From left to right: Retired Happy Hooligans John Syverson, Dick Pratt and Al Henderson look over old photos to identify Hooligans of the past.**

# Making \$2,000 is Pretty Easy These Days...

*Contributed by Jennifer Raab, Recruiting and Retention Office*

...for Soldiers and Airmen in the North Dakota National Guard. The Guard Recruiting Assistant Program (G-RAP) is available to both Soldiers and Airmen in the National Guard. The Every Soldier a Recruiter (ESAR) program is available to Soldiers, including full-time Soldiers, in the Army National Guard. Each of these programs offers \$2,000 for each potential recruit you refer to a recruiter who enlists.

## G-RAP

Guard Recruiting Assistants (RA's) can earn additional income assisting recruiting efforts by identifying well-qualified men and women for service in the ARNG and ANG. RA's may earn up to \$2,000 for each enlistment!

Traditional Soldiers, Airmen and retirees of the Army and Air National Guard are eligible for the G-RAP. Upon verified enlistment, the RA will receive an initial \$1,000 payment, with a second \$1,000 payment upon verification of the Soldier's successful shipment to Basic Training for non-prior service contracts, or a full \$2,000 payment for prior-service contracts.

A Guard Recruiting Assistant may opt to receive healthcare in lieu of the \$2,000. Thanks

to a unique collaboration with United Healthcare, traditional Officers and Soldiers of the Army National Guard participating in G-RAP may also qualify for optional healthcare coverage through United Healthcare.

Interested Soldiers/Airmen may visit [www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com](http://www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com) for more information.

## GRAP-O

For Soldiers in the Army National Guard, G-RAP has expanded to include officer accessions. As an RA, you will now be eligible to earn up to \$8,500 for officer accessions under the Guard Recruiting Assistant Program - Officer (GRAP-O).

Under GRAP-O, you will work with an Officer Strength Manager (OSM) rather than your recruiter to process the officer candidate and move them towards accession.

The total amount of payment for an officer accession is determined by the ARNG's current critical needs and the GRAP-O payment chart\* at the date of accession. Interested Soldiers may visit [www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com](http://www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com) for more information.

*\*GRAP-O Payment Chart can be viewed*

*by visiting [www.guardrecruitingassistant.com](http://www.guardrecruitingassistant.com) and clicking on "FAQ" and then on "What about Potential Officers?"*

## ESAR

Soldiers in the Army National Guard are also eligible to take advantage of the ESAR program. ESAR also pays \$2,000 for each referral who enlists into the ARNG. The ESAR program may not be combined with any other contracted recruiting program, such as G-RAP.

**Full-time Soldiers:** One of the main differences between ESAR and G-RAP, is that ESAR is open to AGR, Technicians and ADSW personnel. ESAR is also open to Soldiers of the USAR, Active Army, and retired members of the U.S. Army.

Another difference between ESAR and G-RAP is the timeline for when the RA is paid. Under the ESAR program, the RA gets paid their first \$1,000 payment upon verification of the referral's successful shipment to Basic Training, and the second \$1,000 after the referral graduates from AIT.

ESAR is a program that was set up and designed by NGB-ASM for individuals who voluntarily apply online at [www.guardsar.com](http://www.guardsar.com) to become eligible to serve as an RA under the ESAR program.

Interested Soldiers may visit [www.guardsar.com](http://www.guardsar.com) for more information.





From left to right, Brig. Gen Abdul Kareem, Iraqi Air Force Academy Commandant, and Col. Michael Wobbema, 119th Wing in a firm handshake between friends. Col. Wobbema worked as Brig. Gen. Kareem's advisor as the Director of the Air Force Training School at Taji Air Base, Iraq. (Submitted Photo)

# MAKING IRAQI HISTORY

## Guardman Takes Charge of Rebuilding Iraq's Air Force

Story by Tom Pantera, FM Extra

Everybody who's served in the Iraq war has had a ringside seat to history. But Col. Mike Wobbema of the 'Happy Hooligans' has a chance to help make an important part of it.

Wobbema, 49, of Fargo, has been in Iraq since the end of January and is the man in charge of rebuilding the Iraqi Air Force.

"When all is said and done in my career, this will be the quintessential tour," Wobbema says in a telephone interview from Baghdad. "I'm making history. I'm building an air force. I'm directly influencing how this air force is built. I've had the opportunity to do a lot of cool things in my career and

I don't know what would top this."

Wobbema became a member of the North Dakota Air National Guard in July 1978 and notes proudly he has served in every status there is, except for state active duty. He started out in aircraft maintenance, rising to crew chief. He became a flier in 1984, first piloting F-4s and then F-16s. Since 2004, he commanded the maintenance group in Fargo. "I've made the full circle with regard to maintenance," he says.

He was deployed to Iraq earlier this year to lead an Air Force team tasked with establishing both flying and ground training for the Iraqi Air Force. Wobbema describes the Coalition Air Force Transition Team's (CAFT) mission as

making the Iraqis into "a viable force capable of ultimately taking over the responsibility of air sovereignty within the air space of Iraq."

The Iraqi Air Force probably reached its high-water mark during that country's war against Iran in the 1980s. Iraqi fighter pilots flew Russian Migs and French Mirages, top-of-the-line war machines. "They had a whole plethora of generation two, generation three fighters," Wobbema says. "They had a really pretty good Air Force."

In fact, the condition of the Iraqi Air Force was and remains a point of pride, and esprit de corps, for the pilots, he says.

But the Persian Gulf War changed the situation radically. "The U.S. military has a tremendous capability to

blow a country into oblivion," Wobbema says. "In 1990, we did that to the Iraqi Air Force. We blew them back into World War I."

In fact, during that first conflict Iraqi fighters shot down no coalition jets. "We absolutely overwhelmed them by numbers," Wobbema says. "We went in with our stealth (planes) and our cruise missiles and just blew the sod out of the place."

Because the U.S. pounded the Iraqi military into the ground, both in the first Gulf War and in the latest conflict, Wobbema and those under him in the CAFT team have had to start rebuilding the Air Force from the ground up. Literally.

The first step is to rebuild the country's infrastructure, areas as basic as sewage systems and power grids. "When you walk in a room and flip on a light switch here in Iraq, there's no guarantee that light's going to come on," he says.

Several former Air Force bases remain standing in the country, but need serious refurbishing. Coalition crews are expanding ramp space, filling bomb craters and building hangars to replace bombed-out ones. "We're creating offices, operations buildings for the pilots, maintenance buildings," Wobbema says.

The second step is aircraft acquisition, something that Wobbema notes can't be done by running down to the local used airplane lot. "It takes many millions of dollars and a long lead time."

That includes buying aircraft to train pilots, Cessnas, King Airls and refurbished Hueys and MI-17s, the last a large helicopter with a large payload capacity. The Iraqi Air Force already has three C-130s and smaller aircraft used for surveillance and reconnaissance.

There are no fixed-wing jets remaining in Iraq, but those will

come later, Wobbema says. For now, aircraft that can help gather intelligence and participate in counterinsurgency operations are more important. Once that part of the Air Force is up and running, work will turn to giving Iraq offensive capability from the air, he says.

But good infrastructure and new aircraft won't mean much without people to fly them. "Probably the longest pole in the tent for skills is the creation of a pilot corps" and the support personnel, Wobbema says.

Iraqi military pilots still are around, but are getting older. Their average age is mid- to late-40s; no pilots have graduated from training since the early 1990s.

For many years, the pilots were in effect grounded by no-fly zones that covered the entire country, except for a small area around Baghdad. What few planes were left after the first Gulf War were taken out in the early days of the current war.

"The biggest problem we have is moving them along and helping them with leadership development," Wobbema says. Many of the fliers were captains a decade ago and lack the management experience they would have gained in the years since.

"We're trying to inculcate them with 20 years worth of career development and leadership that they just didn't have here," Wobbema says.

Pilot training began in October. On Nov. 7, the first student pilot made a solo flight in a Cessna.

When it comes to both ground crews and pilots, Wobbema and CAFT have an extra job in addition to the actual training: convincing the Iraqis that ways of operation determined by their former training, and their culture, should be changed.

"This is very much a crawl, walk, run kind of process," Wobbema says. "It's not just buildings and planes and people but it's process and plans and systems, the command system. What we want to do is help influence them and advise them so ultimately, they come around to their own evolution."

When it comes to maintaining aircraft, for example, the Iraqis originally ran on a Soviet model, which meant information was given out strictly on a need-to-know basis. If a certain aircraft had five sets of maintenance books, nobody saw all of them.

Likewise, motors, airframes, hydraulics and other aircraft systems all had separate maintenance books so "nobody could tell you completely, top to bottom, how the (aircraft) worked," Wobbema says. In contrast, in the American system a crew chief can explain all the workings of an airplane.

Other differences in air force operations are deeply rooted in Iraqi culture.

In the U.S. military, "we spend a lot of time helping to train people so that in a crisis situation, we really try to get them so they can make a decision and they can move on," Wobbema says. "In this culture, if you are subordinate to somebody, there is no decision to be made. That can only be made by the commander. That might be several layers up. It might be as simple as, 'Should we change the tire on this aircraft or not?'"

In Arabic culture, where the leader is the ultimate authority, "innovation in leadership is somewhat frowned upon and is discouraged," he says. "We like to get things done now. We use e-mail and get a decision back in a matter of a few hours. These guys, their bureaucratic process is paper. They will take that piece of paper and the person who needs to process it will take it in. It's got to go in order."

The trick to changing that culture, Wobbema says, is "to see

what they want, get them to engage with you and both of you adjust slightly to what the expectations are. ... I can bust my hump, but if I leave and they go back to the old way, what have I gained? It really is four-dimensional chess going on here at all times."

All this is, of course, being done under wartime conditions and dangers. While experienced pilots are out there, they are hiding in their communities.

"The people I work with take their life in their hands every single day," Wobbema says. "Their families may or may not know what they do for a living. Their neighbors certainly do not know."

Sometimes, the wrong people find out. "I've had students who have been murdered, who have been kidnapped," he says. "I've had students who have withdrawn because their families have been threatened." Just living in Iraq takes courage, he says. "I'm not so sure in the U.S. that we would see the same kind of tenacity."

Those pilots themselves are products of a school system that once was at least adequate, but has deteriorated. Still, the most successful pilot candidates are those who speak the best English. "It takes time to learn a new language," Wobbema notes.

The Iraqi Air Force currently has less than 1,500 people, but unlike with the Iraqi Army, U.S. officials don't need to worry about tribal factionalism tearing it apart.

"You can have (army) divisions that are Shia or Sunni," Wobbema says. "But an air force is truly a national identity. I've engaged with the tribal thing to some extent; the best way it manifests itself to me is, 'My cousin wants to be an interpreter, would you consider giving him a job?' You just notice it more because that's kind of in the back of your mind in the first place."

Still, he says, "there's really not room for a lot of faction kind of things."

Despite any difficulties, Wobbema says, his job serves an important U.S. interest: getting Americans home.

"The reason we're building this air force is until we can get the Iraqi Air Force in the air and into the counterinsurgency fight, the U.S. military will not be able to extricate itself fully. (Until then,) U.S. forces will have to be fully engaged."



**The first class of Air Force Officer Cadets at the Iraqi Military Academy at Ar Rustimiyah (IMAR). This Academy was built by the British in the early 1900s. The NATO Training Mission - Iraq (NTM-I) provides some oversight as an Advisor Corps to the school. These cadets had seen 8 months of military training before being entered into the Air Force training phase. Incidentally, Moammar Quadafy (Libya fame) graduated from this school.**

# Band of Brothers: 20 Years of Music Coming To An End For Guard Siblings



Left: Brothers Dan, Todd and Jeff Pfingsten have served in the 188th Army Band together for more than 20 years.

Below: Members of the 188th Army Band stand tall outside of the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Fargo, N.D.



Story and Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hagburg  
141<sup>st</sup> CSB (ME) Public Affairs

It's not unusual for family members to serve together in the North Dakota National Guard, but the 188<sup>th</sup> Army Band's three Pfingsten brothers have taken togetherness to the extreme: they have served side-by-side in the band for more than 20 years.

The trio, however, will soon be broken up.

The youngest brother, Sgt. Todd Pfingsten, plans to retire Jan. 11, 2008, at the conclusion of the band's Music in the Schools Tour.

"It's just time," said Todd.

Todd joined the Guard in 1982 when he was 17 years old. By that time his brothers, Staff Sgt. Jeff Pfingsten and Sgt. Dan Pfingsten, were already members of the band, Jeff playing trumpet and Dan playing trombone.

But instead of the band, Todd joined Fargo's 816<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company. He had a family connection in this unit too: his father Lee Pfingsten was first sergeant. Todd served 3½ years as a fuel and electrical repair technician in the 816<sup>th</sup>.

Todd decided to leave the 816<sup>th</sup> in 1986 because his job changed when the unit transitioned to the 142<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion.

"I heard from my brothers there was an opening for a euphonium player in the band," Todd said.

He had played euphonium in high school and "I did a little training and was able to pass the audition."

Meanwhile, Todd's training in the 816<sup>th</sup> did not go to waste. He has worked as an electronics technician throughout his civilian career. The Pfingstens serve primarily as musicians in the band, but they have other talents too. All are licensed truck drivers and they all have substantial experience with weapons.

Todd competed five times in the Winston P. Wilson Marksmanship Training Exercise, being joined once by Jeff and once by Dan.

"Doing the weapons stuff and being involved in competitions, it works to bring you closer together," said Jeff. "And when we're driving trucks together we get to talk all the time."

Todd said that having the chance to travel has been the best part of being in the Guard.

"I have gotten to see a lot of stuff in the

last 25 years," he said. "Going to Jamaica was a blast, also Australia and Germany."

Dan said that serving together has kept the brothers close.

"In later years it's been a good way to catch up," he said. "We all have our own lives and don't see each other that often anymore."

"When you go someplace you know you're going to have somebody there to talk with and go out with and have a good time," said Jeff. "And if you have problems there's someone to talk to, which is a big plus."

Dan has served in the band for 26 years and he admits he has considered retiring. Jeff, who joined the band a few months

**"When you go someplace you know you're going to have somebody there to talk with, go out with and have a good time."**

before Dan, does not plan on retiring until he is 60.

First Sgt. Lee Pfingsten, their father, served 30 years in the Guard. Jeff is shooting for 38.

"It's not that long a time – it goes by pretty quick," he said. "I plan on staying for quite a while."

# Airman of the Year Awards Given

Story by Capt. Penny Ripperger, 119th Wing Public Affairs

Congratulations to the following Airmen selected as the Outstanding Airman of the Year (OAY) for the N.D. Air National Guard in 2007.

On Jan. 12 the following members were awarded the prestigious honor at the Courtyard by the Marriott in Moorhead, Minn.: Master Sgt. Nolan Carlson (Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year), Staff Sgt. James Haygood (Non-Commissioned Officer of the year) and Senior Airman Brandon Langerud (Outstanding Airman of the Year).

The OAY banquet is an annual celebration honoring the best of the best of the enlisted force.

Supervisors nominate airmen based on criteria focusing on the airman's exceptional service in the military, as well as their involvement with charitable and volunteer organizations in the community.

Each year enlisted members of various ranks and positions are nominated, but only three walk away with the prestigious honor of bearing the title of: Airman of the Year (rank of E-1 to E-4), Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year (rank of E-5 to E-6) and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year (rank of E-7 to E-9).

The selected outstanding airmen will have the honor of attending the state and national Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) conference.

They will also be members of the Wing Leadership Council and will be assigned their own parking spot for the year.

Congratulations to these Airmen for their superb work in 2007:

**Airman of the Year Nominees:** Senior Airman Jessica Clark, Senior Airman Brandon Langerud, Senior Airman Jennifer Lais and Senior Airman Melissa Rippy.

**NCO of the Year Nominees:** Tech. Sgt. Kari Appletoft, Tech. Sgt. Steven Gibson, Staff Sgt. Ami Baxter and Staff Sgt James Haygood

**Senior NCO of the Year Nominees:** Master Sgt. Nolan Carlson, Master Sgt. Dominic Cook, Master Sgt. Albert Humphrey and Master Sgt. Clint Lowe.



## Airman of the Year

Senior Airman Brandon D. Langerud works in the Maintenance Squadron as a crew chief with the C-21 Lear Jet. He joined the NDANG in 2004. He currently resides in Fargo, N.D. where he attends North Dakota State University, majoring in construction management engineering with a minor in business administration. In addition to his part-time job at Worth Construction where he works on custom home and remodeling projects, he also volunteers his time as a former 4-H ambassador, teaching a wide variety of classes in woodworking, digital photography, global position systems and rocketry.

## NCO of the Year

Staff Sgt. James E. Haygood is currently the NCO of the Personnel Reliability Program at the 119th Detachment 2 Security Forces Squadron located in Minot, N.D. After six years in the Air Force, he joined the NDANG in 2005. He lives in Sherwood, N.D. with his wife, Brenda. They have four children, Kendra (20 years old), Andrew (15 years old), Jennah (8 years old) and Tara (five years old). Sergeant Haygood is active with his local church. He also volunteers his time with local remodeling projects in his community.



## Senior NCO of the Year

Master Sgt. Nolan W. Carlson is currently assigned to the 178th Reconnaissance Squadron. He began his military career when he joined the NDANG in 1991 as an avionics flight-line technician. Carlson is a graduate of Dakota Aero-Tech. he also attended North Dakota State University and the University of Mary. He lives in West Fargo, N.D. with his wife, Tracy and two children, Justin (4 years old) and Annika (21 months old). Carlson serves as a volunteer firefighter and is a member of EANGUS and the American Legion.

# Kosovo Notification for Training Order Received by N.D. Army National Guard

*Joint Force Headquarters Press Release*

**Bismarck, N.D.** – Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. National Guard Adjutant General, announced Nov. 30, 2007 that the N.D. Army National Guard received a “Notification for Training” (NFT) order to support NATO peace enforcement operations in Kosovo.

These operations are crucial to guaranteeing the area’s security and stability. A secure environment will allow the United Nations-led diplomatic process to proceed, which will ultimately determine Kosovo’s destiny. At issue is Kosovo’s independence from Serbia or remaining a Serbian province. The mission is referred to as Balkans 12. The N.D. Army National Guard will be the lead element in a 2,500-member multi-national task force, which is expected to include about 1400 U.S. military personnel and 700 N.D. Guardsmen.

“Although this is an Army Guard mission, we are pursuing ways in which Air Guardsmen can participate as well,” Sprynczynatyk said.

This notification is not a mobilization or deployment alert order because the decision to carry out this mission has not been made by the Department of the Army.

The purpose of a NFT is to provide sufficient time to effectively plan missions, identify and train personnel and prepare appropriate equipment should the Army issue a mobilization order.

If the decision to mobilize occurs, the mission is expected sometime during the latter half of 2009 and would encompass several N.D. Army National Guard units. The remainder of the task force will be complemented by Army National Guard units from other states.

“This early notification is exactly what we have been asking for. It gives our Soldiers, their families and employers time to effectively plan for this possible deployment, adding some predictability to their lives,” Sprynczynatyk said. “If we are ordered to mobilize, we will ensure that our forces are fully prepared to succeed in their mission. Additionally, we would still have approximately 3,500 Soldiers and Airmen and equipment available to respond to any state emergency or contingency if ordered

by the Governor.”

The N.D. National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters is expected to lead the task force effort. Other units expecting to participate include the Fargo based 141<sup>st</sup> Combat Support Brigade and 426<sup>th</sup> Signal Company and the Valley City based 231<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion along with elements of Bismarck based units 68<sup>th</sup> Troop Command, 112<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion (Security & Support), 285<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion (Assault) and 957<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge).

The task force will be led by Brig. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, Land Component Commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Jack Cripe, State Command Sgt. Maj.

N.D. Army National Guard units have previously participated in NATO-led peace missions in the former Yugoslavia (Balkans region of southern Europe). The Bismarck based 1/129<sup>th</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment served in Bosnia in 1997; the Wahpeton based Company B, 142<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion served in Kosovo

in 1999; 15 Soldiers participated in a Stabilization Force (SFOR) to supervise land mine removal in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2003. In 2004, a five-member combat engineer team supported Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams in de-mining operations in Kosovo, and most recently members of the Bismarck-based 112<sup>th</sup> Command Aviation Battalion participated in aviation airlift missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2005-06.

If this mission is ordered by the Department of the Army, Army National Guard units will follow a two-step process.

The first step is to issue an “alert for possible mobilization order,” which notifies a unit of a potential mobilization. A “mobilization order” usually follows and provides a reporting date and location for the unit.

If mobilized, under the current mobilization policies, the Soldiers would serve up to one year on active duty, which would include time spent at their mobilization station.



**Top left:** A view of Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, main base of the U.S. Army under the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) command. The objectives of KFOR are to establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo. **Top right:** N.D. Army National Guard units have previously participated in NATO-led peace missions in the former Yugoslavia (Balkans region of southern Europe) including a five-member combat engineer team in 2004. Here the team oversees the removal of the Kacanik Bridge in Kosovo. This was one of many projects completed by the group. (Submitted Photos)



## Guardian Snapshots



Lt. Col. Nathan W. Erstad, 119th Wing comptroller, gets a plate of food as North Dakota joint executive council members from left to right, Brig. Gen. Alan W. Palmer, state commander of the air component command, Command Sgt. Maj. Jack Cripe, state command sergeant major of the Army component command, Command Sgt. Maj. Dan Job, command sergeant major of the joint forces headquarters, Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Bradley W. Childs, 119th Wing command chief master sergeant, serve the Christmas holiday meal at the North Dakota Air National Guard during the unit training assembly Dec. 1. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bradly A. Schneider, 119th Wing)



From left to right, Brig. Gen. Robert Udland, North Dakota Joint Force Headquarters, and Maj. Gerald C. Collins, Fargo Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) commander, unveil a Medal of Honor display during a ceremony recognizing North Dakota Medal of Honor winners at the Fargo MEPS Dec. 4. One wall of the Fargo MEPS is being used to display the Medal of Honor along with photos and descriptions of heroic actions taken by the North Dakota Medal of Honor recipients. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing)



From left to right, Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, Maj. Jon Erickson, 1st Sgt. John Waters and Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald Miller. Erickson is the commander of the 188th Air Defense Artillery (RAID), currently serving in Afghanistan. The unit is scheduled to return home this month. The Adjutant General and Command Sgt. Maj. Miller visited the unit in Oct. during a trip to the U.S. Central Command area of operations. They also visited Airmen from the Fargo based 119th Wing stationed in Doha, Qatar. (Submitted Photo)

# Soldier Story: Precious Moments in Iraq

Story by Sgt. Kristi Dump  
164th Engineer Battalion

I recently had the opportunity and privilege to go out on a humanitarian patrol. The patrol was scheduled to go to schools in the outlying area. We would drop off book bags with school supplies in them for Iraqi students.

It was 7:00 a.m. in Iraq and 10:00 p.m. the night before at home. Most Americans were settling into a deep sleep. I was heading outside the wire wondering what this patrol would have in store for me. Little did I know that I would learn so much more than I dreamed of in the next few hours.

We went to a grade school. I had so much fun there. The first room we went into was a first grade girls and boys mixed class. The boys sat on one side and the girls on the other.

The teacher was there with her very young son named Joseph. He was a very shy little kid. His mother stood by me so I could get a picture with him.

I entered another classroom that was full of third and fourth graders.

I walked down one of the aisles to have my picture taken and when I turned around there were kids everywhere.

They were grabbing my arms, trying to talk to me. I was laughing so hard. I could not even lift my arms up because I had so many kids tugging and pulling. They finally

gave up and let me have my picture taken with them. I visited a few more classrooms and then it was close to time to leave.

Everyone else had left the building. It was just me and two male Soldiers left.

One was working on getting information from the teachers. The other was providing security and I was just there. We were standing in front of the first grade classroom.

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**“Little did I know  
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The little boy named Joseph was still curled up to his mother's leg. I started to play peek-a-boo with him. One of the male Soldiers was standing in between us, so I used him as my hiding post.

Little Joseph finally smiled for me. I think I even got him to laugh. His mother noticed what Joseph and I were doing and smiled at me. She

then waved me over.

I went to the door, knelt down and put out my hand. Joseph put his hand in mine. His mother looked at me and said, “You my friend,” as she put her hand over her heart.

Her whole class got out of their seats to get closer to me.

I pulled out my camera and took their picture. They wanted to see it on my digital screen. I showed the children the picture and they all began to yell.

The teacher became upset at the kids and told them to sit down. I apologized to her for getting her class worked up.

I don't know if she understood what I was trying to say or not, but she smiled at me. I decided that I better leave and let them get back to learning.

When we loaded up into our vehicles and started to head back to the base, I realized that I have not laughed like that or had that big of a smile on my face in a long time.

As much as we gave the kids today, I think they, in return, filled a little piece of my heart that will always stay with me.

I think these children taught me more today than I will ever fully understand in a lifetime.

I will never forget this day, a day that time stopped and I enjoyed life in Iraq to the fullest.



**All in a Day's Work:** (Top left) Sgt. Kristi Dump is all smiles as she distributes backpacks to Iraqi schoolchildren on a humanitarian mission. Dump is a member of the Minot based 164th Engineer Battalion Security Forces (SECFOR). The unit was mobilized for active duty in Iraq on June 4, 2007.



The 164th SECFOR spent over two months training at Camp Shelby, Miss. in preparation for their security mission in Iraq prior to departing for overseas. The unit's mission consists of perimeter and internal security operations in support of coalition forces in Iraq.

(Bottom left, right) Iraqi children react enthusiastically to their new school supplies. (Photos by Spc. Roy Neset, 164th Engineer Battalion)





**Left: North Dakota Army and Air National Guard members move into position to show their respect with a salute for retired U.S. Military veterans flying from Fargo, N.D. to Washington, D.C. on an Honor Flight to tour the National World War II memorial Nov. 2.**

**The North Dakota National Guard personnel are standing at the mouth of the runway at Hector International Airport as the Northwest Airlines charter flight departs Fargo, N.D. for the nation's capitol.**

**Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing**

# Airman Escorts Father on Honor Flight for Veterans

*Story by Maj. Allen K. Albright, 119th Wing JAG*

I had the rarest of opportunities recently: a chance to join 250 WWII Veterans on a 747 and travel with them to see the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. for the first time. My own father was among them.

I learned a few things on this trip, not all of which I expected. To spend a couple of days with a group of spry 82 to 97 year olds is to regain confidence that God does not abandon us to misery in our old age.

I had a grandfather who taught me this lesson once. Yet, as my own knees begin to creak and I find limits to my strength that were not there a few short years ago, I guess I needed to be reminded again.

I've been on a lot of military "planes, trains and automobiles" during my 25 years of military service. Military members know their common ground and tend to be quick to use humorous one-liners and zingers to help break the ice and build a feeling of camaraderie.

I learned that the only thing that changes in 60 years is the speed with which they get on and off the bus.

One gentleman had lost his tour ID at the Lincoln Memorial. Another member of our same bus found it and turned it in. The gentleman said, "Wow, I was looking all over for this thing, thank-you, thank-you....Where did you find it?" The finder shouted out from the back of the bus, "I

found it in a strip club!"

Far and away the most important lesson I learned took me by surprise. This trip wasn't about stories from long ago, or remembrances of friends who died as mere children on overseas battlefields. Although I did see the tears that still run from those events, as well.

The most common emotion I saw displayed, now more than 60 years since the war's end, was a sense of relief. I witnessed a generation in their 80's and 90's, still carrying a burden to know that they must somehow preserve the things that happened six decades ago, not for them but for us. They bear a sincere concern that forgetting those lessons will allow it to all happen again.

This is the generation that traveled through childhood at the height of the Great Depression. Then the same generation who received the least was called upon to give the most. The numbers are staggering. More than 80 percent of men from age 18-35 would put on the uniform. The world they lived in saw more than 20,000 people die from war every single day for six long years. The statistics are mind boggling and endless.

More than 12,000 bombers lost by the Americans alone. More than 100,000 Allied aircrew lost just in Europe. Of the 40,000 men from both sides who served on submarines, 30,000 never went home. It goes on...and on. It's all history to you and

I. It's personal to them. They see the names and faces still. They speak with a haunting passion about a world that so desired peace, but was nearly overcome with evil. Their aged eyes still flash when talking about how foolishly unprepared America was to defend its freedom.

I heard opinions on all sides of the current war among them. So, it was not some bastion of conservatism which offered this advice. Many of them commented again and again how "People don't realize how much went into saving this country. People don't think it could happen again, but we didn't think it would happen then. And then it was on us, and we almost gave up the ship before we got things turned around."

These are men and women who looked directly in the face of a future that didn't include a United States of America as we know it, and they experienced what it took to ensure that destiny was changed. They clearly still carry the burden of wanting to know that lesson will never be forgotten.

I believe that is why so many of them appeared so relieved when they walked the granite memorial. One 80-something veteran nurse I spoke to that morning quietly said it best: "All this stone and marble, this thing will be here forever. Finally, something to help remind people of all that happened."

The time of the greatest generation has almost passed. With them will be lost the personal experience of why over 52 million people perished from the face of the earth as a result of one war.

I saw many elderly veterans carry that burden and set it down on a circular monument of marbled stone and granite at the National Mall in a sincere hope that you and I will pick it up and never forget.



**U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Paul E. Tangen, 119th Wing first sergeant, carries Christmas gifts into the North Dakota Veteran's Nursing Home, Lisbon, N.D., Dec. 19. The gifts are given to veterans at the nursing home by the North Dakota National Guard annually, using funds which are raised through personal donations given by the North Dakota National Guard members. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing)**