


ON GUARD


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A MAGAZINE BY THE 163d ATTACK WING

August 2019



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COMMANDER'S PRIORITIES

GLOBAL MISSION READINESS

FLAWLESSLY PERFORM OUR STATE MISSION

RECRUIT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN OUR AIRMEN

VISION

EXPERTLY TRAINED AIR NATIONAL GUARD PROFESSIONALS
PROVIDING GLOBAL MISSION CAPABILITIES AND
READINESS TO LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL LEADERS,
NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

MISSION

ONE TEAM PROVIDING DEDICATED, DISCIPLINED AND
DIVERSE GUARDSMEN READY TO DEFEND OUR STATE,
NATION AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM ANY THREATS
THAT COMPROMISE THE SAFETY, SECURITY AND
WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS AND ALLIES

On Guard is proudly published for the members of the 163d Attack Wing and their families.

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Special thanks to:

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The contents of On GUARD are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Air Force or the 163d Attack Wing.

OUR MISSION

To be one team providing dedicated, disciplined and diverse Guardsmen ready to defend our state, nation and local communities from any threats that compromise the safety, security and well-being of our citizens and allies.



Wing Commander
Col. Sean Navin



Vice Wing Commander
Col. Carrie Colas



Command Chief
Chief Master Sgt.
Gilbert Sanchez

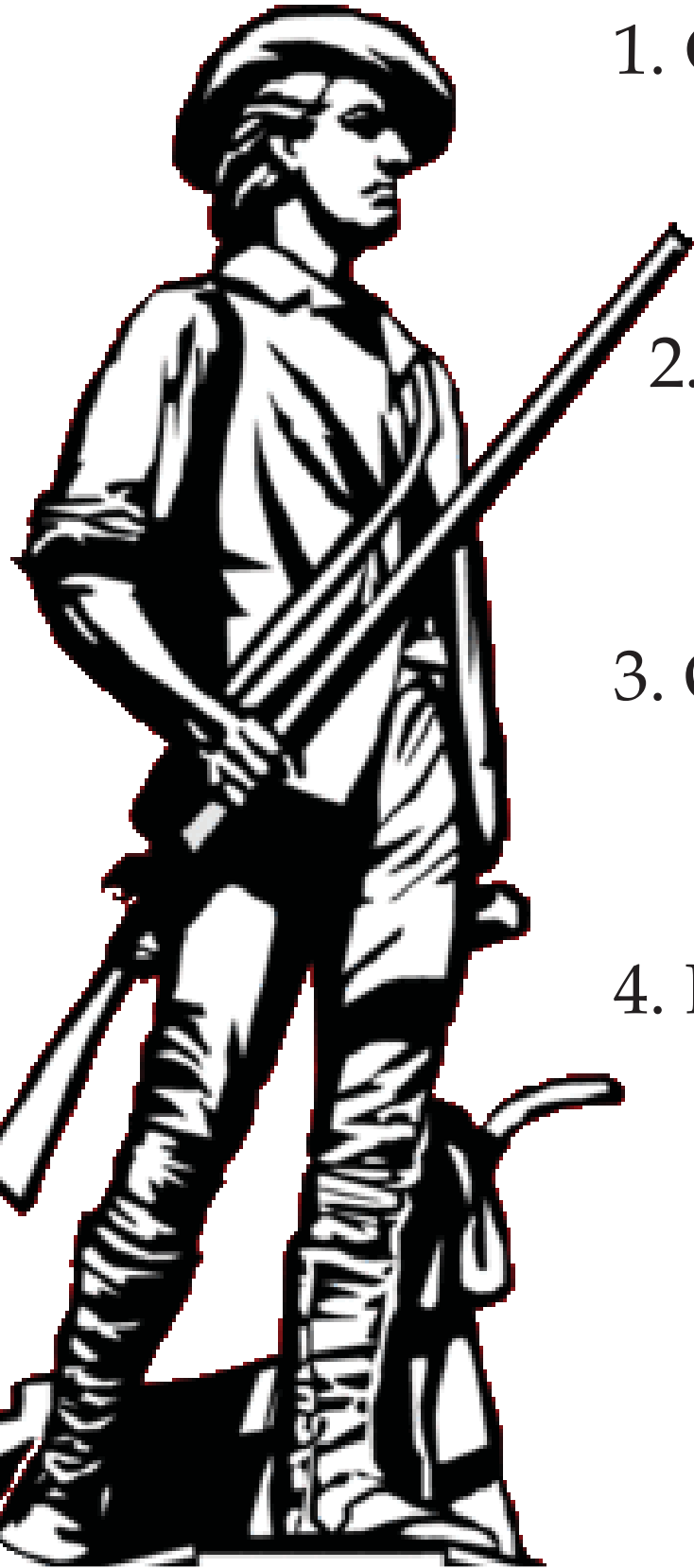
163throwback



In conjunction with their Thanksgiving meal, members of the 163d Attack Wing receive their influenza shots from the 163d Medical Group at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., on November 2, 2012. (Air National Guard photo taken by Master Sgt. Neil S. Ballecer)

The Adjutant General's Priorities

Major General David S. Baldwin



1. Combat Readiness

2. Civil Support Readiness

3. Quality Infrastructure

4. Effective Organizations



Clark Bramante Takes Command of 163d Operations Group



by Master Sgt. (CA) Gregory Solman

163d Attack Wing Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Clark ("C.J.") Bramante ascended to Operations Group commander of the 163d Attack Wing (ATKW) in a change of command ceremony here in June.

Bramante, who had most recently served the Wing as the commander of the 160th Attack Squadron, received the guidon from Col. Matthew Brancato, who held the position for 20 months prior to being selected to attend National War College.

"It's sad to be departing," said Brancato, "but what makes me feel good about handing it over is that the leadership team has all the information, all the knowledge, and all the passion they need to keep things moving forward."

"C.J. has leaned in and learned and absorbed as much as he could, and there is no doubt he's going to be fantastic as the next operations group commander," Brancato said.

"Lt. Col. Bramante's leadership became apparent the moment I walked on to campus," said Col. Sean Navin, 163d ATKW commander. "Those kind of folks stand out. You don't have to go looking for them. They make good decisions, they're good people, and they care about their Airmen."

Regardless of Bramante's previous position as the 160th Attack Squadron's commander, Navin added that Bramante's appointment to the coveted wing position was competitively won, rather than simply a matter of inevitable accession. "What happens, especially at the 163d, is that there are multiple people inside every group who are going to compete for both Squadron command and Group command positions," Navin explained. "We like having five or six people on the bench who can succeed and get to the top. It makes for a healthy wing."

Navin characterized Bramante as “a credit to the entire machine” in having been “developed, and prepared, for senior leadership positions...Lt. Col. Bramante is an excellent example of this. We will now collectively help develop him into the next role.”

Former Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Dana Hessheimer, who visited the Wing from the Pentagon to attend the change of command, cited the position of Safety Officer as an example of such advantageous development.

Hessheimer recalled Bramante as “just a flyer” in Operations when Hessheimer arrived at the Wing, soon appointing Bramante as the Wing’s Safety Officer.

“If you think about it, a lot of leaders throughout the Air Force went through the Safety Office. That’s where you really come to know the Wing. Once you become Safety Officer, you have to touch every part of the Wing,” Hessheimer said. “It’s not about Ops, or [Mission Support Group], or the Med Group, or anything else. Once you become a Safety Officer, then you have to go out and talk to everybody.”

Hessheimer said Bramante’s disposition was ideal for the mission of the wing upcoming. “His personality is outstanding. The smile on his face today was like a kid at Christmas.”



Col. Keith Ward, commander of the 146th Airlift Wing at Channel Islands, recalled working closely Bramante, both in Operations and when Ward served as the 163d ATKW’s vice commander. “He took every job we ever gave him, saluted smartly, and said, ‘Will do,’” Ward remembered.

Some of those essential missions included working out the issues surrounding remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) access to domestic airspace and the Formal Training Unit, and improving the wing’s groundbreaker domestic response capabilities. “He was the one that cracked the entire code with the Federal Aviation Administration on how to make it rapid, so it’s responsive,” Ward said. “On flight safety, he hired the entire wing safety office, filled the positions, got us through the inspection, and corrected all the deficiencies.”

Ward characterized Bramante as “a dedicated hard worker, with lots of initiative. He takes the bull by the horns and goes forth and conquers.” Ward called the appointment “very well deserved...He’s going to be a fantastic group commander.”

“Lt. Col. Bramante’s future is bright, which is why he’s our Ops Group commander,” added Navin, predicting that Bramante’s unique skill set, one that “has been highlighted numerous times over his ten-year tenure here in the Wing, will enable him to progress beyond group commander, to vice wing commander, to wing commander, and to state general. It’s simply going to be up to him.”

Profile of a Leader



by Master Sgt. (CA) Gregory Solman

163d Attack Wing Public Affairs

Even after 22 years of military service, Lt. Col. Clark J. (C.J.) Bramante is still looking ahead instead of back. The newly appointed Operations Group commander of the California Air National Guard's 163d Attack Wing sees "mission accomplishment, both in state and federal missions" as his top priority.

"It's why we serve," Bramante said. "We must maintain this focus. Within the group, my number one priority is ensuring our Airmen are trained and equipped to accomplish our mission."

That task will take several forms, Bramante insists, "from making sure they're able to care for their families and personal lives, to stabilizing our federal mission. Completing our Operations Center renovation will enable us to conduct operations well into the future, providing stability for our members with a rewarding and enduring mission."

"We will continue to focus on Formal Training Unit student production, which is important for the entire MQ-9 community," Bramante continues. "In addition, as members of the California Air National Guard, we must always remain ready when tasked to support state missions. We're going to hold those missions side by side, as each are of vital importance."

Only a sense of humility kept Bramante from seeing himself in the position he now assumes, after serving as commander of the wing's 160th Attack Squadron. "I work with amazing people who I always imagined in this role," Bramante says. "I thought, 'Why would it be me out of this group?' With that said, I feel well prepared and equipped, and I can't wait to continue working with this team. All of the Airmen within the wing work together to accomplish great things."

Bramante's own accomplishments were obvious to others tracking his career, according to 163d Attack Wing Commander Col. Sean Navin, who says Bramante's "leadership became apparent the moment I walked on to campus 20 months ago. Those kind of folks stand out. You don't have to go looking for them."

Bramante started as a Marine, during which time he served with VMGR-352, a KC-130F/R squadron based at Miramar; and with the 11th Marine Regiment as the Regimental Air Officer at Camp Pendleton. He put on blue for the Air Force Reserve here in 2007, flying the KC-135R with the 336th Air Refueling Squadron for three years before joining the 163d in February, 2010.

"When I left active duty and joined the Reserves as a captain, I figured I would just be a Reserve guy, continue serving, and finish out my time as a KC-135 pilot here at March," Bramante recalls. "Then I saw what the Guard was doing and the opportunities that it offered and I moved across."

"In joining the Guard, I never thought I would end up at this point," he remarked, moments after his change of command ceremony in June. "It's a surreal experience—standing in front of the Wing, looking out and seeing everybody, and just being overwhelmed by the amazing opportunity that it is."



Bramante stresses one of the wing commander's standing mission priorities: Retention—during a period of dramatic transition. "This unit has conducted steady-state federal missions for many of our members' entire careers," Bramante says. "The transition to a traditional Drill-Status Guardsman (DSG) model of service has been a new experience for many. Returning to steady operations will bring stability and more opportunities for people to serve in our federal mission. I believe this will have a positive effect of recruiting and retention."

"We've been in a transition period for a while," Bramante continues. "The Operations Center upgrade has provided some unforeseen challenges, extending the completion date. We have welcomed an Active Associate squadron within the FTU which has taken longer than initially planned. Construction on a new FTU building is well underway."

Undergoing that many major initiatives concurrently "means there's a lot of change and uncertainty, which affects our Drill-Status Guardsmen (DSGs) most dramatically," Bramante continues. "Through this time, we have seen DSGs find other employment and some members have retired. I know people believe in the importance of service and our mission. I look forward to carrying these projects to completion as we continue to build the team for our future."



Andrew, the son of Staff Sgt. Patrice Skyner of the 163d Communications Flight, 163d Attack Wing, apprehensively approaches a costumed member of the 501st Legion - Vader's First after a Star Wars-themed meet-and-greet during the wing's annual Family Day festivities, June 1, 2019, at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The legion is an all-volunteer cosplay group that participates in community events as a way to share their passion for the movie series. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Crystal Housman)



Staff Sgt. Rene McKinney, with Headquarters Flight, 163d Attack Wing, poses inside a large cutout of the cover of the wing's magazine, On Guard, June 1, 2019, during the wing's Family Day festivities at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. Family Day gave Airmen a chance to mingle and relax while sharing the day with colleagues, friends and loved ones. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph McKee)

Wing Guidance on Political Activities

The 2020 election season is fast approaching. Now is a good time for all to review and get familiarized with the rules regarding political activities. The rules governing political activity for DoD personnel are contained in DoD Directive 1344.10 and AFI 51-508 for military members and the Hatch Act for DoD civilian personnel. Political activity is defined as “an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office or partisan political group.” It is DoD policy to encourage individuals to exercise their rights and responsibilities as United States citizens. However, DoD personnel are generally prohibited from engaging in political activity in the workplace.

The attached memorandum from the Acting Secretary of Defense succinctly drives the point home: We can ensure all military and civilian remain free to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship within law and regulation, while also maintaining the apolitical nature of our mission and ethos as military professionals. Additionally, the DoD Standards of Conduct Office also has a helpful website with guidance on the subject that can be found at:

http://ogc.osd.mil/defense_ethics/topics/political_activities.html

If you have any additional questions regarding political activities by DoD personnel, please contact your servicing legal office for assistance.





U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Gregory Jones, commander of the California Air National Guard, speaks to members of the 163d Attack Wing, June 2, 2019, at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. Jones is a command pilot with more than 6,000 flying hours; he became the California Air National Guard commander this spring. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Crystal Housman)

Airmen of the 163d Attack Wing re-enlist at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., in June, 2019. (U.S. Air National Guard Photo by Master Sgt. Gregory Solman)



163d Attack Wing's

Q4Zero

Quest for Zero Mishaps

Basic Electrical Safety

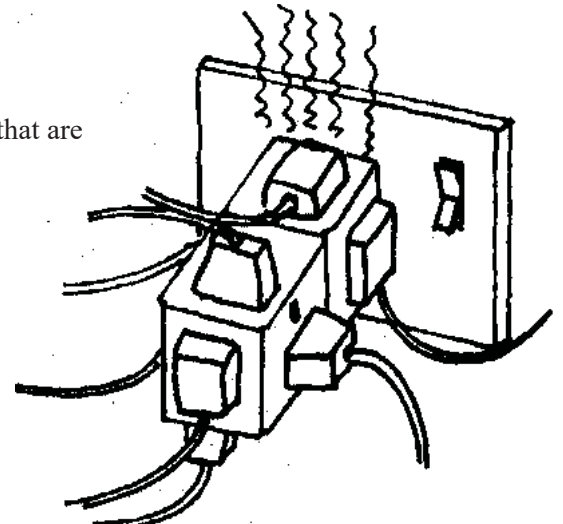
Four basic electrical safety items to focus on; concept, recognition, protection and safe work practices.

Electricity is like water running through a hose. The current is the flow of electrons through a conductor or a material that allows electrons to flow through it. The hose has insulation which resists the flow of electrons outside of the hose. When you kink the hose you oppose the electron flow.

Know the concept of electricity and you will be able to recognize hazards which will help you prevent injury or even death. The most common hazard of electricity is shock. Some other hazards are fires, explosions, arc flash, and arc blast. Shocks occur from current that travels in closed circuits through conductors such as the human body. With all of that water in the human body, we are a very good conductor!

Shock is current using our bodies as the conductor and flow of electricity going through the path of least resistance. No kink in the hose, you could say. The current will enter one point and leave at another. There are three ways the path will be at the least resistance and depending on the voltage will shock a body or electrocute the body. You can have contact with two conductors: standing in water, and yourself, or contact with one conductor and the ground, lastly contact with a tool (hot metal) and the ground.

Protect yourself and others: insulate, elevate and guard. Never work with tools that are exposing wire, when the insulation is ripped or broken. The power lines are an example of elevated energy. Never allow yourself, tools or materials to get within 10 feet of elevated energy.



Fellow Airmen,

Our United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) offers extraordinary opportunities for our most qualified enlisted Airmen who meet the criteria to enter the commissioned ranks. We ask commanders and supervisors to encourage their sharpest Airmen to apply for the USAFA LEAD Program. Each year, approximately 70 Airmen are offered appointments to USAFA either directly or through its Preparatory School.

USAFA LEAD seeks young, talented and diverse Airmen with leadership potential who meet the USAFA entry qualifications and demonstrate outstanding character. Please encourage these Airmen to consider a commissioning path through our Air Force's Academy. As a reminder, each applicant must meet the following criteria: (1) no older than 23 years of age on 1 July 2020 for entry to USAFA or no older than 22 years of age on 1 July 2020 for entry to the Preparatory School, (2) unmarried, (3) a U.S. citizen (or be able to obtain citizenship prior to USAFA entry), and (4) have no dependents. Applicants must also meet eligibility criteria IAW AFI 36-2013, Enlisted Commissioning Programs. Encourage interested Airmen to retake the SAT and/or the ACT to ensure the most recent standardized test scores are submitted.

The LEAD Program is an opportunity for all Airmen who meet the qualifications. It is a warfighting imperative to build diversity into our ranks. Commanders and supervisors are encouraged to recognize the value of diversity in our Air Force and open the door for this program to Airmen from a variety of demographics, experiences and backgrounds.

The application is now open for the Class of 2024. An Airman wishing to apply for a USAFA appointment must go to academyadmissions.com to start the application. Airmen must also complete and submit an AF Form 1786 NLT 31 December 2019. The completed form and the commander's Letter of Recommendation must be mailed to: HQ USAFA/RRS, 2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 2300, USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025. Airmen with complete applications will be considered for direct appointment to USAFA or assignment to the USAFA Preparatory School in order to become qualified for the Class of 2025.

Additional information is available on the USAFA Admissions website (academyadmissions.com), through a Career Assistance Advisor, or at your local base education office. Interested Airmen and Air Force leaders may also submit questions to the USAFA LEAD team at USAFA_LEAD@usafa.edu.

Signed,

Kaleth O. Wright

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

and

David L. Goldfein

General, USAF Chief of Staff



STRAIGHT TALK



THIS IS THE WING COMMANDER'S COMMUNICATION TOOL TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE WING. THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO VOICE YOUR OPINIONS OR CONCERNS:

1. CALL THE HOTLINE ABOVE, OR
2. SEND A PRIVATE MESSAGE TO THE 163D ATKW FACEBOOK, WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE COMMANDER

IF THE COMMANDER HAS INFORMATION TO PUT OUT, YOU CAN FIND IT ON EITHER THE WING FACEBOOK (WWW.163ATKW.ANG.AF.MIL) OR THE HOTLINE.

Tennessee ANG Borrows HAIC's 'GrizzlyNet' for Ardent Sentry 2019



by Master Sgt. (CA) Gregory Solman

163d Attack Wing Public Affairs

The secure, unclassified commercial network developed at the Hap Arnold Innovation Center (HAIC) here for use in Domestic Operations (DOMOPS) and training was incorporated into Exercise Ardent Sentry 2019.

The annual exercise was conducted May 29 to June 5 by North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command and hosted by the Tennessee National Guard. It simulated a catastrophic earthquake with its epicenter in Arkansas in order to train and evaluate interagency response to multi-state disasters.

HAIC's breakthrough network, now known as "GrizzlyNet", has garnered a nationwide reputation in advance of its official accreditation, says Maj. Michael Baird, HAIC military lead.

The use of GrizzlyNet during the DOMOPS exercise provided yet another proof of concept for the innovation used many times by the California Air National Guard's 163d Attack Wing in firefighting and search-and-rescue missions, said Senior Master Sgt. Robert Davis (above), one of the network managers on the HAIC communications side.

"They came to us in order to distribute video over the entire CONUS (Continental U.S.)," Davis said. "The exercise involved the Tennessee Air National Guard having an MQ-9 Reaper take off in Texas, then hand it off to Tennessee ANG to fly it, all while disseminating the video to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and others." The full-motion video generated by the Reaper was transmitted back to HAIC and distributed from there in near real-time.



Davis said that the wing conducted a similar experiment, on a larger scale, when California hosted Ardent Sentry in 2012. "If there is a disaster that requires a total Air National Guard response, GrizzlyNet allows any RPA unit with a ground control station and launch-and-recovery to disseminate their feed, hand the RPA off to another RPA unit, and fly it throughout the CONUS. And GrizzlyNet can disseminate the video anywhere in the world, really, and very importantly, to non-DOD agencies."

HAIC created GrizzlyNet in partnership with HAF-A2Q, the Air Force's innovation office, under the auspices of James G. "Snake" Clark, director of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Modernization and Infrastructure, and Deputy Chief of Staff for ISR; and Air Force Col. Christopher McDonald, director of web-based innovations, ISR Innovations Directorate.

The concept developed by HAIC stemmed from recognition that the communications infrastructure serving RPA units well during combat operations abroad was impractical for DOMOPS, typically conducted in cooperation with civilian authorities with either no or limited access to military networks.

"The main purpose is train like we fight on the Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance side," Baird said. "There is not the infrastructure built on the [unclassified communications] side that there is on the combat side. For us to be able to train like we fight, we had to build that system. Now we're able to utilize that system for exercises, training, and for actual DOMOPS."

Brancato's Short Tenure Leaves a Long Legacy



by Master Sgt. (CA) Gregory Solman

163d Attack Wing Public Affairs

Despite having commanded the 163d Attack Wing Operations Group for only 20 months, Col. Matthew Brancato (above, right) started in on one of his primary objectives from the start: Making himself, as he put it, “irrelevant.”

“The goal when I came in was to develop a leadership team—where it wasn’t just people coming to me—and if you take me out of the equation, the team continues to function,” recalls Brancato. “I had to take a lot of leave for family issues over the last couple of years, and the group just kept moving forward, and that’s my intent...Whether I’m there or not, the people leading the team, down to the lowest supervisor, is empowered to continue to move forward.”

One way or another, Brancato’s model produced tangible accomplishments. His team oversaw “the SOC 1.0 conversion that required us to stand down from combat. When I took over, [the conversion] didn’t even have a design, and now we’re at 65 percent design, so that’s moving forward and we have a plan to move back into our building.”

Operations also began to integrate active-duty personnel via the Active Association construct, in which a wing becomes a blended unit incorporating Air National Guard and active-duty Airmen. "When I joined the team here, there weren't a lot who understood the Total Force Initiative that was coming until Jeff Shaw and Paul Brockmeyer started pulling information and took over that whole program," Brancato explains. "Now we have active duty personnel here, so we feel the progress when we see the Active Association go from the idea phase to now, with active duty members in our formation, for our change of command."

"California said, 'Challenge accepted: We're going to find a way,'—because the training and skills the crews possess can benefit stateside missions, including hurricane relief, tornadoes, forest fires, earthquakes and things like that," Brancato added.

Brancato's months also oversaw the relocation conversion that moved the wing's launch-and-recovery operations from the Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, Calif., to the home field at March Air Reserve Base. "It was a major accomplishment for the safety and efficiency of our assigned missions," Brancato recalls. "During that relocation, we also transitioned from Block 1 [MQ-9 Reaper Remotely Piloted Aircraft] to Block 5s."

The wing also made breakthrough contributions to domestic operations (DOMOPS) during Brancato's Operations command. "When I worked with active duty peers at the Pentagon, they said there was no way that an MQ-1 or MQ-9 was ever going to fly DOMOPS," Brancato remembers. "They said the negative public perception of RPAs flying in the National Airspace System was too much to overcome."

"California said, 'Challenge accepted: We're going to find a way,'—because the training and skills the crews possess can benefit stateside missions, including hurricane relief, tornadoes, forest fires, earthquakes and things like that," Brancato added.

Brancato credited his team with doing a "phenomenal job at breaking down barriers and supporting the citizens of California," despite manpower and resources challenges. "There are countless lives and countless homes that were saved because of the dedication of our team."

Brancato predicts "the next leadership team that gets in place will hit the ground running and not skip a beat."

For his part, Brancato plans to study "policy, strategy and the bigger picture of the Air Force" at National War College in Washington, D.C. Brancato could not promise a return to the wing, he maintains he still wants to be "an RPA guy. I'm still passionate about this weapons system. I want to use that school to be able to study something that would make the RPA enterprise go forward."

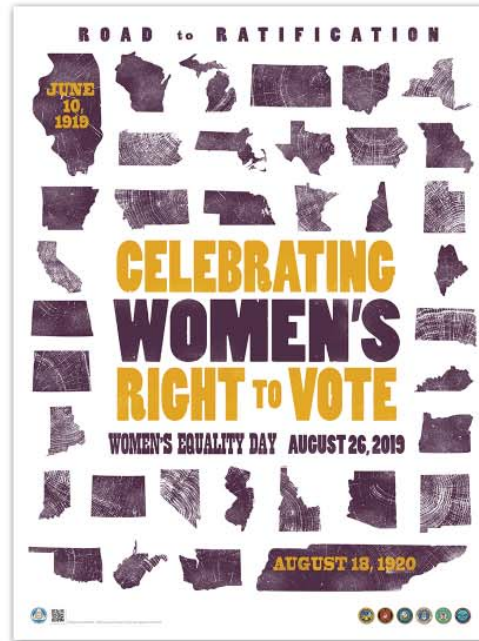
CULTURAL
AWARENESS



OBSERVANCE

AUGUST 26, 2019

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY



FACTS

Women's Equality Day celebrates the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution which guarantees all American women the right to vote. The Amendment changed Federal law and the face of the American electorate forever.

The women's suffragist movement was successful because a group of women—and men—came together to promote change. Changing the Constitution was a lengthy and difficult struggle.

Between 1878 and 1920, champions of voting rights for women worked tirelessly, although their strategies varied. Some tried to pass suffrage acts in each state. Others challenged male-only voting laws in the courts. More public tactics included pickets, silent vigils, and hunger strikes. Suffragists were heckled, jailed, and sometimes physically abused.

By 1916, most of the major suffrage organizations united behind the goal of a constitutional amendment.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson changed his views and publically endorsed women's rights to vote. The political balance began to shift.

On May 21, 1919, the House of Representatives passed the amendment. Two weeks later, the Senate followed. Suffragists focused their efforts on getting 36 states to ratify the proposed amendment.

By March of 1920, 35 states had approved the amendment, one state shy of the two-thirds needed to pass. Tennessee cast the final vote for ratification. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby certified the ratification on August 26, 1920.

Women's Equality Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the many benefits of true equality and the role of women in our public life. Women in public service and government have long served this nation by working to clear barriers, enforce laws, implement new ideas, and change people's attitudes.



Friends, family members, and members of the 163d Attack Wing celebrate another year of the Grizzly golf tournament at Tukwet Country Club Golf Course in Indio, Calif., on June 3. The course hosts the tournament every year to help the Grizzly Golf association raise money for various organizations such as the Wounded Warrior program. After an 18 round game, all of the players gather together in the club house for raffles, an auction, and a hearty meal to celebrate the day of longest drive, closest to pin, closest chip and best putt. (Air National Guard Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Stanley Thompson)

Texas Air National Guard members train at the 163d Attack Wing Regional Training Site at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. June 21, 2019. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Neil S. Ballecer)





YESTERDAY. TODAY. TOMORROW.

