

# THE BEACON

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

May 2020



COMBAT EXCELLENCE-ALWAYS ON MISSION



# From the WING COMMANDER

124th Fighter Wing Commander Col. Shannon Smith

## Reopening the Fighter Wing

Reopening is the current theme, at least for some portions of this nation. Our president has provided guidelines for "Opening Up America Again." Today as I craft this message, we are in Stage 1 of Gov. Little's guidelines for "Opening Up Idaho."

While the guidelines associate timeframes for each stage (Stage 1 projected through May 15), it is important to remember that these stages, and continued progression through the stages, are primarily conditions-based.

Specifically, we need to continue to see downward trends in both patients reporting into emergency departments with C-19 symptoms and documented C-19 cases. I have little doubt that continued progression through these stages will also be contingent on the citizens of Idaho being highly disciplined in their social distancing and personal hygiene. Which brings us back to reopening the fighter wing.

On May 1, General Garshak issued his command intent to return full-time support and state personnel of the Idaho Military Division to full strength presence. His command intent, and

resulting policy guidelines, impact the entire force and are worth highlighting here:

Overall intent is to safely and responsibly resume maximum capability to accomplish our missions - it is imperative we maintain a unique state of readiness.

Symptomatic personnel should NOT be in our workplaces.

While in the workplace, six-foot distancing will be maintained - facemasks are encouraged, but also required when six-feet is not possible. Group gatherings will follow the graduated stages of the Idaho plan.

The workplace will be made "safe" through focused custodial efforts and work practices that allow social distancing. Return of identified "higher risk" Airmen will require additional consideration.

Return of the force requires a safe workplace and will be executed at command discretion down the chain.

As with the state, reopening the fighter wing and successfully progressing to full force will be contingent on every Airmen being highly disciplined in their social distancing, and personal hygiene.

As a fighting force, we have continuous readiness requirements, which means that we must keep our skills highly honed for action.

Your leadership either has or will be contacting you shortly to begin the process of your returning as a full-time or drill status Airman. This is a conversation.

We need each and every Airman back to full-strength but we need to do it the right way. C-19 has turned so much of our lives upside-down. Please actively engage in the discussion and help us identify the path to reopening.

On that note, I expect that we will drill in June - together. I truly look forward to that moment.

When this Beacon publishes, our Airmen supporting the Aviation/Maintenance package will likely have departed, and our first-wave RCP Airmen will be ever closer to their departure. It's time to write that chapter of our fighter wing heritage - a chapter that will reflect our journey through a pandemic to successfully project combat power anywhere we choose.

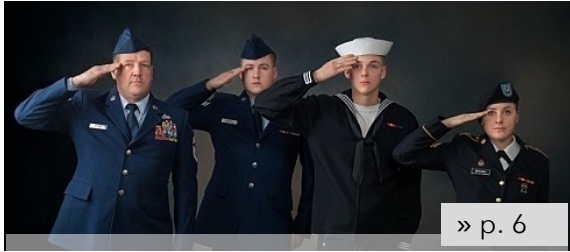
Reading this edition of the Beacon, bears witness to our ability to support our state and continue to prepare and execute our federal mission.



*-take a look!*

*Col Smith*

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### WING COMMANDER

Col. Shannon Smith

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Capt. Rebecca Solosabal

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Senior Airman Joseph Morgan

Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker

Mr. Ryan White\*

\*May Beacon editor

## ON THE COVER



Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Idaho National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, like Chief Master Sgt. Amee Henke from the Idaho Military Division's Joint Staff, continued to help out in the community by spending the day giving blood to the American Red Cross blood drive at Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, on April 22. Just one person's donated blood can potentially save three lives, and every two seconds someone in America needs blood. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur)

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# Tactical Combat Casualty Care

Providing Airmen with more hands-on casualty care training

Story by Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

Photos by Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds and Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker

The 124th Medical Group offered Tactical Combat Casualty Care training March 6-8 to deployers and anyone interested in updating their training in preparation for the 124th Fighter Wing's upcoming deployment. TCCC replaced the training formerly known as Self Aid Buddy Care.

Much like SABC, TCCC is required every three years. This new training will be more beneficial for those members who are deploying because members get to experience more hands-on training that gives them the skills and experience when dealing with blast injuries, gunshot wounds or any other type of trauma, said

Staff Sgt. Annelise Lane, a medic with the 124th Medical Group.

"The TCCC training gives members a way to break down a combat situation when medical attention is needed and is designed for them to be able to treat the most preventable cause of death on the battle field," said Lane.

The TCCC training teaches the "MARCH" assessment, which stands for: massive hemorrhages first, assess airways, respirations, circulation, and head and hypothermia. The training also covers the basics of first aid that a member would learn with the SABC, such as splinting.

The 124th MDG set up five stations breaking down each step of the "MARCH" assessment with a final station where the members are able to put what they learned to the test. Two at a time, the attendees were instructed to blindly head into a room where they were met with different obstacles to test the training they had just learned. When entering







the dark room the lights were immediately flipped on. Gun shot noises, explosions and loud banging filled the room, along with the screams and hollers of the instructors to induce a sense of fear and stress into the situation.

"I felt immense pressure, probably the most pressure I've ever felt in my life," said Airman Nathan Layne, a nondestructive inspection specialist with the 124th Maintenance Squadron.

The TCCC training left an unforgettable experience on Airmen to remember how to save lives in the field and protect their wingmen in a combat environment.

"This experience was unlike any kind of learning experience I've had," said Layne. "It was fun, it was intense and it was genius to incorporate so many hands on opportunities into this class."



# The Brown Family Legacy

A Father and His Three Children in the U.S. Military



Story by Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker  
Courtesy photos by Maxine May Photography

In 1986, Sid Brown was itching to leave the city of New Plymouth, Idaho. With the financial burden of college heavy on his mind, he met with an Air Force recruiter in Ontario, Oregon, and quickly found himself in uniform, working as an F-16C weapons load crew member at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

After nearly 30 years in weapons and maintenance jobs, including five years as the 124th Maintenance Group Superintendent at Gowen Field, Airman Sid Brown became Command Chief Master Sgt. Sid Brown, state command chief, Idaho Air National Guard. His legacy of service has trickled down to his three children, Everett, Cassandra and Wesley, who joined the Idaho Air National Guard,

Idaho Army National Guard and U.S. Navy respectively.

"It means a lot to me to have my children serving," Sid said. "I believe everyone who is able should serve in some capacity – even if they don't join the military – and I'm very happy they've all chosen unique paths to do that."

The first of Sid's kids to join the military was Everett Brown, a traffic management specialist with the 124th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Gowen Field. Now a Senior Airman, Everett said the military is engrained in their family history.

"We have a very long bloodline of military in our family, all the way back to when they stormed the beaches of Normandy, to Vietnam and the World Wars," said Everett. "The tradition has carried on from

generation to generation. It's an established part of our lives."

For Everett, joining the Idaho Air National Guard was a way to honor his father and the experiences he had as a child on Gowen Field.

"As a kid, I watched my dad come home from deployments and saw the respect and pride he had and I wanted to feel that way," Everett said. "My dad has always been my hero and it didn't matter what branch I ended up joining, I just wanted to work hard the same way he did."

The day Everett left for basic training was the same day his sister, Cassandra, enlisted in the Idaho Army National Guard.

Cpl. Cassandra Brown is an ammunitions specialist in the Golf Company, 145th Brigade



Support Battalion. Although she wasn't initially sure what branch she wanted to join, she knew the military was where she belonged.

"Joining the military felt like something I needed to do," said Cassandra. "None of my friends were surprised when I finally joined. I feel like I've always had that decision in my heart."

Kassandra said between the conflicting schedules and excessive pride, there's a bittersweet feeling when it comes to having a family full of military members.

"I feel very proud of my family, but also scared at the same time because you never know what will happen to them," she said. "But we all have cool stories to share. In our family you always have someone to talk to. You always have someone to relate to."

Everett and Cassandra's brother Wesley, who joined the Navy in June 2019, agreed that the support from their family is invaluable.

"They really understand what I'm going through, especially my dad who has had active-duty experience," said Wesley. "He takes time to answer all of my questions."

Seaman Wesley Brown is a hospital corpsman at Wayne Caron Clinic, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Although his mom's side of the family has a rich naval history, Wesley's motivation for joining the military had less to do with his family's history of service.

"I mostly wanted to branch out from Idaho and experience the world through a different lens than the rest of my family," he said.

Regardless of their selected branch or individual reasons for joining, Wesley said the military establishes a common thread between him and his siblings.

"I take pride in my family because we're all doing our part to serve our country," said Wesley. "We come from a good background with strong morals."

Although Sid has decades of experience and sits in a highly regarded position, he largely keeps his influence to himself when it comes to his children.

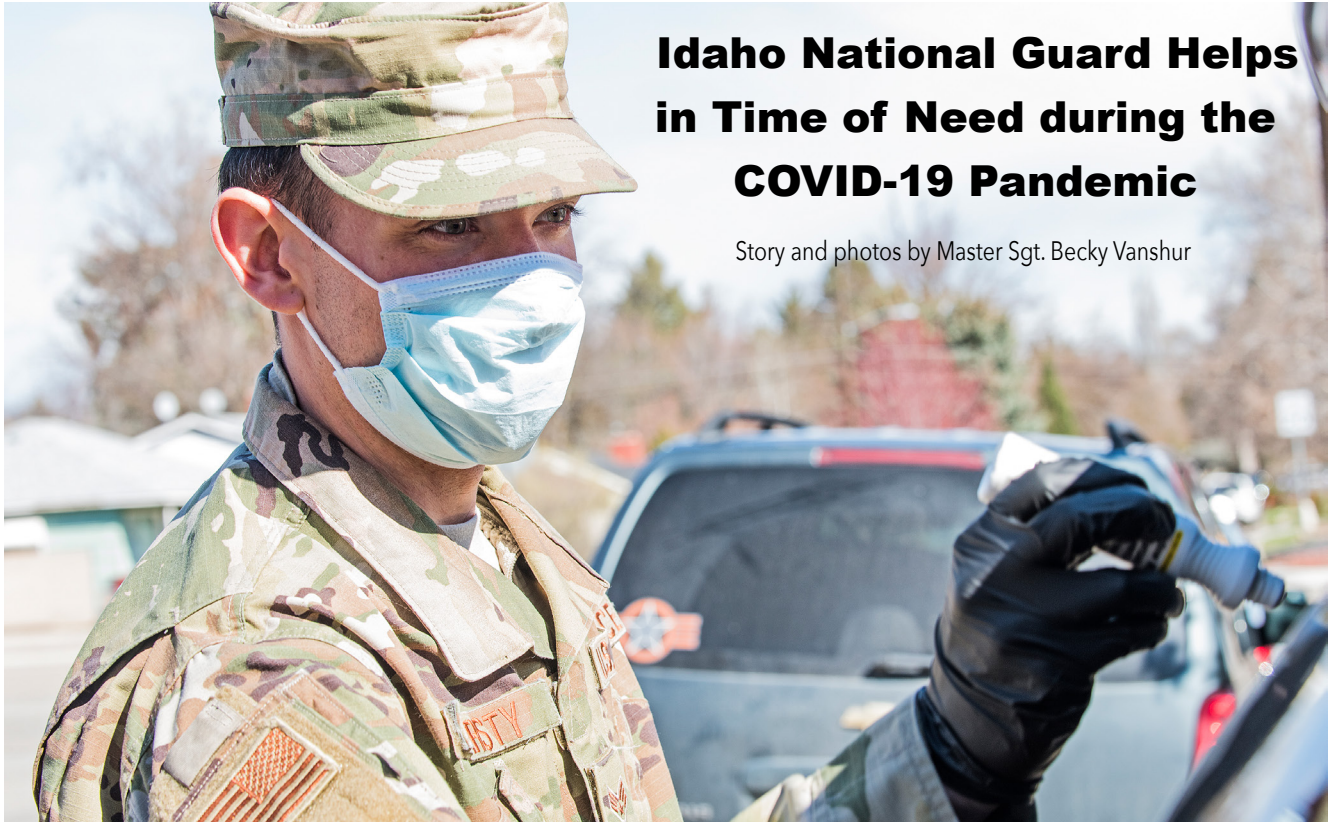
"I do my best to stay out of their careers," Sid said. "Good, bad or indifferent, it's their path."

According to a 2013 Pentagon report, more than 82% of recruits

across the Air Force, Army and Navy have a family member who has served in the military. Whether that's the case or not for a military hopeful, Sid emphasized that it's important for parents to be supportive of their children's decisions.

"The military is a great career path," he said. "Your kids will learn new skills, get great benefits and a great education, they'll have to stay off drugs and they'll potentially see the world. Don't be afraid. Don't stifle their decisions."





## Idaho National Guard Helps in Time of Need during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur



More than 40 Idaho National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have been activated to assist food bank workers in keeping up with an increased amount of demand as Idahoans start to feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are so delighted to have this support from the Idaho National Guard," said Karen Vauk, the Idaho Foodbank's CEO and president. "We have to get more food in and more food out to support our communities across the state. We needed more manpower, so we called upon the National Guard."

Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen were placed on state, active-duty orders in late March and assigned to work at the Idaho Foodbank's Boise, Lewiston and Pocatello locations.

"We have more than 4,000 members in the Idaho National

Guard," said Maj. Gen. Michael Garshak, commander, Idaho National Guard. "We respond when the state, county or city organizations' capacities are overwhelmed or stretched to the limit and they ask us to come in and help."

Vauk requested additional assistance through the Idaho Office of Emergency Management after she noticed a significant increase of need in the food supply throughout Idaho, which was causing her operations to be spread thin.

Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen are also assisting at Boise's St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry by handing out donated groceries to those in need. The Idaho Foodbank donates food to pantries like St. Vincent de Paul as part of the Feeding America program.

"Before COVID-19, what we would see here at the pantry would be an average of maybe



1,100 families per month,” said Ralph May, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul. “During this crisis we are seeing close to 2,300 families per month for now. We are seeing a little more than double and some days we are seeing three times the amount of families we would normally see in a day.”

Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen are assisting employees and volunteers with loading and unloading trucks, boxing and sorting donated food, helping load food into people’s cars and making deliveries to several of its 400 community-based partners throughout the state.

“Missions like this give people another reason to want to join the National Guard,” said Garshak. “Not only are they trained and prepared to serve our nation at times of war, but they are also ready and available to come to the aid of local communities and citizens in times of need.”





# Joining Forces in Emmett



Special warfare Tactical Air Control Party Airmen from the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron and defenders from the 124th Security Forces Squadron participated in a joint ground combat operations exercise with members of the Gem County Sheriffs Department, Emmett, Idaho, Mar. 7. During the exercise Airmen practiced effective communication and maneuverability in an integrated combat unit.

Photos by Senior Airman Joseph Morgan











# Finding Help

Soon-to-deploy Airman loses home to fire

Story by Mr. Ryan White  
Photos courtesy of Staff Sgt. Daniel Garrison  
and Mrs. Heather Echols

Soon-to-deploy Staff Sgt. Daniel Garrison, a weapons load crew member with the 124th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, lost everything he owned when his Nampa, Idaho, apartment caught fire on the morning of April 23, 2020, but, with help from the 124th Fighter Wing's Family Readiness Program, he and his family are starting over in a new home.

Garrison and his wife were still in bed when his 13-year old daughter woke them up because she saw flames coming from their balcony. He quickly scooped up his dog, yelled for everyone to get out, and ran out of the apartment without a shirt or shoes. He says the fire department was on scene quickly, but not in time to save his home and all his family's belongings from being completely destroyed.

Fortunately, Garrison had





renter's insurance, but money from insurance doesn't come right away. Sometimes it can take several months before any money arrives to replace what has been lost. However, he's been able to find a new home for his family and secure enough personal items to get by with help from the 124th FW's Family Readiness Program and the local community.

"The love and support from our local community, the Air National Guard community, friends from all over the world who I met while on active duty, and people we don't even know that have helped through a Go Fund Me is the main thing that's kept us from feeling hopeless," said Garrison.

Garrison knew he could get help from the 124th FW's Family Readiness Program and reached out to Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager Heather Echols on Thursday afternoon, the same day as the fire. She was able to help secure him a \$1,000 grant through the Idaho Guard Reserve Family Support Fund within 24 hours of his call.

This grant fund is just one of many available options available to guardsmen in need of help. Interest free loans are another commonly used resource available.

Echols also runs a Facebook group called ID Air National Guard Family Page, which is designed to connect families with events, activities, and resources within the Idaho Air Guard. She used the group to share Garrison's story, where she was able to find several people, within hours, who were willing to pick up a donated living room set for Garrison and deliver it to his family's new apartment. Echols says this is pretty typical behavior from members of the group.

"There are people who are struggling and all they have to do is ask for help," said Echols. "Here is a person that asked for help and look how quickly we helped them. Look how quickly the community stepped up."

Garrison said he is typically not the type of person to ask for help but is grateful he did. His advice to other guardsmen in similar situations is simple.

"Don't let yourself get in the

way of people trying to help," said Garrison. "Let people help and things will probably work out way better if you just let them help you."

If you are in need of help or would like to help Staff Sgt. Daniel Garrison and his family recover from the fire, please contact Mrs. Heather Echols, the 124th FW's family readiness program manager, at 208-513-3430 or [heather.l.echols.mil@mail.mil](mailto:heather.l.echols.mil@mail.mil).







Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Idaho National Guard Soldiers and Airmen continued to help out in the community by spending the day giving blood to the American Red Cross blood drive at Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, on April 22. Just one person's donated blood can potentially save three lives, and every two seconds someone in America needs blood.

Photos by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur





When you're isolated at home, feelings of anxiety, loneliness, or worry may become overwhelming. Experiencing these feelings is common during times of heightened stress.

Don't be afraid to reach out. We're here to help! The Department of Health and Welfare has opened an Idaho COVID-19 Hotline with an option for behavioral health.



## IDAHO COVID-19 HOTLINE

### 888-330-3010

We offer anonymous and confidential assistance for all, no matter your situation. If you are experiencing any type of distress from feeling overwhelmed or isolated, a mental health challenge, substance use disorder, or if you are seeking resources during this difficult time, please reach out!

We have trained professionals ready and available to talk with you and assist you in accessing the mental health and substance use disorder services you need.

#### Resources for Idaho Residents

Idaho Care Line: call 2-1-1 or visit [www.211.idaho.gov](http://www.211.idaho.gov)

Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline: call 2-1-1 or 208-398-4357

Optum Idaho Member Crisis Line: call 855-202-0973



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**  
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



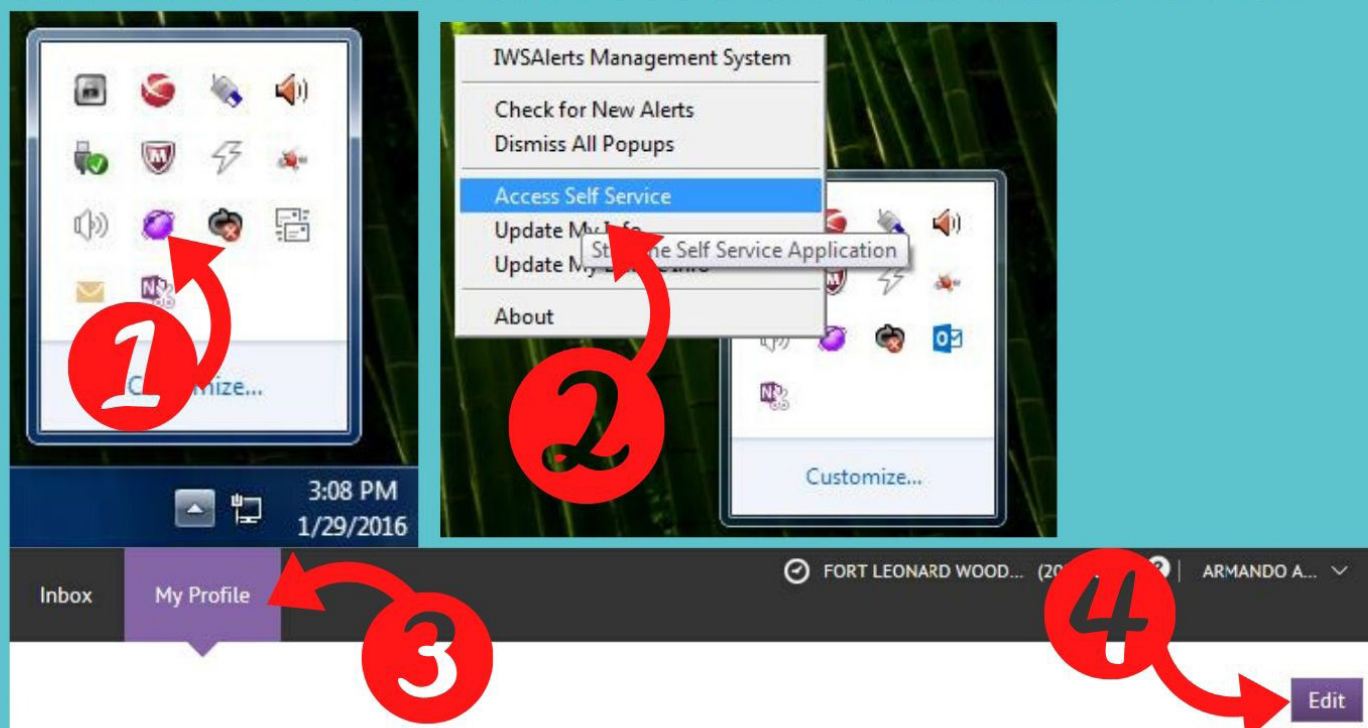
# AtHoc

KEEP A PULSE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING

AtHoc is an interactive warning and messaging system that allows senior leaders to alert you. It allows you to stay informed of both emergency notifications of on-base incidents, base warnings, and critical command messages via desktop alert, text, and email.

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REGISTER TODAY**

ON-BASE AND FROM A DOT MIL COMPUTER



IF YOU AREN'T ON-BASE, CONTACT YOUR  
CSS AND THEY WILL REGISTER YOU.