

# COWBOY GUARD

**2021**  
YEAR IN REVIEW





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## 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Major General Gregory C. Porter

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Dear Readers,

As 2021 comes to a close and we prepare to turn the page, I reflect on the unforeseen challenges we have faced as an organization as well as the progress and accomplishments we have made. It is a privilege to serve alongside all the men and women who are committed to seeing this organization succeed. I thank each one of you for facing these challenges head on and adapting to overcome every obstacle.

This last year, the Wyoming National Guard took part in more domestic response missions than ever before. The assistance both here in the state and across the nation fighting fires, providing security, and supporting local hospitals was a true testament to the importance of our profession. Being ready at any time to perform the mission we are called to do. We proved to be ready and responsive when needed.

None of what we accomplished this year could have happened without the dedicated people in our ranks or our civilian workforce. Each one of you is an integral part of our ability to be the Sword and Shield for the state and nation. Without the strength of our force, our Sword will break and our Shield will buckle.

As we look to the future, we will continue to have strength as a priority while we recruit and retain the best the state and nation have to offer. We must ensure men and women are employed, enlisted, and committed to the Wyoming Military Department remains a professional, equipped, and ready force capable of remaining as the Sword and Shield.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Gregory C. Porter".

**Major General Gregory C. Porter**  
Adjutant General, Wyoming National Guard



# ON THE COVER





A photograph of a female pilot, 1st Lt. Holly Woodridge, in the cockpit of a C-130 Hercules aircraft. She is wearing a green flight suit with an American flag patch on the sleeve and a headset. She is looking down at a control panel filled with various gauges and instruments. The cockpit is filled with sunlight, creating a bright, warm atmosphere. The pilot's hair is tied back in a ponytail.

## *IN THE AIR*

U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Holly Woodridge, an aviator with the 187th Airlift Squadron maneuvers a C-130 Hercules aircraft assigned to the 153d Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air National Guard as part of Exercise Southern Strike at the Mississippi National Guard's Combat Readiness Training Center Gulfport, Miss., April 22, 2021. Southern Strike is an annual training exercise hosted by the Mississippi National Guard to increase combat readiness across all branches of the U.S. Military. This exercise allows our members to hone in on their lethality which strengthens the Wyoming National Guard.

(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jon Alderman)









# *LETHALITY*

Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment fire the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems for their annual training live-fire exercise. Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon, First Lady Jennie Gordon, Sen. Dan Dockstader, and Rep. Donald Burkhart were all on site to experience and learn about the live-fire exercise, showcasing the Guard's lethality.

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Kristina Kranz)







# HISTORY **IN THE MAKING**

STORY BY SGT. ERIC MOORE | PHOTOS BY SGT. ROY UPTAIN

On a cold and windy January day, members of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery of the Wyoming Army National Guard made history by conducting the first live fire HIMARS Rapid Infiltration at Dugway Proving Grounds in Dugway, Utah, Jan. 21-22, 2021.

“For the 2-300th, it’s kind of historic for us,” said Lt. Col. Robert Lemay Lejeune, commander of the 2-300th, emphasizing the importance of this event.

HIRAIN missions have been around for a long time in the military and are a staple of combat in the Middle East that the 2-300th consistently trains for.

“This is one of our mission essential tasks,” explained Training Officer Maj. Shawn Stensaas. “It will help us improve and maintain our proficiencies and relevancy to support missions around the world, wherever they may be.”

The 2-300th first began practice for the exercise in 2015. For this attempt, they utilized a C-130 Hercules aircraft provided by the 153rd Airlift Wing out of Cheyenne, Wyo.

Using the aircraft in this method allows the artillery greater mobility and a substantial increase in the overall range of their mission. This tactic makes HIRAIN missions very flexible.

“It can be used in any theatre where you can land a C-17 or a C-130,” explained Lejeune.



While it might appear that the use of aircraft in a field artillery mission like the HIRAIN would be normal, this is not the case. The normal method the soldiers of the 2-300th use to fire their artillery is to drive their M-142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System to a set point on the battlefield and then to fire from that location. While this method can be highly effective, it is limited by the range of the artillery used, usually 18-42 miles. This range can be extended by conducting a HIRAIN mission.

“I can conduct a raid but it’s as far as I can drive and secure myself forward on the battlefield,” explains Lejeune. “Which is relatively short when you compare the distance to an aircraft. So by working with the Air Force, we add this great new capability in terms of range.”

This exercise that took place Jan. 21-22 saw the 2-300th load two HIMARS and one Humvee onto the C-17 Globemaster III. The airplane then took off from Cheyenne and flew to Hill Air Force Base in northern Utah.

The following day the C-17 crew flew the members of the 2-300th to Dugway Proving Grounds where the HIMARS exited the aircraft, obtained a good firing position, and fired their payload. They then rapidly reentered the aircraft and returned to Wyoming.

This week’s mission included collaboration from an unlikely source, the 315th OSS Airlift Wing out of Joint Base Charleston in Charleston, S.C. The 315th provided the aircraft that would be used for the event, the C-17, a much larger aircraft that allowed the 2-300th to use two of their HIMARS and one Humvee.

This collaboration with the 315th came about by happenstance according to Col. Kent M. Porter, commander of the 115th Field Artillery Brigade, which is the headquarters unit for the 2-300th.

“They reached out to me,” Porter said, explaining how the mission came to life. “They had a mission on the west coast and part of their validation is to take mobile equipment up in their aircraft. I made a few phone calls and we have just built a good relationship that we hope to have continue.”

“We cannot do this without their assistance, it truly is a team effort,” Lejeune concurred.

Given the essential status of the HIRAIN mission in combat operations, training was required to conduct these exercises safely and effectively. The teamwork between the 2-300th and the 315th should continue for a long time.



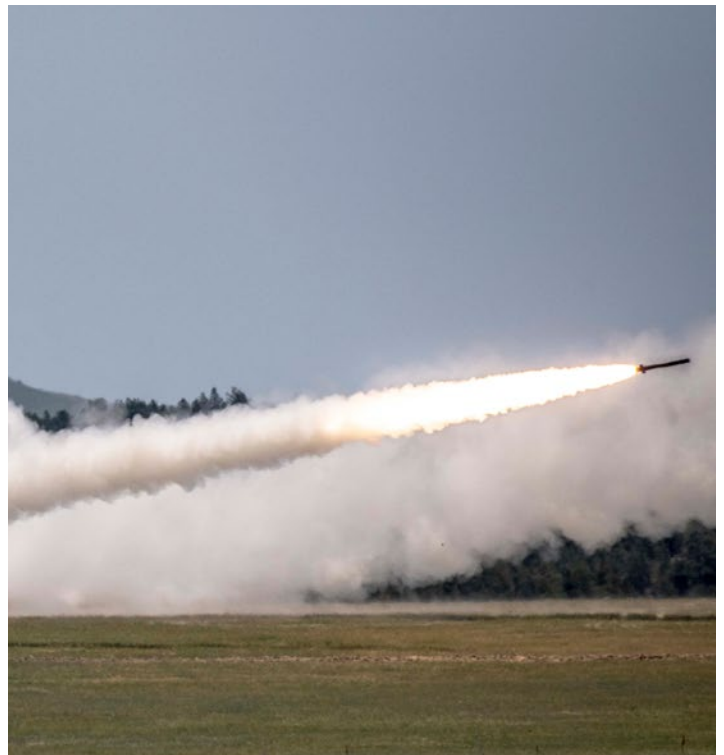
# FIELD ARTILLERY **LIVE-FIRE EXERCISE**

PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. JACQUELINE MARSHALL, SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ, AND SGT. STEW DYER



Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment fire the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems during their annual live-fire exercise at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center, Wyo., June 14, 2021.

Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon, First Lady Jennie Gordon, Sen. Dan Dockstader, and Rep. Donald Burkhart spent the day learning about the Wyoming Guard's deep heritage in field artillery excellence. Showcasing the strength and lethality of the HIMARS. The crew consists of three members. HIMARS is a light, multiple rocket launcher mounted on a standard Army Medium Tactical Vehicle truck chassis. It carries six rockets that can be fired as a volley or individually.







# CAMP GUERNSEY HIRAIN MISSION

STORY & PHOTOS BY 2ND LT. JAMIE BRIDENSTINE

Members of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Regiment made history again, performing a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System Rapid Insertion (HIRAIN) mission on April 12, 2021, at the Lt. Gen. Wright Tactical Airstrip at Camp Guernsey.

April 12 marked the first time the tactical airstrip was used for a HIRAIN mission.

A High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) was unloaded, simulated a shoot, and loaded back onto a Lockheed C-130J Hercules. The 2-300th previously executed a live-fire HIRAIN at Dugway Proving Grounds in Dugway, Utah earlier this year.

While this mission was not a live-fire exercise, it demonstrated Camp Guernsey has the capabilities to facilitate HIRAIN mission training. The tactical airstrip, a 4,661 foot long, 60-foot wide gravel runway, accommodated the landing and takeoff and proved it could withstand the mission.

The joint mission was conducted between the 2-300th, the 243rd Air Traffic Control Squadron from the Wyoming Air National Guard, and the U.S. Air Force 29th Weapons Squadron. The squadron, based in Little Rock, Ark., conducts graduate-level instruction in weapons and tactics employment with the Lockheed C-130J Hercules.







# UNIT TRAINS IN THE CALIFORNIA HEAT

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. MIKAILLA BROWNFIELD

On May 31, over 60 soldiers from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment, based out of Afton and Evanston in Wyoming, traded in the normally cool weather of Wyoming for the desert oasis of the National Training Center in Ft. Irwin, California.

Within the expansive sandpit at Ft. Irwin, deemed 'the box', Wyoming soldiers met up with other units from around the U.S. in order to participate in training missions. These missions were geared toward helping soldiers be better prepared for future potential deployments.

"The NTC is known for training up companies and organizations to go and deploy," said 1st Lt. Alyssa Brenner, commander of 1-297th.

"What we are doing here is supporting a division-sized movement. Our role as light infantry is to be the decisive operation, clear urban areas, and learn how to work light infantry with mechanized heavy

infantry." In order to do that, the service members worked tirelessly through scenarios and missions that were handed down to them by the operations team at NTC. They would often wake before dawn to start their training and continue through days that reached well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

During these events, the unit prepares for whatever situations they may face when defending the nation. "We give the most realistic training you can receive outside of actual combat," said Capt. Joshua Kiehl, a primary observer, coach and trainer at NTC.

**"We replicate every effect, from chemical attacks to anti-tank missile systems. Whatever a soldier may face, it is replicated here."**



Kiehl felt the unit was doing very well during the training events. He believes that this sort of training allows them to learn more than they would be able to at their home station.

“The biggest challenges the units face would be them exercising all the things that they normally aren’t able to,” he said.

“Whether that be resupply or casualty evacuations. We always think about engaging the enemy when deployed but these other things aren’t thought of as much even though they are very important.”

Throughout their time in the box, the unit found themselves up against many challenges but found they were able to learn from all of them.

“We completed an urban clearing exercise yesterday and then did it again today,” said Brenner.

“From yesterday to today, we changed tactics and it paid off. We had a very good outcome today. I feel people are learning a lot.” The new commander felt she was not only learning herself but saw a good amount of development at the team and squad leader levels of the unit as well.

After completing their training at NTC the unit is looking forward to coming back to Wyoming and continuing to build their company and on the skills that they learned while in the heat of the California sun.





# WYOMING

## SOLDIER IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. MIKAILLA BROWNFIELD

On July 18, Spc. Aiden Carroll, a Horizontal Construction Engineer with the 133rd Engineering Company in Laramie, made the journey from the rocky plains of Wyoming to the beautiful mountains of Flagstaff, Arizona.

His mission? To compete in and win the 2021 Army National Guard National Best Warrior Competition held July 19-23.

Carroll already had two victories under his belt. He placed first in the Wyoming state competition in April, and again in the Region Six competition in Oregon at the beginning of June. From those previous wins, he knew this competition was going to be tough. But he

was determined to put in all his effort, representing his home state to the best of his abilities.

Even with the prior experience, the national competition was as tough as ever. Over five days in Arizona, Carroll and 13 other competitors participated in a multitude of tasks that pushed them to their limits, both physically and mentally.

“It was quite a bit harder, with long days and not much rest,” Carroll said, “We spent a lot of time preparing for the next day late at night.”

There were over 20 events, each with its own set of challenges. The Soldiers competed in everything







from a three-gun challenge to testing their abilities in combat water survival.

For Carroll, the worst event was the never-ending ruck march. It was one of the final events held on the fourth day of the competition.

“We were on the ruck and thought it was going to be short, so I was moving at a good pace,” Carroll said. “By the time we got back to base, we had someone on the side of the road give us some advice to pace ourselves. My legs were killing me. It sucked, but we made it through.”

He noted that the way he pushed through is just remembering to embrace the suck. But, even with the events pushing them past their limits, the soldiers attending still managed to enjoy themselves.

“The competitors made fast friends with one another,” Carroll said.

“They helped each other through the many struggles during the events.”

Not only did the Soldiers participate in new and exciting events and make some friends along the way, but they were also able to represent their states to the best of their abilities. They showed others what their state is capable of.

“He put 100 percent effort into everything he did,” said 1st Sgt. Glenn Worley, the 1st Sgt. for the 133rd Engineering Company, when talking about Carroll. “He’s the perfect face for the enlisted Soldiers of the

Wyoming Guard.” Now, in the end, this is a competition and a winner must be named.

After the five days of brutal competition were over, and the Soldiers had exhausted themselves in all aspects, they sat together at the banquet, waiting to discover who would be named Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, respectively.

The Soldier and NCO who distinguished themselves from the elite pack of guardsmen at the competition were Sgt. William Lukens, a Tactical Power Generator Mechanic with the 208th Area Medical Support Company out of Tennessee and Staff Sgt. Zachery Carlson, a Special Forces Engineer with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group out of Utah.

The winners will move on to compete in the Department of the Army Best Warrior Competition, where they will go head to head with the winners of the Army Reserve and Active Duty Army competitors who won their respective competitions.

As for Carroll, he’s looking forward to his chance at competing again as an NCO. “I plan to take a few years off from this competition,” he said.

***“Hopefully, I can help other Soldiers who want to compete, then take another run at it myself once I’m an NCO.”***







# *RESPONSIVENESS*

Soldiers and Airmen from the Wyoming National Guard load onto a C-130 aircraft at the 153rd Airlift Wing, Cheyenne, Wyo., Jan. 16, 2021. National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from several states travel to Washington. Members mission was to provide support to federal and district authorities for the 59th Presidential Inauguration.

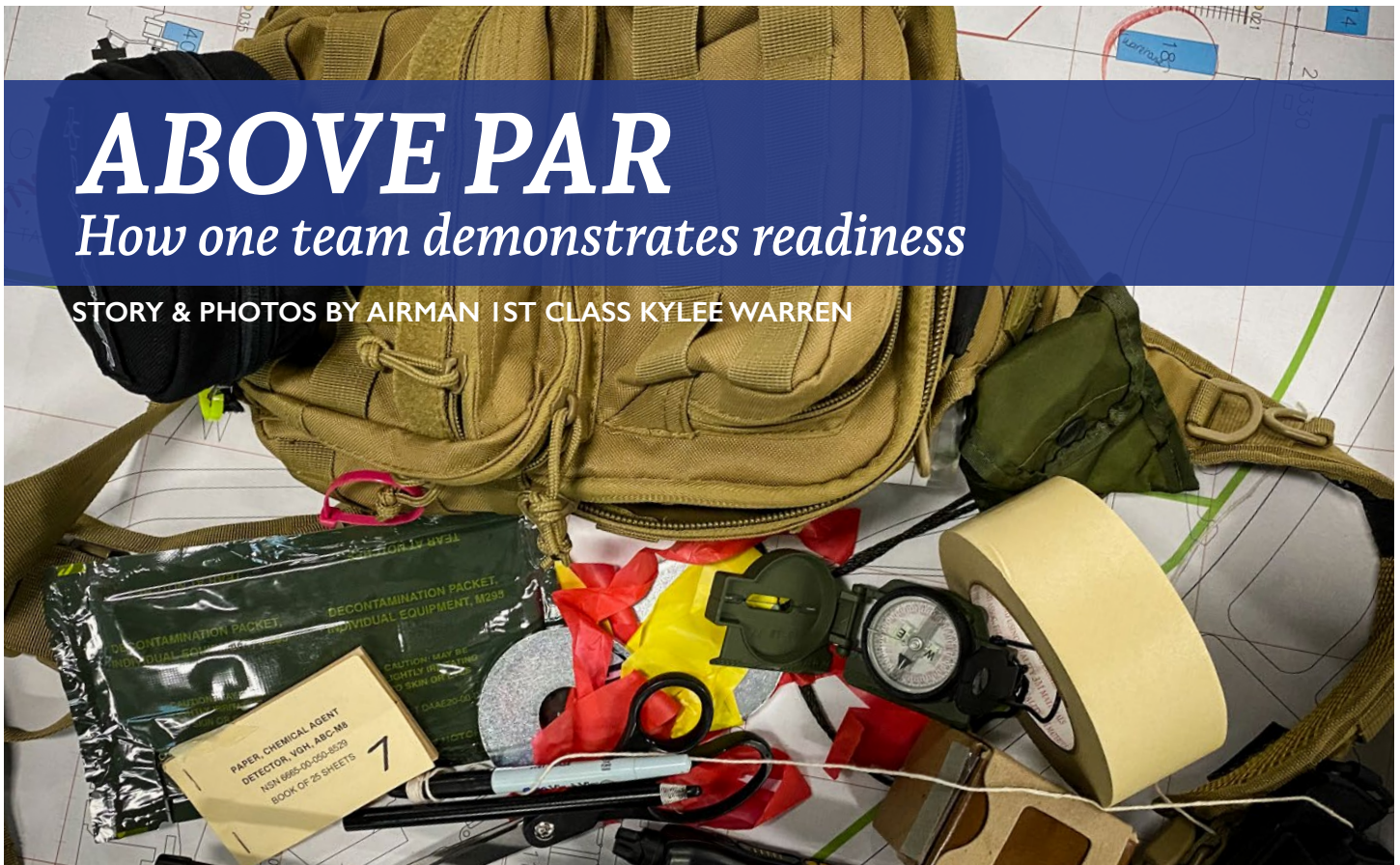
(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jacqueline Marshall)



# ABOVE PAR

## *How one team demonstrates readiness*

STORY & PHOTOS BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KYLEE WARREN



“Attention on Base,” a loud static-coated voice echoed over the intercom. “Alarm Red, Alarm Red, MOPP Level 4.”

A strobe of light flickered from above. Lights went off, doors slammed down the hallway, and airmen hustled around their darkened workspace to don black gas masks and matching rubber gloves.

After a long wait and two more announcements, three individuals ushered their way down a corridor. They collected a bag of supplies, passed two armed guards and exited through the double doors. Once in the smoky Cheyenne atmosphere, this post-attack reconnaissance (PAR) team looked for clues to tell them what caused the attack and which threats still lingered in the air.

The attack wasn’t real-world, but instead a simulation during a 5-day military exercise at the Wyoming Air National Guard’s 153rd Airlift Wing in Cheyenne. The MOPP, or mission-oriented protective posture, alarm gave a chance for airmen to get experience putting on shielding equipment so they would be ready during an actual attack.

Luckily, real-world Cheyenne was safe. The smoke hazing the air resulted from distant forest fires and not the remnants of a real attack.

Even though there was no real-world threat, the PAR team served one of many essential deployment functions as if the attack really happened.

“PAR is important because it is the pre-emptive response to ensure the safety of the base after the attack,” said 2nd. Lt. Lindsey Johnson, Medical Service Corps Officer for the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. Johnson was tasked as one of three airmen responsible for serving the primary PAR team for this exercise.

Before the exercise, the PAR team received specialized training. The team then performed pre-attack actions to familiarize themselves with the area they would survey after an attack. They accounted for equipment or vehicles along their route, and they cleared hazards and any object that might be mistaken for ordnance.







Finally, they set up materials that detected the nature of the attack. After any attack, the PAR team must perform its functions before the base can get back to work.

“A thorough PAR sweep allows the base to safely return to operations, so it’s important to do our job quickly and thoroughly,” said Technical Sergeant Sterling Law, an Aeromedical Technician with the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron who served on the PAR team. Law said that the field data also informs key decision-makers on how to respond to the attack and protect the base.

“Information needs to be relayed to everyone safely,” said Technical Sergeant Andrew Chester, a Medical Administrator for the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. Chester performed key communications for the PAR team during field investigations.

“The entire base is depending on you to do your job and you must look out for what can harm your base, whether it be environmental contamination or an improvised explosive device,” Chester said. “It may seem trivial during an exercise, but in reality, it would be critical.”

The PAR team demonstrated their readiness effectively, even when they were met with the unexpected. In one post-attack scenario, the PAR team encountered a vehicle that was not present during their pre-attack sweep.

“It was strange trying to handle that situation,” Johnson said. “In a real-world deployment environment, the vehicle could have been contaminated or filled with explosives.”

The team reported the vehicle’s presence to base decision-makers, stood back and waited in the field for further instruction.

While this was only an exercise, it also simulated the actions any airman might be tasked to perform in the event of a real-world attack, Johnson said.

“It’s easy to think ‘well, this is an exercise,’ or get frustrated, but the reality is this is training that needs to be taken seriously,” Johnson said. “You don’t know if you are going to be on a PAR team someday, and you need to know how to act to ensure the safety of all.”

Like so many teams at the 153rd, the PAR team demonstrated that they were ready to perform in their jobs, communicate and relay information that may save lives in a real-world scenario. They proved they were more prepared to act in a deployed environment.

The PAR team’s performance was just one example of how many groups across the Wyoming Air National Guard demonstrated their capabilities to operate in a deployment scenario during enemy threats and attacks.

“The purpose (of this exercise) is to look at how we survive and operate in an environment that isn’t always conducive to surviving and operating,” said Colonel Barry Deibert, the Commander of the 153rd Airlift Wing.

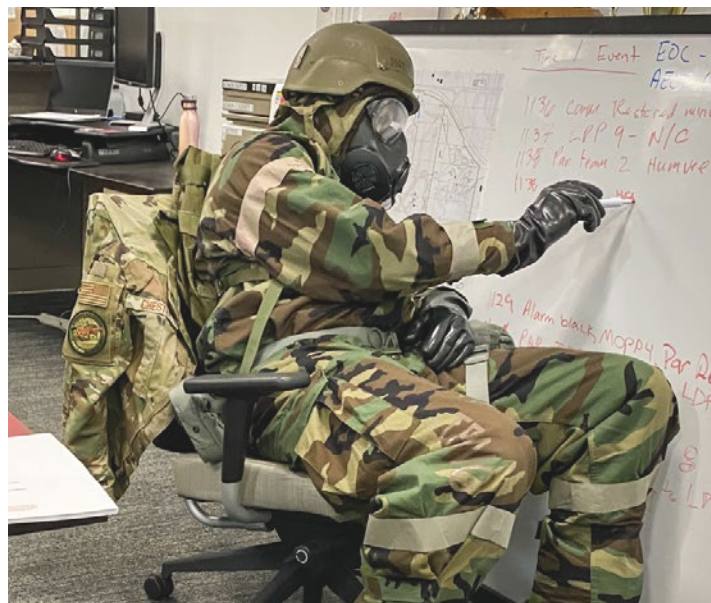
Airmen across all functions were asked to demonstrate their jobs despite the distraction of a simulated wartime situation. They went into the exercise knowing how to react, even if they did not know what to expect.

The whole point of the exercise is preparedness, Johnson said. In the case of the PAR team, that point was achieved.

“We are more confident if something were to happen after this exercise,” Chester said as the exercise came to a close.

Col. Deibert also acknowledged his gratitude for the airmen across the wing who worked hard to demonstrate their readiness during the exercise.

“I appreciate this wing,” Deibert said. “I’m in awe every day when I can see what we can do, and I wish us the best with the future.”





# MAFFS CREWS WRAP UP SECOND BUSIEST SEASON

STORY BY TOM SANDERS & PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. JON ALDERMAN



With a mix of favorable weather conditions in the western U.S. reducing wildfire activity and the increased availability of commercial air-tankers, the USDA Forest Service released the final four U.S. Air Force C-130 Modular Aircraft Firefighting System-equipped C-130 aircraft Sept. 29, marking the end of a 96-day support effort.

“The USDA Forest Service and other federal wildland fire agencies appreciate the continued military support through the MAFFS program,” said Kim Christensen, Deputy Assistant Director for Operations for the USDA Forest Service.

“They provide a valuable contribution to our wildland firefighting efforts and we’re proud to have them working alongside us. We also appreciate their focus on safety in all aspects of their operations.”

The year 2021 marks the 49th year for the MAFFS program, and it was a notable season for the MAFFS crews from the Nevada Air National Guard’s 152nd Airlift Wing, Reno, Nevada; the California Air National Guard’s 146th Airlift

Wing, Port Hueneme, Calif.; Air Force Reserve Command’s 302nd Airlift Wing, Peterson AFB, Colo.; and the Air National Guard’s 153rd Airlift Wing, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

“This was an exceptional year that saw each unit contribute to a highly successful inter-agency firefighting effort to date,” said Lt. Gen. Kirk Pierce, commander, First Air Force, Air Forces Northern.

***“The sustained effort demonstrated the commitment and professionalism of the MAFFS teams. We appreciate the efforts of each Airman and want to thank their families as well, for supporting our Airmen in their relief efforts.”***

First Air Force (Air Forces Northern), U.S. Northern Command’s Air Component Command, is the DoD’s operational lead for the aerial military effort.





USNORTHCOM's priorities are homeland defense, mission assurance, force protection and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA), the latter of which includes wildland firefighting.

Not since 2012 had all eight aircraft been activated at the same time. During this year's 96-day MAFFS activation, aircrews flew 945 sorties, dropping 2,583,204 gallons of fire retardant, the second-highest tally ever, next to 1994's fire season that established records in all categories.

Additionally, aircrews conducted 929 drops, the third highest season tally, and 940.6 total flying hours, for the fourth-highest number.

The initial activation of MAFFS-equipped military aircraft occurred on June 25, a month earlier than in 2020 and the earliest activation of MAFFS-equipped aircraft in a decade.

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) made the decision to activate MAFFS in accordance with

the DoD-USDA-DOI Agreement. With respect to the national situation, NMAC determines when, where, and how many MAFFS are needed.

"The availability of commercial air-tankers enabled us to release the MAFFS back to their home stations, allowing them to resume priority work in their primary Department of Defense mission," said Christensen.

When needed, the MAFFS C-130 units and crews essentially convert the C-130s into air-tankers that provide a critical "surge" capability during the height of the fire season.

The C-130 aircraft are equipped with the U.S. Forest Service's MAFFS, which can drop up to 3,000 gallons of fire retardant in less than 10 seconds across a quarter-mile line. The system slides into the back of the military aircraft, and retardant is released through a nozzle on the rear left side. If additional MAFFS support is required this season, the crews and planes can be activated within 48 hours.





# MOTHER

STORY BY STAFF SGT. LEE MURPHY & COURTESY PHOTOS

# OF EXILES

The symbol of our country is a woman, a mother, who would sacrifice anything for the sake of her children. This is no accident.

Through a stroke of good timing and determination, two Airmen from the 153d Airlift Wing in Cheyenne, Wyoming, made Lady Liberty proud on the night of Sept. 10, 2021.

In an emergency delivery, a child was delivered by administrative specialists Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer N. Ballenger and Tech. Sgt. Shyloh A. Vallot, to a guest family from Afghanistan. Wanting to help evacuate those in need from Afghanistan, Ballenger and Vallot volunteered for a temporary assignment as part of Operation Allies Refuge at McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst Air Force Base, New Jersey.

Operation Allies Refuge is an ongoing military operation working towards transporting at-risk civilians, interpreters, and other visa applicants out of Afghanistan.

As part of the operation, both Ballenger and Vallot were simply carrying on with their duties when they were suddenly alerted by one of the guests that there was a medical emergency nearby.

The guest turned out to be the expecting father. His family had left their home in Afghanistan and found himself in need of help.

Even though they did not speak the same language, he made his dilemma clear; his wife was pregnant, and they needed medical assistance right away.

However, there were only male doctors on staff in the area that night. Afghan custom dictates that female attendants must deliver children.

Neither Ballenger nor Vallot had any advanced medical training, but they knew exactly what to do as mothers themselves.

Bringing along a 16-year-old Afghan boy to act as a translator, Ballenger and Vallot followed the man to his wife. They found her on the third floor of the building, in what was seemingly a barracks wing of the base being used to house some of the guests temporarily.

The mother's contractions had already begun; they had already reached one-and-a-half minutes apart. Ballenger and Vallot rushed to the mother and rendered aid. Donning gloves and masks, both women tended to the mother as she struggled to deliver the child.

Holding the newborn, Ballenger ensured the baby was healthy and could breathe properly as she helped clear the baby's airway. Her cries were a relief to everyone in the room that night. "This is probably one of the best experiences I've ever had," said Ballenger.

**"These people trust us; they came here for safety, for stability, and for a better life."**

She is alive, healthy, and now an American.

"It just makes you realize how lucky we are to have what we have," said Vallot. "They want that so badly, they were willing to get on a flight to who knows where, and to come to an unfamiliar country, not even knowing the language, that's how much they want this."

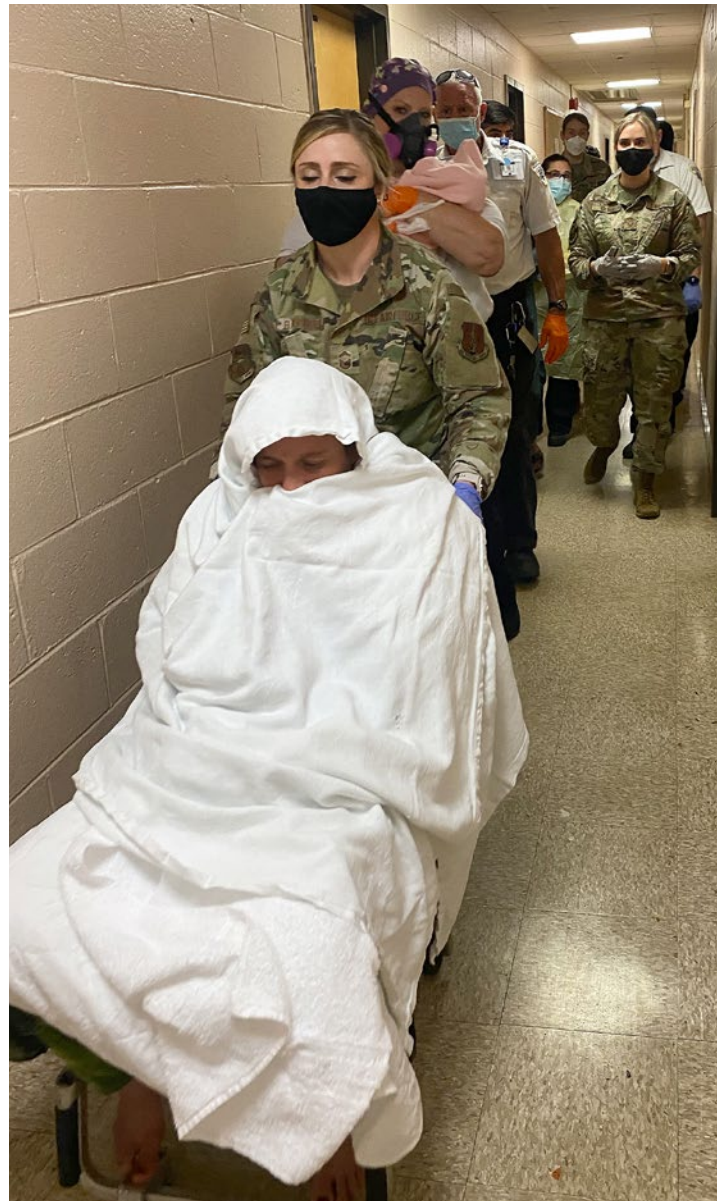
"That is how much they trust us," said Ballenger.

That night, a unifying moment of peace, joy, and goodwill between strangers was forged. It is a stark reminder of why we have been fighting the longest war in U.S. history when that has become so hard to see.

This child's life, at least, created in the shadow of malice, brutality, and death was saved. This life is now a symbol of peace, friendship, and the security that America offers to all world peoples.

This event reminds us why we have sacrificed so much for so long: the selfless actions of Ballenger and Vallot are what makes America the country it is today.

**And this small triumph alone, in the grand scheme of things, is worthy of being counted among its victories.**





# GUARDSMEN CALLED TO SUPPORT INAUGURATION



STORY BY ALYSSA HINCKLEY | PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. JACQUELINE MARSHALL

Responding to a request by the Federal government, more than 100 Wyoming National Guard Soldiers and Airmen volunteered to support crowd control, communications and logistics during the 59th Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C. on Jan. 20, 2021.

The 59th Presidential Inauguration, like all presidential inaugurations, is considered a National Special Security Event (NSSE). P.L. 106-544 designated the U.S. Secret Service (USSS) as the lead federal agency responsible for coordinating, planning, exercising and implementing security for National Special Security Events. The preparation for a NSSE is a cooperative

effort among federal, state and district agencies. The National Guard provides a wide variety of capabilities that can seamlessly integrate with inter-agency partners to enhance inauguration support capabilities. Several states are activating to provide timely, safe, and proactive support to civilian authorities.

While the costs associated with this deployment will be paid for with Federal dollars, these National Guard professionals will remain under their respective governor's control, under Title 32, 502(f) orders for up to 31 days and adhere to D.C. law.

“When we are requested, we continue to provide our



(ABOVE) COURTESY PHOTO

***“We are proud to support, and be part of, the long tradition of supporting this historical event for our country,”***

*-Maj. Gen. Greg Porter, adjutant general for Wyoming*

governor and civilian authorities properly manned, trained and equipped forces available wherever and whenever they are needed.” Military support to inaugurations by Guard members dates back 232 years to when Gen. George Washington began his inaugural

journey from Mount Vernon, Va. to New York City. Local militias (the modern-day National Guard), joined his inaugural procession as it passed through towns along the route to be joined by members of the regular Army, additional local militia, and Revolutionary War veterans once Washington arrived in New York City.

This presidential military escort then accompanied him to Federal Hall for the presidential oath. The National Guard and other military units have continued this tradition of inaugural support ever since. Additional National Guard Soldiers and Airmen will be made available to provide support to Wyoming authorities, should the need arise.



# PROUD TO SERVE

STORY BY STEPHEN DOW  
PHOTOS BY MATTHEW CASTON  
OF THE SHERIDAN PRESS

For Casper resident Tayler Stephenson, the Army National Guard was supposed to be a means to an end, a way to reach the final destination on her life road map.

But life doesn't always work out as planned, Stephenson said. Sometimes, it's better.

"My original plan was to go to law school and have the Guard pay for it," said Stephenson, a private first class with the 960th Brigade Support Battalion out of Sheridan. "But, joining the Army showed me I have a lot of different options I didn't even realize were available. A lot has happened in just a year-and-a-half."

One of those unexpected curveballs was the global COVID-19 pandemic, which was just entering public awareness as Stephenson joined the guard in March 2020. If she had been told her first deployment would involve issuing COVID-19 tests at Sheridan Memorial Hospital's urgent care testing center, Stephenson would have likely responded with a confused expression and a question or two.

And yet Stephenson, along with Specialist Brandon Masters of Dayton, have become integral members of the Sheridan Memorial Hospital team in just a matter of months, according to the hospital's chief ambulatory officer Holly Zajic. And as Stephenson ends her deployment in Sheridan Dec. 9, Zajic has a lot of thanks and appreciation to send with her.

"We are honored and humbled to have had the Wyoming National Guard helping us serve our community," Zajic said. "With their assistance we have been able to stabilize staffing within the urgent care testing center, which ultimately helped the whole hospital





cooking meals and cleaning rooms. So I just came in with a willingness to do whatever was asked of me.”

Stephenson and Masters ended up being deployed to the hospital’s drive-thru COVID testing center, and have rotated through a series of duties including administering COVID tests and entering patient data into a computer system.

Both Stephenson and Masters came into the hospital without medical experience — Stephenson is a writer for Oil City News and Masters is a deputy for the Sheridan County Sheriff’s Office — and have learned a lot in a short time, they said.

“I’ve learned a lot about paying attention to the little details,” Masters said. “You need to make sure you’re not releasing the right information to the wrong people.” “I’ve had time to develop my leadership skills and really expanded my understanding of the world,” Stephenson said.

system, as we were able to deploy staffing and resources to areas in the hospital that had the highest need to care for our most critical patients. We are grateful for their time and commitment.”

Both Stephenson and Masters were deployed to Sheridan in October. Stephenson was the first arrival at the hospital on Oct. 18, and, despite having a relatively low rank, she was nominated as noncommissioned officer in charge, which means she has overseen the testing center operations since her arrival.

“It’s kind of rare for a private first class to be an NCOIC,” Stephenson said. “I’ve had quite a few different people up here with me, including people who are older than me and who hold higher ranks. But I’ve done my best to lead the operations while I’m here.”

Within a week, Stephenson was joined by Masters, who is also in his first deployment and will continue to serve at the hospital through the end of December.

“The chain of command sent me an email saying they were looking for assistance with COVID relief in Sheridan, and I jumped at the chance to serve the community in which I live,” Masters said. “That’s a pretty rare opportunity, and I’ve been grateful for it.”

Initially, neither Stephenson nor Masters were sure what they signed up for. The National Guard has been deployed to hospitals throughout the state, but there is no uniform way in which they are being utilized, Stephenson said.

“The National Guard is doing very different things in each hospital,” Stephenson said.

“In Wheatland, they are admitting people into the hospital and checking temperatures, and in Cheyenne, they are

But most importantly, being surrounded by sickness has given Stephenson appreciation for her life and a desire to make the most of it. She’s still working toward her law school dreams, but she’s also enjoying the journey on the way to her eventual destination. While in Sheridan, she’s taken painting classes and yoga lessons and enjoyed the local dining scene.

“I’ve learned to live life and not be so uptight about everything,” Stephenson said. “I know that seems like the opposite of what you’re supposed to learn in the National Guard, but when you realize you can die the next day, you start to think, ‘Maybe I should actually enjoy life rather than just trying to get to the next point.’”

Although Stephenson is leaving Sheridan, she will be back every month and will continue to help her adopted community in any way she can.

“I would love to jump back in and help again when I’m in town,” Stephenson said. “Even if it’s for just a day, I think it would make a big difference.”











# PARTNERSHIPS

Members of the Leadership Cheyenne program tour the Wyoming Air National Guard's C-130 Hercules at the 153rd Airlift Wing, Cheyenne, Wyo., June 24, 2021. Class members toured the base and learned about the Wyoming National Guard capabilities and their role in the community. The Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce designed the program to promote a better understanding of the community, enhance leadership skills and develop a strong network of future community leaders. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jacqueline Marshall)



# SHARED VALUES

STORY BY ALYSSA HINCKLEY | COURTESY PHOTOS



Soldiers from the Wyoming National Guard team up with the Wyoming Game and Fish to construct a 40 ft. by 27 ft. cabin as part of the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training program.

Intended to be used as a regional patrol cabin by the Wyoming Game and Fish, the cabin took approximately two weeks for the team of soldiers to complete, testing the 133rd engineer company on key functions of their military occupation specialty and improving their overall competency in their engineering skills.

The work put in by the Wyoming National Guard resulted in approximately 3,000 man-hours saved for the Wyoming Game and Fish and saving around \$35,000.

***“The cooperation from the Wyoming Army National Guard has saved the department a tremendous amount of time and money,” said Jerry Cowles, Habitat and Access supervisor for the Laramie Region Game and Fish office.***



“Harnessing the ability to display combined work force efforts between the two agencies will provide lifelong training opportunities for soldiers, enhance wildlife habitat, and increase public trust throughout this great state.”

The newly constructed cabin, located outside of Arlington, Wyoming, is just one project of many innovative readiness training projects the Wyoming National Guard has completed. Over the last three years, the engineers have used their annual training time to work on improving roads, installing five 24-inch culverts, adding around 500 cubic yards of gravel, grading roads, adding water bars, and raising roadbeds to aid runoff. All of which have provided hands on military training for the soldiers of the 133rd while benefiting the people of Wyoming.

***“This partnership between the Guard, Game and Fish and local landowners really reflects Wyoming values and the way we get good things done in our state,” Nesvik said.***

“The Army National Guard’s efforts will benefit sportsmen and women who use these areas to hunt and surrounding landowners who make their living here.”





# STRIKING TEAMWORK IN THE SOUTH

COURTESY STORY BY STAFF SGT. LEE MURPHY | PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. JON ALDERMAN



The common definition of camaraderie is, “a feeling of friendliness, goodwill, and familiarity among the people in a group.” A vital piece of military ethos, camaraderie is the guiding spirit of military service - to be something bigger than ourselves. Many of those who serve want to be a part of something bigger, something grander, something that has purpose. It is that spirit of service and camaraderie that allowed us to hold together as one country during the most dire domestic crisis we had ever faced and it is what helped the Greatest Generation emerge victorious in World War II.

Members from every branch of service, working in conjunction with each other and in total synchronization is how we create something larger than ourselves.

This is the vision of the Southern Strike training exercise held annually at the Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport, Miss. April 2021 marked the 10th iteration of the exercise, which takes almost a year to plan, and is designed to increase the overall combat effectiveness of the units involved.

“We’re liaising with ground units, special forces units, different branches, we’ve got the full joint spectrum here,” said Col. Cynthia L. Smith, exercise director for Southern Strike 2021.

“Marines, Army and Air Force Reserves, National Guard, Active Duty; all those components together, they’re basically a one-stop shop to hit any flavor of training that you can imagine.”

Each year, members from every service of the Department of Defense converge at the CRTC and engage in joint-service training profiles

that focus on combat effectiveness in varied conditions and terrain - Soldiers and Marines running ground operations through mud, sand and rain, Sailors storming in amphibious support from sea, and Airmen in heavy aircraft controlling the skies.

Approximately 1,200 service members from the active, guard and reserve components of the U.S. military participated in this joint, international combat exercise. Foreign allies come from places like Niger, Uzbekistan and the Netherlands to take part in the training.

Southern Strike 2021 saw a few “firsts” in its history as an annual training exercise in Mississippi. This was the first iteration of the event in which a Hellfire missile was launched in the airspace by a MQ-9 “Reaper”, with a successful hit on target. This is also the first time Space Command and a Cyber Team could integrate into the exercise.

One of the main concerns for this exercise, and for the U.S. military moving forward is superiority of the cyber domain, and how ground forces interact with this new frontier of war. On this strange, new front, the United States military is already preparing for the fight ahead. While the U.S. has always utilized Special Operations forces to supplement their warfighting capabilities, they, along with Cyber and Space operations, are taking center stage.

“Cyber is the domain we are reaching for, because of our location here on the coast, and all of the 11,000 square miles of airspace that we have,” said Smith. “What we have in place is vital to going forward.” The exercise serves to highlight the facilities and capabilities of the Mississippi National Guard, said Smith. “That has a trickle effect, so





participants who come here may also identify CRTC as place that they want to come back to for their own exercises, which also helps the local area economically.”

Another first for this year’s exercise was the presence of the VAQ-209 Attack Squadron, who were flying their signature EA-18G “Growler” electronic attack aircraft, also known as the “Star Warriors.”

“Our role is to support other aircraft, and Airmen and Soldiers on the ground,” said Cmdr. Dustin Engel, commanding officer of VAQ-209 attack squadron, assigned to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in Washington.

“It allows us to integrate with units we don’t normally work with, for example, the Air National Guard from Wyoming. We don’t normally work with C-130s, so this exercise allowed for extra planning and missions with that unit, and it is a chance for both units to learn, to develop, and to understand the mission that each unit has, and to prepare a more capable plan,” said Engel.

“When we deploy, one of our primary customers is Special Operations Forces, and the objectives they need to carry out. Being an electronic warfare unit, we can assist with that,” said Lt. Col. Mark Masterson of the 216th Space Control Squadron, assigned to the 195th Wing of the California Air National Guard.

“This exercise gives us a great opportunity to work face to face with that customer. Southern Strike gives us a great venue to refine techniques, tactics and procedures that we would use in the real world that keep our operators sharp.”





## ***Soldiers Volunteer for Operation Remount***

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ

It was an overcast and drizzly day on Saturday for Staff Sgt. Felicia Holbrook and her Soldier Pfc. Brandon Miller. Holbrook is a recruiter in the Wyoming Army National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion. Miller is one of her Recruit Sustainment Program Soldiers.

The two arrived at the Mirrored K Legacy Ranch in Jay Em, Wyoming, to start their day helping clean out the horse barn in preparation for a program called Operation Remount.

Originally, there were supposed to be several other recruit Soldiers and cadets from the Wyoming



Cowboy Challenge Academy to help out. Due to unfortunate events, only Holbrook and Miller were able to make it.

The ranch is owned by Kelly Alexander and the program is run by him and his family. Alexander is a veteran who served over 20 years in the Army and Army National Guard.

The program stemmed from his own experience with post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as multiple traumatic brain injuries. After trying several different programs to get treatment, he came across a program in Texas called Veterans and Mustangs through the Mustang Heritage Foundation. It was there that he found the tools needed to find the way back to his normal self.

“When it comes to heart, mustangs have it, hands down,” Alexander says. He wants to duplicate his experience and allow veterans who suffer from traumatic issues like PTSD to find their way back as he did.

Operation Remount is a 6-week program that pairs the participant with a wild mustang. Wild mustangs also experience trauma when they have to be pulled away from their herds and placed in overcrowded pens and immunized.

There’s a shared type of experience between participant and mustang, which helps in the healing process. They work to build a trusting and bonding relationship through one on one training.

The program is funded entirely by donations and free to veterans and first responders who participate. There are some expenses participants will have to pay for themselves in the beginning, but in the future, the Alexander’s want everything to be covered by the program.

Holbrook herself is an experienced equine handler and will be volunteering her own time to help teach classes at Operation Remount. She recently started her own business called Shade Tree Equine and Canine Massage.

“I’m a little bit nervous,” says Holbrook. “It will be

my first time taking what I’ve learned and showing it to others.”

Holbrook is using these types of opportunities to volunteer to help her Recruit Sustainment Soldiers during their time with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion.

Soldiers who enlist and have a while before they ship out to Basic Combat Training participate in the RSP, which is treated as a regular part-time drill with the Guard. They learn basic soldiering skills that prepare them for BCT.

“The Recruit Sustainment Program is highly encouraged to volunteer in their community, and we don’t always get the opportunity to do that,” Holbrook says.

“I want these kids to understand that even if your military family is retired, they still might need help, and this is an opportunity to volunteer with a great program.”

Volunteering offers Soldiers the opportunity to get to know and help out in their community.

Programs like Operation Remount provide opportunities to Soldiers and anyone else who wants to find a way to give back to their community.







# WILD WEST AIR SHOW

PHOTOS BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KYLEE WARREN  
& TECH. SGT. JON ALDERMAN

The Wyoming Air National Guard celebrated 101 years of aviation for their annual Wild West Air Show. On Sept. 11 and 12 they hosted more than 30 historic and modern civilian and military aircraft, which featured aerial acts throughout the day. Community members from the surrounding area came from far and near to enjoy displays of military aviation history.

“We created an event to keep people interested from start to finish. Part of keeping them interested, is setting things up that are enticing the whole way through,” said Lt. Maxwell McMillan, the Air Show Director.

The event featured some of the best aerobatic pilot groups in the country. In addition to being two days of family-friendly fun, McMillan hopes the event inspired some young people to explore the many career possibilities that exist in the military and aviation, in general.







# SOUTH DAKOTA & WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD

## *Lead the way with new sexual assault response training*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ



The South Dakota Army National Guard has partnered with the Wyoming Army National Guard for the last two years to pilot a new program to better prepare service members to respond to sexual assault. The program is described as the first response to sexual assault by program developer Maj. Bridget Flannery of the South Dakota Army National Guard.

This new program is designed to instruct peers how to respond to another when they disclose an assault and render aid when those service members are in need. It's not to replace the current Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, but rather, supplement it.

### **"Buddy Aid is changing the way the National Guard trains its members face-to-face,"**

says Master Sgt. Rebecca Motley, the Wyoming National Guard Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. "You would never leave your buddy lying there with a sucking chest wound. You train to provide aid to help save their life. The same principles apply when someone discloses an assault, Buddy Aid trains Soldiers with the right way to respond and get them help."

Maj. Bridget Flannery created Buddy Aid after deploying to Afghanistan in 2013. Instances of sexual violence occurred so much that someone needed to address it for the safety of their service members. Over time, the commanders would brief it for every mission. Eventually, things started to change. Service members began to take note, and the environment became much safer for members to come forward.

Up on returning from that deployment, Flannery's commander said they couldn't forget what they had learned.

From 2014 to 2018, Flannery began developing training slides based on what she learned while partnering with sexual trauma coordinators. When the slides were finalized and given the green light, Flannery and her team submitted them, with a few days to spare, to the Warrior Resilience and Fitness Innovation Incubator in the Spring of 2019.

The WRFII seeks to implement pilot programs that will eventually be available to all states. They identify, select, evaluate, and disseminate evidence-based practices to prevent harm and promote resilience.

"Out of the 34 pilots we've had in the last three years, Buddy Aid is the first to have gone through to the extension phase of becoming more broadly implemented," said Maj. Emily Vernon, branch chief at the WRFII. She added that this was partially due to Flannery's tenacity and partly due to the effectiveness and popularity of the program now that people have been receptive to it.

Buddy Aid is still a pilot program. It's still in evaluation for effectiveness. But the data from the surveys of training in South Dakota and Wyoming make it much more likely the National Guard will implement it.

Over 680 Wyoming guardsmen and over 345 South Dakota guardsmen have received the innovative pilot program training.

The data has shown at a 99% confidence level that this training significantly affects service members' perception that sexual assault is the biggest threat to our military members. Overall, this means increased preparedness for appropriately responding to a sexual assault, including what to say, recognizing abnormal behaviors, asking if one sees those behaviors, and rejecting rape myths.

"This program is doing great things, and it is changing some of the ways that we deal with the response to sexual assault in the National Guard," said Vernon. "We are providing effective training to supplement the training that already exists."

The next step for Buddy Aid to move forward is to expand and standardize training. There will be a phased-in approach over the next few years, and the hope is that Buddy Aid will grow to other services beyond the National Guard.



# 67TH ARMY BAND PLAYS AT MILITARY APPRECIATION GAME



STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ

It was a beautiful day for a football game on Saturday, as the Wyoming Cowboys Football team took on the Fresno State Bulldogs at War Memorial Stadium in Laramie. The game was also a Military Appreciation Day game. Members of the military, past and present, were recognized for their service.

A highlight of the game was the halftime show. The Wyoming National Guard's 67th Army Band "Wyoming's Own" performed the Armed Services compilation with the UW Western Thunder Marching Band.

It was an exciting performance. As the marching band played through the service songs, they spelled out each service branch acronym. The band doesn't play at the Military Appreciation game every year, but they'd like to do so.

"We'd like to make it a yearly thing," said Staff Sgt. Nolan Budweg, drum major for the ceremonial band. "This is good exposure for us. There's still a lot of people who don't realize we have a band here."

Budweg used to be in the marching band and said it's still exciting to perform at the halftime show.

The day was the complete opposite from the last time the Army Band performed at a UW game, which was back in November 2018. According to Sgt. First Class Richard Cole, it was around 11 degrees and snowing.

Although the Cowboys weren't able to secure a win, the fans were hyped and the weather was perfect for an October game at 7220 feet.





# EDUCATOR LEADERSHIP RENDEZVOUS



## EDUCATORS LEARN ABOUT THE NATIONAL GUARD

COURTESY STORY | PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ & SGT. STEW DYER





In August, the inaugural Wyoming Educator Leadership Rendezvous was held at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center. The ELR is a three-day summer retreat that brings together Wyoming teachers, counselors, and principals from across the state to learn about the military, leadership, and culture-building strategies, develop professional learning networks and improve morale and resiliency among educators in the field.

Participants included the Wyoming District Teachers of the Year and their principals, Milken Award Winners, and Presidential Award Winners for Math and Science Teaching, and school counselors. This event is a partnership between the Wyoming Department of Education, the Wyoming Army National Guard, and the Wyoming Air National Guard.”

## *“Education and the military go back a long way,”*

said Maj. Gen. Greg Porter, The Wyoming Adjutant General. “Since 1944 when president Roosevelt signed the G.I. Bill, many citizens have used their service as a way to seek to further their education. Events like this only further enhance the partnership between the military and educators, fortifying lines of communication and breaking down stereotypes.”

The ELR is named for a French military term, rendezvous, which means “present yourselves!” and is also a term that describes a gathered group of explorers and leaders. The idea behind the event is to strengthen the bond between education and the military to help meet State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow’s goal of ensuring all Wyoming students are college, career, and military readiness.

“This event allows established and aspiring leaders in both education and military to find common ground.”

## *“Forge connections and inspire one another,”*

Balow said. “Only good things happen when we model for young citizens that learning from and with one another is a lifelong endeavor. I am hopeful that the Educator Leadership Rendezvous is a new tradition that lasts for years and years.”

This event is a unique way to showcase the military without simply telling educators about it. Instead, the educators get to experience the military with a fun leadership event.

The educators are split into squads. Each squad is joined by two guard members (one Air and one Army) to lead them through events created to challenge them as a squad but also individually. Participants will display camaraderie, selfless service, problem-solving, and other leadership qualities as they move through the individual and squad challenges.

“It’s amazing that educational leaders are coming together from across the state, along with members of the military and the Wyoming Department of Education, to train and develop our unique leadership qualities,” said Alexis Barney, the 2021 Wyoming Teacher of the Year. “Even more, we are connecting in a fun way to leverage our collective influence as champions for Wyoming education.”

## *“It is such a special opportunity.”*

The goal of the event is to help educators know what the military can do to help support them as teachers to help students while in the classroom, as well as give the educators some basic knowledge of the military that they can share with their students to make the military ready as viable options for students.





# TUNISIA & WYOMING: 17 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

STORY BY STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS | PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. JON ALDERMAN AND SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ

Unique to the Wyoming National Guard is the State Partnership Program. For almost two decades, Wyoming has been a proud partner with the country of Tunisia. An important partnership that continues to strengthen and enhance readiness in both countries. A relationship based on common interests and mutual respect.

“The State Partnership Program is a Department of Defense security cooperation program run by the National Guard Bureau and executed by each state. Allowing states to have partnerships with countries across the globe,” Maj. William Lindmier, former State Partnership Program Director for Wyoming.

States are partnered with foreign nations based on size, location, and mission. Tunisia shares similarities with Wyoming including tourism, economic interests, and military equipment.

*“This partnership has helped make our countries more secure and advanced the safety of both Tunisians and Americans,”*

*said Army Gen. Daniel Hokanson, chief,  
National Guard Bureau.*

The partnership between Wyoming and Tunisia has allowed for numerous military-to-military exchanges capitalizing on mutual capabilities in aviation, medical, border security, noncommissioned officer development, peacekeeping missions, infantry tactics, counter-terrorism and sharing best practices from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The partnership is more than just a military one.

This year, the University of Wyoming Department of International Studies received a grant from the Department of Defense that will allow ROTC students to study abroad.

The first course will be taught by Ali Raddaoui, who is originally from the University of Sfax in Tunisia.

The collaborations between Tunisia and Wyoming have resulted in an exchange of learning from each other, sharing experiences, and getting better together.







*Members of the Tunisian Air Force get a tour of the Wyoming Air National Guard base and the Wyoming Army National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility in Cheyenne, Wyo., Sept. 14, 2020. The Tunisians are visiting to take part in the Aviation Familiarization Event hosted by the Wyoming National Guard.*



# PARTNERSHIP FOR HOPE

COURTESY STORY | PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. MICHELLE GONZALEZ DIENER



Joint-medical training brought together service members from the Army, Marine, Navy, and Air Force Guard and Reserves to provide medical care services for Central Delaware Partnership for Hope 2021 in August.

Members from the Wyoming Air and Army National Guard were part of this Innovative Readiness Training in Dover, Del. The IRT provided no-cost medical care and benefits to underserved communities in Central Delaware. The training also provides opportunities to Guard and Reserve medical providers.

More than 250 service members were able to get hands-on training. Something they might not usually get over weekend drills.



**“It’s a great opportunity for us to get out and work with some other units to hone our skills and provide that service to the population where they may not otherwise have access to some of the things that we’re offering,” said Spc. Patrick Northrup, a medic with the Wyoming Army National Guard Medical Detachment.**

Over nine days, the IRT provided more than \$1.3 million in optometry, dental, and other medical services to more than 3,200 community members.

“We learn a bigger picture of medicine for the military,” said Sgt. Cabot Peden, a Wyoming Army National Guard combat medic working as a dental technician during IRT.

“I think it’s cool to get out of Cheyenne and to get out of our norm, to get out of our comfort zone a little and have to deal with different situations like we do in the real world and downrange.”

The training also lets service members see firsthand their services’ impact on the community. According to Staff Sgt. Michelle Gonzalez Deiner, public affairs for the Delaware National Guard, because a good portion of Dover’s population lives under the poverty line, getting health care can be challenging.

Capt. Jason Brooks, Central Delaware Partnership for Hope IRT officer in charge, summed up the exercise, “Being able to work directly with the community, to see the value of their work on the faces of those that they encounter is priceless.”

**“To hear ‘thank you,’ to see the response from the community, to see the outpouring of support from those that we are serving is genuinely heartwarming.”**



(Above) Pennsylvania Air National Guard commander, Brig. Gen. Michael Regan, speaks with Wyoming Air National Guard Maj. Barbara Sickler, officer-in-charge of a Central Delaware Partnership for Hope medical care site, and Pennsylvania Air National Guard Maj. Matthew Jackson, a psychologist with the 193d Special Operations Wing, about the valuable impact August’s IRT project was having in the Dover community. (Photo by Maj. Nicole Reigelman)



Airman 1st Class Madison Pagett with the Wyoming National Guard, 153rd Medical Group carries dental equipment in Dover, Delaware, August 2, 2021. Nearly 250 service members from every service in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps worked on a joint-service medical mission that provided training and no-cost community healthcare. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Alyssa Lisenbe)





# CIVIL AIR PATROL

## CELEBRATING 80 YEARS



The Civil Air Patrol celebrated its 80th anniversary this year. Founded, December 1, 1941, by Gill Robb Wilson. CAP volunteers are an integral part of the Air Force's total force and many regular guard, reserve, and civilian members.

The CAP's mission is to support America's communities with emergency response, diverse aviation and ground services, youth development, and promotion of air, space, and cyber power. Congressionally chartered 80 years ago, CAP performs services for the federal government as the official civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CAP organized and supported a nationwide blood drive named "Operation Pulse Lift," of which Wyoming flights were included. The Wyoming Wing's Teton County Senior Squadron stepped up and flew 470 COVID-19 test kits from St. John's Medical Center in Teton County to the Wyoming Public Health Lab in Cheyenne. This year, the cadet's program was able to resume and the 2021 cadets graduated on August 16.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CIVIL AIR PATROL:

[www.wywg.cap.gov](http://www.wywg.cap.gov)

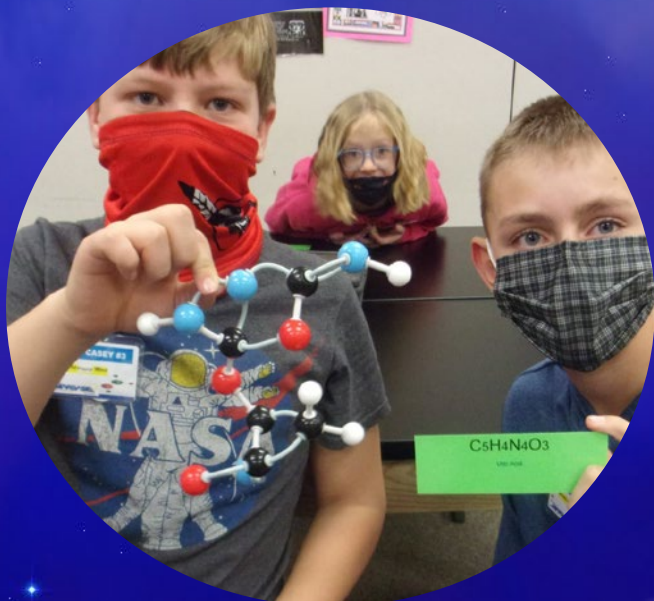
307.773.4405



# STARBASE ACADEMY

## CONTINUES TO EDUCATE THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

STORY BY MASTER SGT. JACQUELINE MARSHALL | PHOTOS BY STARBASE STAFF



opportunities. Targeted students include children from low-income and rural areas. Ramirez said the pandemic made this more difficult. However, it expanded their reach by opening up the future potential for the program.

"We are looking into working with other areas in the state that would benefit from our program. This year, we went to Casper and partnered up with the Natrona county boys and girls club. We got to meet almost every single student that participates at their club," said Ramirez. Being able to reach students outside of Laramie County will further the impact of this program and shape our future generation's potential.

Wyoming STARBASE Academy is a Department of Defense Youth Program operated in partnership with the Wyoming National Guard and Wyoming Military Department since 1994.

In 2021, educators and students were still feeling the ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic around the world. This also impacted Wyoming STARBASE Academy. In response, the program went from shutting down completely to gradually opening one class at a time. The staff followed the CDC guidelines and found an innovative way to continue the learning experience.



To find out more about this program, please visit WY Starbase on Facebook **@STARBASEWY** or call **307-777-8191**

"We had to make a lot of adjustments and be flexible due to COVID restrictions," said Jessica Ramirez, Starbase Wyoming educator. This year we had 286 students attend the traditional program. And our outreach initiative reached 250 students.

"We make it our mission to reach out to our community and participate as much as we can, especially because we are the only STARBASE in the state," Ramirez added.

At STARBASE, students participate in challenging "hands-on, minds-on" activities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

This premier educational program serves, free of charge, fifth grade public, private, and home-school students in Laramie County, Wyoming.

The academy focuses on serving student groups from areas that are historically underrepresented in STEM



***Congratulations to the classes of 2021!***





A National Guard Program

# Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy

*Courage To Change*

*The mission of the Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy is to provide a safe, disciplined and professional learning environment that empowers non-traditional learners (ages 16-18) to improve their educational level and employment potential and become responsible productive citizens of the State of Wyoming.*



The Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy, or WCCA, is an accredited five-and-a-half-month-long residential academy designed to provide structure, instill discipline and help young men and women recognize and achieve their potential in a quasi-military training environment.

WCCA is a state agency operating under the oversight of the Wyoming Military Department. As such, it is 75 percent federally funded and 25 percent funded by the State of Wyoming.

WCCA is one of 40 programs nationwide, which are all part of the National Guard Bureau's Youth Challenge Program. The National Guard Bureau founded the Youth Challenge Program in 1993 and has graduated

more than 150,000 participants nationwide. The Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy opened its doors in January 2006.



The program encompasses two phases: The residential phase and the post-residential phase. The residential phase focuses on the structure, leadership development, discipline, and academics. The post-residential phase takes place after graduation, where cadets put their newly-learned skills to the test with the help of a trained mentor nominated by the cadet.

The Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy operates two classes per year: One begins in January, the other in July. The Academy also uses the camp's Dining Facility for meals, the camp Chapel for



*WCCA graduated more than*  
**1,307 cadets**  
*SINCE INCEPTION*



presentations and optional faith/spiritual training, the Obstacle and Confidence courses as well as other services to meet Academy needs. The WCCA greatly appreciates Camp Guernsey's leadership and support of our mission; without these enablers, WCCA's success would not be possible.

In July 2012, the program adopted its current name, the Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy (WCCA), and embraced the State's official code, the Code of the West. A Cowboy Ethics curriculum has been added and is now an integral part of the WCCA's program.



The Wyoming Cowboy Challenge Academy is designed around an intervention model built on eight core components needed for successful living. Much of the skill development process is based on deliberate experiential learning situations created by the staff.

*Academic Excellence | Life Coping Skills | Job Skills | Health and Hygiene | Responsible Citizenship  
Service to the Community | Leadership/Followership | Physical Fitness*









# *PEOPLE*

Wyoming Army National Guard pilot Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Parkins rests between flights during a joint paradrop training mission on Fort Carson, Colo., May 20, 2021. Golf Company, 2nd Battalion of the 211th Aviation Regiment, Wyoming Army National Guard supplied two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters for the mission. Which cannot be accomplished without the hard work and dedication of our people. They are true professionals.

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Roy Uptain)



# 1,195 Full Time Employees

198 Army AGR 248 Army Tech/T5 261 Air AGR 189 Air Tech/T5 231 State 68 Non-mil Fed

## WYOMING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

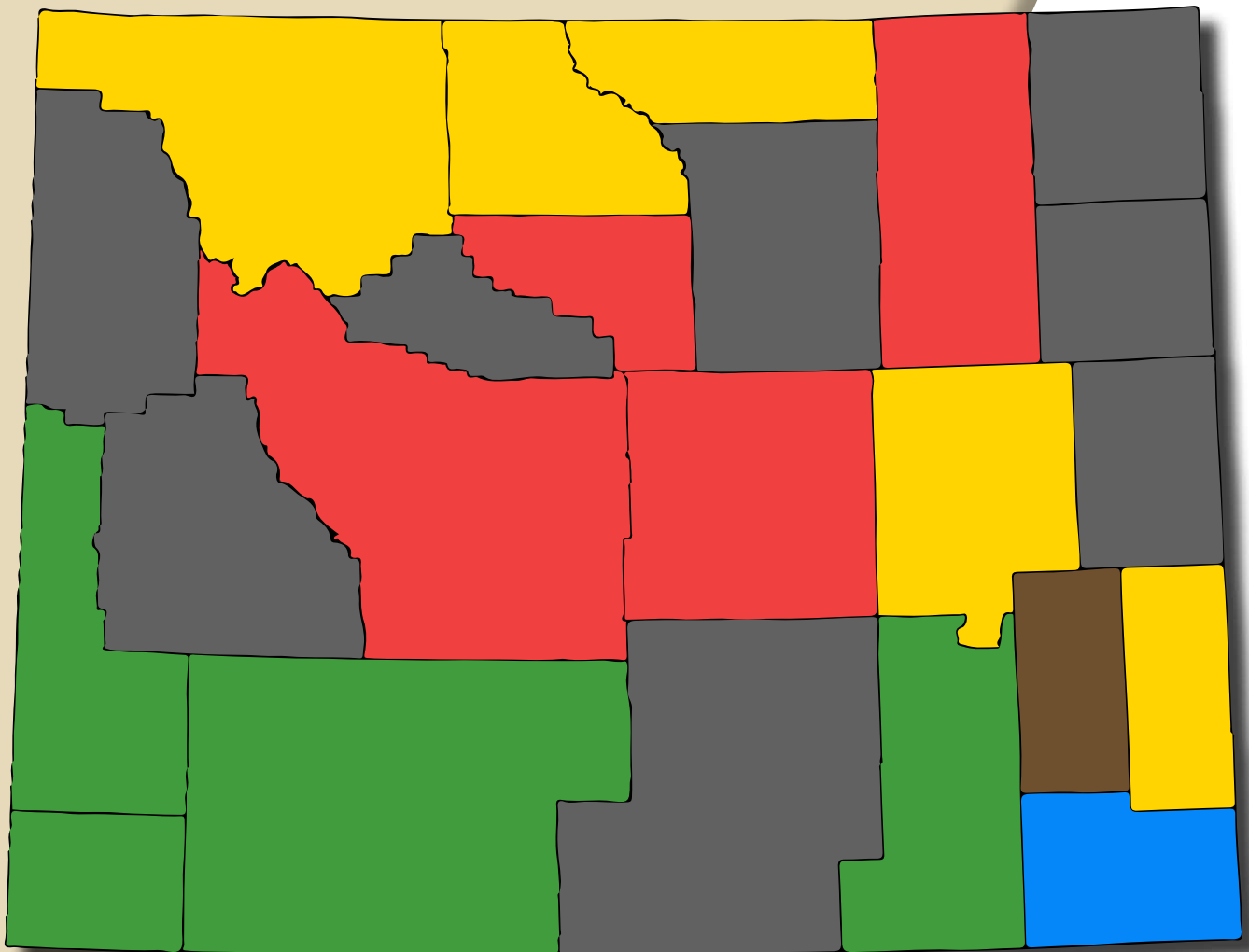
members live in 23 Wyoming Counties 31 States

## WYOMING AIR NATIONAL GUARD

members live in 19 Wyoming Counties 38 States

**\$114.37 Million budget**

**\$105.2M Federal \$9.17M State**





## **WYOMING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD | CHEYENNE**

Wyoming Army National Guard | Cheyenne

Wyoming Army National Guard - BG Steve Alkire, CCWO5 Doug Drost, SCSM Lindsay Schmidt

Joint Force Headquarters - CPT Jacob Arnold, 1SG Daryl Jackson

Wyoming Medical Detachment - COL Scott Morey,

84th Civil Support Team - MAJ Casey Henry, 1SG Aaron Benson

115th Field Artillery Brigade - LTC Alex Fisher, CSM Jason Spaulding

148th Signal Company - CPT Paul Ortega, 1SG James Haight

Recruiting and Retention Battalion - MAJ Lara Taylor

G Company, 1st Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment - CPT Dustin Wambach, 1SG Shawn Hauf

## **960TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION | SHERIDAN (HQ), LOVELL, POWELL, DOUGLAS, TORRINGTON**

MAJ William Lindmier (battalion), 1LT Justin Dodd (company), CSM Douglas Swingholm, 1SG David Reynolds

920th Forward Support Company - CPT Matthew Ryan, 1SG True Hatch

## **94TH TROOP COMMAND | LARAMIE (HQ), ROCK SPRINGS, WHEATLAND, EVANSTON, AFTON**

LTC Marko Rubich (battalion), 1LT Ben Taylor (company), CSM James Swingholm

133rd Engineer Company - CPT Ethan Carswell, 1SG Glenn Worley

197th Public Affairs Detachment - CPT Craig Heilig

67th Army Band - WO1 Brett White, 1SG Charles Olivas

C Company, 1-297th Infantry Regiment - 1LT Alyssa Brenner, 1SG Wes Reyher

## **CAMP GUERNSEY TRAINING CENTER | GUERNSEY**

COL Loren Thomson, MAJ Christina Bullington, CSM Bill Spaulding

213th Regiment - COL Jakob Norman, LTC Cole Kelly, CSM Katherine Zwiefel

## **2-300TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT | CASPER (HQ), GILLETTE, LANDER**

LTC Robert Lejuene (battalion), CPT August Wilson (battery), CSM Spencer Jolley, 1SG Dale Fowler

A Battery, 2-300th - CPT Luke Meyer, 1SG Paul Bennick

B Battery, 2-300th - CPT Andrew Skretteberg, 1SG Durward Jones

## **WYOMING AIR NATIONAL GUARD | CHEYENNE**

Wyoming Air National Guard - Brig. Gen. Justin Walrath, CMSgt Svendsen Larsen

153rd Airlift Wing - Col. Barry Deibert, Col. Jeremy Schaad, CMSgt Douglas Rhodes

153rd Comptroller Flight - Lt. Col. Freddie McMillan

153rd Operations Group - Lt. Col. Thomas Gagnon, CMSgt Sarah Brewster

187th Airlift Squadron - Lt. Col. Jon Holland, SMSgt Marshall Davis

187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron - Lt. Col. Richard Cummings

153rd Operations Support Squadron - Lt. Col. Jeremy Burton

243rd Air Traffic Control Squadron - Capt Daniel Hochhalter, CMSgt Jerry Taper

153rd Maintenance Group - Col Gary Monroe

153rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron - CMSgt John Moritz

153rd Maintenance Squadron - Maj. Joshua Eveslage, SMSgt Larry Quinn

153rd Maintenance Operations Flight - CMSgt Christopher Carlson

153rd Mission Support Group - Col. Patricia Chavez, CMSgt Anna Gallegos

153rd Logistics Readiness Squadron - Lt. Col. Kristina Tweedy

153rd Civil Engineer Squadron - Lt. Col. Matthew Sturtevant, CMSgt Erik Smith

153rd Force Support Squadron - Maj. Sheila Sells, CMSgt Denise Hondel

153rd Security Forces Squadron - Capt. Terrance Bell, CMSgt Jennifer Lovering

153rd Communications Flight - CMSgt Emily Collins

253rd Command & Control Group - Lt. Col. Jason Allen, CMSgt Robert Merrill

153rd Command & Control Squadron - Maj. Tonja Moon, CMSgt David Ziegelbauer

253rd Support Squadron - Lt. Col. Wendy Allison

253rd Security Forces Squadron - Capt. Jeffrey Castaneda

153rd Medical Group - Col. Daniel Perala, CMSgt Theresa Sheheen





# WARRANT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2  
BRADY SHERIDAN

STORY BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 NATHAN GALLOWAY

PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. JACQUELINE MARSHALL & SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ

Out of more than 26,000 warrant officers in the United States Army, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brady M. Sheridan is selected as the 2020 Warrant Officer of the Year. As trusted, technical experts, there is an innate desire to be the best of the best among warrant officers. This drive culminates each year as top active duty, Army National Guard, and Army Reserves warrant officers from across the nation compete within their branch for the title of Company Grade Warrant Officer of the Year.

In addition to the extraordinary honor of being named the 2020 Warrant Officer of the Year, Sheridan received the Chief Warrant Officer 5 Daniel J. Logan, Jr. Medal for Distinguished Achievement from the Adjutant General's Corps Regimental Association, National Guard Association's Eagle Rising Award, and was recognized as Wyoming's top Warrant Officer.

Sheridan was awarded the Daniel J. Logan, Jr. Medal for Distinguished Achievement in recognition of his exemplary individual values, leadership skills, visionary perceptiveness, and support to Soldiers, Commanders, and Families that ultimately led to his selection as the Adjutant General Corp Warrant Officer of the Year. Sheridan received the Eagle Rising award for his exceptional contributions in his profession and to his community. Sheridan's notable efforts in

earning this award include planning, preparing, and implementing the Integrated Pay and Personnel System — Army into the Wyoming Army National Guard, consistent position as a national leader in data quality metrics, high level of assistance to National Guard Bureau with writing and publishing the Integrated Pay and Personnel System — Army personnel policy guidance, and partnerships with charities resulting in donations of more than \$5,000 for ALS and \$80,000 for local businesses affected by COVID-19.

Sheridan's personal attention to Soldier and Family care earned him recognition as the Wyoming Warrant Officer of the Year. Sheridan's dedication to maintaining ninety-nine percent accurate system data, timely execution of critical administrative actions, and successful deployment and returning of over 360 Soldiers, and meticulous management of the defense enrollment eligibility reporting system (a system critical to Soldier and Family benefits) during Integrated Pay and Personnel System — Army migration only highlight the depth of his passion for the Families, Soldiers, and Commanders in the Wyoming Army National Guard.

"I have worked with a lot of selfless individuals over the years who make a tremendous impact on Soldiers' lives every single day.



I believe taking care of Soldiers and their families is what the Adjutant General's Corps stands for and it is something I am very passionate about," Sheridan said. "To even be in the discussion for the AG Warrant Officer of the Year is very humbling, and I am honored to have been chosen to represent the National Guard."

Sheridan is a Wyoming Guardsman with over 13 years of service, joining the Wyoming Army National Guard in 2008. Sheridan said, "I joined the Guard when I was 21 years old, at a time where I was a little lost in life and was searching for something to challenge myself." Sheridan recalled how he sought out his longtime friend, now First Sergeant Edmundo Herrera, "who informed me what the National Guard had to offer, and I never looked back."

When asked what led to his decision to become a warrant officer, Sheridan stated, "I've spent the majority of my military career in human resources, and I have always been drawn to the tremendous opportunity we have to positively impact Soldiers and their families. From the moment a Soldier enlists to the moment they decide to hang it up, the HR Professional plays a significant role in their career."

Sheridan almost prophetically described his motivation, "Warrant Officers are the subject matter experts in



their respective fields which is what ultimately drove my decision to become a Warrant. I wanted to become the best HR Professional I could possibly be." Sheridan offered the following advice to NCOs and Soldiers in the Adjutant General Corp.,

***"Always remember there is a Soldier at the end of every transaction we do. At the end of every complicated administrative process or decision, there is a Soldier and a Soldier's family. We have a responsibility to put the needs of every Soldier before our own. So, take that responsibility to heart, always take pride in what you do, and find fulfillment in the service of others."***

For his next assignment, beginning in February 2022, Sheridan will report to the Soldier's Support Institute at Fort Jackson, South Carolina where he will serve as the Integrated Pay and Personnel System — Army Liaison Officer. As the Liaison Officer Sheridan will continue to develop and implement processes and policies that will establish system collaborations throughout the Army. He will also have the opportunity to mentor and train Adjutant General Corp Soldiers of all ranks from the active duty, guard, and reserve components.





# ANG OUTSTANDING 1ST SGT. OF THE YEAR

## MASTER SGT. JOHN STEGEN

STORY BY STAFF SGT. LEE MURPHY | PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. JON ALDERMAN & SENIOR AIRMAN SEAN PAPILE

The United States Air Force is the second largest branch of the U.S. military. It supports over 500,000 total personnel across active duty, Reserve and Guard. Out of all those uniformed members, only a few can stand out above the rest.

In the Air National Guard, this individual is awarded the Air National Guard Outstanding Airman of the Year award, and it is a crowning achievement that stands as a testament to that individual's dedication to military service.

This year, the award for Outstanding First Sergeant of the Year was earned by Master Sgt. John Stegen, a first sergeant with the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and a native Hawaiian, attached to the 153d Airlift Wing here in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

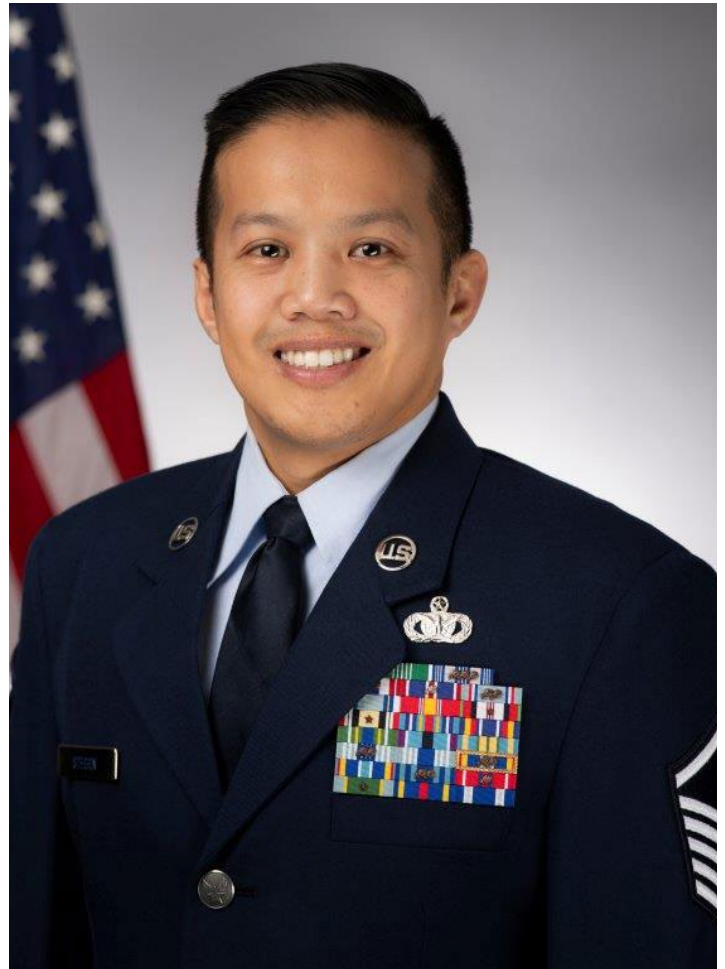
Stegen is a veteran of the force with over 17 years of service, across both active and Guard. Stegen joined the military in 2004, and was formerly in the Security Forces career field before moving to aeromedical as a first sergeant.

Stegen's reasons for joining the military were selfless, as expected from someone who would go on one day to earn an award such as this one.

"I felt like a bigger calling was to be a member of the military because not many people did it back then," said Stegen. "17 years later, I'm still doing it because it's something good, and because I truly enjoy it."

The award itself represents the culmination of years of hard work and dedication to duty, and it is no small feat. "Winning this award was a humbling experience and a surprise," said Stegen, "At this level, it is more about my troops than myself, so I felt like I was just doing my job."

But as he has grown in his career, his aspirations followed. Now, his goals align more with preparing the future generations of Airmen to follow in his footsteps. Because for Stegen, service isn't just about himself.



"For me, as the time passes, you start progressing in your career, and start leading the troops, it's less about you and more about the troops because they're the future," said Stegen, "It's not just checking boxes, it's having the personality, the emotional intelligence, the knowledge of leadership."

When asked what wisdom he would impart to the younger Airmen of the force, he said,

***"Be true to yourself, set smart, realistic goals and make sure you have a strong support system at home."***





“Make sure your goals are achievable, but not easy,” said Stegen.

***“Challenge yourself, and look for opportunities.”***

Stegen’s service to the force and to his fellow Airmen embodies the core values instilled in each of us from our first day in uniform: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do.

Looking to the future, Stegen stated that younger Airmen need to remember to always ask for feedback and continue to strive to be their very best selves in all their endeavors. If we continue to do that, that will strengthen the force overall. Because, after all is said and done, it is really not the award itself that is most important, it is the years of service and sacrifice, and the dedication to his Airmen that it represents.

It is that model of selfless service and dedication to others that we should all strive to emulate, in and out of uniform.







# WY I SERVE: MAKING AN IMPACT

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ

Serving the country as well as the community goes hand in hand in the National Guard. It's also common for service members to volunteer in their community when not on duty. Once a year, Maj. Cory Castle, dusts off his cowboy boots and hat, dons a pearl snap shirt, and heads out to the "Daddy of 'em All" to volunteer for Cheyenne Frontier Days.

Castle has loved rodeos ever since he was little. Coming from a military family, he didn't have the opportunity to grow up around it. His dad is also a big fan, so would load him and his siblings up and head to the rodeo any chance they got. Fast forward many years, and with multiple different duty stations, Castle and his family end up in Cheyenne. It was then that he was asked by

a friend if he'd be interested in volunteering for the big show.

"A buddy of mine, who I've known for a long time, talked to me and invited me out," Castle says. "I did a couple of days in 2009, became interested and he signed me up. I've been there ever since."

For 125 years, Cheyenne has played host to CFD, bringing in over half a million people from all over the world each year to enjoy the western way of life. It is an opportunity to step into the Cowboy culture and connect with the western heritage. Centered in that culture is the rodeo. For 10 straight days, cowboys and cowgirls compete in one of the largest outdoor rodeos



in the world, and it's run entirely by volunteers. Over 2,500 volunteers work year-round to make the Daddy of 'em All happen.

This year marks 12 years Castle has served as a volunteer. Currently, he serves on the Public Relations Committee. As a lead, he helps make sure all of the shifts are filled and that other subcommittees have what they need in order to operate. The committee also coordinates and escorts media, as well as lends a hand to other committees if they are short-staffed or need additional personal.

It's hard work. Volunteers sometimes start at 7 a.m. and work until the night show ends. Putting in 12 to 18 hour days is common. But to Castle, it's worth it.

"I think being part of the rodeo, even if it's just a small piece of it, you get some satisfaction." Castle continued, "I think the biggest piece for me is the friendships and the camaraderie that we have. I've made a lot of lifelong friends through this organization that I probably wouldn't have had outside of the military."



Castle's volunteer efforts have made an impact. He was nominated for Volunteer of the Year in 2018 but ended up deploying soon after. After he came back, he was nominated, selected, and inducted into the Heels class of 2020.

There are 10 different CFD committees that make the show happen. From those committees, individuals can be nominated to become a member of the Heels group, as recognition for years of dedicated service and making an impact on the CFD organization. The Heels were formed back in 1936 for the sole purpose of recognizing volunteers that dedicate their work and are committed to the success and continuation of CFD.

"It's a pretty high honor. I was extremely humbled to be nominated, let alone selected," Castle says. "I will continue to work just as hard as I always have. Being a Heel doesn't relieve me of my duties."

Castle also explained how large the tie to the military is for CFD. The organization goes well out of its way to make sure the military is recognized and incorporates service members as much as possible.

While volunteering at CFD is a tremendous commitment in itself, the sacrifices made while serving are beyond compare. Being gone on deployments, training or schools, you miss out on a lot of important life events. Apart from that, Castle says his 25-year career in the military has been nothing but positive. He's always had good leaders that have taken him under his wing, and his family has always been taken care of. They've found different ways to celebrate those missed events.

Castle plans to continue volunteering at CFD for as long as he is able and said that even if he moves away, he'll still find a way to come back. As for his service in the military, and why he continues to do so, he says this,

***"You learn that in the military there are sacrifices that need to be made. I would argue that I'm the most fortunate person in the world that I have a family who wholeheartedly supports what I do, in every aspect. That's why I continue to do what I do."***



# 67TH ARMY BAND COMMANDER RETIRES

## AFTER 35 YEARS

STORY BY SGT. STEW DYER AND PHOTOS BY SGT. ERIC MOORE



U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Phillips, hung up his mandolin after 35 years of dedication and service to the military. He was honored during a retirement ceremony at the Wheatland Armory, Wyo., on July 3, 2021.

Phillips started his career as a euphonium player in the 1st Marine Division Band. He then joined the Marine Corps Reserve as an Air Support Operator, before transferring to the Colorado Army National Guard in 1991. Phillips was selected for Warrant Officer Candidate School and took command of Colorado's 101st Army Band in 2001.

Later in 2012, Phillips transferred to the Wyoming Army National Guard and took command of the 67th Army Band. He led the band on a rewarding journey until he retired as a CW4 in September 2020.

"My time in the military is a cherished part of my life," said Phillips.

Phillips' love of music wasn't just in uniform. He is a retired music educator who spent 30 years teaching young musicians. Phillips co-directs the Jeffco Community Band, as well as performs with the Jeffco Brass, and the local senior community – where his wife works.

For retirement, Phillips plans to keep his workout routine with friends, while still volunteering his time, and musical talents, in his community. He is also looking forward to spending his free weekends with his wife.

*"My thanks to the Wyoming Army National Guard for allowing me to extend my career," said Phillips.*

*"I am grateful for the time spent with the Soldiers of the 67th Army Band. If I was magically young again I would do it all over."*





# NEW COMMAND

## SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER



STORY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 NATHAN GALLOWAY | PHOTOS BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. ROB TRUBIA

Chief Master Sergeant Joshua D. Moore was appointed as the Wyoming National Guard's first Command Senior Enlisted Leader on August 1, 2021. Moore brings with him twenty-six years of service as he begins this new assignment. As the Command Senior Enlisted Leader, Moore will serve as the primary adviser to The Adjutant General of Wyoming in all enlisted matters. Prior to this assignment, Moore served as the Wyoming Air Guard State Command Chief.

"The Command Senior Enlisted Leader position ensures there is an enlisted voice at the Adjutant General and other senior leader levels," Moore commented when asked why the Command Senior Enlisted Leader position is important.

Moore has established three primary areas of focus directly supporting The Adjutant General's priorities

that will guide his efforts as the face of Wyoming's enlisted men and women. Moore explains,

"My first priority is Senior NCO development. Our basic military guidance is to train our replacements. Through deliberate professional development future senior enlisted leaders will be ready to help lead this organization as current leaders retire."

"Resiliency of our enlisted force is paramount to our continued success. This is my second priority. Recognizing the need for and training resiliency methods will help ensure our junior enlisted Airmen and Soldiers are given the tools they need to deal with the stressors of life."

"Removing barriers to service is my third priority. Service to our state and nation should be as easy of an option as possible. It should not be unnecessarily difficult to wear the uniform. Individually, our enlisted force manages many aspects of life, including civilian, family, professional, and the military. Removing barriers to serving will help facilitate balancing the many roles they fill."

As the Command Senior Enlisted Leader, Moore will be a member of The Adjutant General's special staff. He will focus on a variety of issues that matter to all enlisted Airmen and Soldiers. Additionally, Moore will represent Wyoming enlisted members at the national level to the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.





# PUBLIC AFFAIRS EARNS TOP HONORS IN MEDIA

STORY BY STATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Two of Team Wyoming's own are among the winners of the 2020 National Guard Bureau Media Contests announced in late March 2021.

The first contest members placed in is the Department of the Air Force Public Affairs Chief Master Sgt. Douglas W. Morrell Media Awards.

This competition is for Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve, and Department of the Air Force civilians sponsored and administered by the Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs.

The awards recognize military and civilian public affairs practitioners and military musicians for excellence in outstanding achievements in furthering Air Force, Space Force, and Department of Defense communication objectives. It also fosters an environment of innovation and growth, leading to more effective communication programs. Individuals and units receive awards for outstanding achievements in furthering Air Force, Space Force, and Department of Defense communication objectives.

The 2020 contest is the 65th iteration of the competition. Technical Sgt. Jon Alderman of the 153rd Airlift Wing



*(U.S. Army National Guard Capt. Alyssa Hinckley, JFHQ State Public Affairs)*

Public Affairs office earned a first place award for "Military Photographer of the Year." The requirement was a lengthy portfolio showcasing his work. Jon also took home first place for a news photo titled "Wings Across Wyoming." Second place for his feature photo "The Departure" and second place for his photo series that captured Wyoming Air National Guard members loading onto a C-130 Hercules during a cold and snowy, early morning departure to Southwest Asia. Finally, he earned first place for his video story about a C-130 pilot titled "The Front Seat."

Master Sgt. Jacqueline Marshall of the Wyoming State Public Affairs office earned a first place award for "Communicator of the Year" and "Civilian Videographer of the Year." Both entries required a lengthy portfolio displaying a variety of her work.

In addition to these awards, the state public affairs team at Wyoming Joint Force Headquarters office earned three additional awards in a second competition called the Defense Media Merit Awards. The team consists of Capt. Alyssa Hinckley, Master Sgt. Jacqueline Marshall, and Sgt. Kristina Kranz.



*(U.S. Army National Guard Sgt. Kristina Kranz, JFHQ State Public Affairs)*





*(U.S. Air National Guard Master Sgt. Jacqueline Marshall, JFHQ State Public Affairs)*



*(U.S. Air National Guard Tech Sgt. Jon Alderman, 153rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs)*

The DMMA contest program recognizes excellence among U.S. government civilian broadcast journalists, graphic artists, journalists, photographers, public affairs practitioners, mass communication specialists and videographers assigned to combatant commands, National Guard JFHQ staff members, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities.

Team WY Public Affairs took home first place for their annual “2019 Cowboy Guard” publication, designed by Capt. Alyssa Hinckley. Additionally, they earned first place for their short-form video production titled “Memorial Day, We Remember,” which delivered a moving message. The heartfelt script was written by our very own Deputy Public Affairs Officer, Capt. Alyssa Hinckley.

Finally, Jacqueline Marshall earned second-place for her video spot called “We are the Wyoming National Guard,” which compiled the entire team’s media into one fast-paced, adrenaline-pumping video.

These individual and unit entries showcase the best of our public affairs talents in print, photography, broadcasting, and public affairs across the country. We applaud the dedication and efforts that these Soldiers, Airmen, and civilians give to our nation every day to bring the Guard story to the American public.



# MAJ. KAROLYN BRAUN

## A SOLDIER'S SACRIFICE IS WORN ON HER SLEEVE

STORY BY MASTER SGT. JACQUELINE MARSHALL | PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. MATT LYMAN



Since July 2021, Maj. Carolyn Braun has been deployed to Southwest Asia with the 29th Infantry Division, intensively supporting Task Force Spartan. Braun's dedication and service were recognized during a recent patching ceremony at the Joint Training Center, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Braun has served as a command element for Task Force Spartan, which serves as the headquarters element for Operation Spartan Shield. OSS is the United States effort to strengthen defense relationships, build capacity, and when necessary, execute contingency plans within the U.S. Army Central. While supporting these efforts, Braun has spent time in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.

On Sept. 11, 2021, Maj. Braun and other Soldiers assigned to the 29th Infantry Division, Task Force Spartan Cell, received their shoulder sleeve insignia — Military Operations in Hostile Conditions, commonly referred to as the "combat patch," denoting their service in a combat zone. Brigadier General Joseph Reale, deputy commanding general for support, 29th Infantry Division, presided over the patching ceremony.

The SSI-MOHC is presented to Soldiers in units that have actively participated or supported ground combat operations against hostile forces in which they were exposed to the threat of enemy action or fire, either directly or indirectly.

The combat patch has been a symbol of military service during combat operations since World War I and continues to this day. Worn on the right sleeve of the uniform, it serves as an emblem of self-sacrifice. As well as signifying service while deployed in a combat zone.

## HEROES AMONG US

*Gov. Mark Gordon and Maj. Gen. Greg Porter distributed Heroes Among Us awards Nov. 6, during the annual Governor's Reception in Cheyenne. The Heroes Among Us Award recognizes heroic efforts of Wyoming Military Department personnel to assist fellow citizens outside the scope of their military duties.*



**WYANG QUICK REACTION FORCE TEAM**



**PFC.  
JOSHUA GRAY**



**SPC.  
PAIGE RICHTER**





# WYOMING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

## GAINS A NEW COMMANDER

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. KRISTINA KRANZ



In a traditional passing of the colors ceremony, the Wyoming Army National Guard gained a new commander as Brig. Gen. Brian Nesvik relinquished command to Brig. Gen. Steve Alkire on Dec. 12.

A time-honored military tradition, the passing of the colors represents the transfer of authority and responsibility of a unit from one commanding officer to another.

Nesvik, having served in a variety of key roles, culminated his 35 years of service as the commander of the Wyoming Army National Guard

“It’s going to be different in the National Guard without the Nesvik’s being a part of it,” said Maj. Gen. Greg Porter, adjutant general of the Wyoming National Guard. “You have so much to be proud of, and you’ve left such a legacy for all of us.”

Having served in the Wyoming Army Guard for 33 years, Alkire was about to retire when asked to take Nesvik’s place as commander of the Army Guard. After being in a full-time active guard position for quite a while, he will serve as commander as a traditional guardsman. “He’s a great leader,” Alkire said of Nesvik.



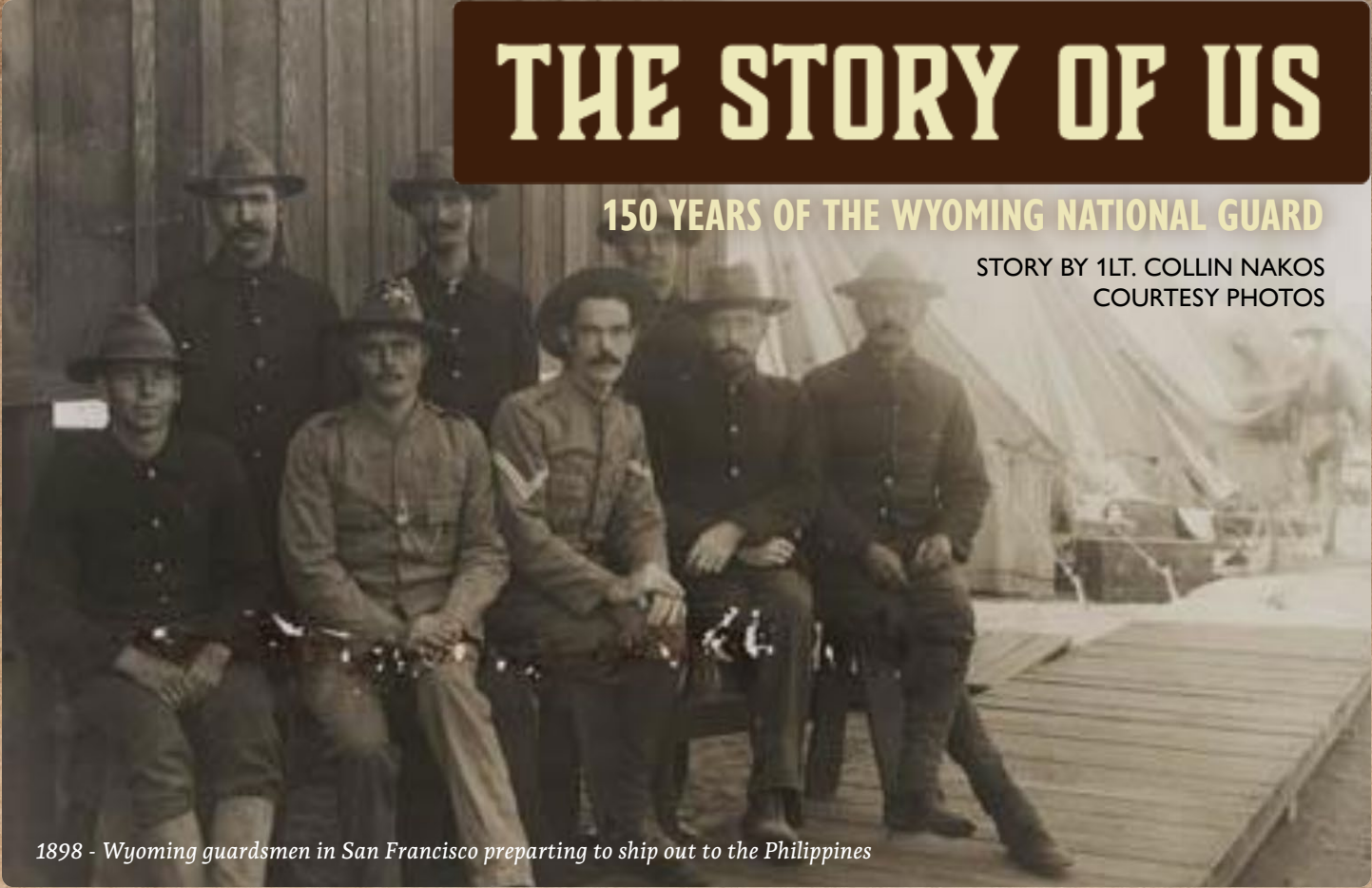
*“I have big shoes to fill. It’s a tremendous honor to have the stewardship of the Wyoming Army National Guard for the next couple of years.”*



# THE STORY OF US

## 150 YEARS OF THE WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD

STORY BY 1LT. COLLIN NAKOS  
COURTESY PHOTOS



1898 - Wyoming guardsmen in San Francisco preparing to ship out to the Philippines

A century and a half ago on November 7th, 1871, Governor of the Wyoming Territory John A. Campbell spoke to the Wyoming Legislative Assembly in his State of the Territory Address, "I desire earnestly to invite your attention to the imperative necessity that exists for the passage of a militia law." He argued that due to the lack of a militia law, Wyoming inhabitants were left without any armed organization for protection in the sparsely populated region of Wyoming.

Thirty-six days later on December 13th, the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Wyoming responded positively to the Governor's request and enacted laws concerning the formation of militia companies, namely that the militia must be volunteer men between 18 and 45 years old with elected officers, and that they may be called out in cases of war, invasion, riots, and other critical events.

While December 13th, 1871 is not the Wyoming Guard's official birthday, it does mark an important anniversary for how our militia came to grow into what we are today. Several small units organized and disbanded over the next couple of decades to respond to local emergencies; however, in 1888 the first Wyoming units to be recognized by the federal government formed as Companies A and B of the 1st Wyoming Regiment,

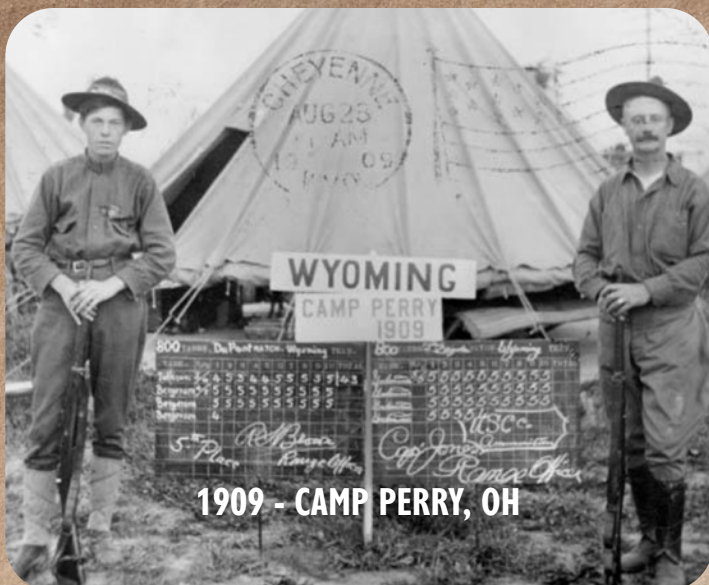
also known as the Laramie Grays and Cheyenne Guards respectively.

Since its first federal call to action in the Filipino theater of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the Wyoming National Guard has served in every major American war and conflict, not to mention countless emergencies within the United States and peacekeeping or humanitarian missions here and abroad. The mission and composition of the Wyoming Guard have altered many times since its formation. Our Army Guard began as an infantry regiment and since then has added horse cavalry, mechanized cavalry, engineers, medevac, aviation, and artillery among other units to their long resume.

The Wyoming Air National Guard formed in 1946. Their mission has changed as well over the decades. From a fighter interceptor squadron to medevac and transportation to aerial firefighting, the Wyoming Air Guard has also built an impressive reputation.

It has been 150 years since the Wyoming legislature formally recognized the need for a territorial militia. Since then, the Wyoming National Guard has proved itself time and time again to be a crucial part of our state's and nation's security.





1909 - CAMP PERRY, OH



1943 - ARMY GUARDSMEN FIGHTING FIRES  
IN THE BIG HORN MOUNTAINS



1951 - KOREA



C. 1951 - LT. JAMES E. CLAY, ONE OF SIX  
WYOMING ANG PILOTS KILLED IN KOREA



2010 - KUWAIT



2021 - CHARLIE CO. 1-297TH INFANTRY  
REGIMENT IN CALIFORNIA





The Wyoming Military Department's priority is strength.

The number of men and women ready and able to deploy to serve the dual mission of the National Guard is the No.1 item of concern for Maj. Gen. Greg Porter.

***“Strength is my top priority. The number of soldiers and airmen in our ranks is important to ensure lethality in all our tasks,” said Maj. Gen. Porter.***

The recruiting teams in the Wyoming Air National Guard and Wyoming Army National Guard are leading the charge for the agency.

Both services' recruiters are finding creative ways to get information to potential recruits about the benefits of military service.

Recruiters take their message to high schools and colleges, businesses and organizations, spreading the benefits of military membership far and wide.

They pepper social media with information and make use of virtual reality to allow



## CONTACT AN ARMY GUARD RECRUITER

1-800-464-8273



@wyomingarmynationalguard



@WyomingArmyNationalGuardRecruiting

**FY22 ARMY STRENGTH GOAL: 1,600**





recruits to “do” the job they are interested in performing in the military.

To ensure success from the beginning, the 153rd Airlift Wing’s Student Flight and the Wyoming Army National Guard’s Recruit Sustainment Program focus new enlistees on the skills to be successful at basic training and beyond.

Command teams across the state actively engage with their soldiers and airmen on retention within their units. Annually the Wyoming Air National Guard excels at retention, losing only about 10% of its force to resignation or retirement.

.....

**“We also had an incredible year as we focused on our number one priority: strength. The Wyoming Army National Guard exceeded end strength goals and the Wyoming Air National Guard had a record number of accessions. We aren’t able to fulfill our missions without our most important asset: our people.”** - Major General Gregory Porter

.....

## CONTACT AN AIR GUARD RECRUITER

307-772-6333

 @WyomingANGRecruiting

 @wyomingairguardrecruiting

**FY22 AIR STRENGTH GOAL: 1,296**

WYOMING  
**AIR NATIONAL  
GUARD**





## WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD **LEADERSHIP**



**Gov. Mark Gordon**  
*The Commander in Chief*



**Maj. Gen. Gregory C. Porter**  
*The Adjutant General*



**Brig. Gen. Michelle Mulberry**  
*Chief of Staff ~ Air*



**Col. Edward Lewis**  
*Chief of Staff ~ Army*



**Col. Holly Shenefelt**  
*Chief of the Joint Staff*



**Chief Master Sgt.  
Joshua Moore**  
*Command Senior  
Enlisted Leader*



**Command Sgt Maj.  
Lindsay Schmidt**  
*State Command  
Sergeant Major*



**Chief Master Sgt.  
Svendsen Larsen**  
*State Command Chief  
Master Sergeant*



**Mr. Doug Shope**  
*Wyoming Military  
Department Deputy  
Director*





**Brig. Gen. Steve Alkire**

*Assistant Adjutant General ~ Army*



**Brig. Gen. Justin Walrath**

*Assistant Adjutant General ~ Air*



**Brig. Gen. David Pritchett**

*Director of the Joint Staff*



**Col. Barry Deibert**

*153rd Airlift Wing Commander*



**Col. Jason Salsgiver**

*U.S. Property & Fiscal Officer*



**Chief Warrant Officer 5 Doug Drost**

*State Command Chief Warrant Officer*



**Mr. Tim Sheppard**

*Wyoming Veterans  
Commission Director*



**Mrs. Germaletta Brown**

*STARBASE Academy Director*



**Mr. William Moore**

*Wyoming Cowboy Challenge  
Academy Director*



**Col. Rick Fawcett**

*Civil Air Patrol, Wyoming  
Wing Commander*





**WYOMING MILITARY DEPARTMENT**

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