

# THE BEACON



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

FALL 2023/WINTER 2024



COMBAT EXCELLENCE - ALWAYS ON MISSION



## FROM THE 124TH FIGHTER WING COMMANDER **COL. CHAD KORNBERG**

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We are well on our way to another very busy year for our wing. At this point, we have now experienced a two-day drill in January, and a four-day drill in February with this year's 0-2-4 schedule. My intent for the four-day UTA's is for organizations to plan and execute mission training events that align with ACE while stressing communications and logistics. These 4-day UTAs are designed to provide more time to focus on training, mission requirements, and collaboration within your individual AFSCs. It is important for us to make time that supports realistic, focused, and meaningful training.



During our first super drill, we had an opportunity to hone our combat skills, from agile combat employment training with training with ops and maintenance to medical's critical care air transport team engaging in combat search and rescue and medical care under direct fire. Adopting the 0-2-4 drill schedule is a change for IDANG. There are always some growing pains associated with change, and we recognize the sacrifices that come with serving in the Idaho Air National Guard. Some of you may have found February drill to be very challenging; others may have been grateful to have more time dedicated to the mission.

I know this is new and I am interested in your constructive feedback! The Public Affairs office has created a short, five-question survey that I encourage all members to complete. You can access the form by scanning the QR code on this page or visit the wing's Instagram page @124fighterwing and click the link in bio. This form is completely anonymous and will help provide a sense of how the new drill schedule is affecting our wing members as we begin to plan our FY25 calendar.

Speaking of surveys, the wing leadership team was recently briefed on all of the feedback and data from the wing's 2023 Command Climate Assessment and Defense Organization Climate Survey. The command team would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who took the time to complete the survey. We know surveys can seem time consuming and monotonous, but it is one tool we use to seek feedback as we strive for improvement.

When you come to drill in April, each squadron will be given tri-fold flyers with their squadron's climate assessment and survey results. The data for each unit has been analyzed and organized by the Idaho Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce. They have helped identify the protective factors (characteristics that increase the likelihood of positive outcomes) and risk factors (characters that increase the likelihood of negative outcomes) associated with each squadron. Additionally, the tri-folds will provide a list of resources and suggested next steps.

We encourage each of you to review the information for your squadron and use it as a way to foster meaningful discussions within your shops. We as a leadership team hear you and are constantly seeking ways to improve the climate of our wing. We value you and your time. You, the people of the 124th Fighter Wing, are what we need to accomplish the mission. You will help us navigate the path into the future as we continue to strive to be more agile, resilient, and adaptable.

We hope everyone is able to enjoy the month off from drill in March, and we look forward to being together again in April!

*Go Guard, ATTACK!*

**SCAN TO VIEW  
THE 0-2-4 DRILL  
SCHEDULE SURVEY**



**OR CLICK HERE  
IF VIEWING  
ON MOBILE DEVICE**



# COMMANDER'S PRIORITIES

## 124FW TRAINING EFFORT FOR 2024:

RELEVANT NOW AND  
READY FOR TOMORROW;  
WITH THE TOOLS WE HAVE TODAY.

We will train in earnest, pushing our comfort levels as we develop and execute agile combat employment concepts in order to produce Airmen who will be ready and relevant to support our federal mission and our enduring state responsibilities.

We will develop our Airmen to be the leaders we need today and into the future by keeping them relevant in their AFSC skills and training them to be agile in execution. We will continue to look for opportunities to push decision making to the lowest level that makes sense while providing training and command intent to best equip our Airmen with the necessary information to make those operational decisions. Our families are the reason many of us serve, and we will look to offer them opportunities to grow and be involved and aware of our mission. We will continue to maintain a strong relationship with our civilian employers, civic leaders, and our community partners.

The best way we protect our future is by being ready and relevant today with the missions we currently have. Our training plan should provide the necessary training and development of our Airmen that will allow for mission success during the next available window or state activation. If we continue to put our best operational foot forward today and train our Airmen to be agile, resilient leaders, we are preparing for tomorrow. We will strive to sustain and modernize our installation so that we have relevant facilities today and for years to come. We will look for opportunities to integrate with our joint partners, whether that be our community, state, other states, active duty, other services, or other nations.

# ATTACK!





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# 124TH **FIGHTER WING** PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

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## **WING COMMANDER**

Col. Chad Kornberg

## **CHIEF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Maj. Rebecca Solosabal

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**

Maj. Bonnie Blakely

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT**

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF**

Tech. Sgt. Mercedee Wilds

Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan

Senior Airman Jady Eisenbrandt

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## **WHERE TO FIND US**



124THFIGHTERWING.ANG.AF.MIL



FACEBOOK.COM/124FW



INSTAGRAM.COM/124FIGHTERWING



FLICKR.COM/124FW



TWITTER.COM/124FIGHTERWING



THE BEACON is the official magazine of the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard. It is published quarterly by the wing public affairs office. Views expressed may not be those of the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, Department of Defense or U.S. Government.



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The 124th Civil Engineer Squadron prepares Gowen Field for flight operations Jan. 7, 2024, in Boise, Idaho. CES Airmen monitor weather reports throughout the week and report to the base when inclement weather is slated to affect flight operations and installation work.(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joshua C. Allmaras)

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# INSPECTION OF WEAPONS IN MOPP

Aircraft Weapons Specialists with the 124th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron perform end-of-runway inspections on the A-10 Thunderbolt II prior to launch out of Gowen Field, Idaho, Oct. 14, 2023. Weapons troops regularly conduct these inspections alongside crew chiefs to ensure aircraft systems are actionable prior to flight. However, this inspection added another layer of training as the Airmen conducted it in chemical protective suits, known as MOPP gear.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan







# DIRECTORS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS & CRISIS LINES

- Idaho National Guard Crisis Lifeline (Call): 208-272-TALK (8255)
- Joint Operations Center (Complete Directory of IDNG Resources): 208-272-5755
- Free and Confidential Counseling Services: Case Manager: 208-918-0346
- Chaplain Corps: 208-272-4311  
Army: 208-272-6468  
Air: 208-608-4825

## 124FW DPH CONTACTS

**TED BERGESS, CIV, LCSW**  
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Licensed Clinical Social Worker  
DSN:422-5313, COMM: (208)422-5313  
Cell: (986)888-9360

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Assists soldiers and families in developing knowledge and skills to improve physical, behavioral and emotional health through wellness promotion and preventative measures. Provides brief solution-focused interventions utilizing evidence based educational materials. Offers support and monitoring of desired behavioral health change plans.

### ANG DPH PROGRAM

All ANG DPHs are familiar with the active components of a Mental Health Provider's role. DPHs are "Trilingual" - they speak the language of AD/ANG/CIV. They are fully integrated adjuncts to the Guard Medical Unit (GMU) Team and are subject to routine peer review and care of oversight. Information shared during Visits/Consults is kept confidential with a few exceptions. Ask your DPH for details.

### ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS

- Suicide Prevention Program Manager
- Disaster Mental Health
- Deployment Mental Health Support
- Master Resiliency Training Facilitator
- Yellow Ribbon Program Support
- CAB/CAT member
- Community Capacity Building & Outreach



# FORGING THE TIP OF THE SPEAR

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Story by Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

Exercise Forging Sabre takes place every other year at the Mountain Home Range Complex, and this year it was held from Sept 11-30, 2023.

"This large-scale exercise is a Singaporean national exercise that involves their fighter squadrons and helo squadrons that are based in the United States," said Maj. Patrick Hickie, the director of operations for the 266th Range Squadron.

The 266th RANS is a geographical separated unit of the Idaho Air National Guard, operating on Mountain Home Air Force Base and Mountain Home Range Complex south of Mountain Home.

This guard unit is unique in its capabilities.



“Not only can we provide realistic training here in Idaho, but we can take our emitters all over the country and world,” said Hickie. “We are the only squadron in the Air Force that takes our equipment to train on other ranges.”

The ranges in Idaho provide a training environment that is sought out by many units, especially the Singaporeans.

“They like the airspace that the Mountain Home Range Complex provides, it’s big,” said Hickie. “They can get all the training they need done here. We have a ton of threat emitters on the range that provide a realistic density of threats. It also helps that the scheduling is easy which helps with their planning.”

Not only does this training assist the Singaporeans, it provides valuable training to the RANS Airmen.

Since combat takes place both day and night, the RANS switched its

schedule to meet mission requirements. This necessitated a lot of coordination.

It allowed the Airmen of the RANS the opportunity to run their equipment and provide the most realistic scenarios they could, said Hickie.

Providing threats doesn’t always just include actual threats to the aircraft, but to their onboard equipment too.

“We have been able to provide GPS jamming to the aircrews on the range,” said Master Sgt. Phillip Mason, the 266th RANS shop chief over GPS jamming. “The aircrew uses GPS for navigation and munitions. Our equipment allows them to work through GPS denial scenarios and these issues are issues they would see in the real world. Allowing them to come up with ways to work around this and still put bombs on targets.”

Airmen don’t always get to see the impact they have, but that’s not true for the 266th RANS.

“Being able to prepare pilots allows me to see the impact of our mission,” said Daniel Falkowski, a radar technician with 266th RANS. “It’s what is being utilized overseas. They are learning the tactics on how to mitigate, negotiate and recognize high-threat environments.”



# AMMO RODEO ECLIPSE

Munitions Systems Airmen with the 124th Munitions Flight assemble various bombs on an assembly line during the 2023 Ammo Rodeo, Gowen Field, Idaho, Oct. 14, 2023. The annular eclipse occurred during the exercise.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan







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# USAFA FOOTBALL AT BSU

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Boise State University's football team took on the U.S. Air Force Academy's team at Albertsons Stadium, Boise, Idaho, Nov. 24, 2023. The USAFA football team trailed BSU throughout the game, finally conceding 27 to 19.







# ESGR PATRIOTIC AWARD - CASCADIA HEALTH NAMPA, IDAHO

The Idaho Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, along with Tech. Sgt. Mike Ashton, a commander support staff Airman with the 124th Fighter Wing, present Patriot Awards to Paul Arnell and Chase Gunderson, president and executive director of Cascadia of Nampa, during a ceremony Dec. 4, 2023, at Cascadia of Nampa, Nampa, Idaho. The award is presented to nominated employers for their support of a Guardsman and their service. Ashton nominated the two for their support of him during the past six years of his service in the Idaho Air National Guard.



Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras



# HISTORY: SHAPING LEADERS TODAY

Story by Senior Master Sgt. Josh Allmaras



Learning to lead is a journey for any Guardsman. More than 15 Idaho National Guard Airmen and Soldiers were selected to attend the Gettysburg Leadership Experience in Gettysburg, Pa., Oct. 12-14, 2023.

This experience takes Guardsmen to pivotal Civil War battlefields, offering them an opportunity to learn through a historical-leadership lens.

“The Idaho National Guard’s Gettysburg Leadership Experience is about focusing our tactical leaders, our NCOs and CGOs, to align their decision-making processes with the National Strategic and Defense Strategies,” said Maj. Michael P. Gillis, the Idaho National Guard joint forces headquarters air executive officer.

The three days spent in and near Gettysburg took a modern look at leadership and applied today’s experiences to past lessons learned.

“I have never had the opportunity to get a hands-on experience on an historical event that had such a major impact on our country,” said Tech. Sgt. Pablo Moreno, a chaplain’s assistant with the 124th Fighter Wing.

Moreno went on to say that the trip allowed him to see first-hand battlefield locations and to learn the importance of listening in leadership.

Learning through immersion has the potential to shift the mindset of Guardsmen and their roles in current and emergent mission challenges they may face with a near-peer fight.

“We want them to understand how their missions affect the overall national picture, and we want them to identify what their role in that national picture is,” Gillis said. “It’s a great opportunity to take lessons from history and apply them to today and to include our joint partners so we have a full understanding of our modern war fight.”

Success in a future fight will not only require innovation but a hard look at lessons from the past.







# MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT WITH THE STEELHEADS

Photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan

The Idaho Army National Guard's 25th Army Band performed Taps and the National Anthem while the Idaho Air National Guard's Honor Guard presented the colors during the opening ceremony of The Idaho Steelhead's game against the Newfoundland Growler's hockey team for military appreciation night at Idaho Central Arena, Boise, Idaho, Dec. 2, 2023. During the game, the Steelhead's auctioned off autographed, military-themed jerseys as a part of an on-going effort to raise funding for St. Luke's hospitals.



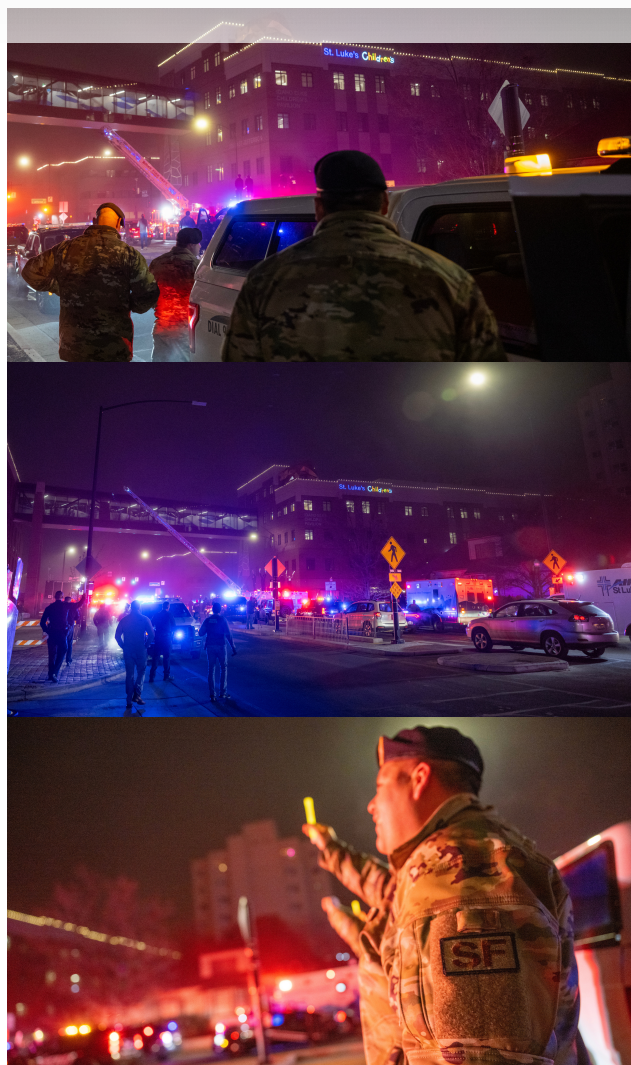






Airmen from the 124th Security Forces Squadron participate in the annual Shine the Light event at St Luke's Children's Hospital, Boise, Idaho, Dec. 21, 2023. The annual event brings first responders from the local area together to shine their lights to brighten the holiday spirit of children who are in the hospital for the holidays.

Photos by  
Senior Master Sgt. Josh Allmaras







# ANDREWS PROMOTES



Senior Master Sgt. Mark Andrews, the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron senior enlisted leader, promoted to Chief Master Sgt. during a ceremony at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, May 11, 2023. The ceremony included a promotion order, tacking of his stripes and presentation of chiefs creed from the wing chiefs.





# 224TH COS EXPANDS CAPABILITIES OF TRAINING MISSION

Story by Mr. Ryan White

Boise is about a four-hour drive from Idaho Falls, which is a long commute for a drill weekend. However, it's a commute many Idaho National Guard Airmen of the 224th Cyber Operations Squadron know well. The 224th COS has a number of members who live and work on the eastern side of the state, where specialized jobs in tech pay well.

Members of the 224th COS, an operational unit within the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard, serve as cyber defenders, using the latest technology to protect vital military assets. Their jobs require constant training to prevent and overcome cyber threats.

Recently, the squadron set up a remote Virtual Private Network to allow its Airmen to log in remotely. The VPN helps Airmen enhance their skills to detect and overcome cyber attacks, just as if they were training in-person on Gowen Field. Remote training has been working so well with Airmen in Idaho Falls, the 224th COS has decided to expand the capability to other Air National Guard units working the same mission. Currently, ANG units from Washington state, Michigan, Rhode Island, and Vermont can use the new joint training environment, with plans of adding the Tennessee Air National Guard early next year. Lt. Col. Kyle Erickson, commander of the 224th COS, says the possibility to go beyond the ANG to include active-duty Air Force units is already being discussed.

Capt. Justin Hall is chief of training for the 224th COS. According to him, the ability to train remotely provides them with realistic

team training scenarios which they can tackle from the office or home. When students ask for assistance, have difficulties with a command, or want to share output, instructors can connect remotely to their virtual machine to view their screens, assist with corrections, or see their product and provide instant feedback.

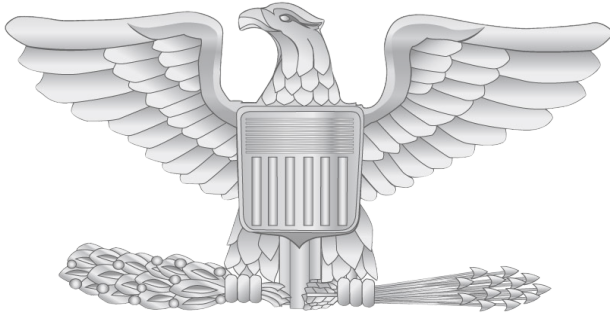
"I can deliver academic content via Microsoft Teams, reinforced with instructor-led interaction," said Hall. "Then skills are demonstrated and assessed through the remote training environment." The entire cyber range environment is 100% controlled by the 224th COS.

"If I could say you can drill more at home, you can do some AT [Annual Training] periods from home; and, oh by the way, we can be a lot more flexible to your lifestyle, then folks are more likely to sign on with us and stay with us," said Erickson.

Erickson believes the remote training capability is a recruiting and retention tool for the 224th COS in the long run. It allows cyber Airmen to work where it is more convenient for them. The unit is also no longer limited to recruiting members primarily from the Treasure Valley. Recruiting from other parts of Idaho, and even other states, is the bigger vision of this type of capability. Cyber is constantly evolving and there will always be need for fresh insights from a new generation of cyber defenders.



# SUMNER RETIRES



U.S. Air Force Col. Elizabeth Sumner, the 124th Fighter Wing's vice wing commander, retires after 30 years of service to her country on Gowen Field, Idaho, Oct. 14, 2023.



Since graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1997, Sumner has spent her career always putting Airmen and mentorship first.



# OUTSTANDING AIRMAN of the YEAR

On Jan. 19, 2024, the 124th Fighter Wing hosted the Outstanding Airman of the Year ceremony at the Boise Riverside Hotel to celebrate the wing, build esprit de corps, and recognize the wing's outstanding Airmen from 2023.



## 2023 WING WINNERS



**Airman of the Year -**  
SrA Martha Escarzaga, MSG



**NCO of the Year -**  
TSgt Joshua Moen, JFHQ  
**SNCO of the Year -**  
SMSgt Keely Lowe, MXG  
**First Sergeant of the Year -**  
MSgt David Steiner, JFHQ  
**Honor Guard of the Year -**  
MSgt Carlos Hsue, MXG  
**Spirit Award-**  
MSG



# SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION & RESPONSE



**All airman and dependents  
ages 18+ are eligible  
to make a report of sexual  
assault through the 124th FW  
Sexual Assault Prevention  
and Response office.**

**For more information, please contact  
a member of the SAPR team.**

## AVAILABLE SERVICES

- Access to restricted and unrestricted reporting
- Connection to non-clinical support services
- Support in notifying law enforcement, if desired
- Access to victim advocate support services
- Connection to medical and mental health resources as needed

**DOD SAFE HELPLINE 24/7**

**1.877.995.5247**

**ONLINE.SAFEHELPLINE.ORG**



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# WEAPONS TRAINING

Security Forces Airmen with the 124th Fighter Wing conduct firearms qualification training at the Gowen Field weapons qualifications range, Oct. 14, 2023. Squadron members undergo annual weapons proficiency training to ensure battlefield effectiveness with a variety of firearms.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan







The 124th Civil Engineer Squadron trains with the 124th Security Forces Squadron during the October 2023 unit training assembly at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, Oct. 14, 2023. SFS trained multiple squadrons from the 124th Fighter Wing on base defense, weapons operations and combat tactics during the weekend. The wing was conducting unit level CBRN training to ensure Airmen are prepared for a near peer conflict.



Senior Master Sgt. Mikel J. Turner, the 124th SFS operations superintendent, reviews the upcoming force protection training with Airmen from the 124th CES.





# 2 0 2 3 Y E A R

As we look back on 2023, here are some of our favorite photos





# IN REVIEW

of our Airmen working the mission & the wing's accomplishments.







This summer, six A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft with more than 100 Airmen from the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard, traveled to Germany in support of Air Defender 2023, the largest collective defense exercise since the inception of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949.



Over the course of two weeks in June, Germany and its air force, or Luftwaffe, hosted more than 200 aircraft from over 20 countries participating alongside 40-plus Air National Guard units from 35 states. With the Air Force and Air National Guard contributing some 2,000 Airmen along with 100 aircraft to the exercise, the U.S is showcasing interoperability and reinforcing its commitment to partners both regionally and across the globe.



"I think this exercise was a huge win, not just for the 124th Fighter Wing, but for every participating unit and country," said Col. Ryan Richardson, the 124th Operations Group commander. "We'll reap the benefits of the relationships we've built and the experiences we've had during Air Defender well into the future."

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan





# PERFORMER PICS

**AUG 26-27  
2023**



U.S. ARMY GOLDEN KNIGHTS



FRANKLIN'S FLYING CIRCUS



JET WACO



MISTY BLUES



COMBINED ARMS DEMO



BRAD WURSTEN



A-37 DRAGONFLY



P-51 MUSTANG



F-35 DEMO TEAM



DORNIER ALPHA JET



U.S. AIR FORCE THUNDERBIRDS





Idaho Air National Guard

# Airman & Family READINESS PROGRAM

The Airmen & Family Readiness Program (AFRP) serves as a one-stop information and referral center for single, married, active-duty, Guard, Reserves, civilians who work on base, and retired members as well as their families. One of its major functions is to ensure personnel and their families are connected with the appropriate service on and off site.



## SERVICES & ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

- |                                              |                                     |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ Deployment Preparation & Reintegration     | ✓ Volunteer Opportunities           |
| ✓ Personal and Family Readiness              | ✓ Career Development                |
| ✓ Child & Youth Services                     | ✓ Transition to Civilian Life       |
| ✓ Air Force Aid Society                      | ✓ Casualty Assistance               |
| ✓ Financial Readiness & Emergency Assistance | ✓ Exceptional Family Member Support |

**FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT MRS. HEATHER ECHOLS**  
Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager



Phone: 208-422-5470  
Cell: 208-513-3430



# KIDS' ACTIVITY

## COLOR BY NUMBER



USE THE KEY TO THE RIGHT TO  
COLOR IN THE WING'S PATCH





124th Fighter Wing  
IDAHO AIR NATIONAL GUARD  
4474 S. De Haviland St.  
Boise, Idaho 83705-8103

# ATTENTION GOWEN GYM RATS

THE J9 IS SEEKING FEEDBACK ON IMPROVING THE BASE GYM

## WHAT UPGRADES DO YOU WANT?

- CARIDO EQUIPMENT
- FREE WEIGHTS
- WEIGHT MACHINES
- DIFFERENT EQUIPMENT
- FACILITY UPGRADES



Scan the QR code to provide your inputs

[OR CLICK HERE IF VIEWING  
ON MOBILE DEVICE](#)

