# North Dakota Guardian

Volume 4, Issue 1 January 2011

# Farewell to the Chief

## Guardsmen Honor Former Governor John Hoeven

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# North Dakota Guardian

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- Printed by United Printing, a private firm in no way connected to the U.S. Government under exclusive written contract with the JFND. Reproduction is by the offset method with a circulation of 7,500.
- The ***North Dakota Guardian*** is published by the JFND Public Information Office, Box 5511, Bismarck, N.D. 58506-5511, 701-333-2007


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Digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.

## On the Cover

**Distinguished Leadership:** Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, right, places the North Dakota Distinguished Service Medal on former North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven at the Raymond J. Bohn armory, Bismarck, N.D., Dec. 20. The medal was awarded to Hoeven for his leadership as commander in chief throughout the past 10 years and is the N.D. National Guard's highest award. (Photo by Mr. Bill Prokopyk, Joint Force Headquarters)

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# View From the Top

## A Look Back: 2010 Year in Review

*From the N.D. National Guard's Joint Executive Council*

The beginning of a new year offers an appropriate time to reflect on the previous 12 months while looking ahead to the future. As we in the Joint Executive Council think about 2010 in the N.D. National Guard, we're filled with pride. You, the Soldiers and Airmen of this great state, have represented North Dakota incredibly well this year on missions in our communities, across our state and around the globe.

Here's just a glimpse at some of your amazing accomplishments.

### Deployments

In all, nearly 1,000 of you were mobilized during 2010, while nearly 100 took part in overseas training missions. About a dozen of our Soldiers and Airmen remain overseas, the lowest number since military response began after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Kosovo saw the greatest presence of N.D. Soldiers, with about 650 of you serving there. In Afghanistan, 107 N.D. Guardsmen served on missions, and 65 of you served in Iraq.

While those may be the most prominent, nearly a dozen other countries had a Guard presence as you provided medical care, exchanged information, trained or assisted. This year, Guardsmen spent anywhere from two weeks to most of the year in Bosnia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Haiti, Japan, Korea, Panama, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

### Natural Disasters

Between those missions, you again responded in force alongside civilian and state agencies when spring flooding plagued the Red River Valley. The mission's duration was considerably less than in 2009 — 18 days versus about 100 days — but the mission was more geographically concentrated than the last go-round. In 2010, nearly 800 of you dedicated about 58,800 hours to helping fellow North Dakotans facing water encroaching on their homes and livestock.

As flooding in one part of the state ended, a major ice storm struck another part — and you were again there. When the April 2 storm took out about 12,000 power poles, 28 of you went on state active duty status to assist civilian authorities in locating and documenting the damage.

### In the Air

Besides participating in disaster missions and deploying overseas, our pilots were conducting stateside missions — and setting records while doing it.

The N.D. Air National Guard flew about 22,000 mishap-free flying hours this year. By the end of September, that had pushed their flying safety record past 38 years, encompassing 206,667 flying hours and 108,811 sorties.

In the N.D. Army National Guard, Soldiers extended their lengthy safety record, too, flying 1,646 hours in the OH-58 Kiowa, 1,244 hours in the UH-60 Black Hawk and 645 hours in the C-12 turboprop. Additionally, Company C of the 2nd Battalion, 285th Aviation Regiment flew more than 6,200 flight hours as they completed more than 750 combat missions transporting senior officials, Soldiers, medical supplies and other cargo during their deployment to Iraq.

### On the Ground

The Air National Guard's 219th Security Forces Squadron marked many milestones this year. The two-year-old squadron reached full strength, making it the second largest National Guard security forces squadron in the U.S. The unit, which works with the 91st Missile Wing at the Minot Air Force Base, passed its nuclear surety inspection, making it the first National Guard unit to ever receive a "ready" approval grade from Air Force Global Strike Command.

Another important aspect of stateside missions includes training. Camp Grafton Training Center, logged 75,000 individual days of training for Guardsmen and active-duty forces who took part in engineer specialty courses and leadership training there. A new Regional Training Institute building opened its doors this fall, creating a high-tech campus for electrician, plumbing and construction training.

Meanwhile, the 119th Wing's Regional Training Site had its busiest year yet. Service members from the Air National Guard, active Air Force and even the Norwegian military came to Fargo to train on Rapid Runway Repair equipment, ROWPUs (Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units), Mobile Aircraft Arresting Systems, Emergency Airfield Lighting System, generators, chemical detection equipment, explosive ordnance reconnaissance training and much more.

What much of this boils down to is nearly 4,400 of you — North Dakota citizen-Soldiers and citizen-Airmen — serving your communities, state and nation with the support of your families and employers. You are spread across North Dakota communities, working out of 25 cities here. The economic impact of your activities exceeded $282.5 million this year, although many consider your contributions across the globe to prevent loss of life and property priceless.

Thank you for all you have done, and we look forward to another great year in the N.D. National Guard!

*For more information about the N.D. National Guard's Joint Executive Council, go to http://bit.ly/git5X3.*

# A Day For Horsing Around

## Military Kids Make New Friends at Riding on Angel's Wings Ranch

*Story By Staff Sgt. Nathanael Baardson*
*Photos By Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp*
*119th Wing*

Emma and Elsie, both children of N.D. Guardsmen, smile as they hold the reigns of their horse during the Riding on Angels Wings event held for children of military members Dec. 5.

Military kids spilled off of a charter bus at the Riding on Angel's Wings ranch near Felton, Minn., and were greeted with smiles and hand warmers. The frigid cold of Dec. 4 didn't damper spirits as the kids made their way into the horse arena for a day camp to learn about horses and pick up a few life lessons. The camp was sponsored by North Dakota's Operation: Military Kids (OMK) and was open to all military Families.

"OMK is an exciting initiative that the N.D. National Guard partners with to advocate for the needs of our children and youth. What's truly neat about OMK is that they are here in our communities to support all military children," said Jessica Clark-Woinarowicz, N.D. National Guard state youth coordinator. "So with these events, you can bet you will have a melting pot of Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve children and youth. This event is a perfect example of that."

As the first attendee cautiously approached a miniature practice horse named Tinker, the other 8 kids, ages 6 to 9, looked on in nervous excitement. One by one, the kids made their way to the small horse in anticipation of interacting with the towering Quarter Horses. With the miniature horse, the kids practiced approaching, greetings, contact and handling, and they learned how to read horses' mannerisms and body language.

While some kids were waiting to meet the miniature horse, the participants who had finished stayed warm in the chilly arena by doing calisthenics with a volunteer near a propane heater.

After learning proper horse etiquette, the kids were thrown into their first big test — haltering the gigantic Quarter Horses and walking them to a fence. The kids were not given instructions on how to get the headgear on and had to rely on each other and use their problem-solving skills to complete the task. This job proved to be a real challenge.

One participant, Emma, said, "We really didn't know what was going on at first, so we were trying to put the [halter] on the horse's nose and in its mouth. Finally, we figured it out!" With a smile on her face, she added, "I'd like to point out that we were the first to get our horse over to the fence, though. We tossed a rope over its head and pulled it over so we could win."

On another team, Connor and Lily's horse helped them with their complex task.

"All we had to do was hold the harness up and he pushed his head in!" Lily said. Connor instantly jumped in, "Yeah, he thought he was going for a walk."

The first of two sessions ended with a walk around the barn and was followed by a lively discussion about the morning over cookies and juice packs. While there was talk of horses and of all the day's fun, the kids visited with Riding on Angel's Wings group leaders about the importance of obedience, patience and careful listening, as well as other life lessons.

"As the kids are directing the horses, it's a natural connection to relate that to the experiences they face every day. They're constantly being told what to do and how to do it, and it doesn't always make sense to them. If they see why they're doing certain things with the horses, they can understand why they need to listen and obey, too," said Mark Schaefer, a school psychologist, clinical director at Dakota Boy's and Girl's Ranch and horse enthusiast from Minot.

"Being part of this great organization has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life," said Vince Babbler, retired 119th Happy Hooligan fire chief and volunteer with Riding on Angel's Wings. "I think I get more enjoyment and happiness than anybody."

The inspiration for Riding on Angel's Wings came from founder Bette Shipley's son, DJ, who was born with congenital heart defects and cerebral palsy. Bette's dream of riding horse with her son took some creative thinking and a few extra hands. The therapeutic benefits and sheer joy DJ experienced riding horse were too much for Bette to keep within her family, and Riding on Angel's Wings was born.

In 2002, with the help of two therapists and a handful of volunteers, the first seven riders were given the opportunity to share in Bette's dream and were able to ride. Since then, Riding on Angel's Wings has touched the lives of hundreds of kids and continues to build on that foundation.

Grace, a North Dakota military child, places headgear on her horse during an Operation: Military Kids (OMK) event near Felton, Minn. OMK is a partnership between Army Child, Youth and School Services; United States Department of Agriculture 4-H Headquarters and N.D. State University 4-H Youth Development. Below, attendees to the OMK event gather with their horses and instructors. The instructors were, from left to right, Kristi Schaeffer, Bette Shipley and Mark Schaeffer. Dr. Erika Berg, assistant professor for the N.D. State University Equine Studies Program, also provided instruction on equine behavior, learning to read horse body language and the appropriate way to safely work around horses.

### Operation: Military Kids

is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with America's communities to support children and youth impacted by deployment. Regardless of whether Families are experiencing deployment for the first time, the second time or another in a series of multiple deployments, OMK's goal is to connect military children and youth with local resources in order to achieve a sense of community support and enhance their well-being. For more information, go to www.operationmilitarykids.org.

# Where Good Soldiers Come From

## 1st Sgt. Graber Led North Dakota Soldiers through World War II

*By Staff Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson*
*Joint Force Headquarters*

**Profiles in Guard History**
*First of a Four-Part Series*

The happy memories flow easily, while the less pleasant ones take some thought for former N.D. Guardsman and World War II veteran John Graber.

The staunch 94-year-old with thick wisps of white hair is candid, lacing his stories with laughter while keeping a few secrets to himself.

His military career began more than seven years before the attacks on Pearl Harbor when Graber — who was five months shy of his 18th birthday — raised his right hand and promised to defend the nation against enemies foreign and domestic. He served with the 164th Infantry Division, making a buck for each weekly drill as a private and later $1.15 as a corporal.

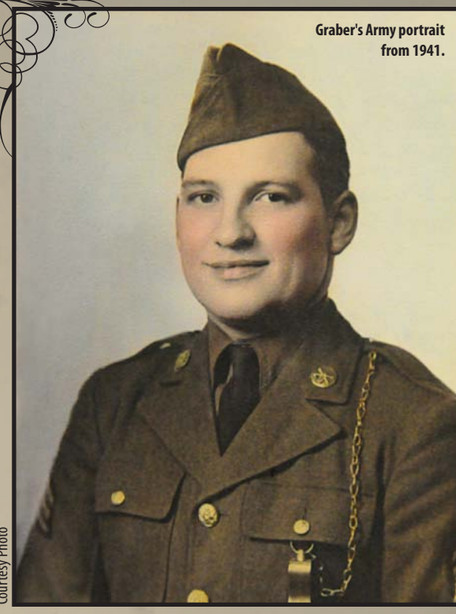
John Graber stands in front of a display cannon on the campus of North Dakota State University.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

After drill, Graber and his fellow Soldiers would head to Gus' restaurant for a hamburger or hotdog for a nickel, being sure to tip another nickel. Graber was enjoying it and had every intention of re-enlisting when he made a decision that would quickly move him to more responsibilities as the possibility of war drew nearer.

"I was going to re-up and … an officer in the artillery told me not to," Graber says. "He said, 'I want you in the artillery.' So, I got into a brand-new artillery outfit, so my promotions were quick. I was a three-striper in three weeks. I was a technical sergeant, which they now call (sergeant first class)."

That artillery outfit was the N.D. National Guard's 188th Field Artillery Regiment.



Graber's Army portrait from 1941.

Courtesy Photo

### Ready for War

As the war in Europe continued and relations with Japan deteriorated, President Franklin Roosevelt activated the National Guard in February 1941. The 164th headed to Louisiana for training, and the 188th later headed to Fort Warren, near Cheyenne, Wyo.

The 188th had better accommodations than the infantry, which found a bare-bones camp for their training. In Wyoming, however, "the locals were quite frosty toward the Soldiers, and the Guardsmen never forgot that dogs and Soldiers were not welcome in some parts of Cheyenne," wrote Lt. Col. Peter Conlin in "The Citizen-Soldiers: An Abbreviated History of the N.D. National Guard."

Things weren't so cold for Graber, though, who married his girlfriend from North Dakota, Maxine King, while stationed there.

Thanks to a combination of skill and luck, Graber took a lateral transfer to a first sergeant position, taking on more responsibility for the men who would serve with him. Despite the challenging duty, "it turned out to be a good move," Graber says, "because later in the year they gave the first sergeants another rocker to make them equal to master sergeants, and that was a good raise in pay, too — and I was married, so I could use it."

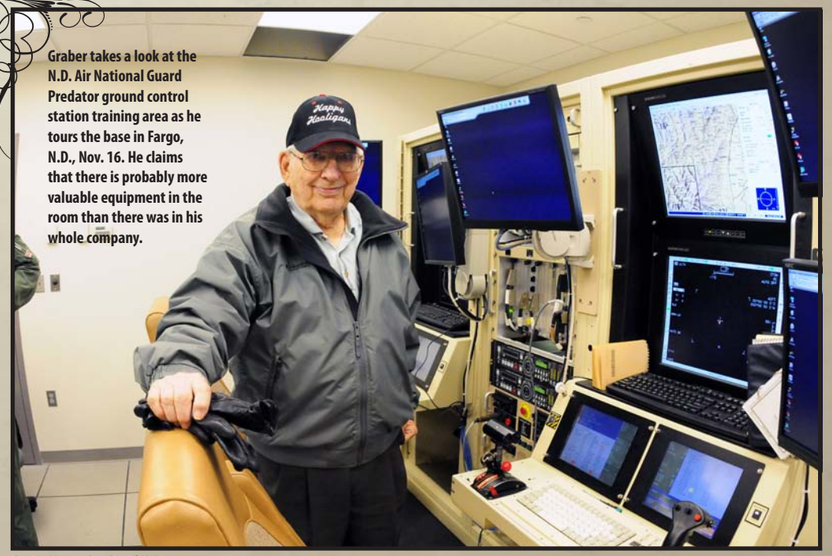
> "In the war, we had good times and bad times."

The first sergeant and his men continued training until the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

"Pearl Harbor happened on a Sunday, and on Thursday we were on our way to Fort Lewis, Wash., by convoy truck," Graber said.

Maxine followed and their first child, Judy, was born Dec. 23 of the following year. Graber would remain in the United States until just before Judy's first birthday.

During that time, the field artillery trained and underwent changes. In February 1943, the 188th restructured and second battalion, Graber's unit, became the 957th Field Artillery Battalion. That spring, they headed to California, where they spent the summer training in the Mojave Desert. Then, it was on to Oklahoma, for additional training at Camp Gruber. By the end of the year, they were headed to New York City to catch a ship departing Dec. 5, 1943, for Great Britain.



Graber takes a look at the N.D. Air National Guard Predator ground control station training area as he tours the base in Fargo, N.D., Nov. 16. He claims that there is probably more valuable equipment in the room than there was in his whole company.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

### Waking Up at Normandy

After about two-and-a-half years of training, Graber's unit would move into combat less than a week after D-Day, June 6, 1943.

It was "D6," D-Day plus six, but Graber laughs at his trip from Great Britain into war despite the uncertainty of the situation at the time.

"We boarded the ship at South Hampton, and they took us out of the harbor and we sat for a while. And I was the first sergeant, so I was carrying the orderly room, and I was so pooped out," Graber says.

"There was a command car on the deck of the LST (landing ship, tank) that we crossed the channel on, and I climbed in the back of that command car and fell asleep. And when I woke up, I said, 'Didn't we leave?' and they said, 'Hey buddy, that's France.' I slept across the English Channel. Some people have

*(Continued from page 7)* swum across it, but I slept across it," he says with a bright grin and chuckle.

What he woke up to was Utah Beach at Normandy.

Graber, at this time in his late 20s, was in charge of a service battery.

"Our duties were to furnish all of the supplies for the battalion. During the time we were over there, we fired over 90,000 rounds of projectiles that weighed 96 pounds apiece — and service battery hauled every single ounce of that," he says with pride.

They also hauled food and handled ration detail.

"I gotta say, for wartime, we ate pretty good," he says. "The cooks that we had were farm boys from North Dakota and they went to a cooking school in Fort Riley, Kan., and, by golly, they turned out to be pretty good cooks."

## Good Times, Bad Times

The artillery regiment participated in the Cherbourg Offensive and Battle of the Bulge before heading to Germany. In his 23 months in combat, Graber took part in five major battles, including Normandy, the European Campaign and Ardennes.

"In the war, we had good times and bad times," he says.

The good times roll quickly from his lips — the close friends he met in war and since as a result of his service and the chance to stay in some pretty fancy quarters in Germany.

Asked about the worst part of the war, he pauses for a while to reflect before responding.

"A couple of times we got strafed by our own Air Force, and that was a little harassment, but we didn't lose any men over it, so that came out alright."

Good or bad, he's keeping some secrets all to himself.

"Tell me about the liberation of the Belgian women," an interviewer says.

Graber's eyes sparkle as he leans back and breaks into a grin. "That's unmentionable!" he exclaims with a laugh.

Throughout the war, Graber's unit served under the VII Corps. Graber is especially proud of North Dakota's connections with "Lightning" Joe Collins, VII Corps commander, and Collins' nephew, Lt. Col. James L. Collins Jr., who commanded Graber's unit. Both Collins were West Point graduates, and the elder would go on to be the Army Chief of Staff during the Korean War. The younger Collins served as battalion commander for the 957th Field Artillery and developed close ties to the North Dakota Guardsmen.

"West Pointers weren't real fond of National Guard Soldiers, and that's what we were," Graber recalled. "(James Collins) was a Pointer, but he sure liked his North Dakota boys. We showed him where the good Soldiers come from."

James Collins, who retired from the Army as a brigadier general, attended every reunion with those North Dakota boys until he died, Graber says.

Graber, now a widower, has lost a lot of family and good friends over the years. The reunions stopped about a decade ago, when barely a dozen remained who could travel. Of the two companies of infantry and two batteries of artillery that mobilized out of Fargo, Graber is only aware of one other man still in the area.

Graber takes it as life experience, saying, "So that's what you get when you get to be 94; you see a lot of people go that are important in your life."

He insists that "life's been good to me," and he's glad he had the opportunity to serve with so many fine North Dakotans.

"I was always proud of my military service. Can't say you were glad that there was a war, but it made men out of boys in a hurry."

*This story is part of a quarterly N.D. National Guard history series that profiles the brave veterans who have served before us. For more information on the history of the N.D. National Guard, go to http://bit.ly/NDNGhistory.*

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

**A photo of prized military memorabilia and personal items in a shadow box in John Graber's home. The shadow box includes service medals, rank and a family photo from John and wife, Maxine's, 50th wedding anniversary on June 1, 1991. The New Testament Bible was issued to U.S. Military personnel during WWII in Europe and is dated January 25, 1941.**

## See More Online:

Watch an interview with John Graber discussing his experiences at http://bit.ly/JohnGraber

View and download photos of Graber on Flickr at http://bit.ly/JohnGraberPhotos



# A Warm Welcome

## Army Guard Unit Returns from Service in Afghanistan, Iraq

*By the N.D. National Guard Public Affairs Office*

Sgt. Eric W. Jensen

**Staff Sgt. Gardell Frey gets a warm welcome from his sister, Brenda, at the Bismarck Municipal Airport Dec.8. Frey returned from Afghanistan after serving with the 188th Air Defense Artillery Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment (RAID) III and IV for the past two years.**

About 70 Soldiers from the N.D. Army National Guard have returned to North Dakota after a nearly yearlong mobilization to Afghanistan and Iraq. The Grand Forks-based 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment mobilized in three groups in November 2009 and came home Dec. 8.

It was a first-of-its-kind mission for two of the groups, which operated the AN/MPQ-64 Sentinel Radar for the first time in a combat zone — one group of about 25 in Afghanistan and one group of eight in Iraq. The Sentinel can alert short-range air-defense weapons to sites of hostile targets. The third group of about 40 Soldiers used the Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment, or RAID, system in Afghanistan. It was the fourth such mission for the 1-188th, and thus dubbed RAID IV. The RAID tower system incorporates sensor technology to protect forward operating bases.

"For the past year, these Soldiers have been saving lives of U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general. "In the meantime, their Families have been stepping up to new roles in their absence. Their service, both our Soldiers and their Families, has benefited the U.S. and our allies, and we owe them our sincerest thanks."

Sprynczynatyk and other senior leaders met the returning Soldiers to thank them for their service as they deplaned at their demobilization station in Fort Hood, Texas.

Capt. Walyn S. Vannurden, of Cavalier, N.D., commanded both Afghanistan groups and 1st Sgt. Gregory P. Brockberg, of Moorhead, Minn., was the senior enlisted Soldier there. Sgt. 1st Class Michael Kraft, of Devils Lake, N.D., served as the senior leader in Iraq. Their Soldiers belong to units in Grand Forks, as well as Fargo and Bismarck, but hail from 31 communities across North Dakota and into Minnesota.

"The mission was very successful," Vannurden said. "We had a high operational rate; our systems were up more than 95 percent of the time. We kept 30,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civilians safe during our deployment on the RAID mission. On the Sentinel side they were keeping the skies safe."

With the groups' return to the U.S., the number of North Dakota Guardsmen serving overseas has reached a low that has not been seen since shortly after the 2001 terrorist attacks. About a dozen Soldiers and Airmen remain deployed in locations across the globe.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

**1st Lt. David A. Kawasaki gets a big hug after arriving at Fargo's Hector International Airport on Dec. 8, 2010. He spent the past year deployed to Afghanistan with the North Dakota Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.**

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Staff Sgt. Michael Miller, 119th Civil Engineer Squadron, looks at handmade thank you cards hung in the hallway at the N.D. Air National Guard dining facility Dec. 5. The cards were made by students at South Elementary School in West Fargo, N.D., and sent to thank the Airmen for their service.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Santa waves to unit members and their children as he prepares to distribute gifts in the N.D. Air National Guard dining facility during the annual children's Christmas party, hosted by the N.D. Air National Guard Family Program Dec. 11.

Courtesy Photo

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Explosive ordnance disposal technician Staff Sgt. Brett Anderson, of the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron, performs a training operation by rendering a simulated improvised explosive device (IED) safe at the N.D. Air National Guard, Fargo, N.D., Dec. 5.

Volunteers, senior members and cadets from the Bismarck and Dickinson composite squadrons of the N.D. Civil Air Patrol participate in the Wreaths Across America program at the N.D. Veterans Cemetery (South of Mandan, N.D.) Dec. 11. Wreaths Across America is a nationwide event. The program's mission is to remember the sacrifices of Veterans, honor those who serve and teach children the value of freedom. More than 3,400 wreaths were placed at the N.D. Veterans Cemetery this year.

Laura Prokopyk

# GUARDIAN Snapshots

Senior Airman Aaron Fagerwick, a 119th Maintenance Squadron crew chief, hand signals to pilots in a C-21 aircraft giving them the 'all-clear' to start engines in preparation for launch at the N.D. Air National Guard, Fargo, N.D., Dec. 5.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Center, the N.D. National Guard biathlon team participated in its first event of the season — the All Regions Snow Camp in West Yellowstone, Mont. — Dec. 8-12, 2010. Members of the team include, from left to right, Sgt. 1st Class Kent Pulst, of Penn, N.D., who serves with the 3662nd Maintenance Company; Warrant Officer Adam Waldo, of Warwick, N.D., who serves with the 1-112th Aviation Battalion; Sgt. Hilary Mehrer, of Bismarck, N.D., who serves with 68th Troop Command; Lt. Col. David Skalicky, of Bismarck, who serves with Joint Force Headquarters; Sgt. Adam Walsvik, of Hazen, N.D., who serves with the 188th Engineer Company; Spc. Brandon Pulst, of Penn, who serves with the 3662nd Maintenance Company; and Spc. Jordan Becker, team coach, of Devils Lake, N.D., who serves with the 3662nd Maintenance Company.

# BUSINESS IS BOOMING

*Story & Photos by*
*Sgt. Eric W. Jensen*
*Joint Force Headquarters*

## Engineers Assemble at 164th RTI to Receive Exemplary Training

National Guard combat engineers from across the nation stood in a graveyard of obliterated doors and wooden panels at the Camp Grafton South training area Dec. 14. Despite their best efforts to heat up the 164th Regional Training Institute's (RTI) live explosive breach range with detonators and impulse charges, North Dakota's winter fury had already set in at a brisk 12 degrees. An entire inventory of military winter weather garments were on display as the Guardsmen packed their gloves with handwarmers and rigged various configurations of explosives to their targets as part of an Advanced Leadership Course (ALC, formerly called Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course).

The ALC urban breaching module, led by North Dakota instructors from the 164th RTI, is unique to the National Guard. The active-duty Army and Marine Corps provide the same training, but "interestingly enough, we are the only National Guard RTI teaching live breach charges right now," said Sgt. 1st Class Paul Deegan, RTI course manager.

National Guard engineer units couldn't be more pleased, either. The RTI offers a sensible, convenient training forum. Command Sgt. Maj. Orville Wang, 164th RTI commandant, said the schoolhouse attracts Guard engineers from all 50 states and U.S. territories.

"If we didn't have this place, I think the only other alternative would be a much longer course where they would have to train with 'Big Army' at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.," he said. "I think we've got the right recipe here."

The ALC's breach range is just one of the ingredients in the RTI's military education program. The Institute provides 25 fully-accredited engineer courses each year, including training for U.S. Army Engineer Military Occupation Specialties, Noncommissioned Officer Education System classes and the North Dakota National Guard Officer Candidate School.

### MORE BANG FOR THE BUCK

Wang said that, as a whole, engineers receive the best training money can buy at the schoolhouse and they have the materials with which to do it. In regard to the breaching course, he said, "the materials are all pretty much reusable. We have a stack of doors to no end."

Students at the ALC are more than enthusiastic to annihilate that back stock. After assessing the damage made on one of the targets by a charge configuration, an instructor explains to his students, "This is why we love our jobs."

Students at the RTI's live explosive breach range detonate a water impulse charge, pushing a light metal door from its frame.

Bottom left, Staff Sgt. Stephen Taylor, of McKenzie, Tenn., prepares a silhouette charge with detonating cord. The blast charge is used to breach walls — wood or cinder block — and shingled roofs.

It's an applicable aspect of the job, too. Engineers currently use the same breaching techniques in Iraq and Afghanistan. Wang said Soldiers use the explosives to get inside buildings and clear them while causing a minimal amount of damage.

"The combat engineer, a lot of times, will be integrated with infantry squads because we have explosive backgrounds," said Staff Sgt. Bradley Bergeron, RTI instructor.

Deegan explains, "What we're taught in breach school is to use the minimum amount of explosives to affect 100 percent of the target, so what you calculate for is the smallest amount that will successfully get through the target."

The instructors consider every detonation a "test shot." This allows their students to learn what is going to work if they ever have to use the techniques in a combat theater. Results between the different explosive configurations can vary.

"For instance, I know what a water impulse charge on a light, metal door will do," Deegan said. "I know because we've done it so many times."

Staff Sgt. Bradley Bergeron, left, an instructor with the 164th RTI, assesses the damage after students detonate an explosives charge at Camp Grafton South's live explosive breach range.

### OLD SCHOOL TO NEW SCHOOL

That type of repetition in training has translated into a staff of knowledgeable instructors who round out a full-time force of nearly 90 personnel at the RTI. The team saw the unveiling of a new 185,000-square-foot building in August and relocated into the facility at the end of September. The first of a two-phased project, the building serves as a schoolhouse and billeting location for military engineers and officer candidates from across the country.

The new building boasts 60 rooms for housing students, plumbing and electrical labs, an assembly hall with volleyball courts and basketball hoops, a 25,000-square-foot storage space to house carpentry, electrical, masonry and plumbing materials and an indoor running track incorporated into the corridor system — a feature that visitors from warmer states can appreciate during the North Dakota winters.

"We've got people from Louisiana, South Carolina and even Puerto Rico that come up here a lot," Bergeron said. "Their cold is putting on a jacket and our cold is putting on another four or five layers of jackets. It's definitely an experience for them."

Nearly 2,500 students are projected to attend courses at the RTI in 2011. With the influx of students to the school, a second phase for the building construction project is scheduled to begin in 2017, which will add 68,000 square feet for two additional billeting wings. That space is vital considering that the 164th RTI trains nearly 60 percent of all Reserve Component U.S. Army Engineers.

Equally vital has been the RTI's solid relationship with the active-duty Army at Fort Leonard Wood and National Guard Bureau. Wang said that the support received by their peers has helped the RTI in coordinating their curriculum, determining funding processes and developing methods for training their Soldiers.

"Fort Leonard Wood puts their arm around us," he said. "They don't say, 'follow me.' They say, 'How can we do this.' This relationship is priceless and it's taken years to achieve."

You can add it to the list of notable achievements for the RTI. In 2008, the 164th received a "Fully Accredited" rating during an accreditation review by the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood by achieving success in all evaluated areas and scoring in the highest percentile for U.S. Army training standards.

In 2005, the RTI became the first engineer school to achieve an "Institute of Excellence" status from the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

Wang is optimistic that even better things are yet to come.

"We're just starting to touch our capabilities and where we're going in the future," he said.

## 191st MP Company Hosts Dining Out Event

The N.D. National Guard's 191st Military Police Company celebrated the holiday season this year with a "Dining Out" in Fargo, N.D., Dec. 11. The military celebration has become a December tradition for the unit, which was reactivated three years ago.

The military Dining Out tradition is very formal, but also is designed to enhance the camaraderie and social rapport of a unit, and in this case, the Families, as well.

The night was full of laughter, heavy hearts, appreciation, military traditions, food and special ceremonies. Company commander, Capt. Krisopher Elijah, led the first toast, and the company's youngest Soldier had the honor of the last.

Along with all of the ceremonies and traditions, the night also revealed the strong unit camaraderie and morale. The Dining Out gives the Soldiers the chance to remember how special things can be with their closest friends, fellow brothers and sisters in arms, and most importantly, family.

"It is important to show everybody that we are all one family. Families serve, too," said Spc. Mark Sertich, of Grand Forks.

Sgt. Jonathan Haugen

**Capt. Kristopher Elijah, 191st Military Police Company commander, addresses honored guests, Soldiers and family members during the company's annual Dining Out event. Also seated at the head table are, from left, Esther Sailer, Chaplain (Capt.) Brock Sailer, Brig. Gen. William Seekins, Lisa Elijah, Lt. Col. Lonnie Punton and Becky Punton. In the foreground is a Missing Man Table, honoring those who are missing in action.**

## Medical Team Among Best in Global Strike Command

A N.D. Air National Guard medical team has been named the best among Air Guard medical units in the Air Force Global Strike Command.

The 219th Security Forces Squadron medical team, of Minot, N.D., received the 2010 Air Force Global Strike Command Lt. Gen. George C. Schafer Trophy for Outstanding Air National Guard Medical Unit of the Year. They will now go on to compete for the Air Force-wide National Guard Medical Unit of the Year.

The Air Force's 5th Medical Group, which is based at Minot Air Force Base, nominated the 219th for the award.

"It's an honor for our medical team to be recognized by Air Force Global Strike Command for this award," said Lt. Col. Tad Schauer, 219th Security Forces Squadron commander. "Our medical personnel have performed exemplary service since the squadron was activated in 2008. They implemented a first-of-its-kind Personnel Reliability Program, ensuring the reliability of traditional Guardsmen to perform nuclear security operations. Additionally, they have taken on medical procedures not previously offered at the base, resulting in a significant cost savings."

# Professional Development Workshop 2011

N.D. National Guard members and their Families are invited to participate in the 2011 Professional Development Workshop: The National Guard — Moving Forward at the Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, N.D., March 4-5. The event is being held concurrently with the annual North Dakota Adjutant General's Symposium for Families and N.D. National Guard Youth Symposium, both of which which will be held March 4-6.

The N.D. National Guard has hosted the Professional Development Workshop events for several years. The focus for the events is to give rising leaders from both services, and at all levels, the tools and information they need to face the missions ahead, and to train them on how to best take care of themselves, each other and their fellow servicemen and women.

Military children will have the opportunity to attend the N.D. National Guard Youth Symposium during the weekend. Attendees will be assigned to two sections — ages 8- to 12- and 13- to 17-year-olds — and will be busy meeting senior leadership, working and listening to national youth motivational speakers, collaborating with other military youth and, most importantly, having fun!

The TAG Symposium for Families will focus on how you, your family, your unit and others can work together in support of our military Families.

In addition, the 2011 State Combined N.D. National Guard Enlisted and Officer Associations Conference will be held throughout the weekend.

For more information about these events, please visit www.ndngea.com, www.ngand.org or contact your unit readiness noncommissioned officer or unit leadership.





# Chaplain's Corner Thank You, N.D. National Guard

*By Chaplain (Maj.) Maury Millican*
*N.D. Army National Guard*

Recently, I was selected for a full-time training position with 1st Army Division West. Soon, I will be mobilized to active duty at Fort Hood, Texas, as the brigade chaplain for the 120th Infantry Brigade, and I will be leaving North Dakota.

When I moved to North Dakota 14 years ago, I had no idea how much my life and ministry would change. Sept. 11, 2001, changed our world. I was commissioned as a chaplain and joined the N.D. Army National Guard. My years of service in the North Dakota National Guard have been amazing!

Highlights for me include:

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagburg

**Chaplain (Maj.) Maury Millican, right, visits with participants at a monthly Kosovo Force (KFOR) 12 Chaplains' Conference Feb. 19, 2010. Millican was the command chaplain for Multi-National Battle Group-East during his yearlong mobilization to Kosovo in which 650 North Dakota Guardsmen conducted peacekeeping operations from 2009 to 2010.**

**Overseas Deployment as Battalion Chaplain with the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2004-2005.** Our watchword in Iraq was *Destiny: The right people in the right place at the right time for the right purpose.* Task Force Trailblazer saved countless lives and provided freedom of movement throughout the 1st Infantry Division area of responsibility in Iraq. I am especially proud of our Valorous Unit Award because it represents something that we all achieved together as one team, one fight. *Essayons! Let us try!*

**Mobilization to State Active Duty with Task Force East, Operation RollBack Water, Spring 2009.** Multiple ministry teams of chaplains and chaplain assistants from both the Army and the Air National Guard worked together to fill sandbags, provide religious support to Soldiers and Airmen and to calm the fears and anxieties of the citizens of North Dakota. When asked why we had so many chaplains and chaplain assistants on the ground, I told the commander that we were prepared not just for ministry to 2,000 Soldiers and Airmen, but 65,000 citizens still in Fargo. I remember the day I prayed with Bishop Aquila in Fargo, and he spoke a blessing on the waters. Prayer does not minimize or negate the hard work of filling sandbags and walking dikes, but it's a part of full-spectrum operations.

**Overseas Deployment as Brigade Chaplain with the 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Support of KFOR 12, Operation Enduring Freedom, 2009-2010.** Our watchword in Kosovo was: *Blessed are the peacemakers.* This peace-enforcement operation provided a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for the people of Kosovo. We worked with units from all over the United States and the world. Religious support operations included key leader engagements with religious leaders throughout Kosovo. Even though US Army Europe decided to tear down Peacekeeper Chapel during our rotation, KFOR 12 chaplains and chaplain assistants provided world-class religious support to Soldiers in Multi-National Battle Group East.

**Honoring our Fallen Heroes and Caring for Families of the Fallen.** Though it has been difficult emotional work, it has been important work. Notification Teams, Honor Guard Teams, Family Assistance Teams, Chaplains and Social Worker Teams — thanks for all you do. We can never forget the ultimate sacrifice which Soldiers KIA have made for the sake of freedom. And we are doing the right thing when we care (even in small ways) for Families of the Fallen. I challenge you to make a personal commitment to never forget the warriors and Families who have paid the ultimate price for freedom. We are never too busy to take the time to honor our Fallen Heroes. Even on the battlefield, we took tactical pauses to conduct memorial ceremonies. And I am especially grateful for the North Dakota Memorial to the Fallen in the Global War on Terrorism located outside of Fraine Barracks in Bismarck, ND. I will never forget. These experiences have impacted me for a lifetime.

To the commanders I have worked for, to the staff officers I have worked with and to the Soldiers and Airmen I have served, thanks for letting me be a part of the team. You are the best! I will always be grateful for my experiences with the N.D. National Guard.

And remember you always have a friend in Texas. Feel free to contact me at maury.millican@us.army.mil.

God Bless you. *Pro Deo et Patria!*
*For God and country!*

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

**Chief Master Sgt. Paul Tangen, of the 119th Wing, dons a specially-made camouflage Santa suit as he gets a hug from a resident of the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon, N.D., Dec. 15, during the annual N.D. National Guard-sponsored Christmas party at the Veterans Home. N.D. Air and Army National Guard members raise money for gifts and present them to the Veterans at the nursing home each year during the holiday season.**