



NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN

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Leading N.D. Troops

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The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award recognizes Air Force units for achievements of national or international significance, including successful involvement with military operations or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing force. The 119th Wing just collected its 15th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN

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Digital photos should be 300 dpi, if possible.

On the Cover



N.D. National Guard instructors from the Regional Training Institute out of Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake conduct bridge crewmember training with Missouri Soldiers preparing for deployment to Afghanistan at Lake Nelson in Oliver County April 5.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Brett Miller, N.D. National Guard Visual Information

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GUARD POSTS

Dispatches from the N.D. Guard Family

GREETINGS FROM THE NEW SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER FOR THE N.D. NATIONAL GUARD

First off, I want to say that I'm honored to be your new senior enlisted leader. For those whom I haven't met yet, let me introduce myself.

I am Chief Master Sgt. James Gibson, and I have been a member of the N.D. Air National Guard for 33 years. I served for more than 32 years in the 119th Security Forces Squadron, and for the last eight months I have been delegated to the chief of information protection position. In that position, I work to ensure security clearances are current and valid and classified materials are handled properly.

Some of you may ask, what exactly does the senior enlisted leader do? In a condensed version, my duties will include advising the adjutant general on all enlisted matters affecting training and utilization, health of the force, and enlisted professional development of N.D. National Guard Airmen and Soldiers. Additionally, I will provide a conduit of communication both up to and down from the adjutant general. Finally, I will represent the enlisted force on several different councils.

To accomplish these duties, one of my goals will be to visit all of the units and

talk with all of you in formal and informal settings. This may take some time because there are nearly 4,400 of you and only one of me.

When I was asked to write this article, it was suggested that I describe some of my thoughts about leadership and mentorship. The following are some guiding principles that I have tried to use so far in my career:

BE FAIR

Being fair should come easy because it is one of the first lessons you learn as a kid. It may get hard sometimes because of rules and regulations, but you should always ask yourself if your decisions are fair.

BE CONSISTENT

Sometimes this could be looked at as being fair, but there is often a difference. Being consistent means your people can expect the same treatment, or reward, for the same actions.

MAKE DECISIONS THAT ARE RIGHT FOR THE UNIT

This means setting aside your personal opinion about someone or your relationship



CHIEF MASTER SGT.
JAMES GIBSON

Senior Enlisted Leader
N.D. National Guard

with them to make decisions that are best for the unit. This doesn't mean you can't be a caring leader, it just means that you should be impartial.

PROVIDE PRODUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Conduct timely appraisals or feedback sessions, and be honest and constructive. This provides a road map for individuals to improve themselves for promotion or more responsibilities.

If you follow these things, will it make everything run perfectly? No. You are going to have issues to deal with, and most of them involve your people. However, I think in the long run, the number of issues you will have to deal with will be reduced if you try to follow these simple rules.

In closing, I would like to wish Command Sgt Maj. Dan Job well in his retirement and thank him for his more than 40 years of service to the N.D. National Guard. He was the first senior enlisted leader in the N.D. National Guard, and he blazed the trail for this position within the state. His dedication to the Guard was very evident during the transition time and when I had the opportunity to work with him.

Thank you.

James Gibson

“ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL IS THAT GOOD MEN DO NOTHING.”

— EDMUND BURKE (1729-1797)

BREAKING

THROUGH THE CAMOUFLAGE CEILING



Changes in force structure have brought expanded opportunities for women in the N.D. National Guard

By Sgt. 1st Class David Dodds, 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Public Affairs

For Col. Giselle “Gigi” Wilz, it’s not her father’s National Guard anymore – and in many ways, that’s made all the difference for her.

Wilz grew up in a Guard family. Her father, Charles, and two older brothers were all combat engineers that started their careers in Dickinson. But, in 1983, when Wilz, a senior at Richardton High School, enlisted into the National Guard, following her father and brothers’ lead and taking a job as a combat engineer was not an option because she was female.

Typical roles for women Soldiers back then were limited to noncombat jobs such as administration, supply or maintenance.

But things have come a long way since, and, today, Wilz, as commander of the 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, leads a combat-support unit comprising men and women in all sorts of military jobs — combat and otherwise.

In fact, from September 1999 to June 2003, the same Wilz, who, at the beginning of her Guard career, couldn’t join a combat engineer unit because of her gender, was named officer in charge of the 164th Engineer Battalion, the headquarters for a number of engineer companies in western North Dakota, including her father’s old unit in Dickinson.

“The line units were still male only,” Wilz said. “But the headquarters had opened up to women.”

Wilz now holds the distinction of being the first woman to rise from an enlisted Soldier to the rank of “full-bird” colonel all while a member of the N.D. Army National Guard.

“It seems like in a great many ways my career was in perfect timing in terms of advancements of female opportunities in the Guard,” Wilz said. “One could say, unlike some of my predecessors, the stars were better aligned for me.”

Not interested in a military career in “admin” or supply or turning wrenches, Wilz started

out as a military police officer in the 191st Military Police Company, in Mandan. She was one of only a handful of female Soldiers in the unit. After returning from Advanced Individual Training, she promptly jumped at the chance to be commissioned, thinking she'd have greater opportunities as an officer.

She was right, thanks, in large part to a changing force structure in North Dakota that grew beyond combat engineer units. Choices all of a sudden were plentiful -- engineering units, quartermaster opportunities, military police and aviation — became part of the career landscape.

During the next few years, Wilz would branch as a quartermaster officer and then transfer to engineers. She would hold leadership positions in quartermaster and engineer units. She also served in Operation Desert Storm in 1990 and Operation Enduring Freedom in Kosovo mission from 2009-10.

A more recent change in force structure brought the 141st MEB to North Dakota's arsenal, creating more upward mobility opportunities for competent officers regardless of gender — especially at the top. Wilz succeeded Col. Lannie Runck as commander of the 141st MEB at a change of commander ceremony on Sept. 16, 2012.

Based in Fargo, the 141st MEB encompasses more than 1,400 Soldiers in units throughout eastern North Dakota.

Though, she's never been one to dwell on it, Wilz said, she has dealt with the good ol' boy system in her career, sometimes it had more to do with traditional culture in North Dakota, "still predominately male dominated."

"But even today we are still fighting those stereotypes in which success is attributed to a female as an individual, but failure is often attributed to the entire gender," she said.

Wilz need only look within her own brigade to see how much progress has been made in her 30 years in uniform. Her deputy commander is a woman, Lt. Col. Debra Lien. Lien, who started her military career with the Wahpeton-based Company B, 142nd Engineer Combat Battalion, has served in the N.D. National Guard for 20 years.

Also, both of the 141st MEB's major battalions — the 231st Combat Support Battalion and the 188th Air Defense Battalion — are run day-to-day by women officers in charge: Maj. Anna Wittrock and JoDee Aubol, respectively.

"I think they have more opportunities, more cultural walls have been knocked down, and face it, these young female Soldiers have proven themselves on the battlefield," Wilz said. "I hope my success has opened more opportunities for them."

Wittrock, a 13-year member of the N.D. National Guard, said she's fortunate to have had mentors like Wilz who've paved the way for all females.

"When I joined the Guard and earned my commission, I felt I had the same opportunities as male Soldiers," she said. "It was about being the best fit for the position, not whether or you were male or female."

Earlier this year, the Pentagon rescinded rules that prohibited women from serving in combat on the front lines. Wittrock and Aubol applaud the move but both agree that the gesture was somewhat moot.

"Women have been on the so-called 'front lines' ever since the Global War on Terrorism began after 9/11," Wittrock said. "So as far as being in combat, they're already there, but I do think the new policy might open doors for schools that, in the past, were restricted to males only."

Aubol, a 12-year Guard veteran, agrees.

"I've always been under the philosophy that gender should be irrelevant as long as you can perform the duties and responsibilities," she said.

Lien, Wittrock and Aubol are among nearly 560 female Soldiers assigned to the N.D. Army National Guard. Females make up 17 percent of the total Army Guard force in the state, or put another way, nearly 1 in 5 North Dakota Soldiers are women.

Of those, 403 are considered "millennials" (born between 1982-2000), 126 are considered "Gen X," (1965-1981), and 28 are Baby Boomers (1946-1964), according to recent N.D. Guard data.

In the N.D. Air Guard, nearly 200 airmen are women, or 20 percent of the total force. 112 are millennials, 73 are Gen X and 13 are Baby Boomers.

Wilz does have a bit of advice to share with all of these women — enlisted or commissioned — that she learned from three decades of service to her country.

"If you love it, commit to it," she says. "When you get an opportunity take it. When someone tells you 'you can't do it,' prove them wrong — and always be true to yourself." ■

COOKED

TO

PERFECTION

Photos by Sgt. Sara Marchus, 116th Public Affairs Detachment

164th Regiment Regional Training Institute Serves up Training for Food Service Soldiers

By Pfc. Zachary Schuster, 116th Public Affairs Detachment

Three Soldiers huddled around an aluminum table in the kitchen area of Building 3840 at Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake. The Soldiers, with their patrol caps on and uniform tops off, arranged three different kinds of meat and cheese between two slices of submarine sandwich bread. Two others — with their blouses on — carried items from one area of the kitchen to another.

As the Soldiers worked, a handful of noncommissioned officers looked on — carefully observing their efforts. One of the Soldiers at the table turned to a nearby enlisted leader.

“Is this enough, sergeant?” he asked, pointing to his sandwich.

The sergeant looked it over.

“Yep, those portions are much better.”

The five Soldiers working were half of a 10-person class of trainees in the food service specialist military occupation specialty training course. Earlier that morning, the other half of the trainees had prepared breakfast, which consisted of eggs-to-order, pancakes, grits and bacon.

That particular day marked the end of three weeks of training. In just 24 hours, the class would begin the final week of class, which

consists of preparing meals in the field. Until then, training would focus on proficiency in the kitchen.

“The goal is for them to leave with the knowledge and tools to succeed in food service,” said Staff Sgt. Brad Hillebrand, one of the food service specialist course instructors for the 164th Regiment Regional Training Institute at Camp Grafton.

Ten minutes before noon, the five trainees on duty lined up behind the cafeteria bar at the front of the kitchen, a full lunch meal laid out in front of them — submarine sandwiches, cole slaw, beef and barley soup with soda crackers and toffee bars for dessert. At the end of the line, to drink, they offered white and chocolate milk, coffee and lemon-lime juice.

Right at noon, about a dozen Soldiers cycled through the serving line, as trainees served food onto trays. The hungry Soldiers included instructors, fellow trainees, and Camp Grafton employees, who all added realism to the exercise and allowed the trainees to fulfill the serving component of the training.

After going through the line, the Soldiers carried their full trays to dining tables on the other side of the room, passing a dozen

stoves where the trainees had spent the first phase of their training, cooking and baking almost three dozen recipes during the course of two weeks. After the meal, the Soldiers completed evaluations covering everything from the appearance of the serving line and sanitation, to quality, size, presentation and portion of the meal.

“A lot of us have done food service before, unofficially,” said Spc. Corey Sinz, one of the students. “We’re going to go back and be able to lead our kitchens and have a better grasp of what to expect.”

The course — now two years old — mirrors food service specialist training for active-duty Soldiers. In fact, the quality of the facilities and training at Camp Grafton has such a high reputation within the National Guard that it attracts Soldiers from all over the nation — including California, which already offers its own form of food service specialist training.

Instructors at the course say they expect to see an increase in demand for training as the Army looks to transition away from contractors to help cut costs. On average, a contractor meal costs between \$7.50 and \$10 per plate, while lunch meals served by food service specialists can cost as little as \$3 per plate.

Within the next two years, to accommodate demand, RTI leaders hope to expand the facilities

and staff. A side room, used as the building’s classroom, will be repurposed to include a dozen more stoves. The course also will add more instructors to build up the organizational and operational capacity of the RTI’s successful food service training program.

Instructors are excited about the course and its future. One even sought a waiver to remain past his mandatory retirement age to continue training students.

With the meal over, the students huddled around tables inside the classroom and conducted a quick review. The meal was a success, but preparing a good meal eventually leads to a good amount of cleanup. Trainees quickly moved to restore the kitchen to a clean and orderly state.

Not long from then, they’d be outside the warmth of the kitchen and in the brutal cold of North Dakota, serving pre-packaged meals from mobile kitchens. And, in just eight days and a wake up, they’d be qualified as food service specialists, ready to go back to their home states of Alaska, Colorado, Missouri, Oregon, Virginia, Arizona, California and Minnesota.

Until then, though, there were stovetop vents that needed to be cleaned. ■



(Opposite page) Soldiers training in the Food Service Specialist course at Camp Grafton, near Devils Lake, manage a cafeteria-style food line on Jan. 28. The meal, which the Soldiers also had prepared, consisted of a three-meat submarine sandwich and a variety of sides. (Above, top right) Sgt. Adam Villa, one of the trainees, cleans a pot. Villa was one of 10 Soldiers enrolled in the course. (Above, bottom) Student-Soldiers clean up the kitchen and their cooking materials following the meal. Instructors at the course have a set cleaning routine for students to follow.

Celebrating MILITARY CHILDREN

The N.D. National Guard celebrated the “Month of the Military Child” with families and the community in April. The month, which is meant to recognize the sacrifices and applaud the courage of military children, was filled with plenty of fun activities for our Guard youths, including an activities fair and a day camp.

This month, two N.D. Guard teens — Miranda Tubridy and Elizabeth Somdahl — share a bit about what it's like to be the child of a military member.

by Miranda Tubridy

I have always been a military child. My dad was active duty Air Force for 21 years as a security policeman, retiring as an E6. He spent time overseas in Greece and Italy before I was born. In the early years of my childhood, he was deployed to Panama, Cuba, Qatar and Oman. When I was 4 years old, he was stationed in Florida and at the time he and my mom were divorced. This meant that I was only able to spend the next two summers with him. Being away from him during the school year made me miss him more, and my mom told me many times that I would question why he couldn't just live closer to us.

I have memories of him being gone and often wondering when I was going to be able to see or talk to him again. At first I didn't understand why he had to go away for so long and what he was going there to do, but my mom always assured me that he was going there for training, to help protect our country, and he would be safe.

Being a military child has taught me to be thankful for the time I have. Although I didn't see my dad as much as my friends, I knew how much he loved me. Unfortunately, I think that with him being away quite a bit when I was a child, I don't feel as though I'm as close to him as my girlfriends do to their fathers. Some of this was because I saw my mom having to “just work it out,” and she had to carry out the role of both parents. She and I had to solve problems together.

Deployments can have minimal or severe effects on families, and I truly believe that this depends on how it is handled. A lot of the struggles that people go through are a result of their attitudes. If you stay positive and hopeful, the time away from your loved one will be much easier and go by quicker. Now that my dad has retired from the Air Force, he is working a “normal” job, and I am able to see him whenever I please. This is a time in which we can build our relationship, which is pretty cool since I'm almost 17 years old and I'm going to be on my own in just a little more than a year.

Although my dad has retired, I'm still a military child. My stepdad has been part of the N.D. National Guard for three years, and prior to this he was active duty in the Marine Corps. I remember when my brothers were 4 and 5 years old, my stepdad was gone for 8 weeks to Officer Candidate School in Alabama. The memories of my time away from my dad came back, and I could relate to some of the fears that they were feeling. I knew that I need to step in and help my mom keep a positive attitude during this time. He was also gone for 16 weeks to BOLC at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., but during this time we were able to make a trip there for a visit. It was a struggle to get into a “normal” schedule at home without the help of another person, but it eventually got easier. My mom would say, “If we can only get through the first 10 days, everything else will be OK”. Being a military child has made me more independent and helps me accept changes that come into my life. Although it's not always easy, with the support of family and friends, challenges like deployments can be easier. ■



Miranda Tubridy is the daughter of mom, Amy Fankanel, and stepdad, Jonathan Fankanel, of Pelican Rapids, Minn., and dad, Dave Tubridy, also of Pelican Rapids.

by Elizabeth Somdahl

People who fight for our country make many sacrifices for us, but people don't usually think that the family members, including their children, also make sacrifices. Being a military child can be a struggle for many kids, especially when one or both of their parents get deployed. It also gets hard not seeing a family member for long periods of time. Being a military child, it can get hard if you have to move because a family member has changed duty stations, and getting adjusted to unexpected changes can be difficult and stressful. Sometimes it's hard to focus on important things, such as school, and it can start to make your grades drop.

When I was younger, there were big changes at the Air National Guard in Fargo. My dad was one of the many who needed to train into a new job, and he was deployed to Nevada for almost seven months. During that time, he wasn't home for my birthday, Thanksgiving, Christmas or my mom's birthday. My mom and my brothers had to do all of the family chores when my dad wasn't home to take care of us. While dad was gone, we got involved with school activities and sports to help keep our mind occupied and do something positive while he was away. My family tried to keep in contact with my dad by email, mail and lots of phone calls back and forth. I missed having him come to my events at school and just having him around the house. I was also kind of mad when my dad left because it also meant more work for me to do around the house, which I didn't like very much when I was at that young.

Aside from a few struggles seven years ago, I've enjoyed doing new things. I've met a lot of children and Guard families during family day activities at the Air National Guard and through the National Guard Youth Council meetings. Two years ago, my family prepared and served a huge dinner for everyone working Christmas day. (There was a blizzard that day also). Right now, the National Guard Youth Council and I are working on a project to produce a video about helping other children cope with having their parents deployed. We also did a service project to decorate the Ronald McDonald House for families during the holiday season.

I am proud to be part of a military family. To know my family is serving our country is a great feeling. Being part of military family allows many great opportunities. Having my dad deployed helped me become a stronger person on the inside. It helped me realize important things, like people come and go, and you should appreciate the days with the people that you have while you have them. To know my dad could be deployed again at any time makes me appreciate him even more. I know a military family who loves and supports each other can get through all of the hard times yet to come. Being a military child may get hard at times, but I'm glad I am one. ■

Elizabeth Somdahl is the daughter of Master Sgt. Dave and Roberta Somdahl of Moorhead, Minn.



Military Children

More than 1.7 million American children younger than 18 have at least one parent serving in the military. Since 2001, an estimated two million children have experienced a parent's deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Youth Fish Camp, June 10-14 in Garrison
- Youth Camp, July 14-18 in Washburn
- Family Retreat, Aug. 9-11 in Cooperstown

For more information about child and youth programming, visit www.facebook.com/NDNGCYP or contact Beth Sandeen or Nicole Cook, child and youth program coordinators for Service Member and Family Support, at 701-451-6109 or 701-333-4822.



HIGH-INTENSITY TRAINING HELPS MEDICS STAY SHARP

By Spc. Whitney Montonye, 164th Engineer Battalion

Combat medics from the N.D. National Guard's 164th Engineer Battalion conducted recertification and validation training recently. As part of the recertification and validation, which is conducted annually, medics are tested on the ability to react and treat patients in two separate scenarios — one where a patient experiences a medical issue such as a heart-attack, and another where a casualty has experienced battlefield trauma.

This year, Staff Sgt. Matthew McKinney, 164th medical section sergeant, increased the intensity for the training by incorporating realistic moulage, including visible, mock injuries and fake blood applied to the body of each "casualty." McKinney says the moulage is meant to help his medics prepare better for some of the worst scenarios they may face.

"Preparing for this event can be challenging within an already cramped training schedule," McKinney said. "But all the extra time put into coordinating this event is worth it."

McKinney believes his medics can walk away with confidence, knowing "when things are at their worst, they will be at their best."

Spc. Daryn Hoover, 164th medic, has been a medic in the N.D. Guard for more than 19 years. He believes this year's validation training was extremely helpful.

"I learned what my deficiencies were, real quick and in a

hurry," Hoover said.

He said the textbook learning and regular hands-on combat medic training increase skills and lead to muscle memory, but the increased intensity and realistic training environment of this event were incredibly valuable.

"When you're deployed, you don't walk into a room and have someone tell you, 'this is your patient and these are his injuries,'" Hoover said. "In a real life scenario, you can't turn down the intensity. You can't afford to go into 'shock phase' because you have to actually treat your patient and pay attention to whether the treatments you are applying are effective."

Hoover deployed to Iraq with the 164th in 2007 and extended his tour for a second year with a unit from the Arkansas Army National Guard.

As a full-time trainer with the N.D. Guard's Pre-Deployment Training and Assistance Element, McKinney said he has learned that Soldiers most enjoy realistic and dynamic training, and he is proud that his medics successfully completed the enhanced recertification and validation.

"They are not easy tasks," McKinney said. "I know I put my medics in difficult situations and scenarios, but I do it to instill confidence in them, so they know they can do any job set before them." ■



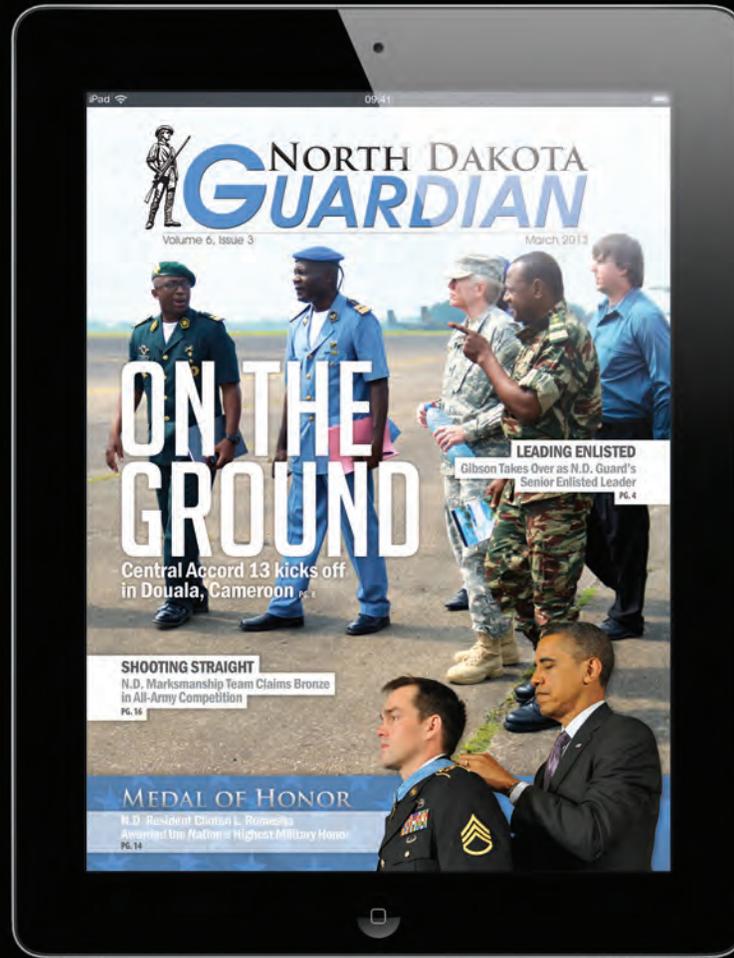
**SUBMISSION
UPAR
OF THE MONTH**

Photo by Spc. Whitney Montonye, 164th Engineer Battalion

Staff Sgt. Matthew McKinney (standing), medical section sergeant for the 164th Engineer Battalion, simulates arterial bleeding from the arm of Spc. Ryan Mertens while Spc. Mick Wehrman, 164th medic, reaches into his aid bag for a Combat Action Tourniquet to stop the "bleeding" during the 164th medics' recertification and validation training in Minot recently.

Are you a Unit Public Affairs Representative (UPAR)? Submit your stories and photos to the N.D. Guardian! Email Microsoft Word documents or PDFs and high-resolution photos to Staff Sgt. Eric Jungels at eric.p.jungels.mil@mail.mil.

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DISASTER PREPARATION

Story by Staff Sgt. Eric Jungels
N.D. National Guard Public Affairs

THERE WAS NO FLOODING. OR FIRE. OR SECURITY THREAT.

It wasn't an emergency that compelled leaders from Ghana's military, law enforcement agencies, and disaster response organization to convene in Accra, Ghana, Africa in the latter half of March.

Instead, representatives of a number of Ghanaian government organizations gathered for a course in pedagogy and incident command led by the N.D. National Guard and the N.D. Department of Emergency Services. Representatives from Ghana's army, navy, air force, fire and police departments, ambulance service, airport authority, cocoa industry and National Disaster Management Organization (known as NADMO) rounded out the diverse student base for the course.

While those who made up the Disaster Planning and Preparedness Program's inaugural cohort are not educators by trade, the pedagogical training was designed to equip participants with tools and frameworks that can be used to teach domestic response forces throughout Ghana for years to come. The training, which took place March 16-30, was the first phase of the Disaster Planning and Preparedness Program, or DP3, a new initiative championed by Maj. Brock Larson, N.D. State Partnership Program director.

"The first DP3 course gave us a good foundation to work from, and it really set the tone for the program," Maj. Shannon Horton, training and exercise officer for the Bismarck-based Joint Force Headquarters, said of the program, which is meant to aid in preparing Ghana to protect people and property through coordinated and effective disaster response.

Horton expressed admiration for Larson's guidance and efforts in launching the DP3 program. Horton believes the success of the first phase of the program was indicative of the amount of time,



Maj. Shannon Horton, training and exercise officer for the Bismarck-based Joint Force Headquarters, addresses media and students during the opening ceremony and press conference for the first Disaster and Planning Preparedness Program class in Accra, Ghana. Horton is seated next to Sherry Adams and Joe Lies. They are all instructors for the course, which took place March 16-30.

STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The State Partnership Program is a 65-nation, 20-year-old National Guard initiative that provides unique capacity-building capabilities to combatant commanders and U.S. ambassadors through partnerships between U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia and foreign countries. The N.D. and Ghana Partnership was created in 2004 and focuses mainly on building the peacekeeping capacity of Ghana's armed forces and defense support to civilian agencies.



Bill Brown, southwest regional coordinator for the N.D. Department of Emergency Services and former deputy police chief, teaches methods of instruction during the first Disaster and Planning Preparedness Program (DP3) class in Accra, Ghana. DP3 is a new three-year initiative for the N.D. National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Contributed photo

N.D. NATIONAL GUARD WORKS WITH GHANAIAI LEADERS TO READY RESPONSE

energy and thought Larson puts into the N.D. National Guard's partnership with Ghana.

"Maj. Larson is a visionary," Horton said. "He has a great perception of where North Dakota should go with the State Partnership Program."

Horton said that the success of the program was also due in large part to the dedication, professionalism and experience of the instructor staff. Maj. Phil Baker, of the N.D. National Guard's Fargo-based 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Sherry Adams, of the Southwestern District Health Unit based out of Dickinson, Bill Brown and Joe Lies, both of DES, and Horton all traveled to Ghana to deliver course content and share their experiences. In addition to their experience with the Guard and with DES, Baker and Brown have many years of experience in customs and border protection, and police work, respectively.

"Our diverse backgrounds encouraged them to begin working together," Lies said. "Also, our experiences and first-hand knowledge lent credibility to the training. When Bill spoke, for instance, the police perked up and listened intently."

The Ghanaians attending the course had good reason to pay close attention to the instructors, who were able to share real-world examples of organized and structured disaster response, including the emergency response services the instructors personally coordinated during unprecedented flooding throughout North Dakota in 2011.

Horton, who described Ghana as the North Dakota of Africa because of the similarities in natural resources and natural disasters each geographic location and population faces, also said the course gave trainees an opportunity to network and establish a base for inter-organizational communication that hadn't existed before March.

"The Ghanaians were attentive and motivated to learn," Horton said. "Most of them had never spoken or met before, and very little coordination between their agencies had ever occurred. The



Contributed photo

From left to right, Maj. Caesar Awos-Badek and Lt. Col. Lloyd Ator, both of the Ghana Army, and Alex Adjevie, deputy superintendent of police for the Ghana Police Service, work together on a tabletop exercise related to flood emergency planning and response during the Disaster and Planning Preparedness Program class in Accra, Ghana.

course got them talking and gave them a lot of incident command planning and response practices and standards to teach and implement. Overall, the course was a great success."

With the first phase of the three-year DP3 initiative in the books, Horton said that the N.D. National Guard and DES can look forward to another couple of years of valuable training exercises with Ghanaian military and civilian responders. Under Larson's leadership, North Dakota's State Partnership Program will coordinate with N.D. government agencies to conduct six more DP3 events this fiscal year.

"The DP3 program has been a great addition to the already aggressive event schedule that the N.D. National Guard has with Ghana," Larson said. "This program has allowed us to bring the strength of North Dakota's civilian agencies to bear in Ghana, which is an extremely important milestone for our partnership. Our teams go in as cohesive military-civilian groups, with the aim of modeling military subordination and cooperation with civilian agencies, while — at the same time — delivering a program that increases the capacity of NADMO to prepare and respond to disasters in Ghana." ■

GUARDIAN

Snapshots

MAKING A SPLASH

N.D. National Guard instructors from the Regional Training Institute out of Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake conduct bridge crewmember training with Missouri Soldiers preparing for deployment to Afghanistan at Lake Nelson in Oliver County April 5.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Brett Miller, 116th Public Affairs Detachment



AIR DEFENSE

Spc. Robert Klettke, team gunner, and Sgt. Tad Thompson, team chief, practice air defense crew drills April 23 with the man-portable air-defense system at Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake. The Soldiers spent three weeks at camp to prepare for a National Capital Region defense mission with their unit, 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Brett Miller, 116th Public Affairs Detachment

CREW CHIEF-ING

Senior Airman Zachary Bjerke secures a pallet on a C-130 en route for Kadena Air Base, Japan, Feb. 2 at Hector Air National Guard Base in Fargo. Members from the 119th Wing battled below-zero temperatures and blowing snow to prepare for the training mission.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathanael Baardson, 119th Wing Public Affairs



A DAY AT THE WING

Firefighters Staff Sgt. Kyle Ransom, left, and Staff Sgt. Peter Amstrup help Samuel Green, 7, spray a fire hose at a burning target during a Pilot for a Day tour April 12 at the N.D. Air National Guard in Fargo. Samuel has a serious medical condition and is being treated to a special day as a general officer at the Air National Guard base. The day includes a tour, a chance to operate the controls of a flight simulator, time in a C-21 Lear jet cockpit, a firetruck ride, and some time on a fire hose.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing

AIR GUARD EVOLUTION



THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS HERE FOR SOME

By Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing

The first manning documents for the Intelligence Targeting Group (that is the official name for it at this time) have arrived at the N.D. Air National Guard, and positions have begun to be advertised. With no manned flying mission on the horizon, it is time for some members to look at new career opportunities in the 119th Wing on both the full-time and traditional side.

The first of eight N.D. Air National Guard C-21 Lear jets are expected to leave in May, and the remaining are scheduled to be gone by September, leaving the base with no aircraft on the flight line. While senior leaders of the Guard and elected officials continue to seek an enduring manned flying mission for North Dakota, the time for change is here for some — but there is no need to panic.

“Unit members have seen many changes in recent years and have made seamless transitions, and while this is a different type of transition, it’s also another chance to demonstrate the Wing’s ability to adapt and thrive,” says Col. Kent Olson, 119th Wing commander.

Every attempt will be made by unit leadership to streamline the conversion process and make it as painless as possible.

Both full-time and traditional Airmen should check the web-based Sharepoint home page “Mission Conversion” link for information as well as to complete a cross-training worksheet. Direct any questions to the unit retention office manager, Master Sgt. Tanya Augdahl, at 701-451-2248. Remember: The retention office will be extremely busy, so be patient with questions and responses.

If an Airman’s schedule allows, there may be opportunities for short-notice training schools in the new Geospatial Intelligence (1N1X1) career field.

“Intel is booming. It is a great career field, and if you put your mind to it, you can do it. It is a great opportunity to do something very relevant to our nation’s defense,” said Maj. Micaela Brancato at a recent aircraft maintenance commander’s call.

When Lt. Col. Jackie Huber addressed full-time Airmen last month, she stressed that unit members should ensure their personnel records are in order so that they’re ready for future opportunities.

“So much of a full-time technician’s job is tied to the associated military position ... people will need to take some personal accountability for being prepared,” said Huber, North Dakota National Guard Joint Force Headquarters human resources officer.

Lt. Col. Darrin Anderson is helping to lead this latest conversion for the Wing after having been appointed as the new Intelligence Group commander.

“We’re looking for people who want to go forward with this new mission, and current members will be given a priority,” he said, “but we will also need to recruit new members.” There might not be time to go directly into the position each unit member wants initially in the conversion process, but steps can be taken to get there eventually.

“Don’t let a step backward prevent you from taking several steps forward in the future with this new mission,” Anderson said.

Despite the changes, the Wing’s experienced leaders know that success will again be the outcome.

“Those of us who have been around for a while and had some success know that we have had to adapt to change, and in some cases it has led to great opportunities. This is another one of those times,” said Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Muehler, 119th Wing command chief. “We often have to move out of our comfort zone and be willing to do what is necessary to both better our unit and ourselves in preparing for the future. This is a ‘fantastic’ opportunity for many unit members to excel in a tip of the sword mission. We’ve shown it in performing the Predator and C-21 missions and the ‘Hooligan’ can do attitude will propel the Intel targeting mission into a successful future as well.” ■



Photo by Master Sgt. David H. Lipp
119th Wing

Master Sgt. Tanya Augdahl, 119th Wing retention office manager, left, stands before C-21 aircraft maintenance personnel to describe cross-training procedures during the April unit training assembly at the North Dakota Air National Guard. Unit personnel with jobs pertaining to the C-21 aircraft will need to cross-train into a new career field within the organization as those positions will disappear from the manning document Oct. 1, 2013.

OUT STAND ING

HAPPY HOOLIGANS NAMED AMONG BEST — FOR 15TH TIME

By Sgt. 1st Class Amy Wieser Willson
Joint Force Headquarters

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During a ceremony April 6 at the N.D. Air National Guard base in Fargo, the unit known as the “Happy Hooligans” added yet another accolade to a lengthy list of accomplishments. For the 15th time, the Airmen were honored with the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Being acknowledged as one of the best that many times is a feat achieved by few, if any, other Guard units in history.

“The members of the 119th Wing have proven time and time again that they are the best in the nation, and this award reinforces that distinction,” said Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley, who attended the ceremony. “The fact that the Wing is receiving this Outstanding Unit recognition for the 15th time is even more impressive. Congratulations to the men and women of the 119th Wing for this prestigious honor, and thank you for your distinguished service to our state and nation.”

Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general, added a streamer to the N.D. Air National Guard’s guidon during the ceremony. Airmen in the unit also receive a ribbon to wear on their dress uniforms, and the designation will be added to the unit’s C-21 Lear jets.

“The credit for this award goes to not just your leadership, but to every unit member,” Sprynczynatyk said. “You’ve served here and overseas on a multitude of missions. Beyond reaching nearly a quarter-million accident-free flight hours, you’ve protected our bases and missile fields, kept the Guard’s equipment operational, provided medical support, loaded cargo and personnel onto aircraft, ensured consistent communications, provided civil engineer support, told the Hooligan story through words and pictures, and recruited and retained some of the best Airmen in the entire nation.”

The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award recognizes units across the active-duty Air Force, Reserves and Air National Guard for achievements of national or international significance, including successful involvement with military operations or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing force. Among the N.D. Air National Guard’s accomplishments during the award period — from Oct. 1, 2010, to Sept. 30, 2012 — were more than 100 Airmen who served on overseas deployments.

Among those who deployed were Airmen with the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron’s explosive ordnance disposal team, who are credited with helping to capture 19 high-value targets and taking part in 162 combat operations during more than 3,300 hours of missions “outside the wire” in Afghanistan. The team also helped train more than 300 Afghan National Security Forces on countering the threat of improvised explosive devices, known as IEDs or roadside bombs.

Since the start of the Global War on Terrorism, about 2,400 N.D. Air National Guard members have deployed, with about 30 with the 119th Security Forces Squadron serving in Afghanistan now.

Beyond overseas deployments and state missions for natural disaster response, the award credits the N.D. Air National Guard’s Minot-based 219th Security Forces Squadron as “a model for Total Force Integration.” The Guardsmen work alongside active-duty Airmen at the Minot Air Force Base to support security for the nation’s nuclear enterprise. Together, they were named the best in Global Strike Command.

The culmination of those and other feats resulted in the Air National Guard receiving the award yet again. It was previously honored in 1973, 1974, 1979, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010. ■

Air Defense Artillery Guardsmen Leave for D.C. Deployment

More than a thousand family members, friends and supporters of the N.D. Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment filled the Alerus Center in Grand Forks April 28. They were there to send off more than 200 Soldiers with the unit who will be helping to protect the nation's capital for the next year.

The N.D. Guardsmen will be supporting Operation Noble Eagle as they collaborate with other Department of Defense agencies as part of the integrated air defense system designed to protect the airspace around the National Capital Region. It's the 10th deployment since 2004 that calls upon Guardsmen from the battalion. Despite that, this is the first deployment for about half of the Soldiers.

Lt. Col. Jon Erickson, of Bismarck, N.D., commands the unit and Command Sgt. Maj. Wallace Keller, of Bismarck, is the senior enlisted leader. Together, they have nearly 55 years of military experience.

The 1-188th is headquartered in Grand Forks with units in Bismarck and Fargo. The deploying Soldiers call 27 different N.D. communities home, as well as 12 cities in neighboring states. Additionally, the deploying group includes a number



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp, 119th Wing Spc. Derek Nelson, team gunner, left, and Sgt. Andrew Dozhier, team chief, for the 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment practice air defense crew drills April 23 with the man-portable air-defense system at Camp Grafton Training Center near Devils Lake.

of family members who will be serving together, including three married couples and four pairs of siblings.

See photos online at www.flickr.com/photos/NDGuard and in next month's issue. ■

— By Sgt. 1st Class Amy Wieser Willson
Joint Force Headquarters

N.D. Guard Unit Dominates Army Engineer Awards

The N.D. National Guard's 188th Engineer Company (Vertical), of Wahpeton and Oakes, recently dominated the annual Army Engineer Regiment and Society of American Military Engineers-sponsored awards in the National Guard division by claiming four of the five top military honors.

The 188th Engineer Company was selected as the 2012 Itschner Award winner. The award recognizes the best engineer company in each Army component: active duty, Army Reserve and Army National Guard. It is named in honor of Army Lt. Gen. Emerson C. Itschner, the 39th chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Besides being recognized as the best engineer company in the Army National Guard, the 188th Soldiers captured the Sturgis Medal, "Best Engineer Platoon Leader (Grizzly)" and "Best Engineer Warrant Officer Award" for 2012.

"Never before has one of our units won so many awards simultaneously," Maj Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. adjutant general said. "The Soldiers of the 188th Engineer Company have earned these military distinctions through their outstanding efforts and devotion to duty while deployed as well as their operations within the state. Their dedication and commitment to excellence is an inspiration to all of us."

Sgt. Jeremy F. Knudson, Blanchard, received the Sturgis Medal for outstanding contributions to military troop construction and base maintenance by demonstrating technical and leadership ability by an enlisted Soldier.

Capt. Alan Roehrich, West Fargo, was selected as the "Best Engineer Platoon Leader." The award is presented each year by the Army Engineer Association in each Army component to a single engineer platoon leader judged to have made the most outstanding contributions of leadership and technical skills to military engineering.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Kendall, Lakewood, Colo., was selected as the "Best Engineer Warrant Officer." The award is presented annually by the Army Engineer Association to one engineer warrant officer in each Army component in recognition of outstanding contributions to military engineering by demonstrating technical and leadership ability. ■

— By Bill Prokopyk
N.D. National Guard Public Affairs

N.D. Soldiers participate in Wildland Firefighting training

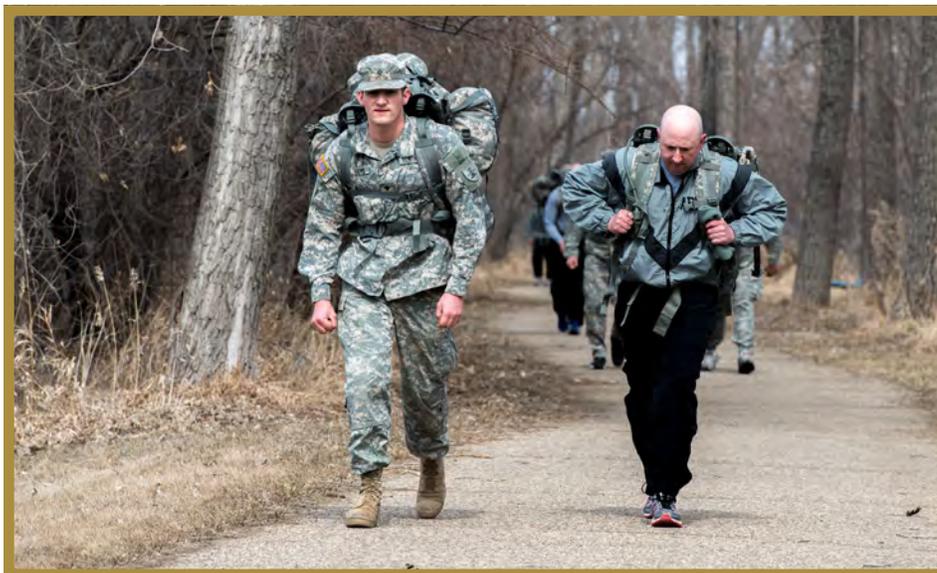


Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Haugen, Joint Force Headquarters

Soldiers march with 45-pound packs on their backs. The N.D. National Guard participated in the recertification portion of the Wildland Fire Behavior and Firefighter Training April 5 in Bismarck. The training covered fire tactics and emergency response in case Guardsmen are needed to respond to wildland fires. Classroom instruction was followed by a three-mile ruck march with a 45-pound pack. The course provides information about the primary factors affecting the start and spread of wildfires and how to recognize potentially hazardous situations.

Chaplain's Corner:

BEATING ZOMBIES?



Finding Life Among the Dead

By Chaplain (Maj.) James Cheney
119th Wing

A quick search on the Internet for the “zombie apocalypse” will turn up a lot of results. This fictional scenario includes all of the thrilling themes many remember from director George A. Romero’s seminal film “Night of the Living Dead.”

Dramatic scenes include zombie attack victims that become flesh-eating zombies themselves. This outbreak of the undead becomes an exponentially growing crisis as the zombie plague quickly spreads — ultimately swamping military and law enforcement organizations and leading to the panicked collapse of civilized society. Eventually, only isolated pockets of survivors remain, scavenging for food and supplies in a world reduced to a pre-industrial hostile wilderness. The bonds of fidelity and trustworthiness are tested and crumble against the onslaught of the undead.

The widespread, cult-like interest with zombies has grown so much that the U.S. government’s Center for Disease Control even used the idea as a theme to promote disaster preparedness.

Speculation abounds as to why so many are taken with the zombie tragedy. Some have suggested this preoccupation with the undead is a way of expressing anxiety over a society bereft of common virtues; adrift from dependable structures; devoid of plain, common sense; and dancing in a paralysis of half-truths and a

mere facade of wisdom.

One of the great questions of biblical scripture asked by an angel on the morning of the resurrection is: “Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

One of the fascinating characteristics of the disciples of Jesus is the pensiveness for

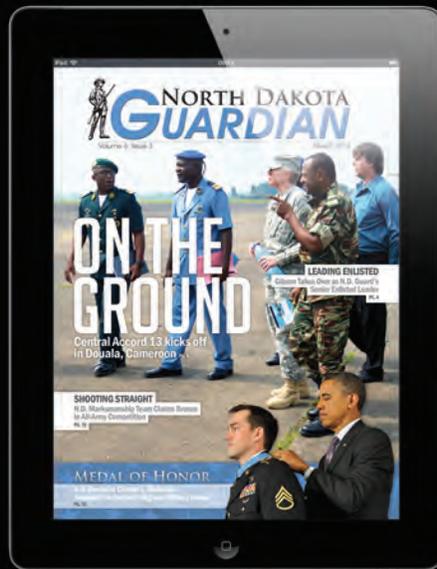
searching — looking for life amidst the dead.

Spring is a great occasion to witness the power of God as he brings life from lifelessness. As we finally enter into this time of grace, let’s search within our hearts and lives for signs of life that may be hidden by our own anxieties and worries. Let our wonder of the question of the angel and the power of God give us the courage to look for life among our challenges. ■



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric A. Johnson, 119th Wing

Maj. James Cheney, 119th Wing chaplain, conducts a chapel service July 10, 2011, for National Guard personnel on flood duty in Minot.



THE NORTH DAKOTA **GUARDIAN** IS AVAILABLE **ONLINE.**

SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS.