



NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN

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Commander in Chief
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Jack Dalrymple

The Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann

Chief of Public Affairs
Capt. Amber Balken

Editor
Sgt. Jennifer Joyce

Contributors
Chaplain (Maj.) Corey Bjertness
2nd Lt. Eric Jungels
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kiel Skager
Senior Master Sgt. David Lipp
Staff Sgt. Eric W. Jensen
Staff Sgt. Brett Miller
Tech. Sgt. Bradley Schneider

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Contributions to the *North Dakota Guardian* are encouraged! Send articles, photos and art to Editor, JFND PIO, Box 5511, Bismarck, N.D. 58506-5511. Electronic submissions are preferred. Please e-mail stories in Word format to: jennifer.m.joyce2.mil@mail.mil
Phone: 701-333-2195 Fax: 701-333-2017
Digital photos should be 300 dpi, if possible.

On the Cover



Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk holds a U.S. Flag presented to him at his retirement ceremony Dec 13, 2015, in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Brett Miller, Joint Force Headquarters

FAREWELL FROM THE TOP

SPRY'S GOODBYE



Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk

Former North Dakota Adjutant General

W

What a ride this has been.

As I near the end of my more-than-40-year career with the North Dakota National Guard, I have begun to reflect on the people, places and issues I've experienced.

I vividly recall being sworn in by Col. Nels Stave and feeling proud of the opportunity to serve my state and nation. I also felt apprehension, not knowing what the next six years would bring; but I did know I would also have the opportunity to turn a personal hobby—photography—into a skill. A few months later, I was ordered to report to Fort Dix, New Jersey, for basic training and later to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, for advanced individual training (AIT).

Over the next five years, I developed my photography skills by traveling across the state during drill periods and annual training. The 116th Public Information Detachment reported on Guard members performing their mission of service to the state and nation. It was a great opportunity to meet Soldiers and Airmen, leaders at every level, and to witness the training conducted to prepare for our federal missions and the opportunities to build projects that served communities. I saw, firsthand, the extreme pride that Soldiers and Airmen exhibited in doing their jobs.

Near the end of my initial enlistment, a good friend and mentor, Maj. Gen. (retired) Murray Sagsveen, suggested that since I had mastered photography, I should consider using my civil engineering experience and become an engineer officer. Just one month before my enlistment would have ended, I commissioned as a first lieutenant.

That same year, our son, Tom, was born. As many Soldiers and Airmen

know, the balancing act of parenthood, civilian career and military service can be tricky. Our family enjoyed, and sometimes endured, the ride; but as we all know, our service members thrive on the support of family and friends.

Over the next dozen years, I had the opportunity to serve as a company commander and then as a battalion staff officer. During that period, our daughter, Cathryn, was born, and again, life seemed complicated. As every service member and spouse knows, we worked to find balance. Then Desert Shield and Desert Storm occurred and, suddenly, the training for our federal mission became as real as our state mission. Hundreds of N.D. National Guard Soldiers and Airmen deployed overseas, while back home, their fellow service members, families and communities prayed for their safe return. A year later, they all returned and all of North Dakota had good reason to celebrate.

For the next several years, I had an opportunity to be serve as the commandant of the North Dakota Military Academy. During that time, it became clear to me the future of the N.D. National Guard was in good hands. As I worked with young officer candidates and junior noncommissioned officers, I again witnessed great pride in these individuals as they served their state and nation, and knew they would become leaders in everything they would do throughout their career. Today, many of those Soldiers are field-grade officers and senior noncommissioned officers, and their proven leadership abilities are second to none.

When our nation was attacked on 9/11, our world changed forever. Suddenly, our state and nation realized

how integral and important the National Guard was in defense of America. As we deployed hundreds of Soldiers and Airmen into harm's way, we all shed tears at their departure, even while we were proud of their service.

As I visited our Soldiers and Airmen overseas, I was continually complimented on the proficiency, dedication and professionalism of the Straight Arrows and the Happy Hooligans—truly the best of the best.

Sadly, not every Soldier returned with his unit. Fourteen members of the N.D. National Guard were killed in action during the Global War on Terrorism. I continue to pray for their souls and for their families, and vow that we will never forget their service and sacrifice.

Over these four-plus decades, I have been proud to serve beside the Soldiers and Airmen of the N.D. National Guard. I am humbled to stand with their families, and I am forever grateful to my own family—Connie, Tom and Cathryn have been with me every step of the way.

What a great ride it has truly been. May God bless each of you and may God always smile on America! ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Sprynczynatyk".



THANKING HEROES

By 2nd Lt. Eric Jungels,
132nd Quartermaster Company

Soldiers Commended for Heroic Actions

When Capt. Waylon Tomac, a nuclear medicine science officer with the North Dakota National Guard's 81st Civil Support Team, stopped in Billings, Montana, with his family on the way to a summer vacation near Yellowstone National Park, he had no idea how much his presence would be appreciated.

Tomac, who lives west of Mandan, North Dakota, with his wife, Jamie, and their four kids, was enjoying a day at a busy waterpark in Billings when the unthinkable happened.

As Tomac stood in a line for concessions, a woman at the park screamed for employees to dial 9-1-1. She described the emergency, noting that a child had been found and pulled from the bottom of a nearby pool.

Tomac immediately ran in the direction of the crisis, fearing one of his own kids might have drowned. He reached a small boy, near the age of five, and found him lying on the ground, obviously cyanotic and unresponsive.

A woman on the scene, who identified herself as an intensive care unit nurse, assessed the child and found no pulse or respirations. Tomac, a respiratory therapist and a former CPR instructor for the North Dakota deputy state surgeon's office,

and the lifeguard who pulled the boy from the pool joined the woman in conducting CPR.

In a chaotic scene, lifeguards cleared frantic people from the waterpark, then stood by crying and praying together as the boy received CPR.

Tomac reminded the nurse to stay calm as she gave compressions in an effort to supply blood and oxygen to the young boy's body.

"I counted compressions and coached her between breaths," Tomac recounted of the dramatic scene.

Tomac, who spent seven years as an occupational health manager in the Guard, taught CPR classes all over North

Tomac immediately ran in the direction of the crisis, fearing one of his own kids might have drowned. He reached a small boy, near the age of five, lying on the ground, obviously cyanotic and unresponsive.

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

(Opposite Page) U.S. Army Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, right, shakes hands with Capt. Waylon Tomac, as he visits with members of the North Dakota Army and Air National Guard who have distinguished themselves within their organizations Dec. 12 during a town hall-style briefing at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Dakota. He had performed CPR in real-world situations before his visit to Billings, but never outside of a hospital setting. Instead of being surrounded by seasoned health professionals, where everyone has the same basic set of standardized CPR skills, Tomac was assisting lifeguards made up mostly of high school students.

“I honestly didn’t think the poor kid was going to make it; we thumped on him for a long time before he finally showed some color,” Tomac said. “After roughly two minutes of CPR, he finally coughed, vomited, began crying and regained consciousness.”

Tomac’s actions — and the actions of those who assisted in the rescue and CPR — saved the life of the young boy.

“I thank God someone pulled him out of the pool in time,” Tomac said. “And thank the Lord we were there with the presence of mind and the training to help this little guy out.”

Tomac graduated in 2005 from the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, with degrees in respiratory



Contributed photo

Capt. Walon Tomac and his wife, Jamie, of Mandan, pictured on a family vacation to Yellowstone National Park with their children, from left, Keisha (7), Porter (3), Kendra (9) and Kaden (11). During a two-day stop in Billings, Montana, Tomac and his family visited a waterpark, where he assisted in CPR for an unresponsive child who was pulled from the bottom of a pool. After two minutes of life-saving compressions, the child regained consciousness.

therapy, chemistry and theology. He’s also two semesters away from completing a Master’s degree in public health at Des Moines University.

Tomac, who will certainly never forget his family’s vacation to Yellowstone, noted that water safety was of critical importance.

“Parents need to watch their kids — even in the presence of lifeguards.”

He also recommends that everyone attend a CPR class and learn how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). He encourages Soldiers and Airmen to make a mental note of the location and ensure maintenance of AEDs in their duty buildings.

“It’s an important skill that can save a life,” said Tomac. ■

Air Defense Artillery Commander Rescues Fisherman Stranded on Ice

When Lt. Col. Ben Cleghorn, battalion commander for 1st Battalion, 188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, isn’t leading Soldiers or spending time with family, he’s usually working hard to protect natural resources, wildlife and citizens enjoying the great outdoors.

As a full-time federal wildlife officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the last 14 years, Cleghorn has been called upon to rescue people stranded by rushing floodwaters, but on the evening of Dec. 8, he was asked to face water riddled with ice to locate and rescue fisherman stranded on a Kidder County lake.

The men, who had walked out onto the lake for a day of ice fishing, couldn’t get back to shore because the ice had heaved and melted away from the shoreline. Stuck on a remote island of frozen lake water, the fisherman called for help.

Cleghorn, along with North Dakota Game and Fish Department district game warden Greg Hastings, and Stutsman County Sheriff’s Deputy Damian Hoyt, used an air boat to reach the stranded anglers and transport them back to shore.

“If the two anglers had not been able to get their cell phones working, they would have had a cold miserable night on the lake,” Cleghorn said, noting that the fishermen also could have fallen through the thinning black ice. “It’s important to always be aware of your surroundings, because they can change in an instant, and that’s what happened to these two men.”

Cleghorn enlisted in the Army in 1988 and later joined the N.D. National Guard. He and his wife, Betty, have four children and live in Jamestown, North Dakota. ■



Don't Get Your **TINSEL**

in a **TANGLE**

— Tips to Create a Low-Stress Holiday —

*From the Resilience, Risk Reduction
and Suicide Prevention Office*

The hustle and bustle of the holidays can create stress in our lives. Choosing a holiday lifestyle packed full of enjoyment, fellowship and calm can set you and your family up for a prosperous new year and beyond. The Resilience, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention (R3SP) and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) offices wish to offer some tips for a more enjoyable holiday season. Give yourself the gift of self-care and peace this year.

Applying the art of goal setting this holiday season may assist in creating a low-stress environment for you and your family. Start by defining goals surrounding the holidays.

North Dakota National Guard staff at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory in Bismarck, North Dakota, were asked what issues they have been faced with during past holidays. Overwhelming responses included travel, spending, busy task lists and situational family stress.

Does this sound familiar? You have just reached the next step in goal setting by evaluating where you are now. Next, it's time to decide what you need to develop and then make a plan for steady improvement. Once you have your plan, continually work toward your goal with a commitment to success. As a family, don't forget to frequently evaluate your progress.

Here are some tips you can use to turn a high-stress holiday into something much more rewarding and relaxing:

- Find time for yourself! Don't spend all of your time providing activities for your family and friends. Schedule this time now and stick to it.
- Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Don't try to do it all.
- Pace yourself. Organize your time and divide tasks equally among all involved.
- Be selective in who you spend time with. Keep interactions positive and supportive.
- Seek alternative methods of gift-giving. Give your time by making plans to visit friends or family or volunteer in your community; consider making homemade gifts, cards or baked goods; donate gently-used items to those less fortunate in your area.
- Slim down your recipes to eliminate your New Year regrets. Be realistic with your menu planning and shop in advance for only the items you need.

- Plan for a safe and low risk party. Provide or bring non-alcoholic drinks, always designate a driver, set a time limit for parties you attend or host, go with your "battle buddy" or "wingman" and stick together to maintain personal safety, and never leave your drink unattended.

- Agree on a household holiday budget that encompasses groceries, travel expenses, gifts and holiday entertainment. Sometimes we focus on gifts so much that other expenses are not accounted for. Combat this by using cash instead of a credit card to avoid overspending and interest charges. Stick to your shopping list and remember that the season is not about how much money you spend.

As you approach 2016, evaluate your state of self-care and feelings of peace. Were you successful during the holidays with your goal setting strategies? If so, continue to incorporate these tips into your daily routines and avoid getting your tinsel in a tangle! ■

1. Define your goal.
2. Know where you are right now.
3. Decide what you need to develop.
4. Make a plan for steady improvement.
5. Pursue regular action.
6. Commit yourself completely.
7. Continually monitor.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Shelly Sizer
R3SP Manager
701-333-3295 or 701-214-7458
shelly.j.sizer.mil@mail.mil

Capt. Michelle Thomsen
Resilience Coordinator
701-333-3079
michelle.m.thomsen2.mil@mail.mil

Heather Mattson
Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
701-333-3293 or 701-204-3555
heather.m.mattson5.civ@mail.mil
N.D. SARC Helpline: 701-425-4821
DoD Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247
<http://www.safehelpline.org>

1st Lt. Austin Kastet
Victim Advocate Coordinator
701-333-3007 or 701-226-4429
austin.w.kastet.mil@mail.mil

Jared Klempel
Suicide Prevention Program Manager
701-333-3080
jared.j.klempel.mil@mail.mil

Erin DeMoe
Alcohol & Drug Control Officer
701-333-3266
erin.n.demoe.ctr@mail.mil

Cathy Palczewski
Prevention Coordinator
701-333-3265
cathy.s.palczewski.ctr@mail.mil

Chaplain (Col.) David Johnson
North Dakota Staff Chaplain
701-333-3006 or 701-425-4673

Bernadette Ternes
Human Relations Counselor (Bismarck)
701-333-3352 or 701-226-2905
bernadette.a.ternes.nfg@mail.mil

Jane Johnson
Human Relations Counselor (Fargo)
701-451-6078 or 701-799-9704
jane.m.johnson.nfg@mail.mil

Ann Stark
Human Relations Counselor (Fargo)
701-451-6093 or 701-866-7933
ann.m.stark2@us.army.mil

Kristi Clifton, LCSW
Wing Director of Psychological Health
701-451-2602 or 701-219-3848
kristi.r.clifton.civ@mail.mil

Chaplain (Capt.) Oliver Herbel
119th Wing Chaplain
701-451-2678 or 701-552-2883



ATTENTION TO ORDERS

Becklund Promoted to Brigadier General

By 2nd Lt. Eric Jungels, 132nd Quartermaster Company



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

Robert Becklund, then a colonel serving as the 119th Fighter Wing commander, pilots N.D. Air National Guard F-16 number 82-0951 Jan. 16, 2005, for the last time as he flies it to the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center (AMARC), better known as the boneyard. The flight was part of a three-ship fly-off of some of the last F-16s to leave the N.D. Air National Guard base in Fargo, North Dakota, as part of a 60th anniversary celebration of the Air National Guard in North Dakota and a send-off of the F-16 A aircraft. Aircraft 82-0951 is covered by unit member signatures which was authorized since the aircraft was sent to AMARC for retirement.



U.S. Air Force Photo/Released

Maj. Robert J. Becklund, assigned to the N.D. Air National Guard's 119th Fighter Wing "Happy Hooligans" sits in the cockpit of his F-16 Fighting Falcon Aircraft and prepares for a mission at the 1994 William Tell Weapons Competition at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

Robert Becklund, a native of West Fargo, North Dakota, was promoted this month to the rank of brigadier general, becoming one of only six general officers within the ranks of the North Dakota National Guard. A promotion ceremony was held at the Air National Guard base in Fargo, where family members, Guard leaders, and Airmen of the 119th Wing— known as the Happy Hooligans — looked on.

Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, then-North Dakota adjutant general, presided over the promotion ceremony. He reminded onlookers that promotions to general officer ranks are infrequent and reserved for only the highest leadership positions within the U.S. Military.

"Today is a very special occasion," Sprynczynatyk said. "To put in perspective the grandness of this event: less than one percent of the American population serves in the military, and of that one percent, less than one percent become a general officer."

Becklund, who began his military career by enlisting in the North Dakota Air National Guard in May of 1982 as a flight simulator technician, earned his

commission in September of 1983 from the Air National Guard's Academy of Military Science, where he was recognized as a distinguished graduate. He went on to become commander of the Happy Hooligans and currently serves as the Chief of Staff for the N.D. Air National Guard.

"Gen. Becklund has excelled at everything his state and country has asked of him," Sprynczynatyk said. "He is very deserving of this new rank, and I have no doubt he will wear it with the same honor and integrity he has displayed over his successful 33-year career in the North Dakota National Guard."

As the commander of the 119th Fighter Wing (as the unit was called at the time), he oversaw the extremely successful and unprecedented realignment of the unit from its F-16 fighter jet mission into three entirely new missions: the launch of MQ-1 Predator Remotely Piloted Aircraft, C-21 Operational Support Airlift, and an active duty-associate Security Forces Squadron at Minot Air Force Base.

Outside of the National Guard, Becklund works full-time as the Executive Director of Northern Plains Unmanned Aircraft Systems Test Site based in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Previously, he completed an assignment with the U.S. Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Task Force at the Pentagon, where he served as their Chief of Current Capabilities.

Becklund, who has three sons with his wife, Dollie, has also had a very distinguished flying career. After graduating at the top of his undergraduate pilot class, he went on to achieve a command pilot rating, flying eight different aircraft and accumulating nearly 4,000 flying hours. He participated in two U.S. Air Force

William Tell Weapons Meet, taking first place in 1994.

Becklund graduated from North Dakota State University in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science in electronic and electrical engineering. In October of this year, he was inducted into the West Fargo High School Hall of Fame. ■



Story from N.D. Air National Guard *Jet Letter*, May 2007

On Dec. 22, 1986, 4-month-old Michael McCann passed away in Fargo. His parents made the brave decision to give the gift of life by donating his heart.

Meanwhile, in California, 5-month-old Andrew De La Pena was given a 4-hour window of time to receive a heart transplant for any chance of survival.

due to an unlikely chain of events and the heroic decisions made by many people over the next seven hours, an N.D. Air National Guard F-4 Phantom, piloted by then-1st Lt. Robert Becklund, raced through dark early morning skies to deliver the heart, which was successfully used in De La Pena's transplant surgery.

"I was just the guy on duty that night," said Becklund of his heroic actions. De La Pena is now 29 and says he is grateful for all of the people involved in his life-saving operation.

"There is not a pulse that goes through my veins without appreciating the gift they gave me." - Andrew De La Pena



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

Brig. Gen. Robert Becklund, N.D. National Guard chief of staff for Air, has his general officer stars pinned onto his service jacket by his mother, Janice, left, and his wife, Dollie, as Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, right, and retired Maj. Gen. Alexander Macdonald, a former North Dakota adjutant general, look on during his promotion ceremony Dec. 5 at the N.D. Air National Guard Base in Fargo.

A Season for Change

Dohrmann Assumes Command of North Dakota National Guard;
Sprynczynatyk Retires After More Than Four Decades of Service

By Staff Sgt. Eric W. Jensen, Joint Force Headquarters



A change of command ceremony held Dec. 13 at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory in Bismarck, North Dakota, formally introduced newly-promoted Maj. Gen. Al Dohrmann as the state's 21st adjutant general. He assumed command from Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, outgoing adjutant general, who retired after leading the North Dakota National Guard's nearly 4,100 Soldiers and Airmen during critical missions, including federal mobilizations and state emergencies, since August 2006.

"Maj. Gen. Dohrmann's impressive resume of leadership, strategic planning and policy development will serve him well as North Dakota's next adjutant general and will provide a strong foundation for leading our National Guard and Department of Emergency Services into a new era of service to our state and nation," said Gov. Jack Dalrymple, who presided over the change of command ceremony. "Maj. Gen. Sprynczynatyk has done an outstanding job for our state and his vision and leadership will have a lasting impact on future generations. We thank him for his many years of faithful service and wish him well in his retirement."

In addition to commanding the N.D. National Guard, Dohrmann also will serve as the director of the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, which is comprised of the Division of Homeland Security and the Division of State Radio Communications. Prior to the change of command ceremony, he was promoted to the rank of major general by U.S. Army Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, who administered the oath of office.

Grass's visit coincided with the observance of the National Guard's 379th birthday. According to the National Guard Bureau, the first militia regiments in North America were organized in Massachusetts on this date in 1636. This year's National Guard birthday theme is "Proven in Battle. Trusted at Home," an adage that reinforces the organization's unique dual mission: to provide professional, reliable homeland response and serve the U.S. during operations overseas. As adjutant general, Dohrmann will be responsible for commanding North Dakota's Soldiers and Airmen to carry out those missions.

“Maj. Gen. Dohrmann and I have worked together since the early 1990s, and I know he is highly qualified and has the training and experience needed to be successful as our adjutant general,” Sprynczynatyk said during the change of command ceremony. “I know he will continue to ensure the North Dakota National Guard remains a well-trained and ready operational force that serves the people of our state and nation.”

Dohrmann’s military service began in 1983 when he accepted his officer commission upon graduating from Minnesota State University’s Reserve Officers Training Program in Mankato, Minnesota. He served within the ranks of the active-duty Army, first as an infantry officer with the 1st Battalion, 48th Infantry Regiment in Gelnhausen, Germany and, later, as the communications officer for the 1st Special Forces Group on the island of Okinawa in Japan.

In 1991, Dohrmann joined the N.D. Army National Guard, and transferred to the engineer branch serving as the assistant operations officer for the former 141st Engineer Combat Battalion in Valley City, North Dakota. Dohrmann has served in a number of roles within the N.D. National Guard, including operations officer for the 164th Regiment Regional Training Institute, executive officer for the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion, staff judge advocate, personnel officer and chief of staff for the Joint Force Headquarters and land component commander for the North Dakota Army National Guard. He was appointed deputy adjutant general in 2007, a role in which he has been second in command of the North Dakota National Guard.

In 2009, Dohrmann deployed overseas as part of Kosovo Forces 12, serving as the commanding general of Multinational Task Force – East. In Kosovo, he oversaw more than 2,000 military members from

the United States, as well as seven other countries. Upon his return in 2010, he resumed duties as deputy adjutant general.

A graduate from Minnesota State University, Dohrmann holds a bachelor’s degree in law enforcement. He also is a graduate of the University of North Dakota’s School of Law in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where he earned his Juris Doctor degree in 2002. Dohrmann resides in Bismarck with his wife, Becky, and four children.

“Thank you, Gov. Dalrymple, for putting your trust in me. I promise to work hard every day to carry on our organization’s proud tradition of service to our state and nation,” Dohrmann said. “Maj. Gen. Sprynczynatyk, thank you for your leadership, for being a mentor and for your service over the last four decades. We have a great team here in the North Dakota National Guard, and it’s an honor to lead and continue to work with our outstanding Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees.”



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kiel Skager, Joint Force Headquarters

Alan Dohrmann’s family presents him with his major general rank moments before he assumed duties as the adjutant general for the N.D. National Guard from Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk Dec. 13 during a ceremony at the Raymond J. Bohn army in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Kiel Skager, Joint Force Headquarters



Chief Master Sgt. James Gibson, senior enlisted leader for the N.D. National Guard, passes Maj. Gen. Al Dohrmann the symbolic flag representing the command of the N.D. National Guard during a change of command ceremony Dec. 15 at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory in Bismarck.

After North Dakota's new adjutant general was welcomed, audience members bid farewell to Sprynczynatyk during a retirement ceremony and paid tribute to his more than 43 years of service to the National Guard. During the ceremony, Grass presented Sprynczynatyk with the Distinguished Service Medal in recognition of military contributions.

Sprynczynatyk's military career began in 1972 when he enlisted as a photographer with the 116th Public Information Detachment of the N.D. Army National Guard. In 1978, he received a direct commission to the rank of first lieutenant and served as the civil engineer, operations officer and company commander for the 164th Engineer Group. He later was assigned as the executive officer and operations officer for the 231st Engineer Battalion in Valley City. Sprynczynatyk also served in the Headquarters, State Area Command, in a number of roles, including positions as North Dakota's Officer Candidate School commandant, operations officer, plans and operations officer, director of plans, operations and training and deputy commander. He also commanded the Bismarck-based 68th Troop Command before assuming duties as the

N.D. National Guard's assistant adjutant general for Army in June 2000. Prior to being appointed adjutant general in 2006, Sprynczynatyk served as the director of logistics for the National Guard Bureau from 2003 to 2006.

A graduate of North Dakota State University, Sprynczynatyk earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1972. He began serving North Dakota that year with the State Water Commission, ultimately becoming the state engineer in 1989. In January 2001, former Gov. John Hoeven appointed Sprynczynatyk as the director of the North Dakota Department of Transportation, a position he held until being appointed adjutant general.

"As adjutant general, I have been honored and privileged to work with thousands of outstanding Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees, including the Department of Emergency Services and State Radio," Sprynczynatyk said. "Whether the work was a war fight, coordinating communications or responding to natural disasters, the safety and security of our citizens was always my priority. I will always be grateful for the support of every one of my colleagues and the support of our great citizens of North Dakota."

Sprynczynatyk's duration as adjutant general was marked by frequent mobilizations for North Dakota units. As commander, Sprynczynatyk oversaw the deployments of nearly 3,300 Soldiers and Airmen in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle, as well as federal stateside missions to the National Capitol Region and the southwest border.

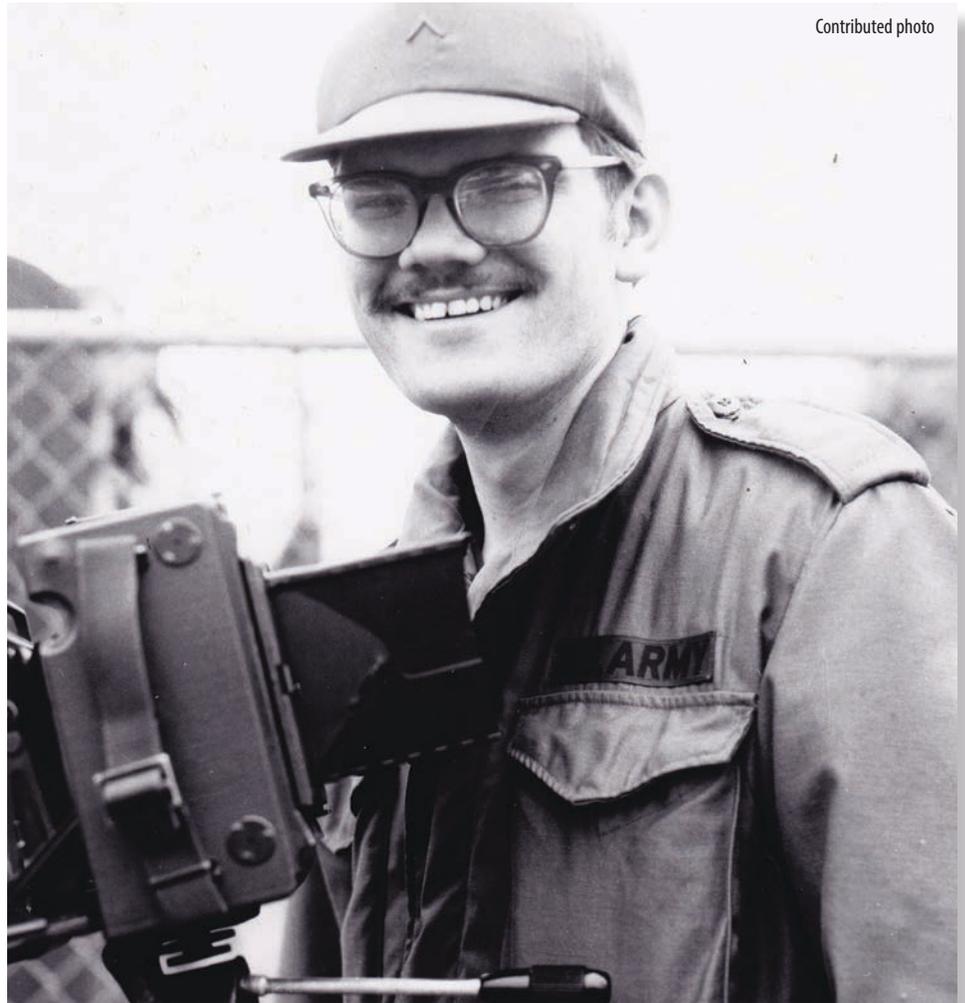
Under Sprynczynatyk's leadership, the North Dakota National Guard also provided support to the state's citizens during more than 40 domestic emergencies. Those operations included flood response, fighting fires, search and rescue, winter emergency support and tornado response. More than 7,600 Soldiers and Airmen were placed on state active duty to support these missions during Sprynczynatyk's time as adjutant general.

For North Dakotans, two prominent National Guard state emergency missions occurred during 2009 and 2011 when Soldiers and Airmen responded to statewide flood events. The 2009 flood primarily was focused in the Red River Valley area in the eastern part of the state. During this event, Sprynczynatyk provided direction and resources to protect lives and property from rising flood waters. North Dakota National Guard members helped fill about 4.5 million sandbags, emplaced nearly 600 one-ton sandbags using Black Hawk helicopters, supported evacuation efforts and emplaced six miles of HESCO flood barriers and three miles of earthen dikes, while patrolling more than 11,000 miles on the Red River's levee systems.

In 2011, Sprynczynatyk and members of the National Guard again brought their flood-fighting expertise when 22 communities across the state recorded record river crests, including the Red, Missouri and Souris Rivers. Sprynczynatyk once again provided guidance to N.D. National Guard leaders fighting the flood and state emergency managers. He helped to develop lasting relationships between the N.D. National Guard and community leaders during the emergency response. More than 3,000 individual Guard members served a record 142 duty days on state active duty to battle the floods and assist with recovery efforts.

Sprynczynatyk also contributed to the development of the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program (SPP) while serving as adjutant general. Under his leadership, the North Dakota National Guard has cemented a successful 11-year partnership with the Republic of Ghana. In 2014, North Dakota broadened its participation within the SPP by adding the Republics of Togo and Benin as partners. The collaborations foster and establish long-term relationships between North Dakota's military and state agencies and their SPP counterparts in Africa. Sprynczynatyk additionally supported the SPP by serving as chair of the General Officer Advisory Council for Security Cooperation Activities, which reports to Grass at National Guard Bureau.

Sprynczynatyk and his wife, Connie, who serves as North Dakota's civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army, have two children, Thomas (Rebecca) Sprynczynatyk and Cathryn (Jason) Sprynczynatyk Anderson, and two grandsons. ■



Contributed photo

Right: Pvt. David Sprynczynatyk during advanced individual training.

Below: Maj. Gen. Sprynczynatyk is joined Oct. 23, 2015 by his family and Governor Jack Dalrymple as he announces his retirement from the N.D. National Guard.



Photo courtesy of the Bismarck Tribune

CONTINUED EXCELLENCE

Happy Hooligans Awarded 17th 'Air Force Outstanding Unit' Award

*Story by 2nd Lt. Eric Jungels, 132nd Quartermaster Company,
Photos by Senior Master Sgt. David Lipp, 119th Wing*

The North Dakota National Guard's 119th Wing, known as the Happy Hooligans, formally received its 17th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) Dec. 5, during a ceremony at the Air National Guard base in Fargo.

Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, then-North Dakota adjutant general, presented the unit award to the Happy Hooligans and commended them for their exceptional service, commitment and mission accomplishment.

"We know you're engaged in supporting global missions and making a significant impact on operations abroad, and we're grateful for your service to our state and nation," Sprynczynatyk said. "You've all played a significant role in making this unit one of the very best in the nation. I am consistently impressed with the commitment, dedication and skill with which you execute all of your missions."

The AFOUA recognizes units across the active-duty Air Force, Reserves and Air National Guard that have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement, including successful involvement with combat operations or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force.

Since the start of the Global War on Terrorism, about 2,600 North Dakota Air National Guard members have mobilized, with 49 of those Airmen deploying to multiple locations through 100% volunteerism in just the last year.



From left, Col. Kent Olson, 119th Wing commander, Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Muehler, 119th Wing command chief, and Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, hold the Air Force Outstanding Unit certificate Dec. 5 during a ceremony at the N.D. Air National Guard Base in Fargo, North Dakota.



Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, second from right, attaches a streamer, representing the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, onto the 119th Wing guidon as Col. Kent Olson, lowers the unit flag during a recognition ceremony at the N.D. Air National Guard Base. It is the 17th time the unit has received the prestigious U.S. Air Force award.

Also present at the ceremony was Lt. Gen. Joseph Lengyel, vice chief of the National Guard Bureau.

“The Guard does three things. We fight our wars, we protect the homeland and we build partnerships. And if you look at the Hooligans and each one of those three areas, there is not a more relevant war fighting unit in our United States Air Force or Air National Guard than the 119th Wing,” Lengyel said.

“The Hooligans are a solution unit. They get things done. They have a work ethic like no other...but I’ll tell you what strikes me the most and continues to strike me the most with the 119th is this excellence combined with the humility. Such humble excellence is rare,” he added.

The AFOUA is awarded by the secretary of the Air Force to numbered units that have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement that clearly sets the unit above and apart from similar units.

During her visit in July of this year, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, praised the wing for being the “tip of the spear.” She praised the 119th Wing for its efforts and success on the forefront of winning the continued fight against terrorism.

“The Happy Hooligans have demonstrated an exceptional ability to adapt to change, and they continuously accept and successfully complete missions of enormous significance,” Sprynczynatyk said. “The unit provides security for our bases and missile fields, gathers critical intelligence and supports warfighters around the world with expert use of remotely piloted aircraft, and enables mission success through critical medical, administrative and services support skills. It’s no wonder why the Happy Hooligans have become one of the most recognized groups of professionals in today’s military.” ■

GUARDIAN

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bradly A. Schneider, 119th Wing

119th student flight members, from right, Maggie Swenson, Matthew Solem and Ryan Straus, clean weapons Nov. 7 in the 119th Security Forces armory at the N.D. Air National Guard Base, Fargo, North Dakota. Student Flight members are involved in a variety of activities during unit training assemblies that help prepare them for basic training.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bradly A. Schneider, 119th Wing

Master Sergeant Derrick Grenz, of the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron, removes old mattresses from one of the barracks at the regional training site in Fargo Nov. 7 so that new mattresses can be moved in to replace them.



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

Senior Airman Kally Anderson, of the 119th Medical Group, left, administers an eye test Dec. 10 to Staff Sgt. Roman Gaughan, also of the 119th Medical Group, at the N.D. Air National Guard Base in Fargo.

@WORK

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bradly A. Schneider, 119th Wing



Col. Kent Olson, 119th Wing commander, and Brig. Gen. Ron Solberg, N.D. National Guard assistant adjutant general (Air), serve the holiday meal to unit members at the N.D. Air National Guard base Dec. 6 during unit training assembly.

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



Hunter McMullen, center, enlists into the N.D. Air National Guard's 119th Wing Nov. 24 as his brother, U.S. Marine Corps 1st Lt. Chad Hingst administers the enlistment oath via phone from Camp Pendleton, California. 2nd Lt. Brett Anderson, left, acted as a witness and Tech. Sgt. Shelly Pherson, McMullen's recruiter, held the phone for the ceremony, which took place at the N.D. Air National Guard base in Fargo.



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

From left, Airman 1st Class Wyatt Koenig, Airman 1st Class Garrett Rix and Tech. Sgt. Chad Noyes, all 119th Civil Engineer Squadron fire fighters, wave at a 9-year-old Make-A-Wish recipient, who suffers from cystic fibrosis, as he rides by wearing a Santa suit in a horse-drawn sleigh Dec. 11 in downtown Fargo. The boy's wish was to be Santa Claus for the day to deliver candy, milk and cookies and toys to kids being treated and staying at Sanford Children's Hospital in Fargo.

Share your photos!

Submit your photos to be considered for inclusion in the N.D. Guardian!

Email high-resolution photos to Sgt. Jennifer Joyce, N.D. Guardian editor, at jennifer.m.joyce2.mil@mail.mil.



North Dakota Guard to Receive Cyber Mission

By Staff Sgt. Eric W. Jensen, Joint Force Headquarters

The North Dakota Army National Guard in 2018 will activate several information technology personnel positions to bolster the Department of Defense's cyberspace forces and defend critical military and civilian government computer network infrastructure. In a memo sent this month, the National Guard Bureau announced that North Dakota will be one of several states to complement a regional Army National Guard Cyber Protection Team (CPT).

"Our goal for cyber-defense is to train, equip and provide highly skilled forces responsive to the needs of the nation," said Army Gen. Frank Grass, chief of the National Guard Bureau, in a news story published Wednesday. "Working with the Army and Air Force our cyber squadrons and teams will provide trained and ready Soldiers and Airmen to support requirements established by the services and U.S. Cyber Command."

The National Guard's first full-time, federal CPT unit, the 1636th Cyber Protection Team, was established in 2014 in Laurel, Maryland. Ten additional units will be added and will fall under state control. In addition to North Dakota, National Guard cyber specialists will operate in

CPTs across Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, South Dakota Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin. Once activated, they will join Army Guard units in California, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio, which already have been announced.

Each CPT is comprised of 39 Guard Soldiers. Seven North Dakota Soldiers will support a shared CPT between Colorado, South Dakota and Utah. The cyber units are aligned to assist local Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions, of which North Dakota supports Region VIII, to carry out the National Guard's mission of assisting in domestic emergency responses.

"This is an exciting time for the North Dakota National Guard. While our Soldiers and Airmen have continually proven themselves on battlefields overseas and during state emergencies at home, our cyber defenders will support our nation and state by detecting, analyzing and mitigating threats and vulnerabilities in the evolving arena of cyberspace," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, then-North Dakota adjutant general. "We look forward to the addition of our Cyber Protection Team

specialists and know it will be filled with some of the most highly-skilled, capable National Guard Soldiers."

The Air National Guard, nationally, also will have 12 Cyberspace Operations Squadrons that will participate in cyber protection, although not in North Dakota. According to the National Guard Bureau, the roll-out of National Guard cyber units is "part of laying out a larger foundation for future cyber forces scheduled for activation." By the end of 2019, 23 states will be home to an Air or Army National Guard cyber unit.

"This is the beginning," said Air Force Col. Kelly Hughes, chief of the Space and Cyber Warfare Operations Division at the Air National Guard Readiness Center, in Wednesday's news story. "This is a massive amount of force structure the Guard has laid into this mission, but this is just the first layer."

Should they be needed, the CPTs and cyber squadrons can be called upon to support state governors to provide cyber protection on government networks. While each state may not yet be home to a National Guard cyber unit, resources can be shared through Emergency Management Assistance Compacts. ■

WWII Veteran Receives Bronze Star

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. David Lipp, 119th Wing

A WWII Veteran, U.S. Army Sgt. Gerald Tillman, was presented the Bronze Star from Col. Kent Olson, 119th Wing commander, and Lt. Col. Mark Ostern, Airman and Family Readiness Program manager for the N.D. Air National Guard, Dec. 15 at the Bethany Nursing Home in Fargo, North Dakota.

Tillman enlisted as a private and was promoted to sergeant. He served in Company A, 1st Battalion, 152nd Infantry Regiment, 38th Infantry Division, in the Philippines at the time of his heroic actions.

He was a gunner in a machine gun unit

at Woodpecker Ridge, Luzon Campaign, Philippines. According to a letter of commendation dated June 1945, "the 152nd Infantry advanced rapidly to Zig Zag Pass east of OLANGAPO and there, attacked continuously...your continued aggressive attack destroyed the greater part of the Japanese 39th Infantry Regiment which had been ordered to defend to the death in the Zig Zag Pass... your own losses have been relatively light. You have killed over 5,900 (of the enemy)."

Tillman's family members were present for the ceremony, which was done in haste due to his failing health. ■



Chaplains' Corner:

A Lesson from Bus Driver 44

By Chaplain (Maj.) Corey Bjertness, 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

About a month ago, I was on my way to work and turned onto 64th Avenue South in Horace, North Dakota. I was following a school bus, Bus 44, to be exact. There is a trailer court at the intersection of 64th and Sheyenne. Bus 44 stopped at the entrance to that trailer court, turned on its lights, and put out its stop sign.

As soon as the bus safely stopped, the door opened. Out jumped what looked like a middle school girl with arms flailing wide as she ran lickety-split for her home. I smiled because I knew what had transpired on that bust moments before.

That little girl sat right behind Bus Driver 44 and it went something like this:

"I forgot my homework! Please, oh please, oh please can we stop? I promise I will run as fast as I can. Please, oh please!"

Bus Driver 44 had a choice to make. He could stick to the rules: Do not back traffic up more than you have to; do not be late getting kids to school; keep to the schedule; hold kids responsible. The list goes on. Or he could save the girl from

having to stand in front of a teacher and explain that she forgot her homework.

He chose to save the girl. Cars were seven deep behind the bus when the girl finally made it back to her seat. Seven adults were inconvenienced and a little later than they would have been, but a little girl had a good day.

So, let me say this: Praise the Lord for Bus Driver 44 and the entire legion of Bus Driver 44s in the world. I have smiled every time I have driven by that location for a month. It makes me happy to know that Bus Driver 44 is on the job. It makes me smile to know that Bus Driver 44 cares more about children than he does about his schedule. It delights me that Bus Driver 44 acts like Jesus.

Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines, listen up! You are Bus Driver 44. Month after month and year after year, you deal with the multitude of inconveniences that accompany wearing the uniform. You suck up the pain of drills, annual training and deployments. All of this you do because somebody else forgot to do it, could not do it, or would not do it. So, you do it — sometimes at great cost.

If there is a God, and I believe there is, you represent him very well. And, for that, I want to say thank you. ■





Photo by 2nd Lt. Eric Jungels, 132nd Quartermaster Company

N.D. National Guard Chaplain (Col.) David Johnson visits with veteran, Stanley Wald, during an outreach event Dec. 21, 2015, at the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon, North Dakota. Soldiers and Airmen of the N.D. National Guard visited the home, delivered gifts and shared a holiday meal with the veterans. The annual event is sponsored by N.D. National Guard members in order to demonstrate their appreciation to those whose military service preceded theirs.