



NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN



THE
Happy Hoolligans

Volume 1, Issue 11

December 2008

A Guard Family Christmas

Area Businesses Recognized for Contributions
to North Dakota National Guard Families



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Phone: 701-333-2195 Fax: 701-333-2017

Digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.

On the Cover



Decking the Halls: Sgt. Jill Fischer, of the Recruiting and Retention Marketing Department, decorates a Christmas tree purchased by her office for the Christmas Tree Showcase at the State Capitol building in Bismarck. The showcase is open to any company, agency or group. The North Dakota Army National Guard's Recruiting and Retention office purchased a tree to show the Guard's involvement in the community and to support North Dakota Guardsmen by decorating the tree with a patriotic theme.



Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk

North Dakota National Guard Adjutant General

&

Connie Sprynczynatyk

Executive Director of the North Dakota
League of Cities

“May the new
year come
with joy and
success for you
and your loved
ones.”



Seasons Greetings to our Citizen-Soldiers, Citizen-Airmen, civilian employees, retirees, employers and our National Guard families.

The holiday season is an opportunity to enjoy time with families, friends and co-workers. It is a time of personal reflection, worship and fellowship. It is a time of charity and good wishes, and for children especially, this can be a wonderful time of the year—a magical time, filled with bright lights, gifts and celebrations.

As you enjoy this special season, please remember our deployed Soldiers and Airmen who are far from home and family. We must also remember the many generations of Americans who have donned military uniforms to ensure our continued liberty, security and prosperity. It is through their sacrifices we are able to safely observe holidays and worship as we choose.

Separation from family and loved ones is hardest at this time of year so we encourage everyone to reach out to the families of deployed Soldiers and Airmen. Remember them in your prayers and invite them to your celebrations and gatherings. Visit our veterans in care facilities and spend time with those confined to home. After all, we are one military family.

The National Guard has seen an incredible transformation and increase in responsibilities in the seven years since the tragic attack on September 11, 2001. Our organization has been a key player in our nation's response to threats. We have mobilized a record number of Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen, acquired new missions and reorganized our Department of Emergency Services with additional responsibilities for homeland defense. Together, we accomplished much in 2008.

From successful mobilizations, homecomings, acquiring new equipment, homeland security and other missions in support of our communities, state and nation, the Guard remains ready and essential. Whenever we are ordered to serve, the National Guard responds with professionalism that yields results. This is an appropriate time to celebrate our past achievements as we look forward to new challenges.

As you enjoy the festivities this holiday season, please encourage your family and friends to celebrate safely. Reminders about wearing safety belts, the dangers of drinking and driving, and the need to prepare for cold weather driving cannot be overstated.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of our communities, state and nation. We are blessed to serve with you and we wish you and your family a glorious holiday season and happiness in the New Year.

Sincerely,

Connie
&
David A. Sprynczynatyk

Maj. Gen. David and Connie
Sprynczynatyk

119th Wing Awaits Completion of New Base Entrance

Happy Hooligans of the 119th Wing will soon have a new and improved main entrance at the North Dakota Air National Guard base in Fargo.

The 119th Wing is in the process of moving the main entrance that is currently located on University Drive north to its new location off of 32nd Avenue north, located on the north side of the base.

“The new entrance will have vast improvements,” said Maj. John Gibbs of the 119th Wing Civil Engineer Squadron.

There will be a designated shelter area to inspect vehicles, mechanical vehicle barriers and a longer queuing area for traffic entering the base that will create less back up on University Drive, said Gibbs.

“The location and vehicle shelter at the new entrance will give security forces personnel adequate room to respond if a suspicious item is found when inspecting vehicles,” said Chief Master Sgt. James Gibson of the 119th Wing Security Forces Squadron.

Construction on the new entrance began in May 2008 and has an estimated completion date of November 21.

TF Powers Construction Company and Smithco Incorporated were contracted to construct the new entrance.

Guard Sponsors First-of-its-Kind PTSD Workshop

The North Dakota National Guard and MedCenter One of Bismarck are sponsoring a Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Workshop this month. It is the first of its kind in the nation, bringing together clinical psychologists to address effective treatment methods for PTSD related to a patient’s combat experience. The workshop will focus on cognitive processing therapy.

Leadership in the North Dakota National Guard continually seeks ways to improve upon the care provided to service members and their families. According to Col. Craig Lambrecht, North Dakota National Guard state surgeon, co-sponsoring this workshop is one way to increase understanding of this evidence-based treatment among community providers. This, in



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Construction at the new entrance to the North Dakota Air National Guard is expected to be completed before the 119th Wing’s December Unit Training Assembly. The new entrance location is on the north side of the base off of 32nd Avenue North in Fargo.

turn, will improve the types and variety of care available to any service member with PTSD.

New Vice Commander Assumes Position at 119th Wing

Lt. Col. Kent R. Olson recently became the Vice Commander of the 119th Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard. He began his career by enlisting with the 119th Fighter Interceptor Group in 1981 serving as an Aircraft Munitions Systems specialist. After being selected for training as an F-4 Weapons System officer, Lt. Col. Olson earned his commission from the Air National Guard Academy of Military Science (AMS). After AMS he graduated from

Undergraduate Navigator Training in 1988. With the conversion to the F-16, Lt. Col. Olson completed Undergraduate Pilot Training and rejoined the 178th Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

Lt. Col. Olson has held several positions at the 119th Wing including the 119th Operations Support Squadron commander, the 119th Fighter Wing Chief of

Safety, 178th Fighter Squadron Operations officer, Chief of Standards and Evaluations, Chief of Training, Chief of Wing

Plans, and the 178th Fighter Squadron Life Support officer.

Lt. Col. Olson is an instructor pilot and functional check flight pilot in the C-21. He is a command pilot with more than 3,100 hours, primarily in fighter aircraft and is a native of Fargo.

Guard Ministry Teams Learn to Respond, Support During Attacks

The North Dakota National Guard’s Religious Support Teams recently trained on how to provide support during chemical and biological incidents, as well as basic crisis intervention during radiological or nuclear incidents. Chaplain (Col.) Jeff Franko, Chaplain (Col.) William Ziegler and Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Flowers became certified to provide the instruction to other trainers after attending a 12-hour course. They then shared their knowledge with all chaplains and chaplain assistants in North Dakota’s Army and Air National Guard.

The training culminated with a tabletop exercise during which time the ministry teams practiced what they have learned, including providing religious support during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear events; operations and safety; chemical, biological and incendiary incidents; basic crisis intervention; radiological and nuclear incidents; and spiritual and religious intervention.



Lt Col. Kent Olson
119th Wing Vice Commander



Paying Your Way

How to Maximize North Dakota National Guard Education Benefits for Spring Semester 2009

The pursuit of higher education can often be exhausting, not to mention expensive. The North Dakota National Guard offers a variety of educational benefits to help students pursue their academic goals. With registration for the spring semester right around the corner, North Dakota Guardsmen will want to make sure they register for educational incentives that best support their future goals.

Two of the more common ways Guard students pay for their school tuition is through the GI Bill and Federal and State Tuition Assistance.

Students should be careful to understand that these programs are separate from one another. Registration needs to be completed for each program to maximize educational benefits.

The North Dakota National Guard will provide tuition assistance of up to 100 percent through a combination of Federal and/or State Tuition Assistance programs. North Dakota Air Guard members can use State Tuition assistance towards North Dakota University System schools and private in-state schools that participate in the program. North Dakota Army Guard members can use Federal Tuition assistance at any accredited school and in combination with the State Tuition assistance for North Dakota University System schools and private in-state schools that participate in the program.

» North Dakota Guardsmen who are using State Tuition Assistance must achieve a grade of "C" or better. Additionally, Army Guard Soldiers must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better to receive Federal Tuition Assistance.

» North Dakota Army Guard Soldiers attending **out-of-state schools** must submit an unofficial copy of their college transcripts to the Education Services Office at NGNDJ1ESOs@ng.army.mil within 30 days of completing their courses. If grades are not received 60 days past the course date, the Soldier will not be allowed to apply for further Tuition Assistance.

» Army Guard Soldiers who have added or dropped courses must also inform the Education Services Office. Tuition Assistance funds will be re-couped for course changes that are not reported.

The following deadline dates are reminders for both North Dakota Army and Air National Guard students to turn in their applications for Tuition Assistance:

- Spring Semester — January 15th
- Summer Semester — June 15th
- Fall Semester — August 31st

North Dakota Air Guard members' applications for State Tuition assistance should be received no later than the day before classes begin. Army Guard members should meet application deadlines in order to receive required funding as applications are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

» The new Web site for North Dakota Army Guard Soldiers to apply for Federal Tuition Assistance has changed. The new Web site is: <https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits/> An Army Knowledge On-Line username and password are required to submit an application.

» North Dakota Air Guard members can submit an application for State Tuition Assistance through the North Dakota National Guard Web site at: <https://www.ndguard.com/benefits/default.asp?ID=289>

» **North Dakota Army National Guard members only** are now required to submit degree plans to the Education Services Office if taking more than nine semester hours. Degree plans can be submitted to NGNDJ1ESOs@ng.army.mil. Soldiers who do not submit a degree plan by Dec. 1, 2008 will not receive funding for the Spring 2009 term.

For more information about Federal or State Tuition Assistance programs, please contact Sgt. Mark Jundt, Federal Tuition Assistance manager, at 701-333-3071 or e-mail mark.jundt@us.army.mil; and Ms. Coreen Ryan, State Tuition Assistance manager, at 701-333-3008 or e-mail coreen.ryan@us.army.mil.

Applying for the GI Bill and applying for Tuition Assistance are not the same thing. To apply for the GI Bill you must contact the VA Certifying Official at your school and:

- » Turn in a copy of your Notice of Basic Eligibility
- » Fill out an Application for Benefits (VA Form 22-1990)
- » Turn in a copy of your GI Kicker contract (if you have one)
- » Verify your enrollment monthly to receive payments

Current benefit rates can be seen at www.gibill.va.gov.

The new GI Bill Program (Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008) is not available until **Aug. 1, 2009**. The Department of Defense and National Guard Bureau have yet to publish implementation guidance. The only information relating to this program in on the GI Bill Web site.

For more information, please contact 1st Sgt. Richard Marschner, GI Bill manager, at 701-333-3087 or e-mail richard.marschner@us.army.mil.

New Law Authorizes Veterans' Salutes During National Anthem

Department of Veterans Affairs
Press Release

Veterans and active-duty military not in uniform can now render the military-style hand salute during the playing of the national anthem, thanks to changes in federal law that took effect in October.

“The military salute is a unique gesture of respect that marks those who have served in our nation’s armed forces,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. “This provision allows the application of that honor in all events involving our nation’s flag.”

The new provision improves upon a little known change in federal law last year that authorized veterans to render the military-style hand salute during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag, but it did not address salutes during the national anthem. Last year’s provision also applied to members of the armed forces while not in uniform.

Traditionally, members of the nation’s veterans service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag while wearing their organization’s official head-gear.

The earlier provision authorizing hand-salutes for veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag, was contained in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which took effect Jan. 28, 2008.



Warrant Officer Drew A. Vinchattle renders a proper hand salute during his Warrant Officer Candidate School graduation ceremony in Fort Rucker, Ala. Oct. 7.

Spc. Brett J. Miller

Chaplain's Corner — Christmas in the Trenches

By Chaplain (Maj.) Steve Cooper
164th Engineer Battalion

Recently, I was reminded of an impromptu and famous Christmas truce during WW1 after reading an article on the internet. Similar accounts from that war and others have been recorded. During those times and now, the spirit of the sacred season reigns, despite dreadful circumstances and despite efforts to stop it.



Chaplain (Maj.) Steve Cooper
164th Engineer Battalion

The truce began on Christmas Eve, 1914. German troops began decorating the area around their trenches for Christmas. They began by placing candles on trees, and continued the celebration by singing Christmas carols — most notably Silent Night. The Scottish troops in the trenches across from them responded by

singing English carols.

The two sides continued by shouting Christmas greetings to each other. Soon thereafter, there were calls for visits across the “No Man’s Land” where small gifts were exchanged — whisky, jam, cigars, chocolate, and the like. The artillery in the region fell silent that night. The truce also allowed a breathing spell where recently-fallen Soldiers could be brought back behind their lines by burial parties. Proper burials took place as Soldiers from both sides mourned the dead together and paid their respects.

The truce spread to other areas of the lines, and there are many stories of soccer matches between the opposing forces.

The truce occurred in spite of opposition at higher levels of the military. Two British commanders vowed that no such truce would be allowed again. In all of the following years of the war, artillery bombardments were ordered on Christmas Eve to ensure that there were no further lulls in the combat. Troops were also rotated through various sectors of the front to prevent them from becoming overly familiar with the enemy. Despite those measures, there were a few friendly encounters between enemy Soldiers, but on a much smaller scale than the previous year.

Sgt. 1st Class Paul Stroklund, of the 164th Engineer Battalion, enjoys time with family; grandson Jayden and daughter Katie, during a Freedom Salute ceremony for his unit Sept. 13. Stroklund was mobilized for active duty to Iraq for nearly 12 months.



Family Values

Changes to Leave Act Benefit Wounded Warriors, Families

Staff Sgt. Billie Jo Lorus

By Gerry Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

Recent changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will extend the period of unpaid, job-protected leave that eligible family members can take to care for wounded warrior spouses, Labor Department officials said.

Legislative amendments to the act signed into law by President Bush provide new entitlements that pertain to military families and enable them to take caregiver leave, officials said.

The Labor Department administers

FMLA for private-sector workers. The changes, authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, are slated to be published in the Federal Register Nov. 17.

"This final rule, for the first time, gives America's military families special job-protected leave rights to care for brave servicemen and women who are wounded or injured, and also helps families of members of the National Guard and reserves manage their affairs when their service member is called up for active duty," Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao said.

"At the same time, the final rule provides

needed clarity about general FMLA rights and obligations for both workers and employers," she said.

One change stipulates that eligible employees who are family members of covered service members can take up to 26 work weeks of leave in a 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty. This change extends the period of available unpaid leave beyond the original 12-week leave period. The new provision was a recommendation of the President's Commission on Wounded Warriors.

A second family-leave-related amendment to the act makes the normal 12 work weeks of FMLA job-protected leave available to certain family members of National Guardsmen or reservists for qualifying exigencies when servicemembers are on active duty or called to active-duty status.

Qualifying exigencies for which employees can use FMLA leave include:

- » Short-notice deployment
- » Military events and related activities
- » Child-care and school activities
- » Financial and legal arrangements
- » Counseling
- » Rest and recuperation
- » Post-deployment activities

To view this press release in its entirety, please visit: <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51931>

Joint Mentorship Program Applications Due

Want to make a difference in your life? Ask a mentor. Be a mentor by attending the Developing Leaders program. If you have personal or professional goals, a desire to broaden your leadership ability and are interested in learning from those who are successful in their fields, this program is for you. If you have a technical skill, experience in the organization and you enjoy helping others to meet their goals and expectations for future leadership positions in their career and life, then we need your expertise.

Applications for the 2009 Developing Leaders program can be accessed by visiting www.ndguard.com. The deadline for submitting an application is Dec. 8.

- » click on the "Joint Force" tab
- » click on "J-staff" on left side of page
- » click on "J5 - Plans, Programs, & Requirements" on the left side of page

Guard Medical Professionals Wanted:

The North Dakota Army National Guard now offers direct commissions in the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) to qualified medical and dental students as well as physician assistant students. The following incentives are available to medical professionals even without prior military service:

- » A \$6,500 State signing bonus
- » Non-deployable after appointment to second lieutenant until done with residence
- » Full second lieutenant pay and allowances through medical school
- » \$50,000 student loan repayment
- » \$25,000 annual bonus (once a doctor done with residency)
- » Many positions around the state to choose from
- » Flexible drill schedule (once a quarter) during medical school and residency

For more information, please contact Capt. Anna Wittrock at 701-451-6056.



A Season Of Giving

TriWest, Area Businesses Pay Homage to Military Families During Family Week

By Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson
Joint Force Headquarters

North Dakota First Lady Mikey Hoeven, Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. National Guard adjutant general, and representatives from nearly 20 businesses and other organizations gathered in the Memorial Hall at the State Capitol Nov. 14 to celebrate a shared purpose; supporting and honoring military families.

The North Dakota Family Alliance chose to focus on military families during North Dakota's annual Family Week, Nov. 16-22, as recently proclaimed by N.D. Gov. John Hoeven. Mikey Hoeven began the Family Week event by reading the proclamation, which included a specific reference to the importance of recognizing "...the service and sacrifice of military families in our state who have borne the hardships of war with courage and devotion."

"This is a time to celebrate the importance of family values in North Dakota by participating in events that focus on families and spending time together," said Mikey Hoeven.

Sprynczynatyk echoed those sentiments, saying that Soldiers and Airmen and their families are his top priority.

"What we are doing here makes taking care of our Guard family that much easier," he said. A part of taking care of military families, Guardsmen and all of our service men and women was demonstrated here today by some key organizations who have been generous contributors to the North Dakota National Guard Emergency Relief Fund and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)."

Rob Keller, Family Program Office director, reiterated the importance of offering



Spc. Brett J. Miller

Scott Celley, TriWest Healthcare Alliance vice president of external affairs, presents a check for \$15,000 to Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota National Guard adjutant general, for the North Dakota National Guard Emergency Relief Fund. Sprynczynatyk was joined by Rob Keller, North Dakota National Guard Family Program Office director, and North Dakota First Lady Mikey Hoeven to recognize Nov. 16-22 as Family Week. The event was held at the N.D. State Capitol — Memorial Hall.

support to military family members, who nobly serve our country here at home.

"It is extremely important to the mindset and well-being of Soldiers and Airmen to know that their families are being taken care of while they are serving their country abroad," Keller said.

The event recognized major contributors to the Family Assistance Emergency Relief Fund and the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), including Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bob's Fireworks City LLC of Bismarck, Bobcat Company, Cass-Clay Creamery Inc., Comstock Land Company of Fargo, DuraTech Industries International Inc. of Jamestown, First Evangelical Free Church of Bismarck, Freedom Riders, Job Service North Dakota, Kemper Construction Company of Minot, Knights of Columbus of Jamestown, North Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association, North Dakota Well Drillers Association of Dickinson, Ressler Chevrolet of Mandan, St. Paul the Apostle Parish of Minot, TriWest Healthcare Alliance of Phoenix, Ariz., Veracity Motors Inc. of Bismarck, and West Acres Development of Fargo.

One of those contributors, TriWest, made another major contribution to the Emergency Relief Fund during the event. Scott Celley, TriWest Healthcare Alliance vice president of external affairs, presented a check for \$15,000 to Sprynczynatyk on

behalf of the organization.

"All of us would like to express our appreciation to those of you who volunteer to wear the uniform and serve our country proudly," Celley said. "We cannot do enough to thank and support you and your families."

TriWest Healthcare Alliance partners with the Department of Defense to support the healthcare needs of military family members. The organization has been a consistent supporter of the Emergency Relief Fund.

The Emergency Relief Fund supports the needs of the more than 4,300 N.D. National Guardsmen and service members from other branches and their families by providing financial support in sudden and unforeseen emergency situations, such as natural disasters, accidents, illness, fire or theft. To date, more than \$100,000 has been distributed to 60 families in need.

TAPS provides a support network for surviving families of those who have died in service to America. 70 North Dakota families have found support in TAPS, which offers grief support and support from their peers, as well as camps and seminars for survivors.

For more information on these programs, please visit www.aerhq.org or www.taps.org or to donate to these programs contact the N.D. National Guard Family Program Office at 701-333-2098.



A NEW APPROACH

Hooligans Save Time, Resources With New Air Force Smart Operations Training

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

AFSO21 team members from left to right, Lt. Col. Mark R. Ugelstad, of the 119th Operations Support Squadron, Master Sgt. Jeanne C. Bakken, of the 119th Maintenance Group, and Tech. Sgt. Jacy J. Voglewede, of the 119th Communications Flight, discuss the new mail distribution system procedures Nov. 14 developed during the AFSO21 process at the North Dakota Air National Guard.

By Capt. Penny Ripperger
119th Wing

The North Dakota Air National Guard is checking its list twice this winter, much like Santa, but instead of checking who is naughty or nice, leadership is taking a closer look at processes and procedures in an attempt to make the 119th Wing more efficient.

Senior leaders from the N. D. Air National Guard traveled to Duluth, Minn., for Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO21) training Oct. 15-17.

The objective of AFSO21 is to create a more efficient and cost-effective Air Force by researching and implementing proficient processes in work environments, said Lt. Col. Mark Ugelstad, 119th Wing AFSO21 director, and first to be AFSO21 certified in the N.D. Air National Guard.

The Happy Hooligans received specialized training by Col. Robert Lemieux, AFSO21 Director for the Air National Guard, which consisted of exercises in standard work, batch versus single piece flow, rapid improvement and identifying waste in processes.

“The military, just like civilian-sector industries, needs to continually work to find more efficient ways to do business and the AFSO21 program is helping us in the North Dakota Air Guard do just that, said Col. Robert Becklund, 119th Wing commander.

“This training event was a very good use of everyone’s time and will pay dividends in the future as our personnel learn ways to lean out our processes, enabling us to accomplish our missions more efficiently,” Becklund said.

The group toured the Cirrus Aircraft Manufacturing facility and interacted with employees who showcased achievements the company gained by following ‘lean principles,’ an integral part of the AFSO21 process.

“During the tour we saw how AFSO21 can drastically improve processes and make our jobs more efficient,” Ugelstad said. “Our next step is to educate the 119th Wing of the AFSO21 process so we can start implementing the program,” he added.

Less than two weeks after returning from the training, Ugelstad facilitated a nine-member team using the AFSO21 process to evaluate the internal mail distribution system at the 119th Wing.

“After we followed the eight steps in the AFSO21 process we were able to cut down the workload to only one hour and one person per day. We’re saving over ten hours of work each day with the new process,” said Master Sgt. Jacy Voglewede of the 119th Wing Communications Flight and member of the team.

The out-brief report estimates that the new internal mail system reduces cycle time and delivery time of supplies, saves ten man-hours per day and improves safety by minimizing trips between buildings on base, which decreases slips and falls. The new system also reduces the use of personal and government vehicles resulting in fuel savings.

For more information about AFSO21 and lean practices, please contact Lt. Col. Mark Ugelstad at 701-451-2196 or email mark.ugelstad@ndfarg.ang.af.mil.

Command Chief Master Sgt. Brad Childs addresses attendees at the 2008 State Combined Associations Conference. The conference gives North Dakota Guardsmen an opportunity to support their local associations and attend informational presentations about topics that affect the Guard community.



Guardsmen Welcomed

Combined Conference Seeks Attendance of Future Leaders

Senior Master Sgt. Eric Johnson

By Sgt. Eric W. Jensen
116th Public Affairs Detachment

Since its inception in 1878, the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) has represented Soldiers and Airmen of the Army and Air National Guard by providing states and its members representation before U.S. Congress for resources. The organization has been largely effective as NGAUS has been responsible for the procurement of modern equipment, training, missions and personnel benefits. The weight the organization carries has led to numerous incentives including, just recently, better access to TRICARE health insurance for Guardsmen at an affordable rate. In 2005, NGAUS convinced lawmakers to lower the basic housing allowance threshold from 140 days to 30 days for members of the Guard. Additionally, they created the "Every Soldier a Recruiter Program" to bolster Army Guard recruitment numbers.

The real value of NGAUS is its commitment to communicating the Guard's readiness status to Congress and what resources and policies are needed to achieve desired readiness levels. By supporting the association, Soldiers and Airmen and their families have an opportunity to be heard by members of Congress.

This year, the state level associations; the National Guard Association of North Dakota combined with the North Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association, are encouraging all North Dakota Guardsmen to become involved in their respective

associations by attending the North Dakota National Guard's 2009 State Combined Associations Conference Feb. 20-22 at the Best Western Ramkota Inn, Bismarck. Registration for this event can be completed on-line at www.ngand.org starting the first week of December 2008.

"This event is of the utmost value to North Dakota Guardsmen and especially our emerging leaders in the officer and enlisted ranks" said Maj. Sean Johnson, Chair of the National Guard Association of North Dakota. "The State Combined Conference is the perfect showcase for what our Combined Associations do for our Soldiers, Airmen and their families. It also is a chance for North Dakota Guardsmen to take part in the election process for association leadership and learn about new legislation being proposed to benefit the organization."

"None of the important benefits we receive as Guardsmen happen without these associations," said Retired Sgt. 1st Class Pete Christianson, North Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association president. "It's important that our enlisted Soldiers and Airmen educate themselves about topics that are being discussed at this conference."

An Opportunity for Growth — Professional Development Workshop Offered to Emerging Leaders

Concurrent with The State Combined Conference, emerging leaders in the North Dakota National Guard are invited to attend a Professional Development workshop. The workshop will feature activities for North Dakota Guardsmen and their families. Among the scheduled informational presentations is the "Generations in the Workplace" session. This presentation is designed to bridge the gap between the various age groups that comprise a diverse American workforce by identifying the different values, behaviors and expectations among co-workers.

Other presentations will highlight key leaders in the Army and Air National Guard at the state and national level. These presentations will provide information on the future of the National Guard and its role in the nation's defense. To participate in the Professional Development workshop, please see your unit readiness non commissioned officer or unit leadership about this valuable opportunity.

All in the Family

The combined conference will be accommodating to families as well. A number of events have been planned throughout the weekend. Families are encouraged to attend the variety of workshops and seminars with their Soldiers and Airmen. Activities are also scheduled for children during the conference banquet.

For more information about the North Dakota National Guard Association's State Combined Conference, please visit www.ngand.org or contact Maj. Sean Johnson at 701-333-3099 or e-mail sean.johnson@us.army.mil.

"None of the important benefits we receive as Guardsmen happen without these associations."

**- Retired Sgt. 1st Class
Pete Christianson**

119th Wing Receives Funding to Build Fire Station

By Capt. Penny Ripperger
119th Wing

The North Dakota Air National Guard, 119th Wing Fire Department will receive \$7.5 million to build a new 21,400 square-foot crash/fire/rescue station at their air base in Fargo. The new facility will be shared by military and civilian response crews in support of Hector International Airport.

The funding is a result of an Air National Guard fire station initiative in which \$28 million was authorized and appropriated in the 2009 Omnibus Appropriation Act. The act facilitates construction projects for National Guard fire departments in response to the Security Disaster Assistance and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009, (Public Law 110-329).

Fire stations located in Mont., N.C. and Utah also received appropriations from the initiative.

This state-of-the-art facility supporting Fargo area airport fire fighters and the N.D. Air National Guard is exactly what is needed to allow them to continue to provide their outstanding fire fighting and suppression services to all flight operations," said Gov. John Hoeven. "This new facility will meet the firefighting needs of all of the anticipated future expansions of the airport. This is a clear example of our N.D. National Guard and communities working side by side to benefit their community."

"We are appreciative of the support by our elected officials in securing funding

for this new joint-use facility," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, adjutant general for the N.D. National Guard. "Working together with their civilian counterparts, the dedicated men and women of the 119th Wing will continue to ensure the safety of passengers, crew and aircraft from fire threats at Hector International Airport. We appreciate every opportunity we have to train and operate in a joint military and civilian environment."

The North Dakota Air National Guard Fire Department has the responsibility to respond to all military and civilian aircraft emergencies at Hector International Airport.

The Air National Guard Fire Department and the City of Fargo have a reciprocal mutual aid agreement, which allows either to request assistance from the other when response capability is overwhelmed by events, explained Chief Master Sgt. Mark Solem, 119th Wing Fire Chief.

"This is not only a great opportunity for the North Dakota Air National Guard, but also for the city of Fargo as we continue to expand our relationship working jointly to better serve the people of North Dakota," said Dennis Walaker, Fargo Mayor.

The new station will ensure that the men and women of the North Dakota Air National Guard will continue to provide



Tech Sgt. Tad R. Brown, a 119th Civil Engineer Squadron fire fighter, carries a ladder during a timed fire fighter fitness test Nov. 6 in the North Dakota Air National Guard fire hall on the east edge of the Hector International Airport runway, Fargo. The fitness test is an annual requirement for the fire fighters and includes various obstacles designed to simulate challenges that they might encounter during fire fighting and fire victim rescue attempts.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

aircraft rescue and fire fighting services in accordance with federal aviation administration requirements, said Shawn A. Dobberstein, Executive Director of the Municipal Airport Authority.

"Our community would not have schedule air service if we did not have a strong partnership between the Happy Hooligans and Municipal Airport Authority. This relationship continues to benefit our community and surrounding region," Dobberstein added.

Construction of the new crash/fire/rescue station is expected to begin spring 2009.

Monthly Premiums Decrease for TRICARE Reserve Select

TRICARE Press Release

Effective Jan. 1, 2009, TRICARE will reduce the rates for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). Monthly premiums for TRS individual coverage will drop 44% from \$81.00 to \$47.51, and TRS family coverage will drop 29% from \$253.00 to \$180.17.

The 2009 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), section 704, required TRICARE to analyze Reserve Select costs from 2006 and 2007, and set new rates for 2009.

"Now that TRS has been in place for several years, we were able to calculate premiums for 2009 from actual cost data obtained in earlier years," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "It is important to provide high quality and affordable healthcare coverage for our National Guard and Reserve families."

Established in 2005, TRS is a premium-based health plan for National Guard and Reserve personnel available for purchase by members of the Selected Reserve who are not eligible for or enrolled in Federal

Employee Health Benefit plans.

TRS provides a health plan option to members of the Selected Reserve and their families when they are not on active duty status. The TRS plan delivers coverage similar to TRICARE Standard and Extra to eligible members who purchase the coverage and pay monthly premiums. TRS also features continuously open enrollment.

For more information about TRS visit the TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.mil>.



Sgt. Jonathan Haugen

Thanks From the Heart: Connie Werner, left, looks on as Beth Cole (both are representatives of Quilts of Valor) embraces Sgt. Shaun Aarhus, of the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company, after presenting him with a quilt made by the Quilts of Valor organization. A Quilt of Valor is a hand-made tribute awarded to service members injured in the War on Terror by volunteer quilt-toppers and longarmers, and awarded to injured recipients in and out of military hospitals around the world.



Battleground: Spc. Krista Dahl, of the 134th Quartermaster Detachment, tries to "achieve the clinch" on Sgt. Jon Blazek, of the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company and certified level three combatives instructor, while Master Sgt. Shayne Beckert, Pre-Mobilization Training Assistance Element (PTAE) noncommissioned officer-in-charge, looks on during a combatives drill at the North Dakota Law Enforcement Training Academy in Bismarck Nov. 20. The drill is designed to desensitize Soldiers to the effects of being hit by an aggressor to prevent them from having to experience an enemy strike for the first time in combat. The PTAE is training North Dakota Army Guard Soldiers to become skill level one certified in combatives.

Sgt. Jonathan Haugen



Dedication to Service: From left to right, a trio of pilots, Lt. Col. Michael P. Nelson, Lt. Col. William T. Pallen, and Lt. Col. Craig R. Schroeder display their retirement flags Nov. 1 at a joint ceremony recognizing them for many years of distinguished service in the North Dakota Air National Guard. All three aviators flew the F-16 and made the transition into current missions for the North Dakota Air National Guard, helping to ensure success in new unit roles and responsibilities.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp



Colorful Personalities: North Dakota Air National Guard Family Program coordinator Jody Harms, in black, gives directions to Staff Sgt. Amie K. Ressler, of the 119th Communications Flight, left, and Staff Sgt. Jennifer A. Brummer, of the 119th Medical Group, during Real Colors Personality training Nov. 2 at the North Dakota Air National Guard. The personality training is one of many different tools used to help educate N.D. National Guard members about personality traits and how different personality types interact differently with each other.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp



Guardian Snapshots



Grand Opening: From left to right, Wendall L. Meyer, Federal Highway Administration; Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota National Guard adjutant general; Francis Ziegler, P.E., North Dakota Department of Transportation director; Governor John Hoeven; Bismarck Mayor John Warford; Mandan Mayor Tim Helbling; Senator Kent Conrad; Senator Byron Dorgan and Congressman Earl Pomeroy cut the ceremonial ribbon at the Liberty Memorial Bridge dedication Nov. 11. The new Liberty Memorial Bridge is dedicated to Veterans of every service.

William Prokopyk



On Fire: Maj. John C. Gibbs, 119th Civil Engineer Squadron commander, goes through the fire fighter's physical fitness test and obstacle course Nov. 6 at the North Dakota Air National Guard. The test is an annual requirement for Air National Guard fire fighters. Gibbs went through the fitness test to experience the demands that personnel under his command are required to undergo annually.

Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp



Super Soaker: Chief Master Sgt. Ben Bush, of the 119th Wing Civil Engineer Squadron, receives fire extinguishing training at the 386th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron in Kuwait. The base fire dept conducted the training for base civil engineers and the Japanese Air Force Oct 4th.

Courtesy Photo



Seeing the world and trying new things are often reasons people join the military. If Tech. Sgt. Jodi Renschler, Staff Sgt. Mandi Hagen and Senior Airman Mandy Herrmann, all of the 119th Wing Services Flight, had these ambitions in mind when they joined the North Dakota Air Guard, they are definitely fulfilling their goals.

The Airmen deployed to Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates in September 2008. The dynamic trio, always looking for a new experience, found what they were searching for when they signed up for the Fire Muster competition.

“We decided to sign up for the Fire Muster because we had never done anything like it before. It was an eye-opening experience that gave us great insight on the physical aspect of being a fire fighter,” Renschler said.

The Fire Muster is a timed firefighter themed obstacle course initiated by the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing Fire Department to showcase aspects of the job and promote Fire Prevention Week. The course contained five tasks.

In the first task, the team began by laying on a cot. At the sound of a bell, participants put on fire gear as quickly as possible, ran to a cone and back, undressed and then laid back down on the cot again.

“One of the hardest parts for me was trying to get the button snapped on the jacket. We all struggled with that and the time didn’t stop until our entire team was laying back down again,” Hagen recalled.

In the second task, participants carried a 50-pound dummy down and around a cone and back. The third task was to roll a fire hose.

“Rolling the 50-foot fire hose seemed like it took forever. We all had to get our hoses perfectly rolled before they would stop the time. It was actually a lot harder than it looked,” Herrmann said.

Task four proved to be one of the tougher challenges.

“We had to fill buckets with water and throw them on a house as if we were putting out a fire. The water would then trickle off the house into a bigger bucket. This was a timed event so we were running as fast as we could with buckets filled with water,” Renschler explained.

“The idea behind this exercise was to simulate putting out a fire before we had trucks and hoses. It was by far the most exhausting part of the event,” she said.

In the final task, the team had to connect two fire hoses, turn on the water and knock down a basketball with the stream.

The best part of this whole experience was just being able to say we did it, laughing the whole way,” Renschler said.

“I was just glad that we didn’t come

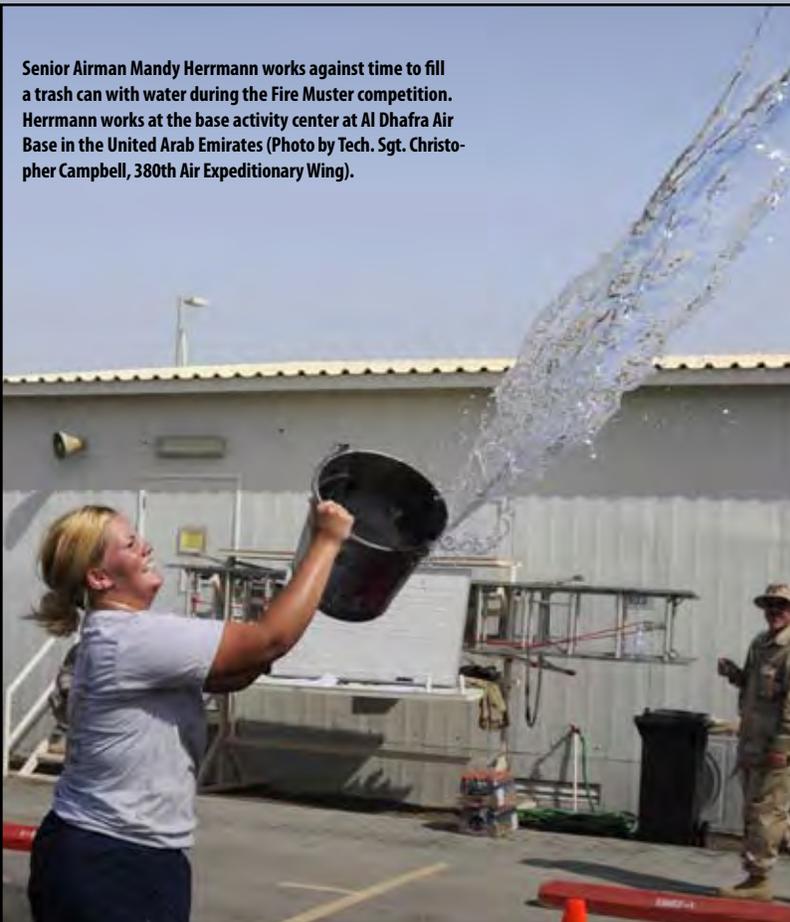
Some Like it Hot

**Airmen Cherish New Experiences,
Learn New Skills During Deployment to UAE**

By Capt. Penny Ripperger
119th Wing

Tech. Sgt. Jodi Renschler rolls up a fire hose during a Fire Muster competition on Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates. Renschler deployed to the UAE in September 2008 (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Campbell, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing).

Senior Airman Mandy Herrmann works against time to fill a trash can with water during the Fire Muster competition. Herrmann works at the base activity center at Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Campbell, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing).



Left to right, Tech. Sgt. Jodi Renschler, Staff Sgt. Mandi Hagen and Senior Airman Mandy Herrmann flex their muscles and show off their 'Happy Hooligan' tattoos prior to competing in the Fire Muster obstacle course.



Courtesy Photo



Staff Sgt. Mandi Hagen and Tech Sgt. Jodi Renschler, left, enjoy a camel ride during a USO tour of Abu Dhabi in October. The tour was one of the many cultural experiences the Happy Hooligan members have taken part in during their deployment to the United Arab Emirates.

Courtesy Photo

in last place! Out of 16 teams we placed seventh. That's not bad," said Hagen.

Work Life

Typically, Airmen who proudly work in the Services career field are stereotyped as being 'just a cook.' The stereotypes have been blown away by these three Airmen as they expand their deployment experience working in Services positions not usually seen by N.D. Air National Guard members on a drill weekend.

"My position is the front desk supervisor in the Chapman's Activity Center where I oversee all front desk operations. The most important part of my position is to make sure we have what the airman needs when they come to the center to unwind," said Renschler.

"I had never worked in an activity center before and have learned many new skills; especially that customer service goes a long way. Usually everyone who comes in contact with my staff leaves with a morale boost and a smile on their face. I am grateful for those experiences and the fact that I have such an outstanding team to work with," added Renschler.

Similar to the duty of boosting morale

in the activity center, Herrmann also has the responsibility of working with off-duty Airmen as a bartender at The Thirsty Camel, the base club.

"This has been a learning experience for me because I have never had a job like this before. It's fun and I obviously meet a lot of people, but it is also a lot of work. My responsibilities include conducting inventory on all alcohol, ensuring that Airmen do not go over their two drink limit as well as ensuring the morale on base is always high," Herrmann said.

On the other end of the Services career field spectrum, Hagen serves in a challenging role at the dining facility.

"I am in charge of quality assurance, which means I am responsible for overseeing daily meal operations, flight meals for aircrew missions and security forces personnel who can't leave their post. I am also in charge of helping with special event dinners," Hagen said.

"It has been really interesting to see how much coordination and planning takes place behind the scenes to keep such a huge operation running. My experience in food service has definitely helped prepare me for this mission, but I'm still learning something new every day," she said.

Happy Hooligan Family

While their hectic work days and unique recreational activities like the Fire Muster competition keep the Airmen busy, they admit they still miss home.

"The hardest part for me is missing my 2 ½ year-old daughter," Hagen said.

Renschler, also a mother of a young daughter, shares a common bond with Hagen. The two Airmen have found support with each other and the nine other Happy Hooligans currently serving at Al Dhafra.

"It's been nice because all of us 'Happy Hooligans' have stuck together and have really been there for each other. When one of us is down or having a rough time, someone is always there. I am very proud of all of them. They have done the N.D. Air Guard proud," Hagen said.

The Airmen are expected to return to North Dakota in December and January.

"This is my first deployment overseas and I'm excited to get back home, but at the end of the day, I wouldn't trade this deployment experience for anything. This has been an incredible opportunity where I've learned so much about the Air Force and myself," Herrmann said.



William Prokopyk

Putting the Top Down: Maj. Gen. David A. Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota National Guard adjutant general; North Dakota Governor John Hoeven and 1st Lt. Dan Murphy, North Dakota National Guard Public Affairs officer, prepare to make their way to the Liberty Memorial Bridge dedication in Bismarck Nov. 11 for a military-themed parade across the bridge with more than two-dozen units including nine Honor Guards, antique military vehicles, National Guard units and others. The chilly ride was followed by a public reception at Bismarck State College.