



NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN



THE
Happy Hooligans

Volume 1, Issue 2

March 2008



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Digital photos should be at least 300dpi.

On the Cover

Appreciation: U.S. Military veteran and Patriot Guard Rider David Woodward, in white hat, shakes hands with Master Sgt. Alan P. Grinsteiner, of the 191st Military Police Company, in a mutual show of respect at an official send-off ceremony on Jan. 19 in Fargo for the 191st. The unit is scheduled to deploy to Iraq after several weeks of training at their mobilization station in Fort Dix, N.J. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp)



VIEW FROM THE TOP

Governor John Hoeven

N.D.'s Guardians Remain 'Always Ready, Always There'

The North Dakota National Guard motto — *Always Ready, Always There* — has defined this outstanding organization for generations. But never have those words been more tested or proven than in the past few years. The Soldiers and Airmen of our National Guard have been, and continue to be, always ready and always there as guardians of our state and nation.

Whether called upon to help their fellow citizens in the event of an emergency or to defend this great country abroad, North Dakota's Guard members have proudly stepped up and done what was asked of them. Their actions have had an impact worldwide, and have earned them an esteemed reputation for professionalism and excellence.

North Dakota's National Guard has been fully engaged in the Global War on Terrorism, successfully and honorably doing its part in the defense of freedom and the preservation of peace. Our servicemen and servicewomen have made important contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and across the globe. Their service has involved cutting-edge technology and strategic missions, blazing new ground and setting the course for other units to follow.

Since 2001, more than 4,300 North Dakota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have served or are currently serving in the Global War on Terrorism, surpassing all previous mobilizations from the state, including World War I and II. With several units having already returned home and five

units currently deployed, North Dakota is an integral force in our nation's war efforts.

Guard members have served this state and nation honorably, and performed their mission with distinction. We are grateful for the outstanding work they have done, and continue to do, on our behalf. We also honor the families of our brave men and women in uniform for their service and sacrifice, and for the unwavering support they have provided their loved ones. They, too, have been called upon to serve their country.

With a large number of Guard members mobilized, North Dakota has sadly borne a loss of life. Some of our heroes have paid the ultimate price so that we can continue to live in a free and democratic society. We will never forget those who lost their lives or the families who continue to mourn their loss.

This new, joint publication is yet another recognition of the outstanding work and cooperative spirit that has come to symbolize North Dakota's National Guard. We are proud of our Soldiers and Airmen who have dedicated their lives to helping others and protecting the ideals of this great nation, and of the families and employers who support them in their efforts.

As we continue to build a strong future for North Dakota, our National Guard remains always ready and always there as guardians of our citizens and communities, and of the precious freedoms we enjoy every day. Thank you for your service to this state and nation.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Hoeven".



81st CST Travels to Texas for Evaluation

The North Dakota National Guard's 81st Civil Support Team (CST), based in Bismarck, will conduct its 18-month periodic evaluation exercise in San Antonio, Texas, the week of Feb. 25. The evaluation ensures that the team is prepared to respond to state and national events involving weapons of mass destruction or accidents involving hazardous materials.

The CST's initial evaluation exercise was August 2006 in Bismarck and resulted in the team's official certification by the U.S. Secretary of Defense on Feb. 1, 2007. This certification validates the group's readiness to respond to state and national emergencies.

The 81st CST can rapidly deploy to assist local first responders in determining the nature of an attack or accident, provide medical and technical advice and pave the way for arrival of follow-on response assets.

The U.S. Army North's (ARNORTH) "Charlie" team from Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, will conduct the evaluation. ARNORTH, which has increasingly been involved in military support to civilian authorities during disasters, formed teams

to evaluate and support CSTs.

Typically, teams conduct these evaluations at a CST's home station, however, the 81st CST coordinated with ARNORTH to further its training by deploying to a geographically unfamiliar area.

"Although I am confident that the 81st CST is mission-ready, it's always valuable to have an outside entity conduct an independent review of your capabilities," said Lt. Col. Larry A. Shireley, 81st CST commander. "I'm certain that it will be a valuable learning process for us."

Throughout the course of the evaluation exercise week, the 81st CST will complete a variety of training exercises before the final evaluation. These exercises use realistic weapons of mass destruction scenarios to test all aspects of the team's response capabilities. Depending on the scenario, the team may be expected to identify chemical, biological and radiological agents, provide patient treatment recommendations or perform decontamination procedures. The final evaluation exercise will be March 1.

"As a result of our intensive training, and the fact that weapons of mass destruction and hazardous materials response is our



Chief Warrant Officer Kiel Skager, Joint Force Headquarters

A member of the 81st Civil Support Team (CST) performs self-decontamination during training outside of Raymond J. Bohn Armory in Bismarck.

only business, the 81st CST provides valuable technical expertise and response assets to assist North Dakota's outstanding first responders to help ensure the safety of the state's citizens," Shireley said.



William Prokopyk, JFND Public Information Office

Turning Up the Heat: On Jan. 27, a gas leak left 5,200 homes in Mandan without heat. The N.D. National Guard organized a heater-lending program to collect space heaters for homes affected by the natural gas outage. Members of the N.D. National Guard set up near the Department of Transportation building in Bismarck and received more than 150 donated space heaters. The N.D. National Guard also loaned more than 100 space heaters of their own.

North Dakota Guardian Name Contest Winners

Three individuals have won the magazine name contest announced this fall in *The Straight Arrow* and *Jet Letter*.

Congratulations to Marlys Morgenstern, Family Program Office; JoAnn Czerwinski, Family Assistance Center and Capt. Shannon Horton, 81st Civil Support Team.

The Joint Executive Council (JEC) chose *North Dakota Guardian* from a list of potential names submitted by North Dakota National Guard members, retirees, family members and civilian employees.

The winners will be awarded with a number of prizes provided by the Recruiting and Retention office.

Veterans Affairs Expands Dental Eligibility

By Master Sgt. Daniel M. Dewey (Ret.), AMVETS National Service Officer

President Bush signed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008 on Jan. 28. Among its many provisions, this act extends the period of enhanced dental eligibility provided to recently discharged veterans.

Prior to NDAA, veterans who served on active duty for 90 days or more were eligible to receive one-time VA dental benefits if they applied to the VA within 90 days post-discharge from active duty and if his/her DD214 did not indicate necessary dental treatment already had been provided. The NDAA extended this timeframe to 180 days.

The VA provides outpatient dental benefits according to law. In some instances, the VA may provide extensive dental care, while in other cases, treatment may be limited. Veterans are eligible for outpatient dental treatment if the VA determines they meet one of the following criteria.

1. Those having a service-connected compensable dental disability or condition are eligible for any needed dental care.
2. Those who were prisoners of war are eligible for dental care as are those with a 100 percent service-connected disability or those receiving a 100 percent rate due to individual unemployability.



Sgt. Ann Knudson, Joint Force Headquarters

Spc. Alissa Andrus, N.D. Army National Guard Medical Detachment, prepares to take x-rays for a dental examination on Staff Sgt. John Dietrich, 957th Engineer Co.

3. Those who are participating in a VA vocational rehabilitation program under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 31 are eligible for dental care necessary to enter into a rehabilitation program and achieve the goals of the veteran's vocational rehabilitation program.

N.D. National Guard Provides Job Opportunities

By Staff Sgt. Kayla Bosch,
Human Resource Office

A Few Benefits to Becoming a Federal Technician

1. You are offered many resources for training, career advancement and personal growth.
2. You will earn annual leave, sick leave and paid time off for all 10 federal holidays. You also are offered 15 days of military leave per fiscal year in which you are being paid for your full-time position while being on military status and performing military duty.
3. You may be entitled to pay bonuses, time-off awards and step increases, which boost your salary potential based on job performance.
4. You can choose from a variety of health care plans with reasonable monthly premiums.
5. You can choose to pick up supplemental dental/vision insurance from a variety of companies.
6. You can choose to participate in the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and use pre-tax dollars to pay for prescriptions, medical bills, child care and much more.
7. You can participate in the Federal Long Term Health Care Program, an opportunity to plan for you and your family's future.
8. Outstanding retirement opportunities are available. Invest in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and get agency matching contributions of as much as 5 percent.
9. Earn two retirements at one time: federal and military.
10. Earn competitive salaries, either general schedule (GS) or wage grade (WG).

Annual N.D. Averages:

GS Entry Level	(GS 5-8)	\$38,626.25
WG Entry Level	(WG 5-8)	\$36,068.58
GS Mid Management	(GS 9-12)	\$58,974.75
WG Mid Management	(WG 9-11)	\$45,809.65
GS Senior Leadership	(GS 13-15)	\$101,719.00
WG Senior Leadership	(WG 12-14)	\$51,799.34

Extra Bonus:

You can choose to "buy back" years of Title 10 active duty time, which add to your years of technician time and count towards your federal retirement. Also, based on your years of active duty service and other federal service, you can earn additional hours for annual leave.

Job Determining Factors:

Your military experience and training, civilian employment and education are all guiding factors for the qualification of each position. Check to see if you are AFSC/MOS compatible when viewing job announcements.

For Additional Information, Please Visit:

North Dakota National Guard:

www.ndguard.com

GS Pay Scale: www.opm.gov/oca/08tables/indexGS.asp

WG Pay Scale: www.opm.gov/oca/wage/appfund/pdf/AppendixH.pdf

The Happy Hooligans — What's in a Name?

By Col. Tom (TLAR) Larson (Ret.) and
Chief Master Sgt. J.C. "Jack" Tietgens (Ret.)

Possibly no other Air National Guard unit has a nickname as well known as the "Happy Hooligans." Where did that nickname come from? How did it come about?

Brig. Gen. Duane S. Larson (Ret.) commanded the North Dakota Air National Guard's 178th Fighter Squadron in the mid-1950s. Because of his fatherly instincts, Larson (then major) became known as "Pappy" to his entire squadron.

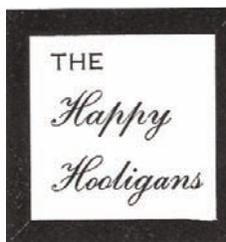
His men were dubbed "Hooligans" for their mischievous antics. Locally, they became known as "Pappy and his Hooligans."

Because of his striking resemblance to the Steve Canyon comic strip character,

"Happy Easter," the squadron was soon known as "Happy and his Hooligans," and later shortened to "Happy Hooligans" around 1958. Soon everyone around the base was using the nickname "Happy Hooligans" to describe the squadron.

In the early 1960s, the North Dakota Air National Guard was searching for a motto to set them apart from other units. A contest was held to choose an official nickname, but no entries topped "Happy Hooligans," so it was officially adopted as the unit's nickname. The first emblem was a white square with a black border and black printing. Soon that was changed to the red and white emblem used today. In 1964, during the ANG Rick's Trophy competition, "Happy Hooligans" was painted on the unit's F-89J aircraft. This was the first time it appeared on the aircraft,

but since then, each North Dakota Air National Guard aircraft has carried that motto/logo prominently on the tail.



Submitted Photo

Brig Gen. Duane S. Larson (Ret.) conducts a flight check on a P-51 (June 1953).

Maintaining a Healthy and Happy Relationship

By Chaplain Col. Jeff Franko,
Joint Force Headquarters

One of the most joyful duties I get to do as a chaplain is share my "wisdom" from 38 years of marriage in many of our state's MRE (Marriage and Relationship Enrichment) events. I will be the first to admit that much of my wisdom came from the mistakes I've made rather than any inherent smarts I have on the subject.



Chief Warrant Officer Kiel Skager, Joint Force Headquarters

Chaplain Col. Jeff Franko speaks during a Marriage and Relationship Enrichment event at Maplelag Ski Resort, north of Detroit Lakes, Minn., Feb. 8-10.

Although a slow learner in the area of relationships, I am a learner who didn't have to get hit over the head too many times before the light bulb went on. And it is a delight to hopefully help others avoid some of the pitfalls and blunders I've had to stumble through.

I just finished reading the book "The Mr. & Mrs. Happy Handbook" by Steve Doocy (with corrections by Mrs. Doocy). Steve is the co-host of *Fox and Friends* on the Fox News Channel and has a funny way of talking about love, marriage and family. One chapter is titled, "Rules of Engagement: Married in the Military." Here are some of his observations:

"It's not easy being married to somebody in the military. There's always a worry that something will go wrong. ... It takes a special person to selflessly serve his or her country, and it takes another special person to be married to that person. It is a hard life. ... What's the key? ... Number one is communication and that's followed by a sense of humor. They go hand in hand. If you don't have that in a marriage, it's not going to be strong." Doocy summarizes, "When married men or women serve in the

military, their spouses discover that while they might not wear a uniform, they also sacrifice a lot. I salute them. It's not easy, and they don't get much encouragement."

Communication and a sense of humor — that's what it boils down to for many who face the dangers and uncertainties of mobilizations and come to find their bond to each other made stronger in the crucible of military life.

The only thing I might add to that secret combination is something Jesus talked about at the end of his ministry.

Before sharing the Last Supper with his disciples he went around the table and washed their feet and then he said, (this is my abbreviated paraphrase of John 13:12-17), "Do you know what this means? If I, your Lord and teacher can make myself your humble servant, you can do the same for each other. I've done this as an example of the way you should treat each other and you will be blessed if you do it."

There you have it, my friends: communication, a sense of humor and a humble servant's heart. It will take you a long way to a long, happy life with the one you love.

College First Program Assists Students



By Jennifer Raab,
Recruiting and Retention Office

A new enlistment option makes it possible for Soldiers to achieve their college goals while serving in the North Dakota Army National Guard. The College First enlistment option provides qualified high school graduates and graduating seniors with no prior military service the opportunity to complete as much as two years of full-time schooling with no federal mobilization/deployment while serving part-time in the Guard.

In other words, the College First program offers the following possibilities:

1. As much as two years of non-

deployment following completion of initial training.

2. As much as a \$20,000 enlistment bonus.

3. Basic educational assistance (\$309 per month) with the Montgomery G.I. Bill-Selected Reserve.

4. Additional educational assistance of as much as \$350* per month with the GI Bill Kicker (additional money available to those enlisting in a critical MOS and assigned to a qualified unit).

5. As much as 100 percent college tuition assistance.

“The extra \$350 a month makes it easier for me to attend college and not have to worry as much about a part time job,” said Spc. Stephannie Hopkins of the Forward Support Company, 164 Engineer Battalion in Minot. “It is nice that I will be able to finish college without the threat of deployment. This will give me the chance to continue on to OCS after college without interruption.”

Hopkins enlisted under the College First program in June 2006.

NGB kicked off the College First

program nationwide in May 2006. As of Dec. 17, 2007, 31 North Dakota Soldiers have signed up for the program.

*The additional educational assistance of \$350 per month for the GI Bill Kicker is increased under the College First program. The GI Bill amount is traditionally \$200 per month.

EARN OVER \$2,000 PER MONTH	
G.I. Bill	\$309
G.I. Bill Kicker	\$350
Drill Pay (E-2)	\$212
Recruiter Assistant Pay*	\$665
Federal College Tuition**	\$500
TOTAL MONTHLY EARNINGS	\$2,036

*Recruiting Assistant Pay: This is a 100 percent voluntary program open to Guard members to assist in helping recruit for their unit. Recruiting Assistants (RAs) can earn an additional income assisting Guard recruiting efforts by identifying well-qualified men and women for service or for each prior service member who affiliates with a unit for four months. Monthly dollar amount is based on one referral enlisting each quarter.

**The Army National Guard funds as much as 100 percent of tuition costs and fees, not to exceed \$250 per semester hour, and is limited to \$4,500 per person each fiscal year.

Joining Up With the New Team in Town

Det. 2 Leads the Charge in Minot

By Capt. Penny Ripperger,
119th Wing Public Affairs Officer

Once fully staffed, the N.D. Air Guard's new Detachment 2 Security Forces Squadron will consist of 60 full-time and 81 traditional (weekend) positions, making it the largest Air National Guard security forces squadron in the nation. N.D. Air Guard recruiters tasked with filling these slots are hunkering down for a busy and challenging year.

“Recruiting for these positions has been going extremely well. So far we have already hired approximately 26 full-time positions and 17 traditional positions. Right now our biggest focus is getting the word out about the squadron to people all over North Dakota,” said Tech. Sgt. Tanya Augdahl, Det. 2 recruiter.

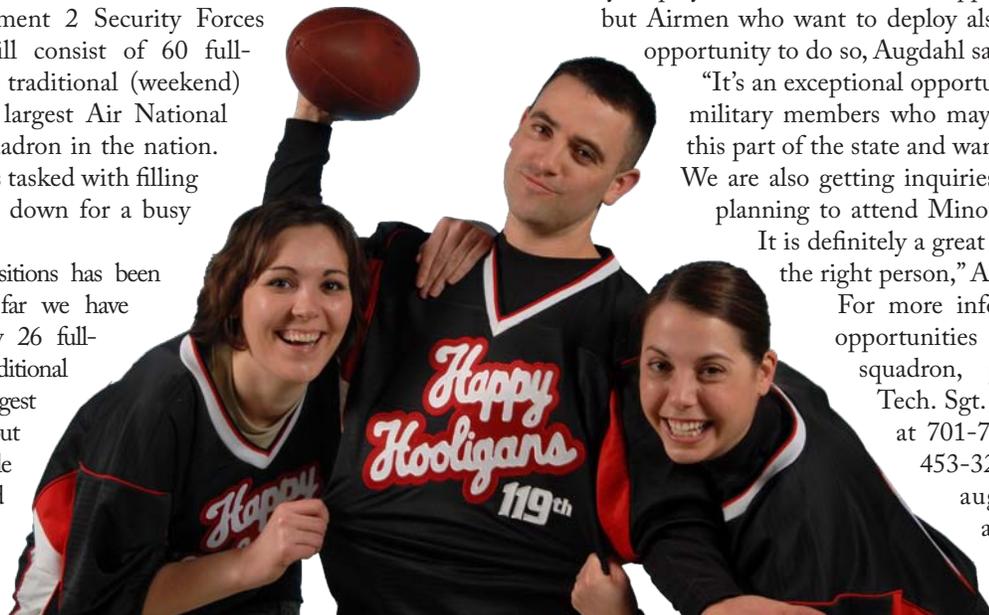
Airmen associated with Det. 2 are members of the N.D. Air National Guard and attached to the 119th Wing, but they work side by side with active duty security forces Airmen at the Minot Air Force Base.

Personnel in these positions have a reduced likelihood of involuntary deployment, which can be appealing to some, but Airmen who want to deploy also will have the opportunity to do so, Augdahl said.

“It’s an exceptional opportunity for current military members who may have family in this part of the state and want to move back. We are also getting inquiries from students planning to attend Minot State College.

It is definitely a great career move for the right person,” Augdahl said.

For more information about opportunities within the squadron, please contact Tech. Sgt. Tanya Augdahl at 701-723-3276 (DSN 453-3276) or tanya.augdahl@ndfarg.ang.af.mil.



Let it Ride

THE PATRIOT GUARD STANDS
FOR THOSE WHO STOOD FOR
ALL OF US

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



They come at the most trying time of any parent's life. They come as people reflect on a life cut short. They come with a rumble that shakes the ground and vibrates to a body's core. When they come, the Patriot Guard Riders bring honor, patriotism and a strong, quiet protection for the grief-stricken.

One might think that a troupe of motorcycles would be the last thing a family would want when grieving a service member killed on the battlefield. But, it's the contrary. The riders come when invited. The rumble of their arrival comforts mourners because it often means that they won't have to see signs or listen to shouts from anti-war protestors. The Patriot Guard Riders serve as human shields, blocking disrespectful interruptions with red, white and blue. They are peaceful yet strong protectors of vulnerable people and those who are not in a position or a time to defend or protect themselves.

"The PGR was a marvelous fix to the protestor problem, which we weren't officially allowed to do anything about," said retired N.D. Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Michael J. Haugen. "They were able to render the protestors ineffective in a very good way."

The Patriot Guard Riders began in August 2005 when, according to the group's national Web site, "American Legion Riders of Chapter 136 from Kansas were appalled to hear that a fallen hero's memory was being tarnished by misguided religious zealots who were protesting at funerals." Their response was to do something about it. The idea of forming a chapter in each state soon caught on and various veterans' groups offered support.

While many Patriot Guard Riders are motorcycle riders, the Patriot Guard is not a motorcycle club. The only prerequisite to belong to the group is "an unwavering respect for those who risk their very lives for America's freedom and security," states the North Dakota group's Web site, www.ndpatriotguard.org.

"Quite simply, we feel the deepest respect and honor for our military people," said N.D. State Ride Captain Randy Lindborg, of Dickinson. "We appreciate their service and sacrifice, and we do not — and will not — forget."

The North Dakota Patriot Guard's first mission came in June 2006 when they offered support at Spc. Michael Hermanson's funeral. The Soldier of Company A, 164th Engineer Combat Battalion, was killed in action in Iraq.



Left: A member of the Patriot Guard Riders shows his respect by holding the United States flag for retired U.S. military veterans flying from Fargo to Washington, D.C., on an Honor Flight to tour the National World War II Memorial. Top: Master Sgt. Teresa A. Terry, 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron, rides the last in a line of motorcycles bearing flags as they make their way through a group of Patriot Guard Riders in Fargo on the way to a Soldier's funeral May 31.

"I heard about an organization that was looking for volunteers with or without motorcycles to stand in a flag line to help shield family and friends of Michael from a protest group and, most importantly, honor this fallen Soldier," said David K. Pagel, assistant N.D. state ride captain. "I was able to take the day of the funeral off to do my part in whatever way possible. That day will forever remain one of the most significant days of my life."

Pagel's spouse, Staff Sgt. Kristen J. Pagel, serves with Headquarters Support Company of the 164th Engineer Combat Battalion (Mechanized) in Minot.

The Riders have since expanded their role, offering support at military send-offs and welcoming service members home from overseas deployments.

"Many of us feel that the spirit of patriotism has not been displayed by enough citizens for too many years in our country," Lindborg said. "The way our Vietnam vets were treated when they returned from serving was deplorable and probably the darkest hour we have ever seen in terms of support for our military. One of our goals as an organization is to see to it that our

Soldiers are never again treated in such a manner."

The Guard Riders recently supported the series of "Honor Flights," which sent World War II veterans to Washington D.C. They also participated in the Help on the Homefront program, which assists returning veterans and their families in overcoming challenges often resulting from an overseas deployment.

"As soon as my kickstand was down, I was welcomed and made to feel right at home," said Master Sgt. Teresa A. Terry of her first mission with the Patriot Guard. Terry works full-time for the 119th Logistics Support Squadron and is the southeast North Dakota ride captain.

The Patriot Guard is strong in numbers, strong in principle and strong in their conviction to support the people in the trenches because many of them have served in the Armed Forces themselves.

"I have witnessed what the simple act of holding an American flag, standing in silence for a fallen military member can do for a grieving family," said Patriot Guard member Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Moen, who serves with Headquarters and Headquarters

Detachment (HHD) of Joint Force Headquarters. "Family members have been overwhelmed by the fact that complete strangers will take time off from work to stand in honor of their fallen hero."

"Standing for those who stood for us" is the Patriot Guard's motto. The group often works closely with state adjutant generals and military leaders in their efforts to support and protect service members and their families.

"They are really amazing," Haugen said of the group. "They add dignity to the funerals from the civilian population."

"As sad of an event that a Soldier's funeral is, the overwhelming sense of gratitude, honor and appreciation we feel combines into an enormous feeling of respect for the Soldier and his family," Lindborg said.

The feeling goes both ways as demonstrated by the numerous letters of thanks posted at www.patriotguard.org. All of the letters include a sentiment similar to that of a June 25, 2006, message that begins, "This has been the most difficult thing we have had to endure." It ends, "No words will ever fully describe my thanks and appreciation for the Patriot Guard."

PURSUING EXCELLENCE

North Dakota National Guard's Non-commissioned Officer of the Year Finds Competition Its Own Reward

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hagburg,
141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

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



It was noon on an August day in Georgia and Staff Sgt. Russell Garrett, pugil stick in hand, was facing off against another Soldier. They both had been awake and on their feet for 39 hours.

After bashing each other with pugil sticks for 30 seconds, Garrett and his opponent did a round with boxing gloves and then fought it out on the ground.

"They'd stand you up and tell you to go to town and that's it," Garrett said. "That was a smoker. No sleep and you just kill yourself."

For Garrett, the fighting was just part of his battle to be 2007 National Guard NCO of the Year. He was at the Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., from Aug. 1-4, 2007, for the field phase of the national competition and then traveled to Washington, D.C., for the board phase Aug. 5.

Garrett is the infantry operations NCO for the 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade of Fargo. A resident of Riverdale, N.D., Garrett joined the Guard in 1994. When he began his NCO of the Year odyssey in 2006, he was serving as a Huey helicopter mechanic with the 832nd Medical Detachment in Bismarck.

After being named North Dakota Army National Guard NCO of the Year in February 2007, Garrett qualified for the national competition by winning the regional Army National Guard NCO of the Year contest at Camp Guernsey, Wyo. He then spent the summer in training.

"I probably road marched twice a week. I tried to run every day I didn't road march," Garrett said. "Just conditioning physically for the challenge I knew they were going to put out there."

As the national competition approached, Garrett's unit put him on orders so he could do a solid week of training.

"It was fantastic," Garrett said.

Arriving at Fort Benning on Aug. 1, Garrett and his fellow competitors were up at 3 a.m. on the morning of Aug. 2 for their first event, the Army Physical Fitness

Test.

"They didn't tell you how long the PT test run was," Garrett said. "You knew you had to do two miles so you ran as hard as you could to the two-mile mark — and then they said to

keep going. Turns out it was five miles.”

It was the beginning of a military skills marathon for Garrett and the others. Next was the Combat Water Survival Test, in which the Soldiers had to perform three water tasks with all their gear and weapons. Basic combat task testing “directly off the expert infantry badge task standards” came next, Garrett said.

The contestants moved out to the fort’s ranges for the next phase of competition, where they faced more testing, this time in medical tasks.

“Boy it was hot,” Garrett said. “Then they had us do orienteering. Straight through the thickets at Fort Benning — if you’ve ever been there, that place is a mess, nothing but ‘wait a minute’ vines and swamp. Even if you don’t touch any water you still ended up soaking wet.”

Weapons qualification followed. The Soldiers were required to zero their weapons in nine rounds or less and then they moved on the “stress shoot.”

“They set you back about 200 feet from the firing position,” Garrett said. “When they said ‘fire’ you just ran up there. You don’t bother trying to climb down the ladder, you just jump in the foxhole and take your shots.”

After completing the 40-shot record fire, the contestants shot with night vision goggles and then with laser aiming devices. It was the middle of the night by the time the weapons firing ended.

“That was a long day,” Garrett said. “But it didn’t just end when you got done shooting. We had some more medical CTT tasks.”

The road march came next, a 10-miler.

“It was a bit of a heartbreaker for me because I got to where I could see the finish line and I could see everybody up there,” Garrett said. “And then the sergeant major rode up on his tractor and said ‘jump on back, time is up.’ I was running and everything. Sometimes a guy just can’t perform when he wants to.”

Garrett and the others moved right on to the next event, land navigation. It was 4 a.m. on the morning of Aug. 3. By 8:30 a.m., they had completed the land navigation and started on the obstacle course.

“I was hurting pretty good at that point,” Garrett said. “A good number of us were just walking between the obstacles.”

After the obstacle course, the Soldiers faced each other in the fighting event. Then, they were driven out to the final event, urban operations. During the ride,



Capt. Tim W. Irvin, GK Magazine

Staff Sgt. Russell Garrett eyes his opponent as he prepares for pugil stick warfare during the 2007 Army National Guard Non-commissioned Officer of the Year competition in Ft. Benning, Ga. Garrett was joined by Spc. Joel Erickson, Det. 1, 188th Engineer Company, who also participated in the competition for Outstanding Soldier of the Year.

they got a chance to dine on MREs.

“The whole time you were there you just ate whenever you had time,” Garrett said. “They didn’t set aside a time for eating.”

In their urban operations scenario, the Soldiers burst into a room and had to identify friends and enemies. They used weapons loaded with simulated rounds.

“It was kind of neat because in those rooms there were actual people with guns that were shooting sim rounds back at you,” said Garrett. “So there was an element of pain involved. I got shot in the finger.”

The contestants finally hit their bunks late in the evening of Aug. 3 after more than 40 hours without sleep. The next day, they flew to Washington, D.C.

The board portion of the contest took place in Washington Aug. 5. The board’s president was Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Gipe, Command Sergeant Major of the National Guard. Four other sergeant majors filled out the board.

“It was a rapid fire board,” Garrett said. “These guys asked you a question and you spit an answer out, asked a question, spit an answer. It was constant.”

Garrett said the time that followed the board was the highlight of his NCO of the Year experience, especially since his brother Aaron was able to travel to Washington and join him.

“They took us around and showed us the ins and outs of the nation’s buildings, the Capitol, the Pentagon,” he said. “We got to go in and see all the big wigs. We got a good intimate look at Washington. It was something else.”

Finally, the contestants moved on to the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States annual conference in Oklahoma City, Okla., where the winner of the competition was announced. Staff Sgt. Mark Dornbush of Texas was named Army National Guard Soldier of the Year for 2007.

Garrett doesn’t know where he finished in the contest — only the winner was named. Even though he didn’t win, he doesn’t regret competing.

“It was a lot of fun, aside from being really tough, it was a lot of fun too,” Garrett said. “You get to do a lot of things you never do at drill.”

Garrett also got a pleasant surprise the morning after the final awards banquet — a call telling him that he had been selected for Airborne School.

“I’ve been trying to get to Airborne School for 13 years,” he said. “Maybe it was going to happen anyway but it was just kind of neat how it happened the very next day. One door closes and another one opens.”

RAID Soldiers Return From Afghanistan

By Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson,
Joint Force Headquarters

Through a thick bank of fog and some cold January drizzle, 37 Soldiers from the 1-188th Air Defense Artillery RAID (Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment) stepped from the plane that brought them to American soil for the first time in months.

One year to the day after arriving in Afghanistan, the Soldiers returned to Fort Hood, Texas. There, they met two of their comrades, Sgt. 1st Class Brian Hornbaker and his stepdaughter, Spc. Kelli Kuznia, who had returned a few weeks earlier on emergency leave. Both hugged and greeted their comrades as they walked into the hangar.

While the Soldiers weren't home quite yet, a contingent from North Dakota came to welcome them, as well. Major Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, adjutant general; Brig. Gen. Al Dohrmann, deputy adjutant general; Col. Robert Fode; Command Sgt. Maj. Dan Job; and Sgt. Maj. Monte Ohlhauser flew to Texas to ensure the first faces the Soldiers saw were of proud North Dakotans.

Then, the returning Soldiers rolled up their sleeves for a PPD shot. Not exactly the greatest welcome home, but it was well worth it. It takes 48 hours to read the results of the tuberculosis test. The faster the test can be administered means the faster Soldiers can return to their families. Fewer than 72 hours later, all 39 Soldiers were home.

The quick turnaround was a record for the North Dakota Guard and wouldn't have been possible without a number of North Dakota Guardsmen arriving in Fort Hood beforehand to help pave the way for a smooth, fast out-processing.

The year leading up to RAID Soldiers' reunification with families was filled with a wealth of accomplishments. Under the leadership of Maj. Jon Erickson and 1st Sgt. John Waters, the Soldiers provided force protection at forward operating bases across Afghanistan.

"The 188th ADA RAID provided outstanding security



Sgt. Jon Haugen, 116th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers of the 1-188th Air Defense Artillery (RAID) are greeted by N.D. National Guard senior leadership as they arrive in Fort Hood, Texas.

surveillance in Afghanistan in seven different areas," Dohrmann said. "Their value to the force was clearly evident by the constant demand for their services by local Army commanders."

The RAID teams employed surveillance camera systems to identify and track potential threats, as well as to confirm or deny reports of suspicious activities. For instance, someone digging near a road could be emplacing an IED (improvised explosive device) or may be farming the edge of a field. During the yearlong deployment, the 39 RAID Soldiers identified, tracked and assisted in more than 200 force protection incidents.

More importantly, the Soldiers fulfilled the goal set forth by Waters early in the deployment: "We will end as we started — a flexible, highly motivated RAID team of 39."

Kilmer Inducted Into Prestigious Club During Deployment



Staff Sgt. Brian Kilmer

While deployed with the 1-188th Air Defense Artillery RAID, Staff Sgt. Brian Kilmer was selected as an inductee to the Sergeant Audie Murphy

Club. Kilmer was honored during a January ceremony in Afghanistan that also recognized five other Soldiers from Combined Joint Task Force 82.

The club, which began in 1986 and expanded Army-wide in 1994, is an elite organization for NCOs who embody the leadership qualities of Murphy.

During World War II, Murphy received every decoration for valor offered by the United States, earning some awards more than once. His 33 awards included the Medal of Honor for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

There are four phases to the club's selection process: a commander's evaluation, a performance test and two selection boards. The process selects those NCOs who contribute "significantly to the

development of a professional NCO Corps and a combat-ready Army," according to FORSCOM Regulation 215-7. "Members exemplify leadership characterized by personal concern for the needs, training, development and welfare of Soldiers and concern for families of Soldiers."

As a member, Kilmer is authorized to wear the club medallion while in dress uniform. The crest depicts NCO rank and an eagle on one side and Murphy's profile on the other. The silver medallion hangs from a broad, powder-blue ribbon — the color of infantry.



Guardian Snapshots



Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hagburg, 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Welcome Home

Col. Robert J. Becklund, 119th Wing commander, left, welcomes home Col. Michael A. Wobbema, 119th Maintenance Group commander, with a handshake as Brig. Gen. Patrick L. Martin and Brig. Gen. Robert Udland look on at Hector International Airport Jan. 26.

Standing Tall

From right to left, Brig. Gen. Robert Udland, Brig. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, and U.S. Congressman Earl Pomeroy, stand and cheer for members of the 191st Military Police Company during a community send-off ceremony recognizing the Soldiers prior to their deployment to Iraq Jan. 19 in Fargo.



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



Hooligans Maintain Fighter Safety Record to Very End

By Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson,
Joint Force Headquarters

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

The Happy Hooligans' impressive safety record nearly came to a crashing halt on the final F-16 Falcon flight to ever leave the base. When that icy January day came around, the Hooligans had successfully piloted fighter planes for nearly 60 years, ending with 144,000 accident-free hours — a record no other unit in the world had achieved.

Airmen say this record can be attributed to a strong culture of safety on the base. Anybody — of any rank or any position — can call off a flight at any point if there is a safety concern. That's just what Senior Airman Jeffrey Jacobson did in the final minutes before the last F-16 was scheduled to leave the base and head to the "boneyard" — Aerospace Maintenance and Recreation Center at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz. Without Jacobson's actions, the plane likely would have never reached its final resting place.

Like the Hooligans, the plane itself had an impressive background. Tail number 980 flew thousands of hours and contributed to drug busts in Panama, Puerto Rico and Curacao. Its career was coming to an end as the Air Force chose to replace — rather than spend \$1 million per aircraft to repair — the aging fleet. Before its final flight, the Hooligans changed out the accessory drive gearbox, which is the main gearbox on the F-16, and repaired a stator on a hydraulic pump. The launch process began and the plane passed all flight checks. In the final minutes before takeoff, the pilot, 1st Lt. Ryan "Chopper" Rastedt, conducted the last check, a flight control computer test.

"During this time, I have always made it a habit to look into the engine bay for any type of problem," Jacobson, an F-16 crew chief, said.

On this extra check, Jacobson noticed that the hydraulic lines had begun to "jump" — a sign of something terribly wrong. Upon further inspection, Jacobson found that four of the six nuts holding the stator in place were loose. The check — which

was done with a small flashlight at the last minute — was beyond what any crew member typically does. Besides that, the extra effort kept Jacobson outside longer than necessary on a day when the wind chill dipped to 30 degrees below zero.

"What motivates a crew chief to this degree of determination and professionalism?" Lt. Col. Michael "Spike" Nelson, Air Guard safety officer, questioned rhetorically. "What was keeping him from just doing what was necessary to launch the jet and get back inside where temperatures exceeded the outside by nearly 100 degrees?"

Others emphasized just how unusual this effort would have been, saying Jacobson easily could have sat in a warm tug rather than fighting the elements to do checks that weren't technically necessary. While nobody can say with certainty what would have happened had Jacobson not done this, one thing is for sure, safety personnel say: There was a pretty high potential to crash.

As a second-best case scenario, the plane would have launched then lost hydraulic

power and the pilot could have tried to divert to an emergency landing point along the way. Even then, it “probably wouldn’t have been a good day,” Rastedt said.

Many Hooligans believe it would have been a much worse day than that.

“If he hadn’t taken the extra step and inspected the engine bay, tail number 980 may have had a terrible ending to her career,” Nelson said. “Not only did Jacobson save a jet that day, but he also may have saved a life.”

Rastedt says the extra checks were a “Hooligans standard” given the Wing’s strong emphasis on safety. It wasn’t the first time a crew chief had called “knock it off” on one of his flights, but it was the first time it wasn’t a quick fix. It took several days to get the plane ready for its final flight since the problem was “definitely a big deal,” Rastedt said.

“It was a normal day until he found something. It could have been a pretty big disaster,” Rastedt said. “From a pilot’s perspective, I’m glad he caught it on the ground.”

Jacobson’s efforts, which went “above and beyond” what he was required to do,

prompted the safety office to submit the crew chief for a safety award. Jacobson received the quarterly 119th Wing Outstanding Safety Award. At year end, he was chosen for having the greatest safety accomplishment of any Hooligan for the year.

“It’s definitely award worthy, stopping the potential loss of Air Force equipment,” Rastedt said.

The award’s citation elaborated, recognizing Jacobson for digging deeper to ensure nothing was wrong despite the plane passing all flight checks. The citation states that “Jacobson’s unwavering determination, persistence, and acute attention to detail, coupled with his strong technical experience and professional insight quite possibly prevented a catastrophic accident.”

“Our culture of safety is the thing that really saved the airplane,” said Senior Master Sgt. Dave Lipp, who was on site to photograph the last mission and witnessed the delay. “The actions (Jacobson) took that day epitomize this culture we have on the base. A high importance has always been

placed on safety at every level within our unit.”

This emphasis on safety seems clear when examining the 119th Wing’s background. On average, F-16 units experienced a failure with the F100-200 Pratt & Whitney engines (which were eventually upgraded to the more reliable F100-220 model) every 4,000 flying hours. The Hooligans went more than 50,000 hours without a failure.

Throughout the course of the fighter era — from the F-101 Voodoo to the F-4 Phantom and finally the F-16 Falcon — the 119th logged the longest calendar record of any unit. The last crash occurred 35 years ago. Due to Jacobson’s extra efforts, the Wing can easily achieve a crash-free year 36.

Although the Wing’s fighter days have officially ended, that culture of safety carries over to the new base missions. It will be no surprise if the Hooligans achieve similar statistics with the C-21 Lear jet and the forthcoming C-27J Spartan joint cargo aircraft. After all, safety is just the “Hooligans standard.”



Above: Staff Sgt. Jeffery J. Jacobson, 119th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, notices a problem with F-16 aircraft number 82-0980, as he prepares to help launch the aircraft being piloted by Capt. Ryan L. Rastedt, 178th Fighter Squadron, Jan. 30, 2007. The flight was re-scheduled until the appropriate repairs could be made allowing for a safe flight for the aircraft retirement. **Left:** Jacobson and Staff Sgt. Jimi A. Fogle, 119th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, stand by the tail of F-16 82-0980.



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

A group of North Dakota Air National Guard personnel make their way through near blizzard conditions on their way to chemical and biological warfare training during the 119th Wing unit training assembly in Fargo on Feb. 9.