



NORTH DAKOTA GUARDIAN

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Boots Back on Ground

Happy Hooligans Return
from Historic C-21 Mission

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On the Cover



A Happy Return: U.S. Air Force Maj. Craig Borgstrom, of the 177th Airlift Squadron, carries some of his belongings on the flight line of the North Dakota Air National Guard Aug. 4, upon his return from deployment to southwest Asia back to Fargo. Maj. Borgstrom is a C-21 pilot who has just landed the aircraft seen behind him in the photo. The deployment was the first time that the North Dakota Air National Guard C-21s have been sent into the theater of operations in the middle east (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp).

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VIEW FROM THE TOP

Comments from North Dakota National Guard Leadership

119th Tradition Leads to Successful, Historic Mission

For the first time in the history of the 119th Wing, a total of 52 Airmen from the N.D. Air National Guard were partially mobilized, over two months, with unit aircraft to support the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. Each month, the 119th was tasked 13 Airmen from the Operation Squadron and 31 Airmen from the Maintenance Squadron to support the Global War on Terrorism under the control of the 379 Expeditionary Air Wing. The 60-day mission was to fly and maintain three C-21 aircraft from Al-Udeid Air Base, Qatar, to support the air tasking order for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This deployment also marked the first time Airmen — rather than civilian contractors — performed maintenance on the C-21. The 119th Airmen stood up the 119 Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit (EAMU) on May 30, 2009. Although the transition from the contractors to “blue-suit maintenance” was seamless to the 379th, it took a lot of hard work to get the expeditionary maintenance unit up to Air Force standards. Keep in mind, we had eight maintainers deploy as an advanced party only three days ahead of the main body. This forced the 119th to simultaneously cover the demanding C-21 mission while transforming the operation into a fully functional Air Force maintenance unit. The 119th Airmen also had to physically transition to a different time zone, adjust to 115-degree temperatures, and provide 24-hour mission coverage with minimal personnel. However, all of

our hard work paid off. Using “Hooligan excellence” and our Midwest work ethic, the 119th out-performed five other maintenance units to win the Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Month for June 2009. I would like to thank all of the men and women of the 119th EAMU for their hard work, patience and excellence, which led to our success.

We also realize our success was attributed to home station preparation and support, effective communication between Operations and Maintenance, and the pride to serve. Without the long hours of preparation at home station, we would not have been able to hit the ground running and focus on the mission. We would like to thank and acknowledge everyone who helped organize, train and support us. Without your dedication and attention to detail it would have cost us valuable time. Time was all-too-often a valuable commodity, therefore it was also imperative for Maintenance and Operations to establish and maintain good communication during this highly demanding mission. Congratulations and thank you to Lt. Col. Richard Omang and everyone from the Operation Squadron on their accomplishments and support. Utilizing maintenance successes, effective communication and their own hard work, the Operation Squadron successfully met 100 percent of their missions. This deployment is a great testament of what the 119th can accomplish — regardless of what airframe or mission with which we are tasked — because of the strength and pride of the Airmen that



Capt. Grant Larson

C-21 Maintenance Squadron Commander
North Dakota National Guard

make up the Happy Hooligans. I have always felt a strong pride in our unit; however, this was never so apparent than during this deployment to Southwest Asia.

Prior to deploying to Southwest Asia, I served side by side, during the flood of 2009, with some of our fellow Soldiers from the N.D. Army National Guard. Although the event was tragic, the experience provided the opportunity to sharpen individual leadership skills. Many of the same Soldiers have recently deployed for a one-year mission to Kosovo; we want to take this time to wish them nothing but the best.

I also want to acknowledge and thank all of the families and employers who have sacrificed time away from their Airmen or Soldiers. Whether it is 60 days or one year, many of us are spouses and/or parents first and foremost, and without family support, none of this would be possible.

Whether you are serving in the Air or Army National Guard, one thing remains constant: We are all part of a common thread tied to the North Dakota Guard's tradition of excellence.

Thank you to everyone who made our deployment — and all North Dakota deployments — a success!

Sincerely,

Capt. Grant Larson

Aberle Assumes Command of 68th Troop Command

Col. Michael R. Aberle assumed command of the N.D. National Guard's 68th Troop Command during a Change of Command Ceremony Aug. 16 at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory. Aberle accepted the position from Col. James T. Hrdlicka, who is serving as the deputy commander for Civil Military Operations for the N.D. Army National Guard's mission in Kosovo. Brig. Gen. Bill Seekins, land component commander, presided over the ceremony.

"Mike Aberle is the perfect choice to command this unit; he is fully prepared and ready to lead this complex organization," Seekins said. "Jim Hrdlicka's demonstrated leadership with the 68th Troop Command has prepared him for his next challenging assignment with the Kosovo Force. I wish him well during his 12-month deployment."

The 68th Troop Command consists of more than 1,200 Soldiers, including the 136th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 164th Engineer Battalion, 1-112th Aviation Battalion, 3662nd Maintenance Company, 814th Medical Detachment and 188th Army Band. The 957th Engineer Company and the 116th Public Affairs Detachment are deploying to Kosovo, but are also assigned to the 68th Troop Command.

Hrdlicka has commanded the 68th Troop Command since November 2008.

"It was an honor and privilege to serve with the Soldiers of the 68th Troop Command," Hrdlicka said. "They always demonstrated great professionalism and dedication."

His stepson, Spc. Andy Huisman, a member of the 957th Liaison Monitoring Teams, also is deploying to Kosovo.

During the Guard's response to the spring 2009 flooding, Hrdlicka commanded Joint Task Force-East, which was based in Fargo. At the peak of operations, Task Force-East comprised more than 1,900 Soldiers and Airmen and was responsible for all military support to the flood fight from Jamestown, N.D., to the Minnesota border.



Col. Mike Aberle

Aberle is from Edgeley, N.D., and graduated from North Dakota State University. His parents, Lorraine and retired Sgt. Maj. Richard "Dick" Aberle, were present for the ceremony. Dick Aberle served more than 35 years in the North Dakota National Guard.

Hrdlicka is from Colome, S.D., and graduated from the University of Mary. His wife, Gail, also attended the ceremony.

North Dakota Soldier Returns From Best Warrior Competition

The road to the Army National Guard Best Warrior competition has ended for one North Dakota Soldier, but not without a great deal of success. Spc. Adam M. Walsvik, of Hazen, N.D., advanced

through numerous tests, interviews and physical challenges to reach the finals in the nationwide competition. The winner — Spc. Guy Mellor from Utah — was announced during the Enlisted Association National Guard of the United States Conference Aug. 9.

"We couldn't be prouder of Spc. Walsvik's accomplishments. Simply reaching this level of competition, being one of the

seven best Army National Guard Soldiers in the entire United States, is a significant accomplishment. It's indicative of this young Soldier's drive and determination to be the best Soldier he can be," said State Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald Miller.

The road to the Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition was a long one. First, Walsvik competed at the company level, winning Soldier of the Year for the 188th Engineer Company (Vertical). Then, he represented the 188th at battalion level and moved on to the first phase of state-level competition at Camp Grafton Training Center, near Devils Lake, N.D., in September 2008. There, Guardsmen competed in a variety of events to test their Soldiering skills including a physical fitness test, written test, day and night land navigation tests and weapons qualification, as well as writing an essay on the Army values. The second phase came in February 2009, when Walsvik came out on top after facing a board of sergeants major asking a barrage of questions on current events, military history, maintenance,



Clint Wood, GX Magazine

As part of the Army National Guard Best Warrior competition in Fort Benning, Ga., Soldiers were sent on a road march of unknown distance. Here, N.D. Army National Guard Spc. Adam Walsvik walks up a hill during the march, which ended up covering 12 miles of road. Walsvik won a series of competitions on his way to this event, where he was named a runner-up.

supply, military law, awards, acronyms, Army manuals, first aid and more. He was named North Dakota's Soldier of the Year during the Combined State Associations Conference banquet Feb. 21. From May 14-17, Walsvik competed in, and won, the regional Best Warrior competition in Fort Lewis, Wash.

He trained and studied along the way, and then left July 30 for Fort Benning, Ga. After a few intensive days of physical endurance tests, weapons qualification and question-answer sessions, Walsvik toured Washington, D.C., with the group of competitors and then moved on to Rochester, Minn., for the Enlisted Association National Guard of the United States Conference on Aug. 8-13.

Walsvik, the son of Dan and Sue Walsvik, of Hazen, joined the National Guard in December 2005. He earned an associate's degree in civil engineering and surveying technology from North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, N.D., and recently began a job with the North Dakota Department of Transportation.

State Marksmanship Match Held

On the weekend of July 25-26, the N.D. National Guard held its state marksmanship match at Camp Grafton South, near Devils Lake. Seven teams from five units competed in rifle and pistol events. The teams came from the 817th Engineer Company, Jamestown; Joint Force Head-



Sgt. Ann Knudson

The winning marksmanship team, from the 817th Engineer Company, Jamestown: Sgt. 1st Class Gary Varberg, Cooperstown; Spc. Tyrel Hoppe, Jamestown; Spc. Evan Messer, Fargo; and Spc. Robert Mahoney, Fargo.

quarters, Bismarck; Camp Grafton Training Center and the 3662nd Maintenance Company, Devils Lake and the 191st Military Police Company, Fargo.

The winning team was from the 817th Engineer Company. Team members were Sgt. 1st Class Gary Varberg, Cooperstown; Spc. Tyrel Hoppe, Jamestown; Spc. Evan Messer, Fargo; and Spc. Robert Mahoney, Fargo. The team score was 1,732. Team alternates were Spc. Michael Walery and Spc. Robb Schlotfeldt.

Unsurprisingly, the winning team contained the two highest individual scorers. Varberg got the highest individual score at 469. He attributed his success to "lots and lots of practice." His brother, Roger Nelson, also a marksman, gave him a competition air rifle at 7, and he was shooting small bore competition by 12. He got into the Guard in 1980 and has won the N.D. National Guard individual marksmanship title almost every year since. Messer got the second highest individual score, 453.

The second place team was from Joint Force Headquarters, Bismarck. Team members were Sgt. 1st Class Russell Garrett, Riverdale; Staff Sgt. Brendan Headrick, Bismarck; Spc. Matthew McKinney, Horace and Spc. Adam Walsvik, Hazen. The team score was 1,445. Team alternates were Maj. Stephen Herda and Sgt. Ann Knudson, both Bismarck. Walsvik is the N.D. National Guard Soldier of the Year.

The other teams' scores were: 817th team 2 - 1,410; 191st MP team 1 - 1,379; 191st MP team 2 - 1,179; Camp Grafton Training Center - 1,164; 3662nd - 1,128.

Soldier Competes in Chile Biathlon Competition

A North Dakota Soldier launched into his second season of high-profile biathlon competition with a trip to Chile last month.

After competing in a couple of roller-ski races in Vermont, Sgt. Blake Hillerson left Aug. 22 for Portillo, Chile. There, he and about a half-dozen other members of the National Guard Biathlon Team competed in the X Campeonato Internacional de Esqui Militar (CIEM), an annual, international winter warfare-biathlon competition attended by European and South American nations with winter-warfare capability.

"I couldn't be prouder of Sgt. Hillerson and his accomplishments," said Maj. Gen. David Sprynczynatyk, N.D. National Guard adjutant general. "For the past year, he has represented North Dakota extremely well at a national and international level. I wish him the best of luck as he begins his second season on this prestigious team."

Soldiers must be selected to represent the U.S. Armed Forces in international competitions, and Hillerson was chosen as one of these "athletes with exceptional ability to represent the U.S., the National Guard and their respective states as ambassadors, with the mission to foster international inter-military rapport while further developing the winter fitness and marksmanship capabilities of our Soldiers," according to the National Guard Biathlon Office in Jericho, Vt.

Hillerson, a Fargo native, said the summer races help him and teammates with their training before the winter season

begins in late November, when they will compete in Canmore, Canada.

Over the past year, Hillerson has perfected his technique with the help of world-class trainers, and he has seen quite a bit of the world.

"[The trainers] are very knowledgeable on technique ... and it's good to work with them on all of the things I can't do myself, like recording us skiing and critiquing form," Hillerson said.

This is Hillerson's second season on the elite team. Last year, he found he did best in the longer, individual races.

"I had two really good races," he said. "They were both 20-kilometer individual races. ... That format favors better shooters."

Last year, he traveled to races in Canmore and Quebec City, Canada, as well as Chile, Argentina, Italy and Maine. He both trains and competes in races in Vermont. This season will bring much of the same for the 26-year-old N.D. National Guard Soldier pursuing his dreams.

Airmen Return From Historic C-21 Mission

A historic mission for the 119th Wing was completed this month as the Happy Hooligans welcomed home 40 Airmen and one of their own C-21A Lear Jets from southwest Asia.

"This mission is a notable occasion for us because in addition to deploying our personnel, we also sent two of our C-21's into theater. We have been flying jets for over 60 years, but this was the first deployment that the Hooligans have ever sent jets into a theater of war," said Col. Kent Olson, 119th Wing vice commander.

The Airmen from the 119th Wing, consisting primarily of maintenance and operations personnel, deployed in various shifts in support of this mission since May 2009. Their primary responsibilities consisted of piloting and maintaining the C-21A Lear Jet aircraft.

The 119th Wing deployed two of their C-21A Lear Jets to southwest Asia, the second jet is expected to return home at the end of September.

— News Briefs Contributed by
Joint Force Headquarters & 119th Wing



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

From left to right Chaplain Lt. Commander (now Air Force Major) James Cheney, formerly of the U.S. Naval Reserve Center in Fargo, N.D., and Chaplain Lt. Col. John Flowers, of the 119th Wing, discuss chaplain's office resources available to military members May 2, 2009, at the N.D. Air National Guard. The chaplains' booth is one of 30 booths set up for a military reintegration event designed to help N.D. Air National Guard members who have recently deployed adjust and learn about benefits they are eligible to receive.

Personal Integrity is Hard Work

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (Maj.) James Cheney
119th Wing

As a former Navy Chaplain and a Catholic priest working at Newman Center to facilitate

the spiritual needs of college students, I have witnessed a few things that can help a person transition into being a mature adult. When young people leave home and are on their own for the first time in their lives, they often test the waters of any value system other than their own. For many, the long hard knocks of life's experiences will eventually teach them that there is a co-relationship between act and consequence.

More often than not, it is after personal failures that many young people begin to look for meaning and direction in their lives other than "he who dies with the most toys wins." Personal failures can be an opportunity for growth in the sometimes long, laborious task of learning how to work and direct the true self. Hopefully, one of our goals in directing our lives is

human happiness.

Whether one believes in religion or not, whether one believes in this religion or that one, we all are seeking something better in this life. At the heart of our seeking is happiness. At the heart of happiness is integrity.

Mahatma Gandhi once stated that "happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are in harmony." Personal integrity begins with us. If we cannot be honest with ourselves then there is little hope of being honest in our dealings with others. Personal integrity guarantees something more than popularity or the many roads public opinion lies before

our feet. Integrity develops character.

Character recognizes the need for morality and creed as opposed to the modernist interpretation of individual autonomy "I" get to make the rules. The interior dynamic of conscience helps us balance the interplay between the darker side of our humanity and the promptings of charity. Conscience is putting our minds to work by thinking practically and morally. As George Cardinal Pell recently wrote, "we think well when we understand moral principles and apply them in clear and reasonable ways; we think badly when we ignore or reinvent moral principles, or apply them in ambiguous and unreasonable ways."

Moral principles are usually prescribed from a set of beliefs about God, our purpose here and the promulgation of the common good. A good place to start might be one of our core values: integrity first. Ultimately, the promptings of eternity are behind the voice of conscience. Conscience takes its value from the objective truth. The many roads that lead up to the mountain of life's goals are wrought with the search for this truth.

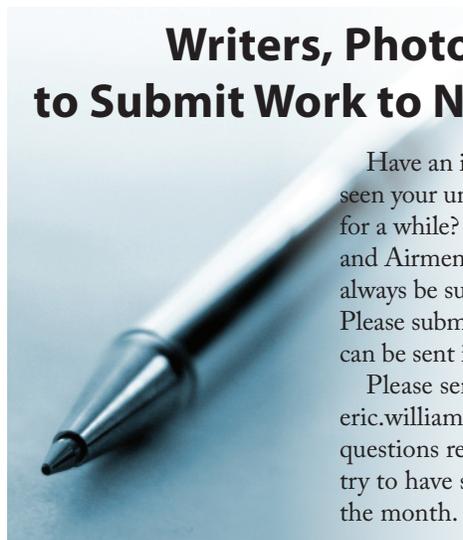
The road to character takes work. When we struggle with a "truth," the easy thing to do is just give up and do what ever we want. However, the clarion call of personal integrity rests in the ability to enter into the struggle for truth with study, prayer and enquiry to try and understand why we face opposition within ourselves. Take courage.

The beginnings of meaning, a moral compass and the ability to lead others toward a worthwhile goal rest in the struggle to inform our conscience with objective truth. Do not be afraid to enter in to that struggle.

Writers, Photographers Encouraged to Submit Work to North Dakota Guardian

Have an important training event coming up? Haven't seen your unit featured in the North Dakota Guardian for a while? Photos and articles chronicling the Soldiers and Airmen of the North Dakota National Guard can always be submitted for use in our monthly publication. Please submit articles in Microsoft Word format. Photos can be sent in .jpg files in at least 300 dpi.

Please send your material to Sgt. Eric W. Jensen at eric.william.jensen@us.army.mil. Also, if you have any questions regarding mailing, call 701-333-2195. Please try to have submissions sent in by the first weekend of the month.



Post-9/11 GI Bill Takes Effect

The Post-9/11 GI Bill is the most comprehensive education benefit offered to Veterans since President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the original GI Bill for World War II Veterans in 1944. In the next decade, \$78 billion is expected to be paid out under it. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after Sept. 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill became effective on Aug. 1, 2009. The amount of support that an individual may qualify for depends on where they live and what type of degree they are pursuing.

Transferability With the Post – 9/11 GI Bill

The following excerpts were taken from an article written by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden, American Forces Press Service:

With the Post-9/11 GI Bill, servicemembers are eligible for 36 months of educational benefits — the equivalent of four nine-month academic years. To qualify for the transfer benefit, servicemembers must have six years of service on active duty or in the Selected Reserve on or after Aug. 1 and commit to an additional four years of service.

Servicemembers have the option to use or transfer as much of their benefits as they want, and they can revoke or redesignate who receives the benefit at any time, said Bob Clark, the Pentagon's assistant director for accessions policy.

He added that servicemembers can add and change names only while on active duty, and not after separating or retiring from active-duty service.

The unused benefits can be transferred to a

spouse, two children or any combination, he said. But children cannot start using the benefit until they're 18 or have a high school diploma or equivalent. Clark noted that children enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System, also known as DEERS, lose their military benefits at age 21 unless they are full-time students.

Only eligible dependents' names will appear on the registration Web site, he explained. Once servicemembers register on the site and designate who the benefits will be transferred to, the application will be processed through their appropriate service branch.

After the service verifies eligibility to transfer the benefits, the application will be forwarded and processed again through VA. And finally, when the selected dependent decides to use the benefit, he or she must go to the Department of Veterans Affairs Web site and fill out an online application to request a certificate of eligibility, Clark said.

The certificate then can be taken to the school to be processed by its Veterans Affairs representative and used to request tuition, payment for books and the living stipend, which varies by institution and location, he continued.

The site, <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>, is accessible using a common access card, Defense Department self-service user identification or a Defense Finance and Accounting Service personal identification number. Spouses and family members must be enrolled under their servicemember sponsor in DEERS to be eligible for the transfer benefit. Military members also can link to the site through www.defenselink.mil/gibill.

More information on Federal Tuition Assistance and the Post-9/11 GI Bill as well as phone numbers for N.D. National Guard Education Office staff can be found at www.guard.bismarck.nd.us/benefits.





From left to right, Tech. Sgt. John Martin, load master in the 249th Airlift Squadron, directs Master Sgt. Todd Strom, of the 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron, as he secures a piece of equipment (increment) on board an Alaska Air National Guard 249th Airlift Wing C-17 July 8, at the N.D. Air National Guard, as they begin loading it for air lift to Volk Field, Wis. The Airmen are members of the newly created 119th Air Terminal Flight (also known as Aerial Port). The increments being loaded are part of the first shipment known as a chalk for the Aerial Port at the N.D. Air National Guard. Future activities at the Aerial Port may include processing personnel for deployment, possibly including both N.D. Army and Air National Guard members who are deploying.

Fully Loaded

The N.D. Air National Guard is undertaking another new function at its' Fargo, N.D. base. The unit is becoming more active in air transportation with its new 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) Air Transportation Operations Element or "Aerial Port."

The Aerial Port function deals with day-to-day and contingency air terminal operations, to include passenger and cargo processing along with aircraft handling. The Happy Hooligans have had personnel and equipment coming and going on the flight line in Fargo for many years, but this is the first time that there has been a full-fledged Aerial Port at the N.D. Air National Guard.

The first official shipment to leave through the North Dakota's Aerial Port was a 119th Civil Engineer Squadron disaster relief bed-down set (DRBS) package sent from Fargo to Volk Field, Wisconsin in early July for another unit's exercise.

Shipment containers or pieces of equipment are typically called increments and sent on flights in groups called chalks. The first shipment to Volk Field, spread over several days and aircraft, included 37 increments and 105 tons. It was a significant test for the 119th Aerial Port to cut its teeth on. The shipment was similar in size to the shipment sent from Fargo to Gulfport, Miss. after Hurricane Katrina.

"We have a lot of enthusiasm on this first mission" said Master Sgt. Todd Strom, of the 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron Aerial Port Flight, as he secures equipment in place in the belly of a massive C-17 Globemaster from the 249th Airlift Squadron,

Hooligans Take on Aerial Port Function

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



Senior Airman Terry Davis, of the 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron, drives a forklift loaded with an increment container July 8 at the N.D. Air National Guard as he begins loading an Alaska Air National Guard 249th Airlift Wing C-17 for transporting to Volk Field, Wis. Senior Airman Ernie Trosen, also of the 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron guides Davis as he drives the forklift.

Alaska Air National Guard.

While the Airmen were up to the task of the initial shipment, the aircraft had other ideas. The first load spent several days on the flight line in Fargo waiting for an aircraft part for the fully loaded C-17, but eventually launched with the maiden aerial port cargo shipment.

In addition to cargo, other assets are processed through Aerial Ports, including people. Military personnel can process through the new Aerial Port at the N.D. Air National Guard in Fargo, which could grow into quite a benefit for the state and the N.D. Air and Army National Guard in the future. When the 119th Aerial Port is functioning at full capacity it is possible that deploying unit members from North Dakota may be able to avoid using various transition points in other states to deploy, says Capt. Brad Jernberg, 119th LRS Operations Officer.

“The Aerial Port is a great addition to our unit. Air Transportation personnel are some of the most highly tasked individuals in the Air Force and it is really something to see them put an operation together” Jernberg said. Teams of personnel have

already been utilizing the Aerial Port as they have been coming and going from the N.D. Air National Guard Regional Training Site in July and August.

Many N.D. Airmen have already been cross-trained into new career fields in the 119th LRS due to the new Aerial Port mission and will specialize in the areas of ramp specialist, passenger service representatives, load planning, cargo preparation and the joint inspection of cargo increments.

“It’s awesome, I love it,” said Senior Airman Ernie Trosen, of his new responsibilities loading heavy aircraft at the N.D. Air National Guard.



Chief Master Sgt. John Nordquist, of the 119th Logistics Readiness Squadron, attaches a winch to equipment. Nordquist is the flight chief of the newly created 119th Air Terminal Flight. Aerial Port members Master Sgt. Teresa Terry, left, and Senior Airman Terry Davis are standing by to assist.

The aerial port role at the N.D. Air National Guard holds great promise for the future. With the expected addition of the Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA), C-27 slated for arrival in coming years the 119th Aerial Port Flight is a welcomed addition to the Hooligans.

Knowledge & Experience

Battle-Trained
Instructors Prep
Soldiers for
Deployment

By Spc. Josh Dodds
116th Public Affairs Detachment

Irish playwright Oscar Wilde once said, “Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes.”

Master Sgt. Shayne Beckert can identify with that sentiment. As noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Pre-Mobilization Training Assistance Element (PTAE), drawing on lessons learned from past mobilizations has proved to be an invaluable teaching tool.

“I love training Soldiers and I take it seriously because I have been in theater and I don’t want the folks we train to make the same mistakes I have seen made,” he said.

In fact, every member of North Dakota’s PTAE can agree that experience overseas can be parlayed into the best, most comprehensive training, which has become exceedingly important as National Guard Soldiers are constantly mobilized for state and federal missions.

In the past, Guardsmen faced lengthy stays at mobilization stations to satisfy training requirements before even setting foot in combat theaters. The PTAE has been successful at reducing time spent preparing Soldiers at these mobilization stations by working with them in their home states.

Some of the training and evaluations they provide include 32 common Army

Master Sgt. Shayne Beckert, right, teaches Warrant Officer Kerry King (formerly Sgt. 1st Class) the proper way to detain a suspect during annual training at Camp Grafton May 2009.



Sgt. Brett J. Miller

"The biggest thing that all trainers should have is theater-gained experience in a combat zone."

- Master Sgt. Shayne Beckert

warrior tasks and 12 battle drills, as well as guidance to units as they present the required theater specific individual readiness training and theater specific leaders training. Actions on contact, entry control point operations, combatives and Combat Lifesaver certification are some specific examples of the types of training provided to North Dakota's deploying units.

"Our goals are to prepare Soldiers primarily with some of the tasks they would be required to complete at mobilization station, which reduces the time there," said 1st. Sgt. Alan E. Grinsteinner, a PTAE instructor.

Late this spring, North Dakota's PTAE began training Soldiers who have since left for a deployment to the Balkans region of Europe as part of the Kosovo Force (KFOR 12) peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. All totaled, the PTAE provided training for more than 570 KFOR 12 Soldiers. In addition, the PTAE's combat lifesaver instructors certified or re-certified 484 Guardsmen, 41 of whom were from the Virgin Islands — one of 10 other states / territories joining North Dakota on its mission to Kosovo. They have also certified 85 Soldiers as Level 1 Combatives Trainers (40-hour course) and 12 Soldiers as Level 2 Combatives Trainers (80-hour course) over the fiscal year.

Twenty-five Soldiers of varying military and civilian backgrounds comprise North Dakota's PTAE Team, although the group will be reduced due to current deployments and transitions in November. Sixteen have participated in prior National Guard deployments.

"Master Sgt. Beckert is excellent with explosives and weapons and a new addition to the team, 1st Lt. (Brad) Loween, with his infantry background, has very good soldiering skills," Grinsteinner said



Sgt. Brett J. Miller

of two team members.

Grinsteinner holds a wealth of civilian and military training knowledge as well. He spent 15 years as a high school teacher and has 23 years in the National Guard as a combat engineer and military police officer. His vast understanding and experience with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons, both in teaching for the South Dakota Military Academy at Fort Meade and now with the North Dakota PTAE, is an asset to deploying units in the region.

"The biggest thing that all trainers should have is theater-gained experience in a combat zone," Beckert said.

As a combat engineer deployed to Iraq with the 141st Engineer Battalion, Beckert served in a unit that acted as its own explosive ordnance disposal team during his first few months in country, he said.

"I wrestled for 14 years, and I am a Level 2 Combatives instructor, as well," Beckert said. "The Combatives classes are taught to any unit that requests us. We also have a Level 4 Combatives instructor, Sgt. John M. Blazek, who can instruct up to Level 2. That is a heck of an asset to the state."

"I go through the information and make sure it is current, but most of my preparation for classes is in my experience," said Staff Sgt. Brendan Headrick, of the 814th Medical Detachment and a member of the North Dakota PTAE.

The PTAE also assists unit commanders by actually training and evaluating Soldiers during weekend drill.

"We are able to do things such as Blue Force Tracker training, help with command and control training and provide the



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Top, Staff Sgt. Thomas Axtmann perfects his grenade throwing technique with a simulator during annual training at Camp Grafton this summer. The proper method of deploying grenades was part of the training provided by the PTAE for Soldiers mobilizing with Kosovo Force (KFOR) 12.

Above, 1st Lt. Jeffrey Steckler, right, practices controlling his opponent, Sgt. Aaron Pallansch, using rear mount, a ground grappling position learned during Combatives training. The PTAE has certified 85 Soldiers as Level 1 Combatives Trainers and 12 Soldiers as Level 2 Combatives Trainers this fiscal year. PTAE instructor Sgt. John Blazek is a Level 4-certified Combatives instructor.

resources to put together a CPX (Command Post Exercise) to test a units' SOP during drill weekends," Grinsteinner said.

To continue this level of training, Soldiers returning from deployments provide unique insight.

"They are the ones to be tapped as trainers for this team," Grinsteinner said. "They have the latest TTPs' (tactics, techniques and procedures) on what is happening at mobilization stations, which brings a fresh outlook to deploying Soldiers."



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Welcome Home, Dad!: Master Sgt. Erik Clemenson, of the 119th Security Forces Squadron, holds his son for the first time upon his return to Hector International Airport, Fargo, Aug. 18, after a six-month deployment to Iraq. Clemenson's son was born during his deployment to Kirkuk Air Base in February 2009. He and his deployed group were responsible for assisting with the protection of base personnel and resources by providing security and law enforcement at the base. They were tasked with searching local personnel and vehicles, maintaining perimeter security and conducting police services on the base.



Thank You for the Memories: Master Sgt. Eric Johnson, 119th Wing Public Affairs, conducts a video interview July 24, during the first night of the F-4 reunion at the Detroit Lakes Country Club in Detroit Lakes, Minn. Johnson is interested in sharing personal recollections and memories of events that happened during the F-4 era, so



Final Formation: Soldiers of Task Force Falcon, Kosovo Force (KFOR) 12, form up for the last time on the gymnasium floor before leaving for their mobilization to the Balkans. Family and friends saw the group off Aug. 21 as they complete extra training before heading overseas.



Sgt. Ann Knudson

Saying Farewell: Members of the Patriot Guard Riders pull into traffic to escort the 957th Liaison Monitoring Team, deploying as part of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) 12, to the Bismarck Municipal Airport on Aug. 17. The Patriot Guard Riders are regular faces at send-offs for North Dakota military members.

Guardian Snapshots



Interview of retired Happy Hooligans Lt. Col. Charlie Lee and Brig. Gen. Tom Hruby. Sgt. Jonathan Haugen is recording interviews of all of the retired Hooligans who are available to ensure that they can be preserved for unit historical purposes.



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Bill Probyk

All About Family: Spc. Ivan Nychporuk embraces his family — son, Adam and wife, Nataliya — before leaving with the 957th Liaison Monitoring Team from Raymond J. Bohn armory Aug. 17 for a yearlong deployment to Kosovo. He will serve as a translator for Polish and Ukrainian Soldiers serving with the KFOR 12 Task Force overseas.



Sgt. Jonathan Haugen

Members of the 119th Security Forces Squadron are lined up on the Raymond J. Bohn armory drill floor in preparation for Camp Atterbury, Ind., to receive



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

Tearing Down the House: Tech. Sgt. Bradley Schenck leads the way with Airman 1st Class Derek Jordahl, both of the 119th Security Forces Squadron, following closely behind as they enter the glass house building of the military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) village during a training exercise Aug. 2 at Camp Grafton Training Center. The 119th Security Forces members are practicing entering and securing buildings in realistic hostile environments to train for situations they might encounter during deployments.

219TH SECURITY FORCES *Up and Running*

The 219th Security Forces Squadron (SFS), a geographically separated unit of the 119th Wing, recently made North Dakota history by being the first Air National Guard unit to have the ability to place traditional Guardsmen on the Department of Defense Personnel Reliability Program (PRP). This monumental achievement encompasses a decade of dedication by many people who helped make this a reality for the 219th.

In May 2007, a small group of Happy Hooligans came out to the Minot Air Force Base and took over a vacant storage area. Within just a few months, the area was remodeled with a conference section, offices, telephone hook-ups and computer network lines.

In October 2007, the 219th SFS had its site activation task force workout specifics on how to make

the squadron a reality. As each prospective shop did their part and worked with their active-duty counterpart, the unit started coming together.

The Personnel Reliability Program, which dates back to the cold war (formally known as the Human Reliability Program), was established to help the Department of Defense properly man positions with elevated importance. The program requires the selection and retention of only those personnel who are emotionally stable, physically capable and who have demonstrated reliability and professional competence to perform their job.

As the 219th SFS started focusing on the Personnel Reliability Program, the hurdles looked too large to overcome. The PRP regulation was not designed nor meant for traditional Guardsmen, however, Headquarters Air Force revised the AFMAN

"THIS ASTOUNDING ACHIEVEMENT HAS BEEN

STORY BY
MASTER SGT.
LONNIE BALLWEG

PHOTOS BY
SENIOR
MASTER SGT.
DAVID H. LIPP





◀ Master Sgt. Lonnie Ballweg observes Tech. Sgt. Stacie Bucholtz, as she performs checks vital sign on a patient for a routine exam. Both are members of the 219th Security Forces Squadron PRP clinic.

N IN THE WORKS FOR WELL OVER A DECADE."

to encompass the reserve components. The resulting AFMAN required the 219th SFS to develop a plan to ensure the reliability of tradition Guardsmen on the Personnel Reliability Program. A continuous evaluation plan was developed and comprised of 18 revisions by numerous agencies and subject matter experts to include Headquarters Air Force and Air Force Medical Operations Agency. The 219th SFS finally prevailed.

"The continuous evaluation plan has been a major hurdle in our mission out here," said Lt. Col. Tad Schauer, commander of the 219th SFS. "This monumental milestone allows the active duty and Traditional Guardsmen to work side-by-side training the 219th for its mission. The 219 SFS currently provides surge force security requirements within Air Force Space Command and the 91st Missile Wing."

The Personnel Reliability Program, which is one of the most revered programs in the Department of Defense, was designed to pick the best of the best Airmen to perform missile field security duties. Recently, Tech. Sgt. Jim Haygood, PRP

Monitor for the 219th Security Forces Squadron, demonstrated the 219th's high-level of performance by being recognized by Air Force Space Command Inspector General Col. Scott E. Gilson as a professional performer during the 91st Missile Wing's Nuclear Surety Inspection at Minot Air Force Base. This inspection ensures the 91st Missile Wing meets the high standards of the PRP.

The 219th SFS plan was approved to place traditional Guardsmen on the Personnel Reliability Program. This astounding achievement has been in the works for well over a decade and has been the vision of many leaders not only in the National Guard but the U.S. Air Force active duty as well.

The 219th SFS is currently well over half-manned with 47 out of 60 Active Guard Reserve positions filled and 45 out of 80 DSG positions filled. The 219th is continuously recruiting for the remaining positions.

If you have interest or know someone who may be interested in becoming a member of the 219th SFS, please contact a North Dakota Air National Guard Recruiter at 1-866-422-1198.

◀ Left, Col. Christopher Ayres, 91st Space Wing commander, congratulates Lt. Col Tad Schauer, 219th Security Forces commander, on the official activation of the 219th Security Forces Squadron.



Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp

A Round of Applause: Retired N.D. Army National Guard Sgt. Sam Floberg stands after Congressman Earl Pomeroy took a moment from the Kosovo Force 12 send-off to recognize him for his service. Floberg, who lost his leg in a November 2006 attack in Afghanistan that killed Cpl. Nathan Goodiron, was greeted with a standing ovation from the large crowd gathered on Aug. 14 at the Fargo Civic Center.