

# Prairie Soldier

THE JOINT NEWSPAPER OF THE NEBRASKA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

## Omaha unit at it again

■ Often-deployed 195th Forward Support Company sends Soldiers overseas to support special operations

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

An oft deployed unit is at it again. Ten Soldiers assigned to the Nebraska Army National Guard's 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne) were wished good luck, Oct. 31, during a ceremony at the Guard's Joint Force Headquarters building in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The ceremony marked the official beginning of the Soldiers' approximately one-year deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Omaha-based Soldiers are part of an Army Special Operations Forces Support Operation Team, or ASPO. Once deployed, they will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and synchronizing Joint and Combined Special Operations Forces logistics requirements within the Special Operations Command Central area of operations.

Several dignitaries attended



Photos by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Official Sendoff:** Gov. Dave Heineman wishes good luck to 10 Soldiers and their families from the Omaha-based 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne) at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31. The Soldiers were beginning a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Once deployed, the Soldiers will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and synchronizing Joint and Combined Special Operations Forces logistics requirements within the Special Operations Command Central area of operations.

the ceremony including Gov. Dave Heineman, U.S. Senator Deb Fischer, U.S. Rep. Jeff Fortenberry and Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, Nebraska adjutant general.

"To the Soldiers who are going to be deploying, we really appreciate what you're doing," said Heineman. "It's not going to be an easy mission. You've got to be flexible, very adaptable, prepared to change your mission on a moment's notice."

"Your headquarters for special operations... they want Nebraskans," he added. "You have a repu-

tation for excellence, extraordinary service, hard work, work ethic and they know when they're getting a team from the Nebraska National Guard they're getting the very best and that's something all of us should be very, very proud of."

Heineman also thanked the families of the Soldiers for their support and vowed his support for them. Bohac echoed his support for the families adding he has confidence in the team and its leadership.

See ASPO on 5.



**I See You:** Sgt. Jarod Fuchser, an air conditioning and heating mechanic with the 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), holds his 9-month-old son, Jerome, during a ceremony to wish good luck to 10 195th FSC Soldiers at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31, as they begin a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

## Multiple Nebraska National Guard units recognized for supply excellence

By Tech. Sgt. Jason Melton  
Staff Photojournalist

**"Y**ou have won this honor against many great competitors and you are here because you mastered the skills necessary to keep the best property books and the best inventory control in the entire Army," said Kathleen S. Miller, acting deputy chief of staff for logistics, addressing a packed auditorium deep in the U.S. military's command center. "I want to congratulate our winners who come here from 17 different states and four overseas locations."

Logisticians from the Nebraska Army National Guard traveled to Washington, D.C., Sept. 10, to attend the 10th Annual United States Army Combined Logistics Excellence Awards, 2014 ceremony at the Pentagon.

The Nebraska Army Guardsmen represented their state by winning three of five categories of the Supply Excellence Awards in the National Guard category.

The SEAs were created in 1986 to recognize excellence in supply operations with objectives to enhance logistical readiness of all Army units, enforce the Command

Supply Discipline Program and provide a structure for the official recognition of group and individual initiatives. The cornerstone of the program remains the on-site evaluation of Army command nominated units.

"Soldiers from the Nebraska Army National Guard were held to rigorous standards and subjected to some intense oversight to be considered for this award," said Staff Sgt. Lillie Chambers, supply sergeant from the Lincoln-based 313th Medical Company. According to Chambers, the supply excellence program is three-tiered with state, regional and national levels.

Units represented at the CLEAs had already won at all three levels and were being recognized for the national-levels of competition.

"High standards are part of day-to-day way of doing business in Nebraska," said Brig. Gen. Scott A. Gronewold, the assistant adjutant general for the Nebraska National Guard joint staff. "That's what's most satisfying... we maintain high standards in our day-to-day business all the time."

See CLEA on 4.

## Special operations Soldier jumps into history

■ Airborne Soldier becomes Omaha-based forward support unit's first female first sergeant

By Sgt. Heidi McClintock  
Staff Photojournalist

**F**or Denise Kaiser, an airborne Soldier with the 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), jumping out of an aircraft is something that always makes her a little excited, anxious and nervous.

"Typically those feelings go away as soon as I land safely on the ground," said Kaiser.

But her jump on Sept. 13 near Mead, Nebraska, was a little different than normal.

Kaiser left the aircraft that day with the rank of sergeant first class and just moments after she landed, her husband, Brian Kaiser, pinned on the rank first sergeant.

"On this occasion those feelings stuck around until a little while after the promotion was over," said Kaiser. "It was so wonderful to have my husband pin me and share that moment in my career."

Kaiser also made a little history becoming the first female first sergeant for the unit.

Kaiser said she feels blessed that her

See FIRST SERGEANT on 8.



Photo courtesy of Maj. Dan Benes

**New Rank:** Denise Kaiser, an airborne Soldier with the Omaha-based 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), receives her rank as a first sergeant from her husband, Brian, after Kaiser completed a parachute jump, Sept. 13, near Mead, Neb.

Inside



Nebraska National Guard families enjoy haunted armories

See story and photos on 10.



Huskers honor veterans during appreciation game

See story and photos on 14.

### Index

- News Briefs ..... 2
- Photo Story ..... 3
- Family News ..... 10
- Editorials... ..... 12
- Sports ..... 14

# NEWS DIGEST

## ■TRANSCOM task force widens logistics pipeline in ebola fight

TRANSCOM—U.S. Transportation Command Joint Task Force-Port Opening teams are widening the pipeline necessary to move forces, humanitarian aid, medical supplies and portable hospitals into Liberia in support of the U.S. government's response to the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, TRANSCOM officials reported Oct. 17.

It marks the first time TRANSCOM has deployed multiple JTF-POs in support of a geographic combatant command, officials said.

Working mostly in the background as part of Operation United Assistance, Airmen from the 817th Contingency Response Group, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Soldiers from the 688th Rapid Port Opening Element, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, are handling airfield operations at Roberts International Airport, Monrovia, Liberia.

In addition, Air National Guard members from the 123rd Contingency Response Group, Louisville, Kentucky, and Soldiers from the 689th Rapid Port Opening Element, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, are operating an intermediate staging base at Leopold Sedar Senghor International Airport, Dakar, Senegal.

TRANSCOM officials said the deployment was a true demonstration of the command's unique capabilities covering rapid assessment, port opening and initial operations.

"Once U.S. Africa Command requested, we assist with assessing strategic ports in West Africa, we rapidly planned with our transportation components, Air Mobility Command and Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, and alerted our forces," said Air Force Maj. Gen. Rowayne A. Schatz Jr., TRANSCOM's director of operations and plans.

Within 12 hours a joint assessment team was ready to deploy with its equipment. Flying by C-17 aircraft, the team arrived in Monrovia a few days later.

"When we had a similar request come in for the airfield at Dakar, the second set of ready forces stepped up to the plate and we had that assessment team on the ground within 96 hours," Schatz said.

Each joint assessment team rapidly evaluated airfield suitability for missions and reported their findings to operational planners at U.S. Africa Command and TRANSCOM.

Immediately, additional JTF-PO forces deployed to "open" the airfields to military traffic, as well as establish airfield operations and initial surface distribution capability.

Within the initial two weeks, TRANSCOM deployed 177 JTF-PO forces and equipment to Monrovia and Dakar to receive, stage, and conduct initial cargo clearance on behalf of the joint forces commander, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and partner nations. To date, they have successfully handled 90 airlift missions, including moving Air Force Expeditionary Medical Support Systems and critical supplies.

"Our JTF-PO teams provide a key link in the global mobility chain, flowing vital equip-

ment and supplies into the affected regions to build their capacity to deal with the devastating effects of EVD," said Marine Corps Col. Andrew Reagan, chief of TRANSCOM's East Division, which leads TRANSCOM support for the operation.

"We work with many other military, government and civilian organizations to get the job done," Reagan said.

Each JTF-PO commander and his team coordinate daily with Africom, host-nation airfield personnel, the joint forces commander, U.S. embassy officials, USAID representatives and deployment teams from the Defense Logistics Agency to manage priorities and conduct operations safely. In Dakar, the JTF-PO has the additional opportunity to work with French, British and coalition partners.

As initial response forces, JTF-PO deployments last about 60 days to give the supported combatant command time to transition operations to follow-on forces.

"I am extremely proud of our JTF-PO forces and the unique capability they bring to a combatant commander faced with an unexpected contingency or humanitarian response, as we have for OUA," Schatz said. "We help set the conditions for success."

## ■Safeguarding digital footprint

AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS—Social media is a great resource for servicemembers and their families to share information and stay connected to relatives at home and abroad.

Although many depend on these wonderful tools, recent events have encouraged us to re-evaluate our digital footprint to ensure personal and professional information is protected from online predators and individuals who want to do harm.

While social media use can be entertaining and informative, it poses potential operations security weaknesses.

OPSEC and personal privacy concerns should be paramount when using social media. Military members have recently been threatened on social media by terrorist organizations looking for information they can use to harm military families and disrupt operations.

The following tips will make it more difficult for unwanted users to acquire personal data through social media:

- Be cautious when accepting friend requests and interacting with people online. Never accept a friend request from a stranger, even if they are a friend of a friend.

- Don't share information that shouldn't want to become public. Remember, once a post is out there it is nearly impossible to control where it goes.

- Disable location-based social networking, or geotagging, on all social media platforms. Geotagging is the process of adding geographical identification to photographs, video, websites and text messages.

- Avoid posting work or personal schedules and travel itineraries, especially deployment information and return dates for individuals, a loved one or a unit.



Photo by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

## Safety Check

A vehicle coming onto the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 24, follows the speed limit. The speed indicator was placed on the base with the help of the Lincoln Police Department the week of Oct. 20-24 to ensure drivers were aware of the speed limit on base. Base officials would like to remind drivers to please drive carefully, follow all posted signs and buckle up - it's mandatory.

- If there is ever hesitation before clicking 'post,' reconsider the content which is about to be shared. Follow the motto: 'When in doubt, throw it out!'

- Adjust privacy settings to ensure posts and profile information is secured and seen only by approved audiences.

Practicing good OPSEC and helping family members follow these security measures is essential to protecting personal and mission-critical information on social media. If you ever feel you are being threatened or you notice vulnerable information online, be sure to alert the social media platform's help center and your local OPSEC manager for assistance.

## ■Incidental expense definition changing for military travelers

WASHINGTON (DoD News) — Big changes are happening with the Joint Travel Regulations, and they could affect how servicemembers are reimbursed for temporary duty assignments, especially incidental expenses.

An expanded definition of what constitutes incidental expenses during official travel went into effect Oct. 1, said Harvey Johnson, the director of the Defense Travel Management Office. The change will save the department about \$18 million annually, he added.

Per diem payments are made up of lodging, meals and, for travelers in the continental United States, a \$5 daily incidental payment. The definition of what qualifies as an incidental expense — which travelers are expected to pay for from that \$5 daily payment — now includes ATM fees, baggage tips for uniformed personnel and, within the continental United States, laundry expenses, Johnson said.

"These were previously expenses that

were miscellaneous reimbursable expenses," he noted.

The expanded definition will affect only a few travelers, Johnson said, and no one should end up paying out of pocket. For example, only about 13 percent of travelers were claiming ATM fees, he said, and they averaged out to about 76 cents per day, well under the flat \$5 daily incidentals payment.

"This incentivizes people to plan ahead," Johnson said. "Should you make an ATM withdrawal? Certainly, if it's necessary. Should you make one every day? I would offer there's probably a better way to plan for that."

If travelers find their average incidental expenses are in excess of the incidentals payment, they should contact their approving authority to ensure actual expenses are authorized on their travel orders.

Mission-related expenses continue to be reimbursable, and should not be confused with incidental expenses, he noted.

"So, if my mission calls for ... (me) to do certain things — make an extraordinary amount of phone calls using the hotel phone, or other mission-type expenses — they are still reimbursable," Johnson said. Travelers should still ensure that their approving authority has approved such expenses, he added.

The travel management office used three guiding principles when considering these policy changes, Johnson said.

First, do no harm — reducing costs to the government shouldn't come at the expense of travelers, he explained.

Second, Johnson said, "We're looking to fairly compensate travelers for expenses occurred."

And third, use data to test and back up recommendations. "I truly believe the data tells the narrative. As you start to look at the data from prior years, ... the picture becomes quite clear on what sort of travel solutions are out there," he said.

## DoD releases progress report on Afghanistan

The Department of Defense provided to Congress Oct. 31, the October 2014 "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," in accordance with regulations. This report covers April 1 to September 30, 2014.

"With the recent signing of the bilateral security agreement and NATO status of forces agreement, we can now move forward in the planning and execution of our two important military missions in Afghanistan as we transition out of our combat mission," said Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby. "In 2015, we will continue to train, advise, and assist the Afghan security forces as well as support counterterrorism operations against remnants of Al Qaeda."

During the reporting period, several significant milestones set the stage for the post-2014 transition and an enduring U.S. - Afghanistan partnership. On May 27, President Obama

announced his decision on the post-2014 U.S. military mission in Afghanistan, contingent on a signed U.S.-Afghanistan bilateral security agreement (BSA) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization Afghan status of forces agreement (SOFA).

On Sept. 29, Dr. Ashraf Ghani was inaugurated as president and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah was sworn in as chief executive officer, a new position established in the national unity government. The day following President Ghani's inauguration, representatives of the U.S. and Afghanistan signed the BSA and representatives of NATO and Afghanistan signed the SOFA.

The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have increasingly demonstrated their ability to plan and conduct independent and combined operations that employ multiple capabilities, to disrupt the insurgency, and to protect the populace. They successfully secured the April national elections and June presidential runoff with minimal support from the International

Security Assistance Force.

"The ANSF have done an exceptional job being in the lead in providing security for not one but two elections and put the Taliban on their heels during this fighting season. There's still work to be done, but that is the purpose behind our future mission," Kirby added.

The Taliban continued to test the ANSF, but were unable to hold any significant terrain and were consistently overmatched when engaged by ANSF, sometimes enabled by coalition air and intelligence support.

The Afghan people, the Afghan government, and the international coalition have made significant progress over the last decade. Work remains after 2014 to develop the capacity of the Afghan security institutions, sustain the ANSF and close ANSF capability gaps. The coalition is well-postured with a capable and willing Afghanistan partner for the Resolute Support mission.

## Prairie Soldier

2433 NW 24th St, Lincoln, Nebraska 68524-1801  
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Letters, articles, notices of events, photographs and art are welcome, but may be edited for clarity or brevity. Publication of any submission is at the discretion of the editor. Submissions can also be emailed to alex.r.salmon.mil@mail.mil. All photos must be high resolution and include complete caption information.

The views and opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the Military Department of Nebraska or the U.S. Department of Defense.

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**Commander-in-Chief**  
**Adjutant General**  
**State Public Affairs Officer**  
**Deputy State Public Affairs Officer/Editor**  
**Staff Photojournalist**

Gov. Dave Heineman  
Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac  
Lt. Col. Kevin Hynes  
1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Sgt. Heidi McClintock

### STAFF WRITERS

**Nebraska Army National Guard**  
1st Lt. John McNally  
Sgt. Riley Huskey  
Sgt. Amy Jacobson  
Staff Sgt. Koan Nissen  
Sgt. Jason Drager

**Nebraska Air National Guard**  
Tech. Sgt. Jason Melton  
Staff Sgt. Mary Thach

### STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

**Nebraska Air National Guard**  
Master Sgt. Shannon Nielsen

# Wanted: Best Warriors

## Military police battalion tests Soldiers mentally, physically

By Sgt. Heidi McClintock  
Staff Photojournalist

Like the National Guard logo reads, 'Always Ready, Always There,' the Nebraska Army National Guard always strives to have its Soldiers trained and ready at all times.

Members of the 402nd Military Police Battalion and 192nd Military Police (Law and Order) Detachment participated in the Military Police Challenge, Sept. 27-28, in Omaha, Nebraska.

The Military Police Challenge was designed to test the competing Soldiers both physically and mentally. Operating in teams, the competition was designed to bring the Guardsmen from different sections and platoons together in a competitive event.

Day one events included the Army Physical Fitness Test followed by a round robin of events including a Humvee push, Humvee preventive maintenance checks and services, grenade throw, team building exercise, assisting a casualty, and much more.

Day two morning events included a ruck march followed by a squad quiz. And to round out the weekend, the unit conducted a family event that afternoon.

According to Spc. Arturo Romero, an information technology specialist with the 402nd MP Bn., adding the competition to performing different Army Warrior Tasks makes one want to strive to be the best.

"These types of challenges reinforce our basic skill sets and remind us of what our strengths and weaknesses are," said Romero. "It's a good refresher and reminds you where you are at and where you need to be."

"It also gives the leadership a good idea where you are at, so they can help coach you along," added Romero.

Staff Sgt. John Ferguson, an internment and resettlement



**Teamwork:** Members of the 402nd Military Police Battalion and 192nd Military Police (Law and Order) Detachment participate in the Military Police Challenge, Sept. 27-28, in Omaha, Neb. Operating in teams, the competition was designed to bring Guardsmen from different sections together in a competitive event.

sergeant with the 402nd MP Bn., agreed.

"I know I like competition and hopefully for everyone competition should bring out the best in them," said Ferguson. "We try to strive to be recognized and help out your team."

"We are in five-man teams, so you want to do your best for yourself, and for your buddies, too," he added.

The first place team consisted of Staff Sgt. Jeremy Kozak, Sgt. Kimberly Mahlberg, Sgt. Randy Robertson and Pfc. Alexander Gould, while the second place team was made up of Staff Sgt. Derek Fryer, Sgt. Zachary Stika, Sgt. Cameron Araujo and Spc. Chad Mascari.

Winning top individual honors for the Military Police Challenge was Staff Sgt. John Ferguson. Second place went to Pfc. Alexander Gould.

After the long challenging weekend, the Soldiers appreciated ending drill with their family.

According to the Soldiers, competing during the drill weekend was a great way to bring everyone in their unit together and train on different tasks as well as bring a little competitive edge to the unit.



Photos by Sgt. Amy Jacobson

**Heave-Ho:** Members of the 402nd Military Police Battalion and 192nd Military Police (Law and Order) Detachment push a Humvee during the Military Police Challenge, Sept. 27-28, in Omaha, Neb. The Military Police Challenge was designed to test the competing Soldiers both physically and mentally. Operating in teams, the competition was designed to bring Guardsmen from different sections and platoons together in a competitive event.



**Out of Harm's Way:** Members of the 402nd Military Police Battalion and 192nd Military Police (Law and Order) Detachment carry an "injured" person during the Military Police Challenge, Sept. 27-28, in Omaha, Neb. The Military Police Challenge was designed to test the competing Soldiers in a variety of skills.



**Radio Check:** Members of the 402nd Military Police Battalion and 192nd Military Police (Law and Order) Detachment participate in the Military Police Challenge, Sept. 27-28, in Omaha, Neb. The competition was designed to increase teamwork within the unit by bringing out the competitive side of the Soldiers.



**Attention To Detail:** Spc. James Rashilla, 754th Chemical Company, fills out a 9-line medevac request at Camp Ashland, Neb., Sept. 27, during the 126th Chemical Battalion's best warrior competition. The unit used this competition to choose who will move on to represent the unit at the 2015 Nebraska Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition.

## Chemical battalion identifies best competitors

By Sgt. Heidi McClintock  
Staff Photojournalist

Soldiers from the 126th Chemical Battalion came together in Camp Ashland, Nebraska, Sept. 27, to compete in the Chemical Battalion's Best Warrior Competition.

The all-day competition started off bright and early with the Army Physical Fitness Test. The APFT was followed by breakfast and then competitors spent the rest of the day competing in a round robin of 12 different events. The long day of events didn't stop even when the sun was going down.

Some of the events included making a 9-line medevac request, unexploded ordnance report, spot report, road march, weapon function checks, disassembly and assembly of weapons, and others. The competition was designed to challenge the Soldiers both physically and mentally.

"These are our basic warrior skills that we need to know and have memorized if we do get deployed," said Spc. Keegan Sejkora, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist with the 754th Chemical Company. "These are the things we would be using every day."

"Getting out in the field and working with the radios and the weapons really helps to learn and engrain in your memory," added Sejkora.

According to unit officials, the com-



Photos by Sgt. Amy Jacobson

**Hello:** Spc. Keegan Sejkora, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist with the 754th Chemical Company, calls in a 9-line medevac request at Camp Ashland, Neb., Sept. 27, during the 126th Chemical Battalion's best warrior competition. The competition consisted of multiple events to identify the unit's top Soldiers.

petition is how they select individuals to move on and represent their unit at the 2015 Nebraska Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition.

"Next month, we will hold the board," said 1st Sgt. Adam Homan, first sergeant for 754th Chem. Co. "Which makes five phases all together and from that we will select the top (specialist) and below and top non-commissioned officer to send to the state competition."

With as much training as units fit

into their drill schedules, competitions are a great way to involve training and add a little competition to bring the Soldiers closer together.

"We do training every month," said Homan. "But the big thing about the competition is it kind of pushes them and motivates the Soldiers to train a little bit harder. It pushes them to earn that award and be selected as the top Soldier."

"Competition brings the best out in our Soldiers I think."



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Jason Melton

**Winning:** Soldiers and U.S. Army civilians from around the globe who were awarded the Supply Excellence Award pose for a photograph with U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno, (left), Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Kathleen S. Miller (second from right), and 53rd Quartermaster Commandant Col. Ronald Kirklin (right), during the 10th Annual Chief of Staff of the Army's Combined Logistics Excellence Awards ceremony at the Pentagon, Sept. 10. Three Nebraska National Guard units took home national honors for excellence in logistics.

## CLEA

continued from page 1.

Units recognized were the 313th Medical Company in the Level I (A) Company Supply, Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) category; the Ashland-based Headquarters, 209th Regional Training Institute in the Level II (A) Small, Table of Distribution and Allowances category; and the Lincoln-based U.S. Property and Fiscal Office in the Level IV (B) Supply Support Activity, Table of Distribution and Allowances category.

"I couldn't be more proud of what you do and what you represent," said Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Raymond T. Odierno as he congratulated the winners. "That's why I want to recognize these leaders and what they have done."

He also spoke directly to the family members in attendance. "The strength of our nation is our Army, the strength of our Army is our Soldiers. The strength of our Soldiers is our families and that's what makes us Army Strong."

"It's been a legacy award," said Command Sgt. Maj. Shawn M. Griffith, who oversees Nebraska's SEA program. "I've been part of this awards program for 20 years and to see the young Soldiers take ownership of it and to see them want to exceed and be the best the Nebraska Army National Guard has to offer and the National Guard as a whole, is really gratifying."

"The cornerstone to supply excellence is really command supply discipline down to company level," Griffith said. "We have a very robust command supply discipline program in the Nebraska Guard and that really is the feeder to the Supply Excellence Award. Not only does it enhance our logistical readiness, it gives us an opportunity for some family members to really see what this is all about. The family members who attended can see why their spouses put in the 10 to 12 hours per day required to achieve this enormous honor."

"It's really an honor to be here at the Pentagon receiving this award on behalf of my unit," said Master Sgt. Troy Redl, the supply sergeant at Headquarters, 209th RTI at Camp Ashland, Nebraska. "Winning this award shows how totally committed we are. For us it's simply about upholding Army values. For my unit specifically, it's all about customer service – the level of customer service says a lot for the commitment, duty and our dedication to do a job well done."



**All About That Brass:** Gen. Ray Odierno, chief of staff of the Army, addresses the winners of this year's U.S. Army Combined Logistics Excellence Awards during a ceremony at the Pentagon, Sept. 10. The winners included 36 U.S. Army logistics units in 17 states including three Army National Guard Units from the Nebraska Army National Guard.

*"We continue to carry on the rich legacy that we have in the logistic and supply arena in our state. I am extremely proud that we keep the ball rolling year after year."*

— **Brig. Gen. Scott Gronewold**  
Assistant Nebraska Adjutant General for Joint Staff

This was Redl's first time to Washington, D.C., however, the 209th is no stranger to winning this award. The unit has won 10 times and been runner up twice in the last 13 years.

"The mission and goal for me and my team – in regards to supply excellence – is to build upon what previous winners have done in the past and take it to the next level," said Redl. "Even with all the awards the 209th Regiment has won, there is always room for improvement. My team's mission is to streamline processes and create new innovative ideas to implement into the supply process. The goal is to do this while providing quality customer service which is our number one function."

According to Redl, the 209th has already submitted a packet for next year's competition and have made it past the state and regional levels.

"I am very pleased to accept

this award on behalf of my unit, said Staff Sgt. Lonnie TenHulzen, U.S. Property and Fiscal Office in Lincoln. This is the fourth time his unit has won the award, he said. "The Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers are dedicated to excellence. Winning this award reflects well upon the Nebraska's legacy of excellence."

"We do things the right way the first time, so we can reap the benefits of the award," said Chambers referring to the SEA award she received on behalf of the 313th Med. Co. "It's a team award and it takes the entire company. The commander and first sergeant have a lot of emphasis on logistics within our company and that showed. Without support from our leadership, I would not have been able to be here today."

Command Sgt. Maj. Griffith attributes the Nebraska National Guard's history of logistical success to deep-rooted tradition.

"It is certainly nothing I have done, but it is a Nebraska tradition – sustained excellence that is groomed from the moment the young folks join the Nebraska Army National Guard," said Griffith. "I was out here about 20 years ago receiving the award as part of the organization myself. When we can get that young Soldier to buy into the tradition, it sustains it for generations. The great thing about this is we have great command support in the Nebraska Army National Guard at all levels and that really allows our logisticians do their job and take care of the Soldiers in the Nebraska Army National Guard."

"Winning the SEA was a great opportunity to come here and not only participate in the CLEA, but also to see what Washington, D.C., has to offer," said Daniel Townsend of the 209th RTI. Soldiers from the Nebraska National Guard and their families also got to see some Capital attractions, touring the Pentagon, White House and meeting with U.S. Senator Deb Fischer before traveling back to Nebraska.

"I think we stand on par with the active, Reserve and all Army components," said Gronewold. "We can hold our heads high knowing that we are second to none. Winning these awards is a total effort. It's a great individual effort, but there are also the people that support them – their families, the people who came before them and people who work for them – all can take ownership for these awards. We continue to carry on the rich legacy that we have in the logistic and supply arena in our state. I am extremely proud that they keep the ball rolling year after year."



**The Pride of Nebraska:** Staff Sgt. Lillie Chambers (second from left) poses with U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno (left) Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Kathleen S. Miller (second from right), and 53rd Quartermaster Commandant Col. Ronald Kirklin. Chambers' unit, the 313th Medical Company out of Lincoln, Neb., won the Supply Excellence Award for the Army National Guard division in the Level I (A) Company Supply, Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) category.



**Consistency:** Master Sgt. Troy Redl (second from left), from the Ashland, Neb.-based Headquarters, 209th Regional Training Institute, poses with U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno (left), Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Kathleen S. Miller (second from right), and 53rd Quartermaster Commandant Col. Ronald Kirklin, after accepting the Supply Excellence Award for the Army National Guard in the Level II (A) Small, Table of Distribution and Allowances category. The 209th RTI has won this award 10 times in the past 13 years.



**Top Honors:** Staff Sgt. Lonnie TenHulzen (second from left), from the U.S. Property and Fiscal Office in Lincoln, Neb., poses with U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno (left), Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Kathleen S. Miller (second from right), and 53rd Quartermaster Commandant Col. Ronald Kirklin, after accepting the Supply Excellence Award for the Army National Guard in the Level II (A) Small, Table of Distribution and Allowances category. This marks the fifth time USPFO has won the award.



**Sendoff:** Gov. Dave Heineman speaks during a sendoff ceremony for 10 Soldiers from the Omaha-based 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne) at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31, as they begin a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Once deployed, the Soldiers will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and synchronizing Joint and Combined Special Operations Forces logistics requirements within the Special Operations Command Central area of operations.

## ASPO

continued from page 1.

“We have a solemn obligation to always be ready and always be there for the state and for the nation,” said Bohac. “That means we deliver combat-ready forces time and time again when asked and we do that again today.”

“It’s with a great deal of confidence that I stand before you as your adjutant general and send forward 10 ready Soldiers, 10 ready families that will be supported by the citizens of this state...we’ll be ready to welcome you home.”

The officer in charge of the ASPO team, Maj. Russ Hewitt, said he was also extremely confident in his team’s abilities.

“It’s an honor, particularly when you have a chance to deploy with Soldiers such as these...they are all subject matter experts,” said Hewitt. “Between everyone on the team, we have over 20 deployments between us, so this is not our first go around, which makes me extremely confident that we are going to go and complete our mission and probably exceed the expectation.”

According to Hewitt, the ASPO team is uniquely suited to provide specialized logistical support.

“The mission is logistics focused,” said Hewitt. “What we do is provide transportation, medical support, it could be engineering support, it could be supply support – you name it – to the tip of the spear.”

The ASPO team is a small section of very diverse logisticians who are experts in their fields, whether that’s fuels, ammunition, or medical supplies, Hewitt added. “In the special operations community, missions come very fast. They’re very quick and you want to have subject matter experts that can be there to help finalize the concepts of support.”

This is also an important mission for the Nebraska National Guard, according to Hewitt. He said as the Army’s structure shifts, a significant portion of sustainment and logistical support will be moving to the reserve component. This mission gives the Nebraska Guardsmen the opportunity to work with their active duty counterparts and hone their skills, making them more valuable to the mission.

One of the deploying Soldiers, Sgt. Joshua Vogel, has deployed with the Nebraska National Guard twice before. This third deployment will be much different for Vogel, an aviation refueling specialist with the team. A few weeks prior to the ceremony, Vogel surprised his then girlfriend, Tamy Pridie, by proposing at Vala’s Pumpkin Patch in Gretna, Nebraska.

Pridie repaid that surprise with one of her own.



**D.C. Thanks:** U.S. Senator Deb Fischer offers words of encouragement during a ceremony to wish good luck to 10 Soldiers from the Omaha-based 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne) at the Joint Force Headquarters building in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31, as they begin a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

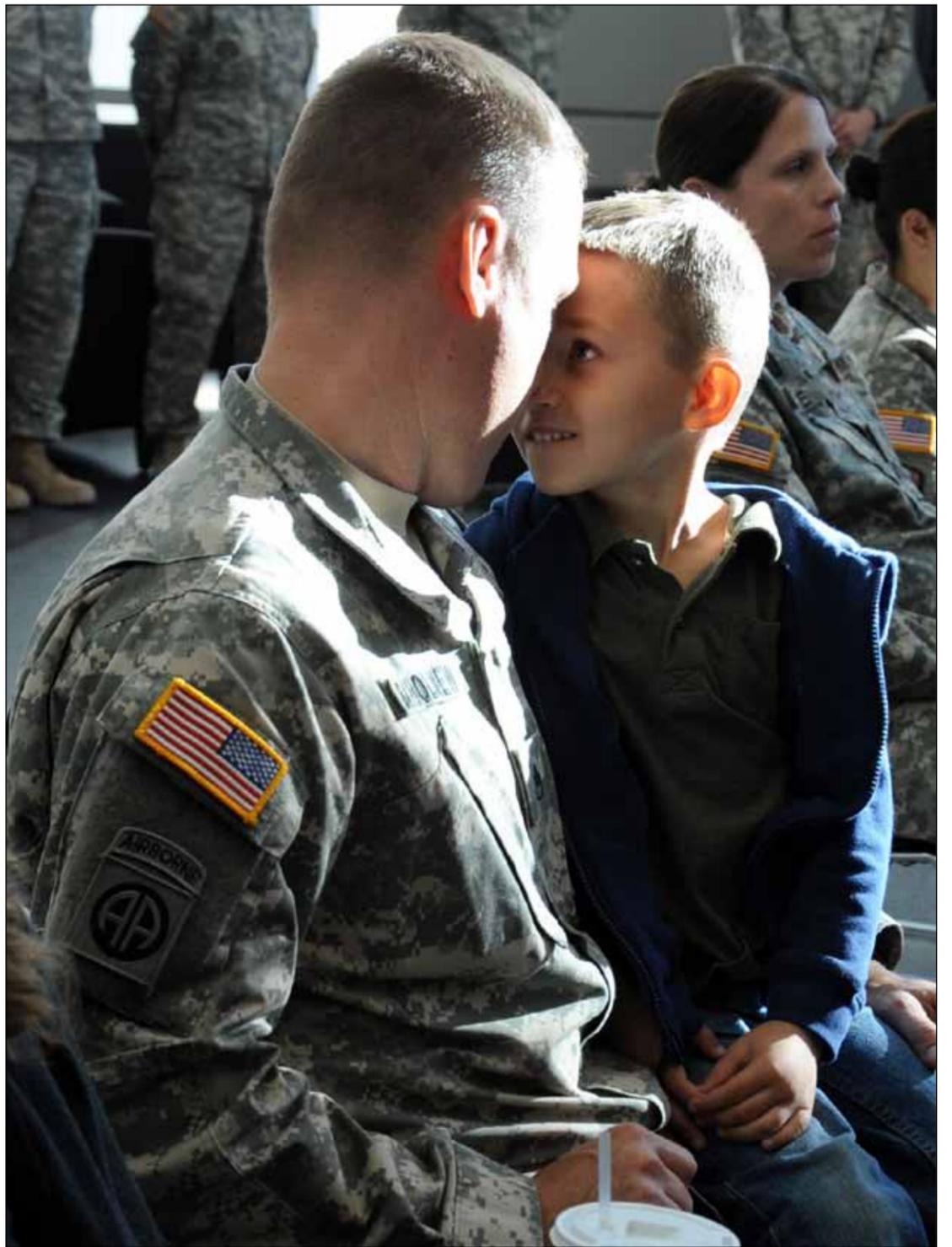


**Leader of the Pack:** Maj. Russ Hewitt, officer in charge of the 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), speaks during a ceremony to wish good luck to 10 Soldiers from the Omaha-based 195th FSC at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31, as they begin an overseas deployment.

“Christmas is my favorite holiday and I was fortunate enough to have a fiancée like her in my life and she surprised me with my entire family with an October Christmas complete with a snow machine and everything,” said Vogel. “I don’t know how she threw it all together, but it was a great surprise.”

Both Vogel and Pridie anticipate time going quickly while the Soldiers are away and look forward to planning their April 2016 wedding when he gets home. Pridie said she has a great support system in place and has gotten great advice from friends and family, while Vogel said they’ve got a game plan to remain in close contact.

“We’ve discussed it and so far she seems pretty strong,” said Vogel. “I’ll



Photos by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Locked In:** Staff Sgt. Jamie Bartholomew, property book officer with the 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), connects with his 5-year-old son, Alec, during a farewell ceremony for 10 195th FSC Soldiers at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31.

be home soon... Our plan of action is a lot of ‘Skype’ dates, phone calls, and letters – anything we can do to communicate.”

And this being Vogel’s third deployment makes the entire separation process a little easier.

“I’m not so much anxious as I am ready,” he said. “I think waiting to leave is the hardest part and having a fiancée in my life now definitely makes it a little more difficult, but after being on so many missions, you sort of get used to the leaving and the hustle and bustle and the packing. It’s just a matter now of waiting to come back home.”

Hewitt, who will also be performing his third deployment, said the opportunity to serve provides perspective on many things.

“In the end it really is about the people and those loved ones and those events and really taking advantage of the time,” said Hewitt. “Deployments do that – they’re a great opportunity to go out there and do good things, but they’re also opportunities to just remind you just how blessed you are and how much you have.”

Hewitt said he is thankful to be part of the Guard community and the things they can accomplish.

“If you have the opportunity to support good things and work with the right people and sacrifice for others, you’re incredibly blessed,” said Hewitt. “And if you have people in your life that care about you and they’re going to miss you – you’re blessed to have that.”

“We’re really looking forward to this,” he added. “This is a great opportunity and we’re going to be excited to get back safely and tell you about all the amazing things we got done.”



**Eyes to the Sky:** Alex Hagen, 6, enjoys himself as his father, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hagen, an ammunition specialist with the 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne), fiancée, Sandy Thomas, and daughter, Becca, attend a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 31. Ten Soldiers from the Omaha-based unit were wished good luck as they begin a year-long deployment.

# A Family Affair

Son follows in father's footsteps by reaching top enlisted rank in Nebraska Air National Guard

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

**A** National Guard slogan says, "Guard is family." That slogan definitely holds true for the Courtney family.

At least one member of the Courtney family has been a fixture for 37 years in the Nebraska Air National Guard for 70 years and counting. The Courtneys now hold the distinct honor of becoming what is believed to be the first father-son duo in the Nebraska Air National Guard to reach the top enlisted rank when Michael Courtney was promoted to chief master sergeant during a ceremony at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska, Sept. 14.

Courtney, the JFHQ human resources superintendent, followed in the footsteps of his father, the late Chief Master Sgt. Robert M. Courtney, who served for 37 years in the Nebraska Air National Guard. Robert passed away in January 2013, yet, according to his son, was very present during Courtney's promotion ceremony.

"It was a day to honor Pop," said Courtney. "It wasn't about me, it was about continuing the legacy that Dad started."

Courtney, a 33-year Nebraska Air Guard veteran, said he essentially grew up on the Nebraska National Guard air base often going to work with his father. He'd also see him working from home, adding the Guard played a big role in their home life.

"I was out here a lot before I actually joined, so his service had a lot of influence on me and just the way it took care of us," said Courtney. "We grew up with the Nebraska Air Guard."

Courtney called his father "hardnosed," and said he used his military background to run the household.

"There were definitely rules," said Courtney. "And there was punishment when those rules were broken."

When it finally came time for Courtney to put on his new rank, he said it meant a lot to him personally and professionally. When he joined the Nebraska Air Guard in 1981, the senior Courtney had already been a chief master sergeant for a year, so Courtney knew he had big shoes to fill.

"For me, it's hard to wear (these stripes) because there are a lot of expectations my dad would have," said Courtney. "If he were still alive, he'd be proud, but he'd also be telling me, 'you need to be doing this, you need to be doing that,' because he didn't take wearing chief master sergeant lightly. Nor do I."

"It's an honor for me to carry on the tradition with the Courtneys being chiefs," he



Courtesy Photo

**Role Model:** Chief Master Sgt. Robert M. Courtney, who passed away in January 2013, served for 37 years in the Nebraska Air National Guard. Courtney's son, Michael Courtney, followed in his father's footsteps by reaching the Air Force's top enlisted rank during a promotion ceremony at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 14.

added. "I'm honored to wear it and I'm also humbled because there are not many people who get to do this."

Robert retired in 1992 giving Courtney 11 years of military service overlap with his father. And although more than 22 years has passed since Robert retired, the name 'Chief Courtney' is difficult for Courtney to reconcile.

"Whenever somebody yells, 'Chief Courtney,' I'm looking around for my dad," said Courtney. "I got in in '81 and he got out in '92, so that's 11 years of Dad being Chief Courtney. So, when I hear that – that's not me, that's my dad. So, that part is very difficult for me because it makes me miss him a lot, but I realize that it is me and I've got to make my own mark and do my own thing."

Courtney said he never set out to follow directly in his father's path, but joined the Nebraska Air National Guard for the educational benefits. He added all he really wanted to do in his military career was achieve the greatest success he could, but thought reaching the rank of chief was a slim prospect. Now that's he's reached that milestone, he's got big plans.

"It's an honor and I'm humbled by the opportunity," said Courtney. "I know if Dad were here – and he still watches me every-



Photo by Lt. Col. Kevin Hynes

**Proud Day:** Chief Master Sgt. Michael Courtney, Joint Force Headquarters human resources superintendent, is administered the chief's oath by Chief Master Sgt. Nancy Vondrasek, 155th Air Refueling Wing command chief master sergeant, following Courtney's promotion to the rank during a ceremony at the JFHQ building in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 14. Courtney's father, Robert, also held the rank of chief master sergeant, making the Courtneys what is believed to be the first father-son duo in the Nebraska Air National Guard to reach that rank.

day – he always had high expectations of me and those haven't changed. And I have high expectations of myself – to live up to what a chief really means."

"The grade, E-9, is not as important as the rank, chief master sergeant," said Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, Nebraska adjutant general, about Courtney's promotion. "A chief master sergeant is important because they represent less than two percent of the Air National Guard's total enlisted force. That is, those individuals who achieve the grade of E-9 are rare, and those who execute the rank of Chief Master Sergeant are even rarer."

Courtney said he takes Bohac's words to heart.

"I don't ever want anyone to think I'm an E-9," he said. "I want to be the chief that I'm supposed to be and the chief that my dad was."

Courtney said he also plans to continue leading by example, taking care of Airmen and helping them grow and be as successful as possible. As for Courtney's future in the Nebraska Air National Guard, he said the sky is the limit.

"I'm willing to do this gig as long as my health stays up," said Courtney. "My wife is fully supportive of all the late nights and missed weekends – she gets it. She's very supportive, so as long as our health remains the same and I can continue to serve at the level and pace I'm doing right now, I'll just keep doing it."

"I do the three Rs – ready, reliable and relevant – when I'm not one or more of those, then it's time for me to punch out," he added.

Courtney said his promotion ceremony was very emotional. Several of his father's friends were in attendance and could speak for the late Courtney.

"Everyone told me he'd be really proud," said Courtney. "I had a hard time with my speech in the first place, but it means a lot and he didn't say that a lot to me growing up. So to have his friends and the people that knew him really well come and tell me that...that's the piece that probably hurts the most – that he wasn't there."

And making history as the first father-son duo to achieve this milestone isn't lost on Courtney.

"I titled my speech 'A Continuing Legacy,' and that's exactly what it is," said Courtney. "Not all of us get a chance to do something where you can be part of history. Not all of us get a chance to do something that you can carry on and continue to make a difference... so it means a lot to me."

"It's a huge responsibility, it's a huge challenge, but I'm super excited to take it on and everyday I still look at these stripes and go, 'really?'" he added. "And every day when somebody says, 'hey Chief,' I'm like, 'Is that me? Where's Pop?' I'll get use to it and hopefully the Airmen I encounter and mentor will say that I lived up to that title."

## Air Guard's top sergeant talks resiliency with Nebraska Airmen

By Staff Sgt. Mary Thach  
Staff Photojournalist

**T**he 155th Air Refueling Wing welcomed the Air National Guard's top enlisted leader to Lincoln, Nebraska, Sept. 12-14. Chief Master Sergeant James W. Hotaling spoke to the Nebraska Air National Guard's enlisted Airmen about the importance of resiliency to the Air Force, Sept. 13, during the unit's monthly drill weekend.

Hotaling outlined the importance of every Airman's commitment to professionalism, the overall health of the force, and the need to embrace the many things Airmen do in the National Guard.

He said no matter what status an Airman is in – active duty, Guard, reserve, traditional Guardsman or technician – each person is indeed an Airman. He added that as the rules continue to change in the military, Airmen must also adapt and change.

"In our profession, we make it a point that you have to earn it to be in our club," said Hotaling during a speech to the enlisted members of the 155th ARW. "You are a trainee until you have earned it. Do not forget where you



Photo by Staff Sgt. James Lieth

**Imparting Knowledge:** Chief Master Sgt. James W. Hotaling, Air National Guard chief master sergeant, speaks to the enlisted Airmen of the Nebraska Air National Guard's 155th Air Refueling Wing at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 13. Hotaling outlined the importance of every Airman's commitment to professionalism, the overall health of the force, and the need to embrace the variety of jobs within the Air Force.

came from and the importance of why you are in this uniform every single day. You are an American Airman. It is what we do; it is not a job."

Hotaling said the health of the force depends on many aspects of resiliency.

"Physical resiliency is more than

running around the block, pushups and sit-ups," he said. "Fundamentally, diet, nutrition, exercise and discipline will help you overcome

any physical adversity."

He said a healthy diet is not only important for physical health, it affects mental resiliency. If the brain is not fed properly it could lead to diminished mental functioning.

To develop social resiliency, Hotaling said it is also important to develop a social support system and interact with people with whom one doesn't work with daily. This will help families understand and hopefully embrace the importance of the Air Force, and the results it is capable of achieving.

Finally, Hotaling said it is essential to find a sense of meaning in one's life to develop spiritual resiliency.

"Spiritual resiliency does not have to be religious, but believing in something greater than yourself," said Hotaling. "It could be the righteousness of our mission. In your deepest, darkest moments, you have to be able to hold onto something other than yourself."

"Everyone is a wingman to everybody else. Recognize what everyone else does," he added. "Just a tap on the shoulder, saying, 'I see you, you are doing a good job,' encourages people. That is critically important."

# Nebraska Air Guard recognizes small community with nose art

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

A Raymond Central High School student will have her artwork displayed around the world on the nose of a KC-135R Stratotanker from the Nebraska Air National Guard's 155th Air Refueling Wing.

Amanda LaPlante, a senior, unveiled her artwork highlighting the small community of Valparaiso, Nebraska, during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Nebraska, Sept. 13, during the unit's monthly drill weekend.

The artwork is part of the 155th ARW's nose art program, a tradition in which members of the Nebraska Air National Guard nominate a Nebraska town or city and a contest is held by local high schools students to create a design that represents their community. This marks the 10th year the 155th ARW has spotlighted a Nebraska community.

"As the National Guard, we're a community-based force and we want to take our communities with us," said Col. Bob Stevenson, 155th ARW commander.

"These airplanes travel, literally, hundreds of thousands of miles," he added. "It's amazing that we land in places like Germany and Japan and all over the world and people will come up...see our airplane, see Nebraska on the tail and then see their hometown stuck on the nose and it brings a little bit of home to them."

LaPlante said finally seeing the artwork on the airplane was amazing.

"It's just so weird to think that people in different continents across the world are going to see what I made just in a small town in Nebraska," said LaPlante. "It'll be nice to have people see it. I hope they enjoy seeing it."

Nose art on aircraft is a long-standing tradition within the military dating back to before

World War II. The art was generally created by ground crews as a way to identify their aircraft and later embraced by pilots.

LaPlante said she wanted many of things within her artwork to represent Valparaiso. The background is meant to look like the prairies surrounding the small community a few miles north of Lincoln, while the train tracks represent a very prominent aspect of the town with train tracks dissecting Valparaiso. Finally, a galloping mustang in the center represents the mascot of Raymond Central High School, where many of the area's youth attend school.

LaPlante said she is hopeful that someone overseas might see the artwork and feel a little piece of home.

"Being across the world I'm sure is really hard and if they see something that brings them back home, I'm sure that would help them a lot and I'm glad to help them with that."



Photo by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Nose Art:** Amanda LaPlante, a senior at Raymond Central High School, unveils her nose art during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Sep. 13. The artwork is part of the 155th ARW's nose art program, a tradition in which members of the Nebraska Air National Guard nominate a Nebraska town or city and a contest is held by local high schools students to create a design that represents their community.

## Multiple Nebraska Air Guard units under new leadership



155th Mission Support Group

Col. Bob Stevenson, 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, passes command of the 155th Mission Support Group to Col. Tami Thompson during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base, Oct. 5. Thompson takes command from Col. Wendy Johnson who relinquished command to become vice chief of staff at Joint Force Headquarters.



155th Operations Group

Col. Bob Stevenson, 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, passes command of the 155th Operations Group to Lt. Col. Don Neff during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 13. Neff takes command from Col. Chris Collins who relinquished command to become the 155th Air Refueling Wing vice commander.



155th Maintenance Group

Col. Bob Stevenson, 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, passes command of the 155th Maintenance Group to Col. Bob Hargens during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base, Oct. 5. Hargens, who was previously the Nebraska National Guard vice chief of staff, takes command from Col. Barbara Buls.



Photos courtesy of 155th Air Refueling Wing

173rd Air Refueling Squadron

Col. Chris Collins, 155th Air Refueling Wing vice commander, passes command of the 173rd Air Refueling Squadron to Lt. Col. Kipper Hesse during a ceremony at the Nebraska National Guard air base, Sept. 13. Hesse takes command from Lt. Col. Don Neff, who relinquished command to become commander of the 155th Operations Group.



Photo by Sgt. Riley Huskey

**It's Official:** (From left) Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman, Nebraska deputy adjutant general, Daniel Wise, AAFES commander of the Heartland Exchange, Aaron Doolittle, facilities construction coordinator, and Col. James Stevenson, 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, cut a ribbon officially opening a new Base Exchange inside the Penterman Armory at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 1.

## Nebraska National Guard air base exchange gets new location, facelift

By Sgt. Riley Huskey  
Staff Photojournalist

One of the oldest National Guard base exchanges in the Heartland celebrated a grand opening on Oct. 1 at its new location inside the Penterman Armory at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Nebraska.

A ribbon was cut officially opening the Base Exchange at its new location. Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman, Nebraska's deputy adjutant general, Col. James Stevenson, 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, Daniel Wise, AAFES Commander of the Heartland Exchange, and Aaron Doolittle, facilities construction coordinator, presided over the ceremony and performed the honorary ribbon cutting with more than 60 Air and Army National Guardsmen, civilian federal workers and military retirees watching on. Cake and coffee were provided free of charge for those in attendance to celebrate the new location.

"The Lincoln Main Exchange is now based on the latest and greatest of the Express brand," Wise said



Photo by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Time To Eat:** (From left) Daniel Wise, AAFES commander of the Heartland Exchange, Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman, Nebraska deputy adjutant general, and Col. James Stevenson (right), 155th Air Refueling Wing commander, watch as Sgt. Riley Huskey, a photojournalist with the 111th Public Affairs Detachment, and Senior Airman Noelle Robbins, a personnel specialist with the 155th Air Refueling Wing's Logistics Readiness Squadron, cut a cake during a ceremony opening a new Base Exchange inside the Penterman Armory at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 1.

to the crowd. "From the quality of the facility to the advanced 'Snack Avenue,' the new location aims to please."

The AAFES brand, Express, operates much like every Base Exchange. The company surveys

local stores and competitors, and prices their products accordingly. Express will price match any brick-and-mortar competitor in the area, assuring Guardsmen are paying the lowest price in addition to being free of sales tax, Wise added.

## Right Place, Right Time

### Nebraska Soldiers assist at accident scene until emergency responders arrive

By Sgt. Jason Drager  
Staff Photojournalist

On Aug. 9, Spc. Jordan Hopwood and Pfc. Nicholas Schreiner used quick thinking and swift action to help two strangers escape from a rolled vehicle. “Wearing the uniform trains you to read and react to situations and that’s all we did,” said Schreiner.

Hopwood and Schreiner were working for the Family Readiness Center and, after dropping off supplies in Omaha, were on their way to Wayne, Nebraska.

“We came to a stop light on the highway and saw numerous people standing around a truck rolled on its side,” said Schreiner. “We noticed there were two people still trapped in the truck and our first reaction was, ‘how can we get them out?’”

“There were about 10 people just standing around, not knowing what to do,” said Hopwood. “So we ran up there and started directing people.”

“The door was smashed from the accident so we were unable to open it,” said Schreiner. “So I grabbed a crowbar and handed it to the man trapped inside through the back of the truck and he smashed out the glass. I then got on top of the truck with Hopwood and we helped hoist the female out of the truck. The truck was pretty unstable, so we had to direct a few others at the scene to stabilize it so it wouldn’t roll over on to us. After that, the man didn’t really need help getting out, so we stayed with the female who was pretty shaken up. Hopwood grabbed her some water and a blanket to help calm her down.”

Hopwood and Schreiner stayed at the

*“I was very pleased we were able to react to the situation effectively and not lose our heads. Somebody needed to step-up and take charge of the situation. Sometimes not making a decision is worse than making the wrong decision.”*

— Pfc. Nicholas Schreiner  
Family Readiness Center

scene with the accident victims until a fire and rescue team arrived. Then, after receiving a few handshakes and a thank you, they left and continued with their original mission.

“I was very pleased we were able to react to the situation effectively and not lose our heads,” said Schreiner. “Somebody needed to step-up and take charge of the situation. Sometimes, not making a decision is worse than making the wrong decision.”

“It felt great to help, especially afterward when the EMTs and sheriff deputies shook our hands and thanked us,” said Hopwood.

For Schreiner, this was not the first time he helped a person in need on that highway.

“Two years ago, about a mile from that very location, I came across a pickup tipped over on its side and I helped a female who was trapped,” said Schreiner.

## Bosses Learn About Guard, Reserves



Photos by Maj. Kevin Hynes

**Hitting The Road:** Nebraska employers and civic leaders had the opportunity to learn more about the important roles that members of the National Guard and U.S. Reserves play during the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Bosslift, conducted Sept. 4, to Petersen Air Force Base, Colorado. During the course of the one-day visit, the employers and civic leaders had an opportunity to fly aboard a Nebraska Air National Guard KC-135R Stratotanker and watch as aerial refueling specialists from the 155th Air Refueling Wing conducted a midflight refueling of a B-2 Spirit bomber (see photo on left), attend briefings at U.S. Northern Command and the U.S. Air Force’s 302nd Airlift Wing, and speak with C-130 crewmembers who are trained to conduct aerial firefighting missions.



## FIRST SERGEANT continued from page 1.

military career of almost 17 years has thrived and given her so many wonderful opportunities.

“I am fortunate that the Soldiers of the 195th respect the role of the first sergeant no matter the gender of the individual,” said Kaiser. “This position is also allowing me an opportunity to set an example for the female Soldiers in the Nebraska Army National Guard.”

With only a hand-full of female first sergeants in the state, Kaiser welcomes the chance to mentor others like she has been mentored.

“I still receive mentorship in my career and look forward to paying it forward to the next generation of leaders,” said Kaiser.

“I am humbled to join a community of superb women who have in the past or that currently hold

positions in leadership,” added Kaiser. “Many exceptional ladies have paved the way and opened doors for Soldiers such as myself. I look forward to the chance to follow in their footsteps and provide the same mentorship to others as they have done for me.”

According to Kaiser, she is looking forward to the opportunities this new rank and position have in store for her.

“The 195th has a full training calendar this fiscal year and I look forward to being a part of the command team that continues the standards of excellence in mission accomplishment,” said Kaiser. “I also am excited to have the chance to mentor and lead the way for females in this organization.”

## Hagel says ISIL degraded, but still dangerous

WASHINGTON (DoD News) — United States and coalition forces have made progress in recent months against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, but the campaign will be “a long and difficult struggle,” Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told Congress, Nov. 13.

“We are three months into a multi-year effort,” Hagel said in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee. In some parts of Iraq, ISIL’s advance has been stalled and even reversed by Iraqi, Kurdish and tribal forces supported by U.S. and coalition air strikes. But ISIL still represents a “serious threat” to American interests, Hagel said.

The secretary stressed the importance of sustaining the regional and global coalition, which includes 16 more countries since Hagel’s last congressional testimony in September. More than 60 nations are now contributing to the fight against ISIL, Hagel said, with assistance ranging from air support to training to humanitarian aid.

“Coalition partners have carried out 130 airstrikes against ISIL in both Iraq and Syria,” Hagel said. “Coalition nations have also pledged hundreds of personnel to support our mission to train, advise, assist, and help build the capacity of Iraqi forces.”

*“Sustaining this pressure on ISIL will help provide time and space for Iraq to reconstitute its forces and continue going on the offense. And as Iraqi forces build strength, the tempo and intensity of our coalition’s air campaign will accelerate in tandem.”*

— Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel

The comprehensive strategy to stop ISIL also focuses on supporting inclusive governance, undercutting ISIL’s flow of resources, countering ISIL’s messaging, and constricting the flow of foreign fighters, Hagel said.

The combined effort has yielded results in degrading and destroying elements of ISIL’s war fighting capacity and denying safe haven to its combatants. The secretary said that ISIL fighters have been forced to maneuver in smaller groups, hide their large equipment, and change their communication methods.

“Sustaining this pressure on ISIL will help provide time and space for Iraq to reconstitute its forces and continue going on the offense,” Hagel added. “And as Iraqi forces build strength, the tempo and intensity of our coalition’s air cam-

campaign will accelerate in tandem.”

However, ISIL “will not be defeated through military force alone,” Hagel said.

In Iraq, he said, “much more needs to be done to achieve political reform.” And in Syria, since there is no partner government to work with, Hagel said military strategy will demand time, patience and perseverance to deliver results.

“The position of the United States remains that (Syrian President Bashar) Assad has lost the legitimacy to govern,” Hagel said. The U.S. and coalition goal, he said, is to ultimately create conditions for a political settlement in Syria.

“We are still at the front end of our campaign against ISIL,” Hagel told the House panel. “Congressional support — your support — is vital for this campaign to succeed.”

## Defense Department brings unique capabilities to ebola response mission, official says

By Claudette Roulo

DoD News-Defense Media Activity

The Department of Defense is playing a unique role in the United States’ comprehensive Ebola response efforts, the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict told Congress, Nov. 12.

Those efforts are a “national security priority in response to a global threat,” Michael D. Lumpkin said during a hearing of the Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee.

Lumpkin leads the department’s Ebola task force, which has been tasked with evaluating how DoD can most effectively support overarching U.S. government and international efforts to stop the spread of Ebola.

“The department has been called upon to provide interim solutions that will allow other departments and agencies the time necessary to expand and deploy their own capabilities,” he said. “United States military efforts are also galvanizing a more robust and coordinated international effort, which is essential to contain this threat and to (reducing) human suffering.”

Lumpkin said he drew several conclusions from a recent trip to Liberia to evaluate the evolving crisis and ongoing work by DoD personnel in support of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

“Our government has deployed a top-notch team experienced in dealing with disasters and humanitarian assistance,” Lumpkin told the committee.

In addition, he said, “the Liberian government is doing what it can with its very limited resources.”

Lumpkin said he traveled to the region thinking he would encounter a health care crisis with a logistics challenge. “In reality, we face a logistics crisis focused on a health care challenge.”

The U.S. effort to limit further spread of Ebola has spurred other

nations to respond, the assistant secretary said, which is critical in addressing a situation in which speed and scaled response are essential.

“Incremental responses will be outpaced by this dynamic epidemic,” he said.

The Ebola epidemic is truly a national security issue, Lumpkin said. Without the U.S. government’s coordinated response in West Africa, the spread of the virus brings the risk of more cases in the United States.

DoD is working in direct support of USAID in West Africa, he said. U.S. military forces there have a two-fold mission.

“First, support USAID in overall U.S. government efforts,” he said. “And the second is respond to Department of State requests for security or evacuation assistance if required.”

DoD personnel are not involved in direct care of Ebola-exposed patients, Lumpkin said. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel approved military activities that fall under four lines of effort: “command and control, logistics support, engineering support, and training assistance,” he told committee members.

Since the initial deployment of troops, DoD personnel have worked in support of these lines of effort, the assistant secretary said.

Their accomplishments include “establishing an intermediate staging base in Dakar, Senegal; providing strategic and tactical airlift; constructing a 25-bed hospital in Monrovia; constructing 12 Ebola treatment units in Liberia; training local and third-country health care support personnel, enabling them to serve as first responders in ETUs ... throughout Liberia,” Lumpkin said.

In each of those missions, he added, the protection of DoD personnel and the prevention of disease transmission are chief planning factors. “There is no higher operational priority than protecting our Department of Defense personnel,” the assistant secretary said.



Photos by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Chase the Rainbow:** Jennica Martinez, a high school sophomore at Lincoln's Pius X High School, demonstrates a ceremonial waltz of a Quinceanera with the help of several friends during a Hispanic Heritage Month luncheon, Sept. 24, at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb. Martinez celebrated her Quinceanera in July and described to the assembled crowd how her celebration took place.

## Military Department marks Hispanic Heritage Month during luncheon

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

The Nebraska National Guard celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month during a ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters on the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Nebraska, Sep. 24.

The ceremony featured Hispanic fare catered by Antoinette's, a café within the JFHQ building, and an explanation of a Quinceanera from Jennica Martinez. Martinez, a high school sophomore at Lincoln's Pius X High School, celebrated her Quinceanera on July 5 and described in detail how her celebration took place.

Following her explanation, Martinez, dressed in an extravagant white dress adorned with a rainbow-colored train, demonstrated a waltz with the help of several male friends.

One of the most important



**Walking On Air:** Jennica Martinez, a high school sophomore at Lincoln's Pius X High School, is lifted during a ceremonial waltz of a Quinceanera with the help of several friends during a Hispanic Heritage Month luncheon at the Joint Force Headquarters building in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 24.

celebrations in Mexican culture, the Quinceanera is a celebration of a



**Happy Day:** Traditional Quinceanera gifts are displayed during a Hispanic Heritage Month luncheon at Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 24. One of the most important celebrations in Mexican culture, the Quinceanera is a celebration of a young girl's coming of age on her 15th birthday.

young girl's coming of age on her 15th birthday. This marks the passage to womanhood and gives thanks to God for his blessings, as well as presenting the young woman to the community. The celebration also honors the girl's parents, family and Godparents, who play a major role in the celebration.

## Holiday season often leads to increased stress

By Krystyn Schmidt  
Psychological Health Coordinator

**T**his is the season for gifts, laughing, love and family...for some. For others the holidays bring stress, anger, sadness, loneliness and grief.

Here are some practical tips to help manage emotions intensified by the holiday season.

•**Be aware and accepting of your feelings.** Whether a loved one has passed away, they are deployed or it is impractical to get together, it is normal, acceptable and okay to feel sadness, grief and/or disappointment. Allow yourself to be aware and understanding of your feelings and express them in a healthy manner.

•**Be around people or reach out.** Look for opportunities to be with family, friends or coworkers. If you are feeling isolated or lonely, look into your community for activities, social events or consider volunteering your time to help others.

•**Identify a budget ahead of time.** Money can bring about great holiday stress along with guilt and regret. Write out who you want to purchase gifts for and how much you are willing to spend. Don't try to buy happiness or go overboard just because it's the holidays. It may help to write the individuals' name on an envelope and put the amount of cash you are willing to spend away. Set a limit and only spend that money, when it's gone, it's gone.

•**Take a breather.** It is too easy to get caught up in the everyday rush and find yourself operating from a heightened, anxious standpoint. Be aware that this is normal. Set aside time before the holidays hit to take a 10-15 minute "break." It may help to have this be around the same time daily, to create consistency. During this time breathe, count to 10, be aware of your stress level and allow yourself to decompress. The more you practice this when you are not stressed to the max, the more likely and easy it will be to calm yourself down when things start to speed up.

•**Be realistic.** Some have great expectations on how the holidays will be spent. When it does not turn out the way they anticipated, let-down can set in. Things do not have to be perfect. Families grow and change. Pick out traditions or make new ones that will fit your

### Signs one should reach out for help:

- Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- Fatigue, loss of energy
- Trouble controlling anger, physical or verbal aggression
- Sadness, depression
- Loss of interest in activities you once found pleasurable
- Changes in sleep
- Feeling inappropriate guilt, shame, hopelessness, helplessness or worthlessness

If you are experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts seek help immediately calling:

The Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Director of Psychological Health: (ARNG) (402) 309-7434 (ANG) (402) 309-1698

In an emergency: Go to your nearest hospital or emergency room or call 911.

family dynamic. If you have a family member deployed or they are not able to get together during the holidays; record messages, send cards or gifts early with a "do not open until" message. Share pictures, emails, videos, and set aside a gift or two for the loved one to open when you are together.

•**Get plenty of rest and exercise.** Find ways to have fun, take a walk, go sledding or ice skating, go for a drive, eat healthy. Keep the use of alcohol to a manageable and controlled level.

•**Know that the holiday season and the "holiday blues" are short term events.** The anticipation of holidays and coping through them tend to last about two weeks. If you find yourself continuing to struggle, it may be beneficial to talk to someone about how you're feeling. Take steps to prevent holiday stress and sadness by becoming proactive. Begin to identify triggers and develop coping strategies or plans to help you through those difficult times.

With some planning and preparation, the holidays do not have to be overwhelming and you can find happiness and peace.

## Important information affecting mailing retirement applications

For those of you who haven't reached 60, please read. The United States Army Human Resources Command (HRC) discontinued mailing retirement applications to Gray-Area Soldiers for their non-regular retirements at age 60.

United States Army Reserve Command, the National Guard Bureau and the Army Retirement Services Office will assist with coordination of this initiative and informing the affected population. Army Guard retirees may contact Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Luhn for assistance. His information is listed later.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact us at (402) 309-7303 or (402) 309-7305. We'll get you pointed in the right direction to ensure you start receiving your retirement benefits on time. We strive to ensure all our members receive quality information and service. We look for suggestions and comments to make our product better.

Check the expiration date on your ID card. Have you updated your ID card? Your retired ID card is your identification for Tricare, Tricare for Life, and to validate your Medicare eligibility.

For updates and relevant information concerning retirement

### Nebraska National Guard Retiree News & Notes

By retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 William Nelson

issues, go to [www.neguard.org](http://www.neguard.org) and click on the retiree site. We have posted a link to the latest "Army Echoes", which has a lot of good information for retirees of all services.

Your Nebraska Military Retiree Council is holding annual elections and ballots will be sent to all members. Offices being voted upon are president, secretary, two at-large Air Force positions, and one Army at-large position. Incumbents will be listed on the ballots. Any NMRC member is eligible to write in themselves for a position as well.

Have you moved, changed a phone number or added an email address? Please contact us to update your information so we can keep our information current. Thanks!

Thank you for your dedicated military service. The U.S. Army has recently adopted a motto, "Once a Soldier, always a Soldier". This applies to everyone - "Once a service

member, always a service member." Be proud of your time in uniform.

If you like to rise early to meet fellow retirees and share stories, here's the breakfast site information for those in the immediate areas:

Lincoln:  
Army National Guard retirees: **FIRST** Monday of each month, 7 a.m., Virginia's Travelers Café, 3820 Cornhusker Highway, Lincoln.

Air National Guard retirees: **LAST** Monday of each month, 7 a.m., Stauffer's Café, 5600 S. 48th St, Lincoln

North Platte area retirees: **SECOND** Saturday of each month, 8 a.m., Airport Inn, North Platte

If any other towns have retiree breakfasts and want to share that information, please let us know and we'll add you to the list so others can join you.

Finally, welcome Sgt. 1st Class

### DEERS/ID Card Stations

- G1 - 2433 N.W. 24th Street, Lincoln, NE 68524: (402) 309-8167/8168/8169;
- "Spirit of 1776" Armory 1776 N. 10th St. Lincoln, NE 68508 (402) 309-7359/7373;
- Penterman Armory at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln (402) 309-1724/1719;
- Air Guard (Lincoln Air Base) Bldg 600 Room E209: (402) 309-1542;
- Norfolk Armory 817 S. 1st St. Norfolk, NE 68701 (402) 309-8900/8908;

- Kearney Armory 5710 Airport Road Kearney: (402) 309-7758/7752;
- 209th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), 220 County Road A, Bldg. 508, Ashland, NE 68003, (402) 309-7809/7628;
- Offutt Air Force Base: (402) 294-2374;
- The number for DEERS is 1-800-538-9552.

Remember, you need two forms of ID when you arrive for your appointment.

Ed Luhn and Sgt. Craig Hoppes to the Army Guard Retirement Services office in the Joint Force Headquarters building. They will continue their dedicated support to our retirees.

**From the desk of Sgt. 1st Class Ed Luhn:** Hello everyone. As the Army Guard Retirement noncommissioned officer, I am looking forward to assisting you with your retirement processing and questions. My phone number is (402) 309-8162 and email address is [Vincent.e.luhn.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Vincent.e.luhn.mil@mail.mil).

My assistant is Sgt. Craig Hoppes, (402) 309-8159 or [craig.d.hoppes.mil@mail.mil](mailto:craig.d.hoppes.mil@mail.mil). We are located in the Joint Force Headquarters Building at the Nebraska National Guard air base, 2433 NW 24th St, Lincoln, NE 68524. Call us at any time.

Your Tri-Care manager is Staff Sgt. Travis Garrett and he may be reached at (402) 309-1541 or [travis.s.garrett.mil@mail.mil](mailto:travis.s.garrett.mil@mail.mil). Contact him for all your Tri-Care related questions. The United Health Care for Military and Veterans phone number is 1-877-988-9378.



## Guard Family NEWS You Can Use



Photos by Sgt. Heidi McClintock

**Trick and Treat:** A young child enjoys meeting Elroy Elk at the Nebraska National Guard's haunted armory at Penterman Armory on the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 24. Multiple haunted armory events were held throughout Nebraska to allow Guardsmen and their families enjoy the Halloween holiday.

# Haunted Armories

Guardsmen, families enjoy tricks, treats, games at multiple Halloween events throughout Nebraska

By Kristyn Frei  
Lead Child & Youth  
Program Coordinator

Costumes, candy, spooks oh my! This year saw four Haunted Armories hosted by the Nebraska National Guard Child and Youth Program. Throughout October, more than 450 military members and their families attended these events in Grand Island, Kearney, Omaha and Lincoln.

Each Haunted Armory included community organizations that set-up booths and handed out not only trick-or-treat items but resources for families. Costume contests were also held at each location ranging from ages zero to 18.

Several community organizations participated in the haunted armories including Lincoln Elks Lodge No. 80, which has supported military youth and their families for more than a decade. Their generous donations over the years have been used to help with several military family events and needs.

The Haunted Armories provide families with an enjoyable and unique opportunity to gain infor-



**Ghosts, Ghouls and Princesses:** Nebraska National Guardsmen and their families enjoy costume judging at a haunted armory party at Penterman Armory on the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Oct. 24.

mation as well as spend time with other military families. Several volunteers helped to make these events successful with helping set-up, face painting, helping at the refreshment table, cleaning up,

decorating and so much more. The overall success of these events was tremendous and the Child and Youth Program is already looking forward to next year's Haunted Armory events.

## Obama designates November as Military Family Month

WASHINGTON (DoD News) – Noting that the selflessness of military families “tells a story of unflinching duty and devotion,” President Barack Obama signed a proclamation declaring November as Military Family Month, Oct. 31.

Here is the full text of the presidential proclamation:

“For more than two centuries, members of our Armed Forces have defended our country with unyielding courage. In our Nation’s times of need, these brave patriots step forward to answer America’s call, leaving behind everything they know and love. And as they help secure our freedom and democracy, their families sacrifice alongside them. During Military Family Month, we recognize every spouse, parent, sibling, child, and loved one who stands with our service members, and we reaffirm our solemn vow to serve these families as well as they serve us.”

“The selflessness of our military families tells a story of unflinching duty and devotion. Through long deployments, difficult separations, and moves across the country and overseas, spouses and partners put their careers on hold and children take on extra responsibilities. With grace and resilience, families endure the absence of loved ones and shoulder the burdens of war. And when battle ends and our service members return

*“I call on all Americans to honor military families through private actions and public service for the tremendous contributions they make in support of our service members and our nation.”*

— Barack Obama  
President

home, their families support their transition and recovery.”

“To fulfill our sacred promise to our service members and their loved ones, my Administration continues to make supporting our military families a top priority. This year, we launched the Veterans Employment Center, an interagency resource to connect transitioning service members, veterans, and their spouses to meaningful career opportunities. We are also committed to fostering partnerships with organizations that help military caregivers and making consistent and effective family services available, including mental health care and counseling, deployment and relocation assistance, and child care and youth programs.”

“Through their Joining Forces initiative, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden are

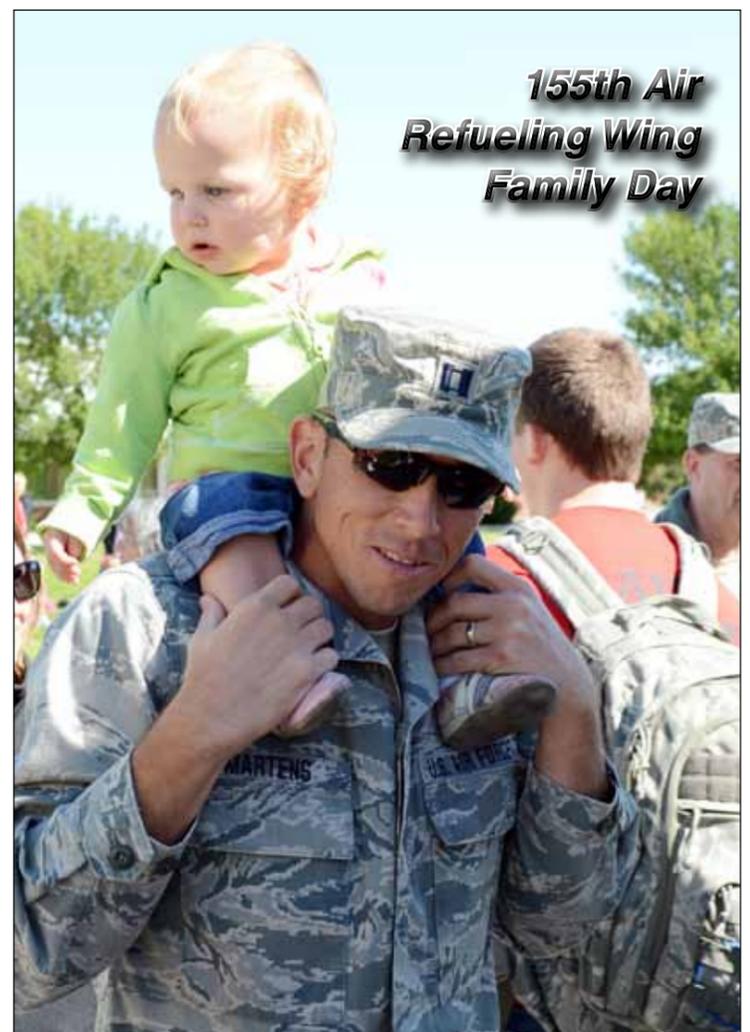
working to ensure members of our Armed Forces, veterans, and their families have all the opportunities and benefits they deserve. And since 2011, their efforts have encouraged businesses to hire more than 500,000 veterans and military spouses.”

“Every day, our military families at home and abroad inspire us and remind us of our obligation to take care of those who do so much for our country. As a grateful Nation, we pay tribute to the women and men who have made our military the finest fighting force the world has ever known, and we honor the enduring strength and dedication of their families.”

“NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2014 as Military Family Month. I call on all Americans to honor military families through private actions and public service for the tremendous contributions they make in support of our service members and our Nation.”

“IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand fourteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-ninth.”

—BARACK OBAMA



**155th Air  
Refueling Wing  
Family Day**

Photo by 1st Lt. Alex Salmon

**Free Ride:** Capt. Eddie Martens, a maintenance officer with the 155th Air Refueling Wing, holds his daughter, Abigail, during the 155th ARW's family day at the Nebraska National Guard air base in Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 13. Nebraska Airmen and their families enjoyed many activities including a bounce house, inflatable slide, sports games and refreshments.

## PROMOTIONS

### Army National Guard

**Major**  
Jeremiah A. Afuh II  
Jason D. Barber

**Captain**  
Oliver C. Berglund  
Erin C. Hanson  
Tyler E. Horning  
Jennifer M. Myers

**Master Sergeant**  
Travis M. Zwickle

**Sergeant First Class**  
William J. Becker  
Jennifer L. Feldt  
Richard S. Graves  
Trent S. Hellbusch  
Patrick S. Sitter

**Staff Sergeant**  
Gabriel C. Conrad  
Adam J. Fischer  
Joshua J. Kushen  
Wardell Newsome III  
Ryan S. Olsen  
Daniel J. Townsend II

**Sergeant**  
Yocelin J. Avina  
Michael G. Jones  
Janie M. Konyek  
Nicholas B. Loseke  
Jacob M. Ohl  
Matthew T. Petersen  
Jason T. Pope  
Mitchell L. Prai  
Levi J. Prusia  
Claire I. S. Sandman  
Andrew J. White  
Stephanie M. Williams

**Specialist**  
Jose L. Audelorios  
Alexander S. Barto  
Lindsey R. Bright  
Shawna R. Brymnesser  
Stephen M. Cornell  
Sigalfredo Diazgonzalez  
Keehan J. Dobish  
Andrew J. Fielder  
John M. Gargan  
Jordan L. Haeffner  
Joshua A. Hamilton

Sabrina M. Herchenbach  
Erik A. Hernandez  
Kyle E. Janc  
Nathan R. Jenkins  
Nathaniel J. Kahn  
Anthony T. Kennelly  
Conner R. McHugh  
David J. Nies Jr.  
Jacob V. Rexus  
Melissa A. Schmit  
Nicholas A. Schreiner  
Trevor T. Smith  
Alexander J. Svitak  
Steven E. Svitak  
David L. Taylor III  
Robert C. Wells  
Stephan T. Wendeln

**Private First Class**  
Walter R. Anderson Jr.  
Matthew A. Arthur  
Cody T. Ballew  
Christopher A. Bartlett  
Cole R. Batenhorst  
Alexander S. P. Gould  
Derek D. Hedlund  
Shaun E. Holley  
Edna E. Johnson  
Jenipher R. Kargle  
Andrew A. Kessler  
Adam Z. Knight  
Nyayan J. Koung  
Andrew J. Nunes  
Rochelle K. Sukup  
Charles H. Sweeny III  
Antwon D. M. Swolley  
Tyna R. Taylor  
Jeffery I. Thompson  
Parker V. Wren

**Private Two**  
Lily S. Baines  
Colin A. Buckley  
Chad D. Comeau  
Jake B. Eden  
Luke D. Engel  
Michael J. Helmers  
Nicholas S. Hooley  
Jauregui J. Iniguez  
Dylan R. Johnson  
Blake E. Mark  
Danielle M. Martin  
Gregory S. Miller  
Dyland J. Samway  
Brandon L. Schu  
Hailey R. Sletten

## AWARDS

### Army National Guard

**Meritorious Service Medal**  
Sgt. Dustin R. Morris  
Sgt. 1st Class Eric S. Gettert  
Sgt. 1st Class Landen C. Koopman  
Master Sgt. Dean A. Reicks  
Warrant Officer Stephen P. Oppliger II  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Douglas J. Luethke  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Todd C. Sumovich  
Capt. Christopher J. Hansen  
Capt. Zachary V. Labrayere  
Maj. Daniel J. Benes

**Army Commendation Medal**  
Pfc. Michael L. Gilpin Jr.  
Spc. Christopher J. Carrier  
Spc. Jacob R. Reichert  
Sgt. Eric L. Wilford  
Sgt. Cameron J. Araujo  
Sgt. 1st Class Allan D. Kerl  
Sgt. 1st Class Kelli J. Hatzenbuehler  
Sgt. 1st Class Christofer J. Alt  
Sgt. 1st Class Andrew J. Hytrek  
Sgt. 1st Class Gregory A. Brown  
Sgt. 1st Class Anthony J. Jensen  
Sgt. 1st Class James R. Bussen  
Staff Sgt. Julie M. Adams  
Staff Sgt. Jessie A. London  
Staff Sgt. Clinton R. Paul  
Staff Sgt. Andrew K. Singsaas  
Staff Sgt. Bo R. Feltz  
Staff Sgt. Christopher R. Jansen  
Staff Sgt. Daniel J. Townsend II  
Staff Sgt. Kelly S. Alexander  
Staff Sgt. Ryan A. Zulkoski  
Master Sgt. Troy A. Redl  
Warrant Officer Jacob A. Kohlman  
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jennifer J. Kramer  
Capt. Brent T. Wiese  
Maj. Clayton W. Engelman  
Maj. Martin E. Neal  
Maj. Edwin W. Davis  
Maj. William P. Mcgreer  
Maj. Fletcher J. Shires

**Combat Action Badge**  
Pfc. Michael L. Gilpin Jr.

**Army Achievement Medal**  
Pfc. Alexander Gould

Pfc. Jacob P. Viox  
Spc. Anthony W. Rischling  
Spc. Christopher J. Carrier  
Spc. Devon R. Eilers  
Spc. Jared D. Archer  
Spc. Daniel Salinas  
Spc. Randall R. Hevelone  
Spc. Adam M. Weisenberger  
Spc. Alexander S. Barto  
Spc. Nathan R. Graber  
Spc. Dewey J. Page  
Spc. Tell A. Jones  
Spc. Christopher W. Suttles  
Spc. Stephen M. Cornell  
Spc. Tyler R. Hightree  
Spc. Jordan T. Hopwood  
Spc. Rebecca E. Spurgeon  
Spc. Brennan C. Frerichs  
Spc. Nathan D. Fielder  
Spc. Christopher L. Preister  
Spc. Christopher D. Anderson  
Sgt. Jay L. Quinn  
Sgt. Candice M. Lyon  
Sgt. Nevine Zaki  
Sgt. Joshua D. Cowsky  
Sgt. Manuel S. Molina  
Sgt. Colton J. Stepp  
Sgt. Dakota A. Kingham  
Sgt. Kimberly J. Mahlberg  
Sgt. Randy M. Robertson  
Sgt. Matthew R. Buhlmann  
Sgt. Alex D. Peyton  
Sgt. Daniel G. Anderson  
Sgt. Kyle D. Mrothom  
Sgt. Tyler D. Johnson  
Sgt. Caleb M. Brown  
Sgt. Westley P. Negley  
Sgt. Timothy A. Smallcomb  
Sgt. Corey C. Handley  
Sgt. Tyler D. Petty  
Sgt. Joseph R. Pollock  
Sgt. James R. Stapleton  
Sgt. Tonjahi A. Thomas  
Sgt. James A. Carlson  
Sgt. Michael L. Olberding  
Sgt. Jacob R. Berry  
Sgt. James S. Morphew  
Staff Sgt. Jon A. Buller  
Staff Sgt. Matthew S. Wonder  
Staff Sgt. Scott D. Seals  
Staff Sgt. Joshua J. Kushen  
Staff Sgt. Jeremy S. Borrell  
Staff Sgt. Jeremy J. Kozak

Staff Sgt. John M. Ferguson  
Staff Sgt. Travis S. Garrett  
Staff Sgt. Derek S. Fryer  
Sgt. 1st Class Wayne P. Johnson  
Sgt. 1st Class Joshua R. Loos  
Sgt. 1st Class Edward W. Pickinpaugh  
Sgt. 1st Class David M. Wooten  
Warrant Officer John Paulson  
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicholas S. Richardson  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael E. Beraldi  
2nd Lt. Mellisa R. Werner  
1st Lt. Jessica L. Wolff  
Capt. Daniel C. Sandoz  
Capt. Russell L. Bartholow

**Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal**  
Capt. Jeffrey C. Boyden

**Nebraska National Guard Commendation Medal**  
Spc. William S. Cornish  
Sgt. Manuel S. Molina  
Master Sgt. Jeremy J. Preister

**Nebraska National Guard Individual Achievement Medal**  
Pfc. Nolan L. Haywood  
Pfc. Tyler J. Rasmussen  
Pfc. Caleb A. Dewey  
Spc. Matthew H. Erb  
Spc. Jenna R. Medley  
Spc. Jerrick D. Bowers  
Spc. Caleb M. Geiger  
Spc. Scott J. Witthuhn  
Spc. Joshua R. Wright  
Spc. Kaleb P. Bateman  
Spc. Matthew Z. Hall  
Spc. Anastasia B. Whisenhunt  
Spc. Amanda L. Odvody  
Spc. Monica R. Pettz  
Spc. Thomas B. Roth  
Spc. Neil J. Boston  
Spc. Ryan J. Linder  
Spc. Ryan S. Rodehorst  
Sgt. 1st Class Christofer J. Alt  
Sgt. 1st Class Jason E. Roberts  
Sgt. 1st Class Jeremiah R. Bretthauer  
Sgt. 1st Class Gerald D. Bouska  
Sgt. Scott L. Stevens  
Sgt. Mary V. Crandell

Sgt. Daniel D. Hogsett  
Sgt. Dalton S. Boden  
Sgt. Joshua J. Hatheway  
Sgt. Cameron J. Araujo  
Sgt. Terry L. Haun Jr.  
Sgt. Nathaniel J. Coldiron  
Sgt. Justin Metcalf  
Sgt. Ellen M. Ross  
Sgt. Eric M. Becker  
Sgt. Daniel A. Holguinsanchez  
Sgt. Nathaniel J. Emons  
Sgt. Patricia H. Lee  
Sgt. Christopher L. Miller  
Staff Sgt. Teresa M. Lenz  
Staff Sgt. Todd M. Bretey  
Staff Sgt. Daniel R. Malizzi  
Staff Sgt. Justin D. McCoy  
Staff Sgt. Denier Y. Rivera  
Staff Sgt. Sonja S. Zerr  
Staff Sgt. Timothy A. Cusatis Jr.  
Staff Sgt. Robert E. Sherard Jr.  
2nd Lt. Andrew C. Cameron

## RETIREMENTS

### Army National Guard

Sgt. Maj. Dennis D. Carroll  
Sgt. 1st Class Roger D. Ramos  
Sgt. 1st Class Timothy S. James  
Sgt. Harvey J. Martinez  
Sgt. Andrew J. Wacker

## TAPS

### Army National Guard

Sgt. Joshua Annen

**Editor's Note:** Look for the next issue of the *Prairie Soldier for Air Force promotions, awards and retirements.*

# Shorttakes

## Nebraska Guard's 43rd Army Band members make beautiful music together in band, at home

By Sgt. Heidi McClintock  
Staff Photojournalist

Warrant Officer 3 Brian Anderson has a love for his family, music and the National Guard. As commander of the Nebraska National Guard's 43rd Army Band, he is able to bring all three of those together into one.

Not only does Anderson have his National Guard family, but both of his children are in the band as well. Anderson is able to combine his passion for music with his children and his Guard family.

Anderson, a 27-year veteran, has spent his entire career in the 43rd Army Band and has served as commander since 2007.

His children are Sgt. Christopher Anderson, a trumpet player, and Spc. Nicole Anderson, a French horn player.

The family's interest in music started when they all played instruments in elementary school and sang in school groups and at church.

"Music has been and continues to be a major part of our lives," said Anderson. "My kids took to music because they were around it all the time and we each enjoy it individually and as a family."

"Nicole and Chris have been around the 43rd Army Band since they were in kindergarten and first grade," said Anderson. "They grew up seeing the family atmosphere we have in the band and how much we all care for each other."

According to Anderson, his kids have been able to witness firsthand the music the band performs and the how appreciative audiences have been throughout his military career.

"I hope having their dad in the unit just made it that much easier for them to take that first step into joining the Nebraska National Guard," said Anderson. "They had no misconceptions about what it would take to be a Soldier/Musician."

In addition to their love of performing in the Army band, the Andersons share their love of music in civilian life.

Anderson is the chair of Performing Arts and the Director of Instrumental Music at



Courtesy Photo

**Cue the Band:** Spc. Nicole Anderson, French horn, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brian Anderson, commander, and Sgt. Christopher Anderson, trumpet, all members of the Nebraska National Guard's 43rd Army Band, pose for an undated photo. The family's interest in music started as young children and blossomed into playing in the Army band bringing music to the masses.

Fremont High School. Both Christopher and Nicole played at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the Cornhusker Marching Band, Symphonic Band and Big Red Express. In addition, Christopher also sang in the varsity Men's Chorus.

"Both Nicole and Chris were all state musicians on their particular instruments in high school and I was a member of all state chorus as well," said Anderson. "Watching them perform in all these groups is one of my happiest memories."

For Anderson, commanding his kids and directing them in the band is nothing new.

"I was their high school band director, so it is not the first time I have had them 'under my command,' so to speak," said Anderson. "It not only feels great to have them in the unit... it feels right."

"I could not be happier that we are in the same unit," added Anderson. "I (would) still enjoy being in the Guard if they were not here

, but having them in the unit with me makes it that much more enjoyable."

According to Anderson, being in the same unit brings them closer together no matter how busy they are with their civilian and military lives.

"No matter how busy we are, I get to see them at drill," said Anderson.

"The best part is having two of the people I love the most in the world serving in important roles and enjoying a unit that has been one of the greatest things in my life," he added. "It has been a pleasure to watch them grow up into mature adults and productive Soldiers."

Music is something that brings the family together regardless if it's on or off duty.

"I am proud to say that we have a number of parents and their kids in the 43rd Army Band and we also have children of former Soldiers from the unit as well," said Anderson. "When people say that the Nebraska National Guard is family, it really is."



Stryker

Oglesby

## Nebraska Military Department honors top employees

Two Nebraska Military Department staff members were honored by Gov. Dave Heineman, Oct. 28, at the State Capitol in Lincoln, Nebraska, when they were presented the employee and supervisor of the year awards.

Honored were Claire Oglesby who was named the department's Employee of the Year for 2014 and Clayton Stryker who was presented with the organization's Supervisor of the Year award for 2014.

Oglesby serves as an administrative assistant III for the Nebraska Army National Guard's Construction and Facilities Management Office. According to her citation, "(her) expert knowledge of the Installation Status Report management system...has improved ISR tracking and management processes... (which) are vital in determining future support and funding of the Nebraska Army National Guard by the National Guard Bureau."

Stryker is the military master planner for the Nebraska Army National Guard's CFMO. "Clay's excellent ability to train, encourage and develop staff has led to the increased efficiency of the CFMO team. Clay's responsibilities as a master planner include research and coordination of activities for various military and public organizations; managing and assisting with collection, research, input, and update of data pertaining to state and federal requirements; and validation and analysis of real property quantities."

# Street Talk

“What has been your most memorable experience this year?”



**Sgt. Benjamin Reehl**  
623rd Vertical Engineer Company  
*“It was during annual training at Mead Training Site when we were building latrine and shower stations.”*



**Spc. Donte Lee**  
754th Chemical Company  
*“One of the events I liked the most was going to Hastings when we go to the range and get proficient with our individual weapons.”*



**Sgt. Janie Konyek**  
402nd Military Police Battalion  
*“It would be getting level one combative certified at Fort Carson, Colorado.”*

## Maintaining physical activity, fitness important even during pregnancy

**L**ife can change a lot faster than you expect it too. You just have to be ready for anything and everything these days, whether that’s in your military life or in your home life. And that is why I always try to plan or think ahead toward the future – because you just never know.

But you need to remember you can’t always plan for everything. You might have to improvise, adapt and overcome.

Just last October I was marrying my husband, Mason, and settling into the married life. Now this October, we are expecting our first child. Talk about a wonderful surprise.

We may not have been expecting a baby this early in our marriage, but boy were Mason and I excited to find out we were expecting a baby boy.

According to Mason, it was a good thing the Army taught me to think ahead of the game and be physically and mentally prepared, no matter the situation.

I knew having a baby could potentially slow my life down by becoming less physically active than I would like with nine months of pregnancy and six months of postpartum. I didn’t want that to happen. I wanted to be able to complete all my annual training days and drills while I was pregnant, as well as staying physically active during my whole pregnancy.

And I have to thank the Army for shaping me into the type of person that I am today; especially the one that always plans or thinks one or two steps ahead. I believe being physically active especially before and during my pregnancy, eating and maintaining a healthy diet, and being mentally prepared has helped me have such an easy

### Another Voice

Sergeant

**Heidi McClintock**



hardest, but it can still be done. Everywhere Mason and I went, we walked. Whether it was walking from store to store baby shopping, parking farther away from the grocery store door, or just walking our dog at night. In addition to walking I continued

and enjoyable pregnancy.

Okay, so you are probably thinking I’m crazy when I say, “an easy and enjoyable pregnancy.”

Well I don’t blame you because I know a lot of women, even some of my own friends, who have had a difficult pregnancy, but I know I have been blessed with my first pregnancy.

Being physically active is something I have always been a big supporter of, even before joining the Army.

Physical activity can be easily fit into your daily routine. It doesn’t always have to be an hour in the gym every other day. It can be as simple as riding your bike to and from work or as a family activity, taking your dog out for a run a few nights a week, swimming, playing basketball or softball with some friends, gardening, nature hikes, going on a jog and even walking.

During my first trimester, I maintained the same workout routine I was doing prior to finding out I was pregnant, which included running two to four miles three times a week as well as 30 minutes, three times a week of weight training in the gym.

During my second trimester it was summer time; I continued to run a few times a week but only ran one to two miles at a time. With the summer season came summer activities. My physical activities beside running included yard work, walking my dog and mini golfing.

Staying physically active during the third trimester is probably the

to do yard work and a lot more house work to get ready for the little addition to our family.

I was lucky to have no morning sickness, headaches, pain or anything during my pregnancy and I really believe it’s from being physically active before and during my pregnancy.

Being in shape and physically active helps out in so many different ways whether you are pregnant or not. Physical activity can help you have a healthy heart, have overall better health, a better sense of well-being, feel better about yourself and so much more. You need to remember that people who don’t get enough physical activities are also more likely to develop health problems as to people who engage in physical activity.

I personally feel that being physically active also helps me sleep better, helps me handle stress, helps me feel better about how I look and gives me more energy. Some may think differently but this is just my personal opinion.

I encourage everyone to stay physically active all year. Not just a few weeks before an Army Physical Fitness Test or 5k race. Because you just never know what opportunities can present themselves at any time of the year or what might happen throughout the year.

Stay tuned for the next Prairie Soldier issue as I write about physical fitness after pregnancy and gearing up for my six month postpartum pregnancy Army Physical Fitness Test.

## Remember to ‘hunt the good stuff’

**B**eing a “news hound,” it’s been hard the past few months to not feel somewhat morose in the face of what seems like an increasingly depressing world-wide situation.

Just taking a look at the headlines of a local newspaper, one finds stories about the “Islamic State’s” building threat in Iraq and Syria, the effects that the Ebola outbreak has had on the national psyche, political confrontations in Washington... Taken all at once, they can create some pretty depressing thoughts. That in turn, can make finding the good in our world even more difficult.

Or does it? As I thought about this column and the fact that we are entering the holiday season, I kept thinking back to now retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 John Regan’s column about finding the good in life and how he tries to spend some each day giving thanks for all his life’s blessings.

I went in thinking that this is going to be hard because of all the negative things that seem to be going on around us. But what I found was that finding good was actually easier because, when I actually thought about it, there are multitudes of more positive things going on around me than I ever thought.

With that in mind, here is a small list of the things I am thankful for.

I am thankful each and every day to be part of an organization like the Nebraska National Guard that is fully committed to doing good in the world, both locally and internationally, often for people we don’t know who are suffering unimaginably

### My Turn

State Public Affairs Officer

**Kevin J. Hynes**



surrounded by our now somewhat huge extended family.

I’m grateful for my children who, despite their occasional grumpiness or problems, keep me young at heart... for the most part.

I’m extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to watch my eldest two sons compete at this year’s state cross country meet, where they hopefully learned that dedication, hard work and willingness to literally “go the extra mile” really do pay.

And then I’m eternally thankful to have a wife willing to put up with the challenges of living with me for these past nearly 20 years, especially considering the often frenetic, always-on-the-go life we lead.

So there. There is my list... or at least a very small portion of the list I created while thinking about all of the good in my life. In fact, it’s almost as eye-opening to look at the things that I didn’t include because of space constraints.

Which brings me back to the point of this exercise: sometimes, especially in this always-wired, always-connected world, we can become so focused upon the now that we lose perception of the bigger world around us... the world of the good and meaningful.

Hopefully this holiday season can serve as a time for us to pause and consider the truly good parts of our lives... the parts that deserved to be thought of and appreciated.

From my family to yours, have a happy, safe and blessed holiday season... a season that enables you, too, to find and concentrate upon the good in your lives.

tragedy, such as we saw during the recent tornadoes in Beaver Crossing and Pilger, Neb.

More importantly, I am thankful and proud to wear the same uniform as members of the Nebraska National Guard who, daily, give of themselves to help people less fortunate than themselves. People like Sgt. 1st Class Lillie Chambers and her family who help countless people through her “Mom’s Food Pantry” and “Santa’s Overflow” projects.

I am forever grateful for having had the opportunity to work with the people I have over the years, such as the late Lt. Col. Leonard Krenk and now retired Lt. Col. Bob Vrana. What these two individuals taught me can’t be adequately described, however they do begin with words like humility, caring and the power that a sense of humor provides in the face of adversity.

I’m grateful for the people who work with me on daily basis. Their sense of dedication have made it easier to meet my challenges and, for the most part, overcome them.

I’m also extremely grateful for my parents, who sacrificed and scrimped to ensure that their five children had opportunities that they themselves never got. Recently, I had the honor to be with them as they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary,

## Honoring our Veterans

By Dave Heinemann  
Nebraska Governor

**D**ear Fellow Nebraskans: Nebraskans are very proud of our veterans. Each year as we celebrate Veterans Day, it gives us the opportunity to show our respect for those who serve our nation. It is a day to remember and to recognize the brave men and women of our armed forces. As we observe Veterans Day, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our veterans for their service.

Veterans Day brings an opportunity to honor and remember those who have served our state and our country in uniform. It is a day to recognize the sacrifices of those who are serving, as well as those who have served in uniform. It is important to thank our veterans for their service.

On behalf of all Nebraskans, I salute the many heroes who have served our country for more than two centuries.

We have not forgotten the tremendous legacy created by our men and women in uniform, which has been passed to those serving today. Their sacrifices have preserved our freedoms.

I’ve seen first-hand the extraordinary respect and pride the people of Nebraska have for our veterans. This is why I was proud to sign into law legislation

which made the veteran designation possible. This law provides for qualified veterans to register with the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs to become eligible for the designation to be placed on their license.

The veteran designation can be added to a driver license or state identification card at the time of renewal with no additional fee. The statutorily mandated fee for a replacement license will be required for persons desiring to add the designation at other times.

Veterans who want to register with the Nebraska Veterans Affairs Office, can visit [www.veterans.nebraska.gov](http://www.veterans.nebraska.gov), or by calling or emailing the Nebraska Veterans Affairs Office. Once they are on the registry, they can apply to the Department of Motor Vehicles to have the designation placed on their driver license or state identification card.

To add the designation to a driver’s license through the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles, please visit [www.Click-DMV.ne.gov](http://www.Click-DMV.ne.gov). The designation can also be added at any of the driver license stations across the state.

I know I speak for every Nebraskan when I say how very proud we are of our military personnel and our veterans. As we observe Veterans Day, let us remember to say thank you to the veterans in our families, our communities and our state.



Heinemann

# 'Tis the Season

## Ashland-based Guardsmen coordinate coat drive to warm local community

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

The winter months should be a little warmer for residents of the Ashland, Nebraska, area thanks to a giving community and the charitable efforts of a few Nebraska National Guardsmen.

Eight Soldiers from the Camp Ashland-based Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Training Center Command recently teamed with the Ashland Chamber of Commerce for a coat drive to benefit members of the Ashland Community.

Maj. Leslie Durr, commander of HHC, Training Center Command, spearheaded the effort as a way to give back to the Ashland community.

In working with the Ashland chamber, three businesses were chosen as drop-off sites for coats. Each site was provided a box with a flyer for coats to be donated. The coats were periodically gathered and taken to a local church where they were provided to "The Closet," a place Ashland residents can go to get quality, low-cost, new or slightly used clothing. Once volunteers at The Closet feel they've adequately met the need of Ashland residents, leftover items are donated to larger communities for distribution.

Durr said she and the other Training Center Command volunteers wanted to do something simple, yet beneficial for the community that supports them.

"We asked, 'what can we do that's maybe not such a big event that it's overwhelming, but something that benefits the community...but we



Courtesy Photos

**Not Just a Warm Heart:** Master Sgt. Dennis Krecklow, Training Center Command, stands by donated coats at the Ashland Training Center Command drill floor in Ashland, Neb. Krecklow and others from Training Center Command worked with the Ashland community to organize a coat drive, which acquired 77 coats for distribution within the Ashland community.

think is a good event?" said Durr.

All told, the coat drive brought in 77 coats just in time for the cold Nebraska weather to arrive.

Durr said she hoped to show that even a small event like this coat drive can help the community and may even spawn larger efforts. She added it's not about being recognized, it's about doing the right thing.

"Charity starts with the individual," said Durr. "I truly believe



**Helping Hands:** (from Left) Maj. Leslie Durr, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Training Center Command, Karen Stille, Midwest Physical Therapy, Janette Robinson, a volunteer at "The Closet," and Chris Gress, Innovative labs, pose for a photo at "The Closet" with many of the coats they collected during a coat drive for the Ashland, Neb., community. Durr and members of HHC, Training Center Command, worked with Ashland businesses to collect donated coats to be redistributed to the Ashland community from "The Closet," a redistribution point in the basement of the American Lutheran Church in Ashland.

that people should help people when they can. I believe it's important to set that example to reinforce that sometimes it's not what others see you do, it's what you know you did."

"I'm very satisfied just knowing something good got done and going home at night and knowing that hopefully, in a really small way, we made the world better" she added. "I hope by doing things like this it sets an example, even at the smallest level, even if two people get something out of it, maybe in

a few years they'll continue to do that—that's how we promote charity and that's how it expands."

And although the first year of the coat drive has concluded, the charitable spirit of Nebraska Guardsmen will continue. Durr said they are always looking for ways to improve the process and hope their idea will spawn other ideas in communities throughout Nebraska.

"It just takes one person to start it...and people will join in and help," said Durr. "Don't be timid about

jumping into this project thinking you'll have to do it by yourself; because people want to do these types of events...you just have to present that opportunity to them."

Other volunteers from HHC, Training Center Command included Master Sgt. Dennis Krecklow, 1st Lt. Tyler Horning, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Don Renner, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Greg Reicks, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mark Roland, Sgt. Brandon Pedersen and Sgt. 1st Class John Ruden.

# Annual chili cookoff



**Serious Business:** Brig. Gen. Rick Dahlman, Nebraska assistant adjutant general-Army, contemplates the flavor of a spoon-full of chili during the 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade's Chili Cook-Off Super National Invitational, Oct. 3, at the Spirit of 1776 Armory in Lincoln, Neb. Sixteen different types of chili were judged in one of two categories – traditional and original.

By Sgt. Heidi McClintock  
Staff Photojournalist

Soldiers, Airmen and civilians of the Nebraska Military Department came together for the fourth annual 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade Chili Cook-Off Super National Invitational, Oct. 3, at the Spirit of 1776 Armory in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The chili cook-off was divided into two categories, traditional and original. There were 16 different chili recipes entered in the contest.

Some of the chili recipes included turkey, bacon, deer and traditional hamburger. Following intense judging, winners were chosen for each category.

In the traditional chili category third place went to Sgt. 1st Class Trent Hellbusch, second place was Mr. Thomas Gray and first place was Maj. Steve Collins.

In the original chili category third place was Maj. Jeffrey Searcey, second place was Lt. Col. Brent Flachsbart and first place was Chief Master Sgt. Mark Forster.

And winning grand champion of the 4th Annual Chili Cook-off was Maj. Steve Collins.



Photos by Sgt. Heidi McClintock

**Spicy Stuff:** Samples of chili are provided for judges during the 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade's Chili Cook-Off Super National Invitational, Oct. 3, at the Spirit of 1776 Armory in Lincoln, Neb. Maj. Steve Collins took top honors in the traditional chili category, while Chief Master Sgt. Mark Forster took top honors in the original chili category. Collins was also named overall champion chili chef.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Koan Nissen

**Where Futures Begin:** Nebraska Army and Air National Guardsmen visit with employers during the Seven Seals Expo, Sept. 14, at the Joint Force Headquarters building in Lincoln, Neb. The expo was open to reserve component members and their spouses, and featured multiple employers looking for the unique skills military personnel can bring to the civilian workforce.

## Nebraska Guardsmen get chance to visit with possible employers

By Staff Sgt. Koan Nissen  
Staff Photojournalist

Local and national employers looking for qualified and motivated job applicants gathered for the "Seven Seals Employment Expo" at the Joint Force Headquarters building in Lincoln, Nebraska, Sept. 14.

The expo, which was open to reserve component service members and their spouses, hosted dozens of employers. Among the employers were BNSF Railway, Lincoln Fire and Rescue, Nebraska Department of Corrections and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"I know that most military men and women work hard and are very reliable," said Chase Sund, a corrections corporal with the Nebraska Department of Corrections. "They tend to be the best recruits that come work for us."

Sund, who is also a Nebraska Army Guardsman, recognized the challenges that many Soldiers and Airmen have when it comes to finding work. Taking the time to

attend an event like the expo and gather information is the first step in many cases.

Hosting such an event on a weekend may be the right move, according to Bill Nelson, a representative with the Nebraska Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, or ESGR.

"There are probably some kids here who wouldn't come during the workweek because they're either going to school or they can't get off work," said Nelson. "Here, they have the opportunity to spend some time during drill to wander around and speak with some of these employers."

Nelson also mentioned that many of the potential employers came to the expo with certain expectations about the quality of workers they could find.

"The employers we have here today are supportive of the National Guard and Reserve," he said. "They really want to target the veterans because they know the skills sets that the military brings to the work force – they understand and it and they get it."

# Veterans Day Honors



Photos by Maj. Kevin Hynes

**Salute to Service:** Veterans from World War II to current wars are honored at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 1, prior to the Husker football game. The game served as UNL's military appreciation game and showcased several displays honoring service members past and present.



**(Above) Under Further Review:** Members of Nebraska military units watch a replay on the big screen at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 1, during the Husker football game. UNL provided hundreds of complimentary tickets to Nebraska service members to show appreciation for their service.

**(Left) Geronimo:** A member of the Army Golden Knights parachutes into the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 1, before the Husker football game. The display was part of the Husker's annual military appreciation game.

## University of Nebraska-Lincoln pays tribute to veterans during football game versus Purdue

By Lt. Col. Kevin Hynes  
State Public Affairs Officer

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln pulled out all of the stops on Nov. 1 when it honored the state's veterans during its football game with the University of Purdue at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Along with giving local service members several hundred complimentary tickets, the University of Nebraska also recognized eight veterans ranging from World War II to Operation Enduring Freedom before kickoff as the game's honorary "Gate Sentinels." Among the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen honored were Sgt. Maj. Scott Langan, an operations sergeant major with the Nebraska Army National Guard's Lincoln-based 110th Multifunctional Medical Battalion, who is a veteran of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Master Sgt. Sarah Bredthauer, a Prime BEEF manager with the Nebraska Air National Guard's Lincoln-based 155th Civil Engineering Squadron who recently returned home from a lengthy deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

According to both of the Nebraska National Guardsmen, being honored in front of more than 90,000 mostly red-clan fans with other veterans from World War II, Korea and Vietnam was a "surreal experience."

"This is just absolutely amazing," said Bredthauer, a native of Sterling, Nebraska, as she waited to be introduced to the crowd. "Being here with these veterans who have accomplished so much is just such an honor."

"I am absolutely honored to be here," added Langan, who grew up in Lincoln. "It's really a humbling



**Special Guests:** Veterans watch an Army parachute display at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 1, prior to the Husker football game.

experience."

Along with serving as gate sentinels, Bredthauer and Langan also had the opportunity to render honors to Nebraska's latest Medal of Honor recipient when the family of the late 1st Lt. Donald Schwab was recognized during the first quarter of the Huskers' 35-14 victory over the visiting Boilermakers.

Schwab earned the award in September 1944 near Lure, France, when he single-handedly rushed a German machinegun nest that caused significant casualties within his infantry unit, clubbing the German gunner with his rifle butt. Schwab was initially given the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroic actions. However, that award was later upgraded to the Medal of Honor.

Schwab's family was presented with the new award during a ceremony at the White House this past March.

While Schwab's family was introduced to the crowd, Langan, Bredthauer and a U.S. Army color guard faced the Schwabs and presented arms when the late officer's medal was shown.

## Ride for the Ages

Nebraska Command Chief Master Sergeant celebrates birthdays riding mile for every year

By 1st Lt. Alex Salmon  
Editor

Nebraska's command chief master sergeant celebrated a milestone by passing mile markers. Chief Master Sgt. Mark Forster, the Nebraska Air National Guard's command chief master sergeant, decided to celebrate his 52nd birthday on his trusty bicycle by riding at least as many miles as years he's lived.

An avid rider, Forster came up with what he calls, "Chief's 51/51" last year as a way to end the cycling season. This year's "Chief's 52/52" was incorporated into a ride across Nebraska with other members of the Air and Army National Guard.

On Sept. 28, Forster was joined by Chief Master Sgt. Russ Sladky, a boom operator with the 173rd Air Refueling Squadron, for a 54-mile ride from the Nebraska National Guard's Armory on 33rd Street in Lincoln to the Missouri Basin Lewis and Clark Center in Nebraska City, Nebraska. When Forster and

Sladky arrived in Nebraska City, they were met by their wives and Forster's son to enjoy a picnic lunch.

Forster, who often rides his bike 35 miles a day to and from work, wanted to use the birthday ride to challenge fellow Guardsmen.

"I've never been big on birthdays, but I've always enjoyed cycling and I'm currently approaching 2,200 miles for the year," said Forster. "This ride isn't especially long compared to my 35-mile commute to and from work but it offers a chance to bring Guard members out for a longer ride than they may normally attempt."

Forster knows the value of physical fitness and hopes his cycling shows others exercise can be fun.

"Since I don't run seriously, I thought a cycling event was a good way for me to promote fitness in the unit," said Forster. "Hopefully, this will help spread the word. Next year's ride is on a Monday so maybe the folks working an alternate schedule will join in. I'd like to alternate between pavement and trails, so next year's ride will likely

be on trails."

"Ultimately, I'd like to see more of our unit members include some form of endurance and cardio training in their daily lives," he added. "It benefits the unit to have healthier members."

According to Forster, being physically fit can be viewed from two perspectives.

"From the organizational perspective, the job of the National Guard is to provide combat forces to the fight," said Forster. "Right now that means we're sending folks to locations that are very hot and that places an additional strain on our bodies. Healthier Airmen and Soldiers perform better, get injured less and have fewer issues with the heat."

"From an individual perspective, our members spend an average of 10 years in the National Guard, some as long as 40 years," he added. "When they leave the Guard, I'd like to think we did everything possible to keep them as healthy as possible during their career. I'd like to think they can enjoy long retirements."



Courtesy Photo

**Tools of the Trade:** Chief Master Sgt. Mark Forster, the Nebraska Air National Guard's command chief master sergeant, and Chief Master Sgt. Russ Sladky, a boom operator with the 173rd Air Refueling Squadron, pose with their bicycles prior to Forster's "Chief's 52/52," a bike ride Forster came up to celebrate his 52nd birthday by riding at least 52 miles. Forster and Sladky rode from the Nebraska National Guard's Armory on 33rd Street in Lincoln to the Missouri Basin Lewis and Clark Center in Nebraska City, Neb.