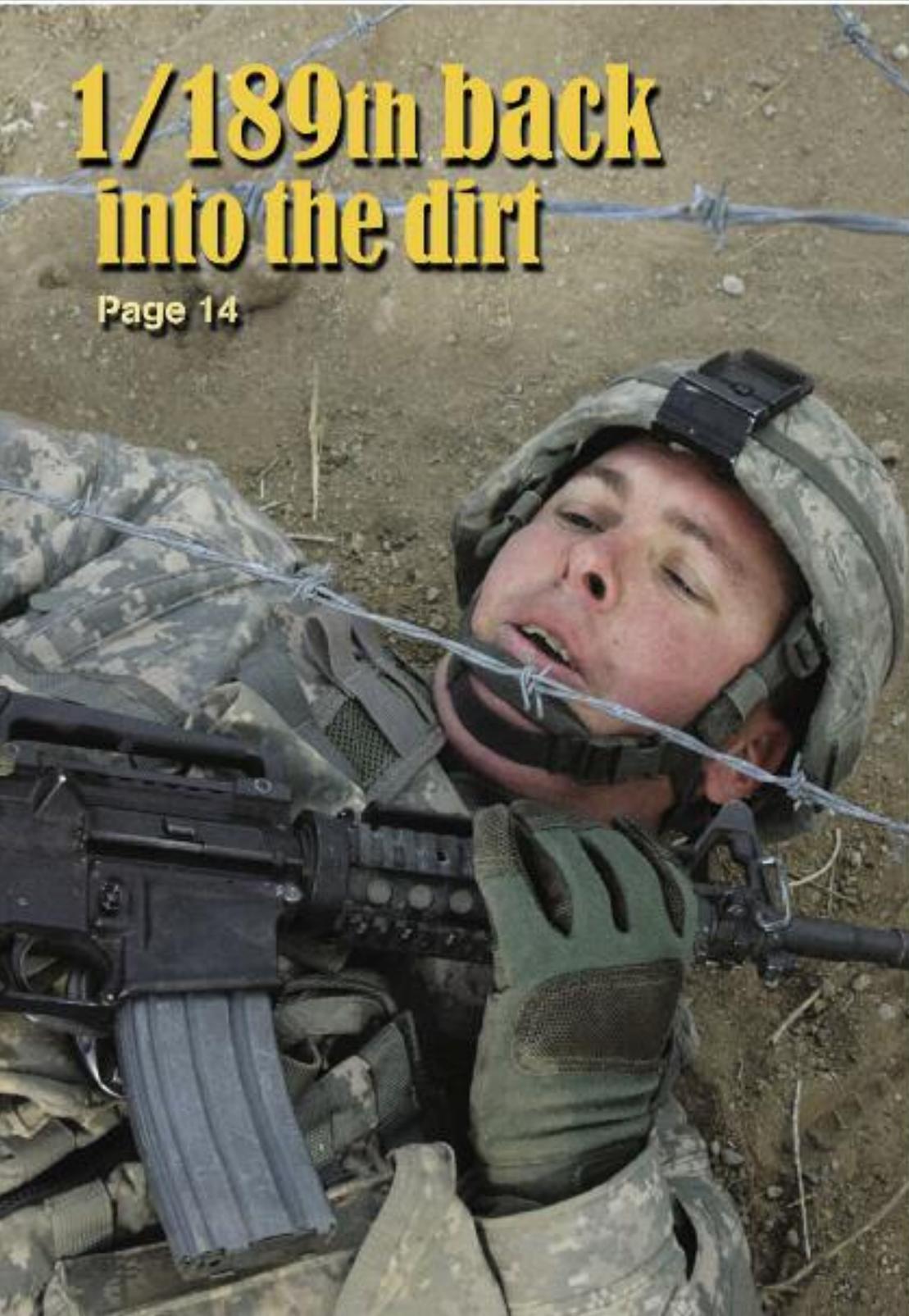




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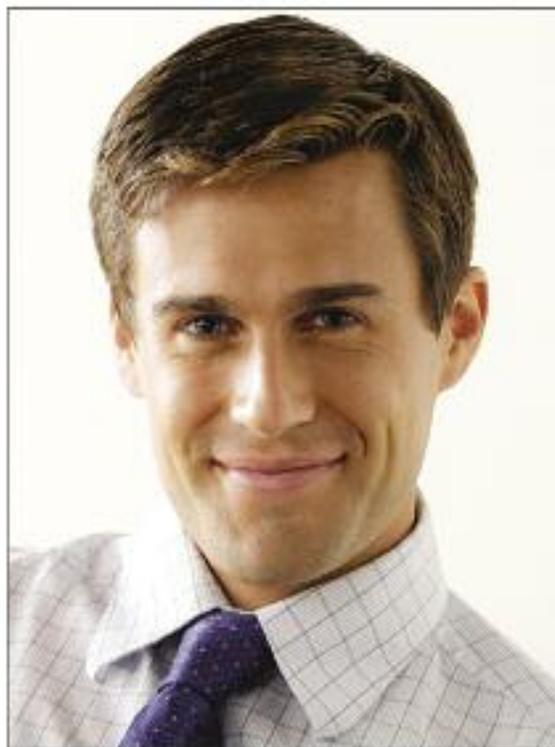
**1/189th back
into the dirt**

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- ▷ CERFP PUTS ON A SHOW IN VEGAS



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ON THE COVER: Sgt. Scott Leavitt of the 1/189th General Support Aviation Battalion completes a movement lane at the Stead Training Site while preparing for deployment. (Note: Leavitt inadvertently lost his eye protection before the photo. Always wear eye protection when working around barbed wire.) Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka

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FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Col. Jeff Burkett, Commander, 152nd Airlift Wing



People, principles are wing's greatest assets

More than ever, it's clear Citizen Airmen and Soldiers are the best investment for our national defense, and I am honored to be serving with you at this moment in our history.

Surely, we will face many trials in the months ahead, but, like the Minutemen in Valley Forge during the winter of 1778, we will overcome and prevail.

To do this, we must keep our focus on three key and intertwined priorities: people, readiness and development. This column will focus on the first priority because it is the cornerstone upon which everything else is built.

Our Airmen, Soldiers and their families must always be front and center. The effectiveness of the National Guard during the past two decades wouldn't have been possible if we didn't prioritize our people. Since 9-11, National Guard Citizen Soldiers and Airmen have mobilized nearly 700,000 times in support of overseas and domestic missions, and tens of thousands of our troops have mobilized more than once.

It's no accident that we are members of one of the most experienced, recognized and combat-tested air wings on the planet. It's also no accident that when the flag goes up, the High Rollers deliver without fail.

We owe it to ourselves, fellow Airmen, families and employers to have an honest dialogue about our unique profession so we can acknowledge, understand, support and overcome the challenges we face today as Guardsmen.

I have often heard that the culture of the Air Force revolves around equipment and aircraft, but in my opinion it's centered on you – the Airman – because without your skills, energy and commitment, our aircraft would never fly.

Make no mistake – you are our most valuable asset! Together, we must look for ways to continually develop our expertise, experiences and opportunities to strengthen ourselves and those around us.

The units I have been a part of that put people first have amazing results.

Teamwork is the norm, and handshakes and salutes generate a feeling of tradition and camaraderie. Motivation, spirit and honor are commonplace and lifelong relationships are formed based not just on familiarity, proximity and necessity, but on conviction, principle and excellence for the missions accomplished together.

We have many challenges on the horizon, such as hosting the National Guard Association of the United States conference

in September, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and experiencing another Operational Readiness Inspection.

As difficult as these tasks will be, I am confident each moment will provide an opportunity to display and showcase your abilities and professionalism.

More importantly, each instance will also be an opportunity to deepen our bonds as Guardsmen and put our principles into practice. ■

New wing commander for Nevada Air Guard

CARSON CITY – Col. Jeff Burkett assumed command of the 152nd Airlift Wing in Reno on May 5. He replaces Col. Mike Williams, the unit's vice wing commander, who was the interim commander for four months.

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Eschewing Hollywood, true stars of **RED TAILS** movie appear at air base

By Catherine Stokes
Nevada Guard Public Affairs Intern

RENO – There hadn't been this much hubbub over movie stars appearing in The Biggest Little City since Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable began filming "The Misfits" in 1961.

Several true stars of the movie "Red Tails" – three World War II-era Tuskegee Airmen who were among the real-life servicemen the movie was based upon – drew an overflow crowd to the auditorium at the Nevada Air National Guard base in January for a meet-and-greet event that coincided with the opening of the movie inspired by the 1940s African-American aviators. More than 500 people attended the event, which had to be split into two sessions to accommodate the excessive turnout.



*“No one knew about us.
Even the government
did not want us
to succeed, but
we would not
let anyone
fail.”*

– Retired Senior Master Sgt.
George Porter

Our Story, Inc., and the Nevada National Guard hosted the event, which featured remarks by retired Senior Master Sgt. George Porter, retired Chief Master Sgt. Lenard Yates and retired Tech. Sgt. Boyd Taylor. The three are members of the George S. "Spanky" Roberts Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen in Sacramento, Calif.

The Tuskegee Airmen are renowned for their World War II exploits and were the first African-American aviators in the U.S. military. More than 200 proud Tuskegee Airmen are still alive nearly seven decades after Axis powers surrendered in 1945.

Kenneth Dalton, founder and president of Our Story, Inc., said he admired the Tuskegee Airmen who had to overcome racism just to fight on behalf of the country during World War II. Dalton helped set up the meet-and-greet in order to give younger generations the opportunity to hear the aviators' stories.

"I sought a way to recognize African-Americans in northern Nevada," Dalton said. "There are so many stories of amazing people like the Tuskegee Airmen that haven't been recounted enough. These are the types of stories that must be shared, not forgotten."

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Walter Suggs, also a Tuskegee Airman but from a later era, accompanied the World War II veterans from Sacramento.

"It's emotionally satisfying for me to see so many people come out and hear the history of these amazing men," Suggs said.

George Lucas, who became famous in the 1970s after directing "American Graffiti" and "Star Wars," served as the executive producer of the movie featuring actor Cuba Gooding Jr. as its marquee headliner. The movie ranked No. 2 at the national box office January 21-22 and grossed more than \$50 million through March.

"I could not believe that the man who directed 'Star Wars' and [wrote] 'Indiana Jones' was so interested in the Tuskegee Airmen story," Suggs said. "Lucas went to Hollywood and received no support to put the story on the big screen. But he overcame obstacles to make it happen – reminiscent of the Tuskegee Airmen."

After brief introductions from Suggs and Dalton, the three original Tuskegee Airmen took time to share their insight with the crowd.

"No one knew about us," Porter said. "Even the government did not want us to succeed, but we would not let anyone fail."

Before passing the microphone to his cohorts, Porter shared thoughts he said no one should forget.

"Remember two words: respect and love," he said. "Respect and love your family and yourself."

Yates shared the highlights of his own career to impress upon the audience that, with enough dedication and persistence, anyone can do anything. Yates' active duty career spanned 30 years, and he recorded more than 1,500 hours of flight time.

"Apply yourself, and you can achieve anything you want because God is with you," he said.

Taylor was the last of the trio to speak. He wanted everyone to know the underlying story of the Tuskegee Airmen is not about overcoming racism, but about making a difference.

"We are all citizens of these United States," he said. "When we joined the military during a time of segregation, few of us thought we could truly make a difference. But we succeeded with the support of those who saw our potential to accomplish great things."

The Tuskegee Airmen Chapter in Sacramento, which encompasses northern Nevada, has 69 members and continues to expand. Though many are unaware of it, anyone can join the chapter.

"All you need is a good mind and the desire to teach the history of the Tuskegee Airmen," Suggs said. "This is America's history we're sharing."



Retired Senior Master Sgt. George Porter, seated, signs an autograph for Staff Sgt. Jose Escobar. Porter and three other Tuskegee Airmen came to the Nevada Air National Guard base in Reno to recount their World War II experiences and promote the movie "Red Tails," which is based on the famous African-American aviators. Photo: Tech. Sgt. Eric Ritter, 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

For information on the Tuskegee Airmen Sacramento Chapter, call (916) 768-0343 or (916) 723-9968.

The Las Vegas-based James Knighten Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen holds meetings at Nellis Air Force Base. For information, write to bryane.jones@nellis.af.mil. ■



Walley Green, right, shakes hands with retired Tuskegee Airman Tech. Sgt. Boyd Taylor during a meet-and-greet event in Reno in January. Green said he flew 50 missions over Italy during WWII, and many times Tuskegee Airmen were assigned to protect him and his fellow aviators. Green said he wanted to once again thank the Tuskegee Airmen for helping him survive the war. Photo: Sgt. Mike Getten

DROP ZONE

• Carson City
• Las Vegas



FORT IRWIN, Calif. – Staff Sgt. Alfonso Vargas, a track mechanic with the Nevada Army National Guard's 1/221st Cavalry, looks over one of the unit's M-3A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles during training at Fort Irwin, Calif. Vargas is one of many maintenance Soldiers with the 221st who keep the Bradleys operating properly. Photo: Pfc. Michael Orton, 106th Public Affairs Detachment



JERICHO, Vt. – Sgt. Craig Kenison of the 609th Engineer Company, foreground, and Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka of Joint Force Headquarters glide toward the finish of the 12-kilometer pursuit race during the Chief of the National Guard Biathlon Championships at the Ethan Allen Firing Range in March. Nearly 20 states and 100 athletes participated in the weeklong competition that tested skiing ability and rifle marksmanship. For results, turn to sports on page 23. Photo: Pvt. Robert Hruz, 609th Engineer Company

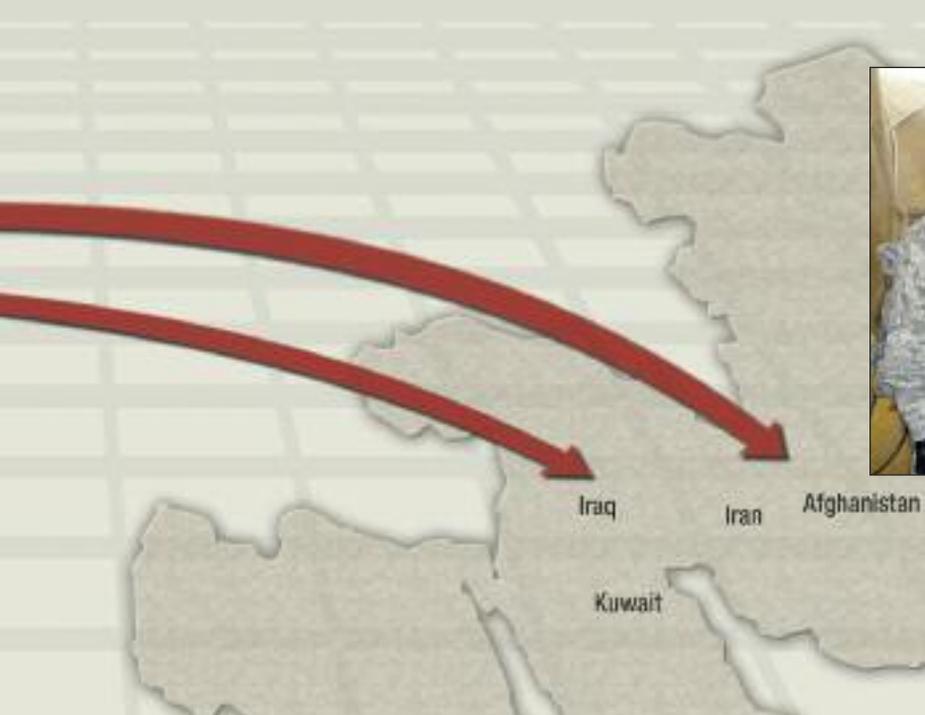


CARSON CITY – Sgt. 1st Class Jeremiah Mock, a survivor of the Sept. 6, 2011, IHOP shootings in Carson City, reenlists in the Nevada Army National Guard at the Nevada Capitol in January. Gov. Brian Sandoval, left, gave the oath of enlistment.

"It's a proud day for our country and state," Sandoval said. "We admire and respect you for what you've done and what you will do in the future."

Mock was one of two Nevada Guardsmen wounded during the shootings at a Carson City restaurant. Three other Nevada Guard Soldiers died in the attack. Although his injuries were severe, Mock returned to full time work with Joint Force Headquarters on Jan. 3.

"I don't want to end my career just yet," Mock said. "When I enlisted in the Guard in 2007, I told myself I was here to complete what I had started and put in 20 years. It's a pride thing – 20 years, that's the gold standard." Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka



NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN – Nevada Air Guard Lt. Col. Pierce Tucker, left, smiles for the camera with two coworkers from the Defense Contract Management Agency after the trio completed an eight-mile ruck march during inclement weather in Afghanistan in March.

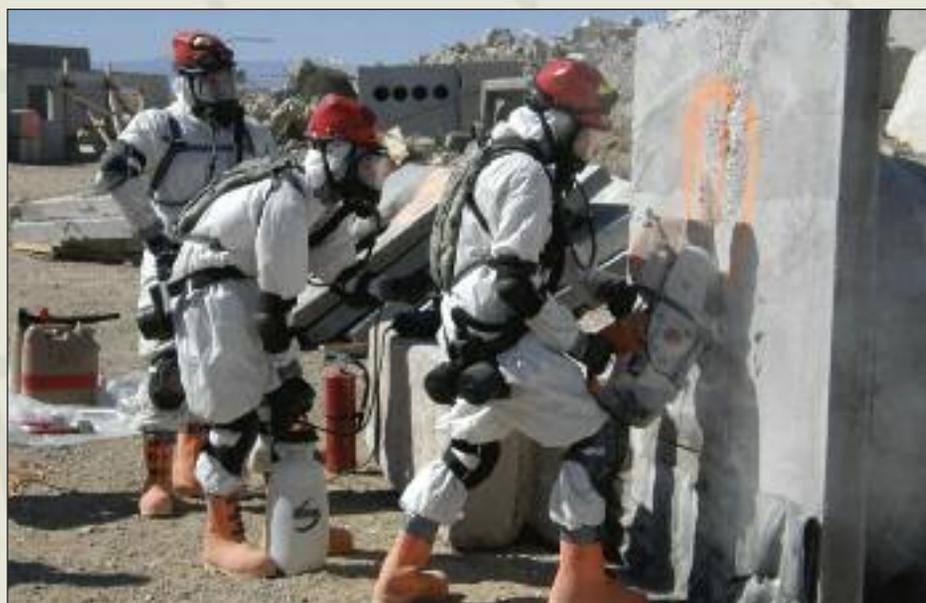
The group undertook the march to commemorate Senior Airman Jason Cunningham, a 26-year-old pararescue jumper who was killed in action on March 4, 2002, while saving the lives of the wounded Soldiers around him. For his actions he was awarded the Air Force Cross, an award second only to the Medal of Honor.

Tucker is looking forward to returning to Nevada in early summer. Photo: Courtesy of Lt. Col. Pierce Tucker, Defense Contract Management Agency



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Whatever snow didn't fall in the Sierra this past winter may have landed instead in Afghanistan, according to the Soldiers of the 485th Military Police Company now working here at one of the region's largest detention facilities. Both Nevada Guard and Afghan National Army Soldiers stopped for a moment in the midst of a combat zone after discovering an anonymously-made snowman after a recent storm. For more on the 485th, turn to page 20.

LAS VEGAS – A saw team with the Nevada National Guard's chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive enhanced response force package – CERFP – cuts through rubble while practicing rescue extraction at the Federal Emergency Management Agency's training site here in February. The team features about 170 Soldiers and Airmen specially trained in large-scale catastrophe rescue, decontamination and evacuation. The training in February helped prepare the team for its official certification in April. Photo: Lt. Col. Terry Conder, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs





137th MPs receive citation for extraordinary service

By Sgt. 1st Class Frank Marquez
17th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

HENDERSON – The 137th Military Police Detachment had an inauspicious start when it was established in 2007 with just six Soldiers in its ranks.

Just five years later, the policemen of the 137th have garnered one of the military's top unit awards.

The Department of the Army recognized the 137th Military Police Detachment's exemplary service in Afghanistan in 2011 with a Meritorious Unit Citation here during the unit's February drill. Battalion commander Lt. Col. Cory Schulz of the 17th Special Troops Battalion presented the award to the unit.

Many military officials consider a Meritorious Unit Citation equivalent in status to an individual Soldier's Legion of Merit award.

During its mission in Regional Command-North, the 137th established four military police stations, numerous investigation sections, several force protection teams, and multiple biometric collection points and administrative operation centers.

The Nevada MPs worked alongside coalition troops from Germany, Croatia, Sweden and other NATO countries.

The unit served abroad from June 6, 2010, until March 18, 2011, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in northern Afghanistan. During its nine-month tour, the unit endured austere conditions. The MPs lived in tents for months before any permanent housing was completed on their base.

Capt. Laura Boldry said the unit had experienced a remarkable transformation as it grew from just a half dozen Soldiers in 2007 to more than 50 in 2010. She said Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, the special operations commander for Operation Enduring Freedom, did not have much faith in the tiny Nevada Guard unit at the start of its mission. The 137th had to prove itself in a unique manner and build its operations from the ground up.



On behalf of all Soldiers in the 137th Military Police Detachment, Spc. Mark Cunningham, right, receives the Meritorious Unit Citation from battalion commander Lt. Col. Cory Schultz during the unit's February drill in Henderson.

Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Frank Marquez, 17th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

But the upstart unit's persistence paid off. By the end of the tour, Mulholland personally presented many awards to 137th Soldiers including nine Bronze Stars, 38 Army Commendation medals and 14 Combat Action badges.

"We maintained the attitude that we could accomplish anything," Boldry said.

Spc. Mark Cunningham, a regional Soldier of the Year, accepted the citation from Schulz on behalf of the unit.

He said he loved his first deployment abroad.

"I got the chance to experience the world," Cunningham said.

"It was amazing to learn about the Afghan people and many other nationalities."

As part of its mission, the unit trained alongside the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police in Mazar-i-Sharif, Chemtal, Kunduz, Camp Span and Maimanah.

Staff Sgt. Tim Beghtol learned that the Afghan people have a complex social structure and are steadfast in their beliefs. He added that he's ready for another adventure with his cohorts in the 137th.

"It was remarkable to learn one interpreter traveled more than 1,000 miles to do his job," he said. "I'd go anywhere, and on any mission with these guys." ■

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CERFP puts on a show in Vegas

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Terry Conder
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

LAS VEGAS – The newest addition to the state of Nevada’s domestic support resources, the Nevada National Guard’s chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive enhanced response force package – CERFP – unit, put on quite a show displaying its specialized skills here in February at a Federal Emergency Management Agency training site.

The CERFP participated in an exercise that demonstrated the unit’s myriad skills and showcased its rescue, extraction and contamination mitigation abilities. The unit features about 170 Airmen and Soldiers specially trained in large-scale catastrophe rescue, decontamination and evacuation.

The exercise in the simulated rubble pile at the training site was one of the final hurdles the CERFP faced before becoming fully certified. Full certification of the unit is expected to come this spring. ■





CAV SOLDIERS CONTINUE TO BOND WITH BRADLEYS

By Pfc. Michael Orton
106th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – In the midst of annual training here, two 1/221st Cavalry Soldiers held out their grime-covered hands and compared battle scars. They ribbed each other and argued about whose hands looked worse.

The cuts, scrapes and scratches were signs of hard work earned from a vehicle Nevada Soldiers are growing to love – the M-3A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle. The Bradley has been the 1/221st's primary tracked vehicle since it replaced the squadron's M-1A1 Abrams tanks in 2007.

The Bradley is not known for creature comforts and leg room. It's made for one thing: effectively sending rounds down range to destroy opposing forces while traversing variable terrain.

One hundred and forty Soldiers participated in the Cav's two-week annual training in the Mojave Desert. The Soldiers used their Bradleys to complete six different tables (or

exercises) and qualified with the Bradleys' weapons systems at a number of distances including several challenging circumstances.

The squadron now fields 26 Bradleys, many inherited from the Idaho National Guard last year. The vehicles are full of highly specialized equipment that takes a very specific skill set to maintain.

Space is extremely limited inside the Bradley – there is no place to stand. The three seats barely offer enough room to sit down, much less move around. Yet in these tight spaces, Soldiers perform a number of tasks that require quick reflexes and even quicker decision making.

The driver's cockpit is so tight and restricting, it is affectionately called the "hell hole." The pathway in and out of the cockpit does not allow for any wasted space and is not for anyone suffering from claustrophobia.

"People don't join the Cav because it's easy," said Capt. Nicholas Moran,

commander of Lima Troop headquartered in Yerington. "They join for the challenge."

Soldiers who perform their duties well and exceed expectations are given opportunities to quickly advance within the cav ranks.

Pfc. Miles Sleeper is already a gunner, a position usually reserved for a non-commissioned officer.

"Somebody thought I was up for the challenge," Sleeper said. "I just try to remain calm and cool about it and then try and do my best."

When the pressure was on during the training, the Soldiers performed well. All of the Bradley crews surpassed the range qualifications during both the day and night exercises.

"Sending 25 mm rounds down range is fun," Moran said. "You don't get to do that on a daily basis. It's definitely not something you get to do in civilian life." ■



Spc. William Holman of the 1/221st Cavalry peeks from the out hatch of his M-3A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle. The Bradleys are relatively new for the squadron, having replaced M-1A1 Abrams tanks in 2007. Photo: Pfc. Michael Orton, 106th Public Affairs Detachment

Gilbert battles stressors among Airmen, Soldiers

By Tech. Sgt. Eric Ritter, 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

RENO – A shooting at a local restaurant. Wildfires in metropolitan neighborhoods. A horrific crash at an air race. Not to mention a decade of deployments and war with no firm end date in sight.

No one would argue the Nevada Guard's Airmen and Soldiers aren't experiencing stressful times.

To help combat the stressors in Guardsmen's lives through discussion and to provide behavioral health support and assistance, the Nevada Guard hired clinical psychologist Trudy Gilbert as the Air Guard's director of psychological health. Soldiers may also request an appointment with Gilbert.

"Nevada's Guardsmen have experienced several disasters in the span of only a few months," Gilbert said. "Those combined events would be a huge stressor for anybody."

When she was hired, Gilbert was concerned Guardsmen would resist seeking assistance, but she has been pleasantly surprised that Nevada's Airmen and Soldiers have greeted her with open arms.

"Nevada Guard leaders understand the importance of psychological health," she said. "There's typically an old-school attitude in the military that seeking assistance for mental health issues is a sign of weakness in a service member, but I've never experienced that attitude here. Everyone has been extremely supportive of me."

Thanks to improved education and understanding, psychological health is now considered a priority, just as any other major health concern, Gilbert said.

Gilbert holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from the Pacifica Graduate Institute in California and works to resolve the unique issues that accompany treatment of service members. She's worked in every major psychological treatment ward in the region with a heavy emphasis on addressing psychological trauma including abuse, sexual assaults and other sensitive situations.

"I'm not 'Big Brother,'" she said. "If I discuss a mental health issue with someone, it's not going to negatively affect their career. That's not the case at all. My job is to assist in any way possible. It's not my job to have a negative impact on a career."

Gilbert also assists Guardsmen should they require an outside therapist.

"I continually monitor each case," she said. "I make sure every person is getting the treatment they need. If I don't see they're getting it, I'll make sure I find it for them."

Gilbert realizes the importance of her role and is ready when needed. She was quickly on the scene following the Reno air race crash and recent Reno wildfires because the availability of a therapist following a catastrophe can be crucial for victims and survivors.

"People are more open psychologically immediately following a tragedy while they are still at the scene," she said. "If they wait a few days, they tend to build defenses toward any kind of mental health therapy."

Although troops have vacated Iraq, and the number of deployments to Afghanistan is decreasing, Gilbert does not believe her job will become easier any time soon.



Air Guard director of psychological health Trudy Gilbert speaks with Airmen about mental health topics during a recent training event at the Nevada Air Guard base in Reno. Photo: Tech. Sgt. Eric Ritter, 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

"Regardless of the National Guard's future missions, behavioral health support will remain a priority," she said.

Gilbert's office is located in the wing headquarters building, and she maintains regular office hours from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Call (775) 788-9307 to request an appointment. ■

Financial counseling can lead to expanded nest egg

By Catherine Stokes, Public Affairs Intern

RENO – Deployed in Afghanistan with the 485th Military Company, Spc. William Weston secures detention centers by day and invests in stocks by night. Thousands of miles away from Wall Street, he's passionate about investing and saving money for his future.

"Wall Street opens at about 7 p.m. in Afghanistan, which is right when I get off shift at the prison," Weston said. "It works out perfectly. I get some time to check my securities before I head to sleep. I invest primarily because I just want to be able to afford a house and a car when I get home."

While Weston chooses to delve into investments using his own acumen, other financial investment resources and guidance are available for the less savvy Soldier or Airmen looking to expand a financial nest egg.

With Nevada's unemployment rate at 13 percent, family savings near an all-time low and credit debt rising, there is little room for error in the investment market. Weston himself feels pressure when investing because he has no set job when he returns to Nevada.

To assist Soldiers and Airmen interested in investments, the military created the Personal Financial Counseling program in 2008 to provide economic advice and guidance. PFC counselors educate Guardsmen and their families on how to survive tough fiscal times, avoid high amounts of debt and make smart, low-risk investments.

The Nevada Guard employs one PFC counselor at the Military and Family Support Center, 685 E. Plumb Lane, in Reno.

"We are fortunate to have the services of a PFC located right in the Guard's support center," said John Strahan, director of the support center. "The counselor is available to all Nevada Guardsmen as well as members of our sister services and their families."

The counselor is trained to resolve financial predicaments and educate individuals on personal investment plans. The counselor also assists in money management, credit and debt liquidation, analysis of assets and liabilities, and establishing and building savings plans.

The PFC counselor is available for individual counseling, group presentations and unit support. Services are free. The phone number is (702) 219-4056.

Cadet Mitchell Vaughn of the 991st Aviation Battalion chose to plan for

the long term by establishing an Individual Retirement Account after consulting with the PFC counselor. He can allocate up to \$5,000 annually into the account, and the money must stay in the account until he reaches age 62. Vaughn is hopeful there will be a nice sum of money in the account when he retires.

"I want to ensure that when I get older, my kids will have some resources to enhance their lives," Vaughn said. "I don't have a wife yet, but I am already thinking about how to pay for my family and their future education. I am also thinking about how I can sustain a decent lifestyle when I get older."

Weston, 21, chooses to invest in the more speculative stock market. He said he was not happy simply leaving his money to sit in the bank.

"It's pretty common for deployed Soldiers and Airmen to follow the markets closely and track their money," Weston said. "It gives you something to think about and follow while overseas."

Weston purchased about \$2,500 worth of Ford Motor Company stock before he deployed and said it's returned about \$100 per month.

"I think it was a good investment considering it was my first time dabbling in the market," Weston said. "I did my research work first, though, and now I feel comfortable investing."

Financial counseling is also available from Military OneSource at (800) 342-9647 or visit www.militaryonesource.com. ■

Currently deployed in Afghanistan, Spc. William Weston of the 485th Military Police Company keeps tabs on his investments nightly. The military's Personal Financial Counseling program can advise less savvy Guardsmen on their investment and economic decisions.

Photo: Courtesy of 485th Military Police Company



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1/189th Aviation Battalion heads back into the dirt



All six Bravo Company, 1/189th General Support Aviation Battalion, CH-47 Chinook helicopters are airborne at the same place and time as the battalion departs for Fort Hood, Texas, in late February. Photo: Pfc. Michael Orton, 106th Public Affairs Detachment

*By Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka
Battle Born Editor*

RENO – There was no time for apprehension or uneasiness among the Soldiers in Bravo Company, 1/189th General Support Aviation Battalion, as they prepared here for the unit's second deployment to Afghanistan. The unit left Nevada in March for a final phase of pre-deployment training at Fort Hood, Texas, and is set to land in Southwest Asia this month.

The 1/189th is the CH-47 Chinook helicopter unit previously known as Company D,

113th Aviation Company, which incurred five casualties during its 2005 deployment in Afghanistan. This mobilization marked the unit's first return to combat since its difficult deployment seven years ago.

"We will never forget the past, and we will always remember and respect the unit's history, but there is no trepidation among the unit's Soldiers," said unit commander Capt. Michael Bordallo. "I have tremendous confidence in the unit. We're very well-trained and are going to continue the long history of commendable deployments by Nevada's aviation units."

Bravo Company, 1/189th GSAB includes about 120 aviators, flight engineers and mechanics from both Nevada and Montana. About 60 Soldiers in the battalion are from the Silver State. While deployed, the battalion will fly and maintain about a dozen helicopters, each armed with three 240H machine guns.

While on its 10-month mission, the 1/189th will provide general aviation support for two regional commands. The battalion will transport anything ranging from personnel to pallets of supplies and even U.S. mail.

The unit began preparing for its deployment 18 months ago. The Nevada Guard's Pre-deployment Training and Evaluation section then put the Soldiers through their paces throughout January, with everyone in the battalion completing lanes training, the combat lifesaver course and Humvee egress training.

The unit held its official mobilization event Feb. 21 with a ceremony attended by Gov. Brian Sandoval and Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Bill Burks. Their speeches drew warm applause from the crowd of about 400, but two Nevada City, Calif., quilters, Ina Gibson and Githa Navo, received an equally heartfelt cheer during the ceremony following their impromptu delivery of 72 handmade quilts to the unit.

The unit left Reno for Fort Hood on Feb. 28. The departure was marked by the rare occurrence of all six Chinooks airborne in one location at the same time.

About 40 percent of the unit's current Soldiers deployed in 2005 with Company D. In the interim since the 2005 mission, the unit participated in non-combat deployments to Haiti and Canada.

"We are ready to go," said Chief Warrant Officer Dan Walters, one of the unit's veteran pilots. "It's been a long road just to get this deployment started. We learned a lot on our previous deployment, and now the younger Soldiers are listening to what the veterans are teaching."

1st Sgt. Don Gable said the unit is eager to return to Afghanistan and get started on its mission.

"This is our job as professional aviation Soldiers," Gable said. "We have our senior guys helping train our younger Soldiers on what to expect while deployed."

Gable said there were no problems filling every position within the unit for the deployment. In fact, a selection process was used to determine the unit's nine tail gunners.

Sgt. Joy Tecson, a 2004 graduate of Reno High School, excelled in the selection process and is now the only female Chinook tail gunner in the state.

"It's a rush to be preparing for my first deployment," Tecson said. "It's exciting to feel I'm doing something for the greater good of the United States and contributing to something that's bigger than myself individually."

Company D's five casualties occurred on Sept. 25, 2005, when a rocket-propelled grenade struck the unit's Chinook assigned the call sign "Mustang 22" in southeastern



Chief Warrant Officer Joseph "Seppi" Baumann, left, and 1st Lt. Trevor Weaver practice loading simulated patients into a Chinook helicopter during Bravo Company, 1/189th General Aviation Battalion, pre-deployment medical evacuation training at the Army Aviation Support Center in Reno. Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka

Afghanistan. Lost in the attack were Nevada Guardsmen Chief Warrant Officer John Flynn, 36, and Sgt. Patrick Stewart, 35, as well as Oregon Guardsmen Warrant Officer Adrian Stump, 22, Sgt. Tane Baum, 30, and Sgt. Kenneth Ross.

Company D continued its mission and eventually returned to Reno on March 18, 2006. During its year abroad, the unit recorded 6,799 combat flight hours and

transported 12 million pounds of cargo and 47,000 Soldiers.

The 1/189th deployment marks the 20th major unit mobilization performed by the Nevada Army Guard since Sept. 11, 2001, in support of operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and New Dawn. Nearly 3,000 Nevada Guard Soldiers have participated in the deployments. ■



The world is topsy-turvy for four Soldiers of the 1/189th General Support Aviation Battalion while Sgt. Jeremy Daniel operates the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer at the Stead Training Site during the unit's pre-deployment preparation. The HEAT equipment gives Soldiers the opportunity to experience a simulated combat-situation rollover.

Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka

SVARE'S SQUAD OF YOUNGESTERS KEEPS GROWING

Army officer 'expecting' 6th adopted child

By Cadet Catherine Stokes, Public Affairs Intern

RENO – Nevada Army Guard Maj. Patricia Svare wakes up each morning at 5 a.m. and promptly dons her military uniform. It's the perfect choice of garb in which to complete her myriad daily tasks that range from leading Soldiers, making Silly Putty, planning for the Nevada Guard's future and battling imaginary monsters in the closet.

Svare, the Nevada Guard's strategic plans and policy officer, is the mother of five at-risk foster children. She's set to become 'Mom' for the sixth time this August when her adoption of 6-month-old Thomas becomes finalized.

When Thomas' adoption is complete, Svare will have five sons and one daughter. She adopted Luc, 6, and Jason, 4, in August 2010, and Cory, 3, Jaxon, 2, and Miranda, 1, in November 2011.

All six were born addicted to methamphetamine.

"Their love is unconditional, but there have been challenges," Svare said. "Thomas is 6 months old, but developmentally he's about 12 weeks old. It's so satisfying to see how they grow and their health improves."

Svare has been passionate about rearing children since she was a little girl.

"When I was younger, I wanted to have four boys and two girls," she said. "And I



Maj. Patricia Svare watches her children Cory, left, Jason and Jaxon, right, bounce on the family's trampoline. "I would jump in, too, if I didn't have to take these boots off," she says to the kids. Photo: Catherine Stokes

never wanted to play with stuffed animals or toys. I wanted to play with dolls. It has always been about children for me.”

While a traditional Soldier, Svare worked in child care facilities for 30 years. In October 2000, she and her husband, Kurt, now deceased, established the Hippity Hop Learning Center in Reno. Kurt’s passing in September 2007 was difficult for both Svare and the children.

“Kurt was retired and would do a great deal with the kids,” Svare said. “Everyone was so attached to him. One day a little girl at the center said, ‘Miss Trish, why are you driving Mr. Kurt’s truck?’”

“I had to tell her he was not there anymore. It felt like I was experiencing the grieving process every day.”

Svare sold the business in October 2008, and the notion of adopting foster children became more and more attractive. She and Kurt had often discussed adopting children and were enthralled by the “Wednesday’s Child” segment on KOLO television news that introduced the public to a potential adoptee.

“Every week during the segment, Kurt would say, ‘Let’s adopt him,’” Svare said. “But we had 157 children at our child care center to look after at the time. I knew we needed to wait.”

After selling the center, Svare kept in touch with some of her old coworkers, including April Cleaveland. Cleaveland kept Svare updated on the adoption status of many of the children at Hippity Hop.

“I met Cory and Jaxon at the center when they were babies,” Svare said. “April kept me posted about how they were doing. Now they are here and so is April.”

Cleaveland began working as Svare’s full-time babysitter in January. She had left Hippity Hop and was not happy in her new position at a different day care center.

Svare inquired if she might consider helping take care of her new children.

“I love Trish’s kids – her house feels like another home to me,” Cleaveland said. “Trish and I have always gotten along well and that’s why we reunited.”

Svare can use all of the help she can get. For four years following Kurt’s passing, she was a single mom trying to find enough time to rear her children properly while maintaining her full-time job in the Nevada Guard. Svare did find some assistance this year when she married Chris Koch in January, she said.

“Each child has their own time-consuming needs,” Svare said. “When I come home after work, it’s dinner, bath and bed. There is just not enough time.”



Maj. Patricia Svare, right, and April Cleaveland make homemade Silly Putty for Svare’s children Jason, Cory and Jaxon at Svare’s home in Reno in March. “Does Silly Putty smell bad, Mom?” Jason asked. “No, but it does feel funny,” Svare answered. Photo: Cadet Catherine Stokes

Svare said it’s rewarding to see the changes in her children. Luc especially has matured. By age 6, Luc had experienced four foster homes before being adopted by Svare.

“When Luc first arrived, we were all having breakfast one morning, and he spilled his glass of milk,” Svare said. “He looked up at me and said, ‘Do I have to go to another foster home now?’”

“I couldn’t believe it, but I told him not to worry. It’s just spilled milk, and you’re not going anywhere!”

Svare said many people do not realize the hardships young foster children experience. She noted new-husband Koch had to take a class to become foster-home qualified, and by the end of the orientation, he was in tears. “We walked out, and he said, ‘You just want to give them all a new home,’” Svare said.

With her sixth child on the way, so to speak, and a new partner in her life, Svare is eager to see what the future holds. She wants to open an indoor play center that would provide child care for children age 6 weeks to 12 years.

“That is my next business venture,” she said. “There is really no place to take kids to play in the dead of winter or the terrible heat of summer, so I want to provide one.”

She’s aiming for the fall of 2013 to open the day care center, and she plans on having several business partners.

“April will be involved, and my kids will be in tow, too,” Svare said.

Today, though, business plans will have to be put on hold. Jason is sure a shadowy creature upstairs is after his loot.

“He’s thoroughly convinced that there are monsters that move his dinosaur piggy bank around the house,” Svare said. ■



Foreign exchange: 1/221st Cavalry interpreter now Silver State scholar



By Sgt. Mike Getten
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

RENO – There were many kilometers to cover before the mixed convoy of military and DynCorp vehicles would arrive at its destination. Suddenly, a mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle slid into a ditch, stopping all forward movement. The Soldiers escorting the convoy jumped from their vehicles to secure the perimeter until the MRAP could be pulled from the gully.

One passenger in the convoy didn't mind the delay. Lt. Col. Kurt Neddenriep, executive officer for the 1/221st Cavalry, was just glad to be "outside the wire." He had just arrived in Afghanistan in the advance party for the Cavalry's 2009 deployment and hadn't seen any of the countryside.

The delay provided another opportunity – interaction with the locals. He quietly stepped out of his vehicle to talk with the Afghan kids gathered beside the road.

Aimal Halim, an interpreter for DynCorp, saw the lanky officer trying to communicate with the local children and quickly stepped in to avoid any potential confusion.

"It impressed me that he would take the time to talk with the kids, so I offered him my service," Halim said.

Neddenriep, a resident of the Elko County town of Lamoille, was happy to accept Halim's assistance because he only knew a few words of Pashto.

"I was trying to ask the kids about themselves and just wanted to chat when Halim came over and introduced himself," said Neddenriep, now the 1/221st Cavalry commander. "I saw it as an opportunity to talk and share with some kids."

Several hours later, when the convoy was returning to its base, a different



From left, 1/221st Cavalry executive officer Lt. Col. Kurt Neddenriep, Aimal Halim and then-Nevada Air Guard commander Brig. Gen. Robert Fitch take time out for a photo in front of the squadron's iconic statue during Fitch's visit to Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan, in 2009. At the time, Halim was the interpreter for the squadron. He is now a student at the University of Nevada, Reno. Photo: Courtesy of Lt. Col. Kurt Neddenriep, 1/221st Cavalry

DynCorp vehicle broke down, and several passengers needed to find an alternate ride.

"I saw Halim looking for a ride, so I offered to make room for him," Neddenriep said. "We rode across from each other in the MRAP and talked for the entire two-hour ride back to the forward operating base."

Neither realized this would be the beginning of an enduring friendship.

About two weeks later, Halim crossed

paths with Neddenriep once again. The 20-year-old Afghan had just quit his job with DynCorp and was saying his goodbyes when he saw his convoy acquaintance.

"I was on my way to the cafeteria when I saw Halim inside talking," said Neddenriep. "I went over to say hello, and he explained why he was leaving. I said I was sorry he was leaving and wished him well."

When Neddenriep returned to his office, two supervisors from DynCorp came in to ask him if there was anything he could do to employ Halim.

"The supervisors really valued Halim, but the company policy was not flexible enough to grant him the visits with his family he desired, and they asked if I would look into hiring him," said Neddenriep.

Neddenriep and the two DynCorp representatives eventually worked out a plan to employ Halim. Two months later, Halim became the interpreter for 1/221st commander Lt. Col. Scott Cunningham. He remained in the position for the balance of the Cav's deployment and became a trusted member of the squadron's staff, known for his emotional conveyance of the commander's message to village leaders.

After an especially difficult day that saw Neddenriep escort a fallen U.S. Soldier and his working dog to Bagram Airfield for their final trip home, he concluded he had experienced too many negative situations, and he needed to do something positive to balance out his deployment.

He wanted to send Halim to college.

Neddenriep knew Halim had skipped college to provide for his mother and sister. Halim's father had died when he was an infant and, as the only surviving male, it was entirely up to him to support his family.

Neddenriep ran the idea past Halim and discussed his possible attendance at the University of Nevada, Reno. Halim was ecstatic over the prospect.

There were several substantial obstacles to overcome. Halim needed a copy of his transcripts translated and a student visa. He had to pass the test of English as a Foreign Language exam, a real challenge because only about 50 prospective foreign students a year are allowed to take the test in Afghanistan.

The final hurdle was simple economics. Halim would need money for tuition, room and board, and other basics while attending college in Nevada.

"I assured Halim if he was accepted, qualified for the visa, maintained a 3.0 grade point average or better and stayed on track to graduate in four years, I would guarantee his tuition and support," said Neddenriep. "I said I would go out to various organizations and raise the money for his education. Even if the organizations didn't contribute, I said I would keep my end of the bargain provided he kept his."

Halim was one of 63 Afghans who applied for a student visa in 2009 to study in the United States. Only four received one.

The 1/221st returned to Nevada in the spring of 2010. Halim landed in Reno in July and began an intensive English course, a prerequisite before becoming a full-fledged UNR student. Halim sailed through the class without difficulty.

Now, nearly two years later, Neddenriep and other supporters continue to offset Halim's expenses. Some of their support also provides for his mother and sister back home.

Halim appreciates the opportunity his benefactors have created.

"Kurt has been very generous to me," Halim said. "He has helped me with all of the varied costs of attending this university, and he assists with the support of my mother and sister so I can focus on my education."

Neddenriep has declined to give an estimate of how much financial aid he has personally provided for Halim. According to collegedata.com, the average annual cost for an out-of-state



Aimal Halim, left, discusses his classes with Lt. Col. Kurt Neddenriep while strolling the University of Nevada, Reno, quad. Halim has attended classes at UNR since Neddenriep spearheaded efforts to bring him to Nevada and fund his education. Halim was an interpreter for the 1/221st Cavalry during its deployment in 2009-2010. Photo: Sgt. Mike Getten

student to attend UNR is \$36,000, including tuition, room and board, books and other essentials.

Halim has a 3.87 GPA and is on track to graduate from UNR with a degree in political science in 2014. He said he wants to return to his country after graduation and use his education to help Afghanistan grow and prosper.

"I hope to help my country. I want to serve my country as an honest politician," Halim said. "That is why I served with the U.S. Army. They are in Afghanistan to help the Afghan people."

Halim openly shares his opinions during class discussions, a freedom he said is forbidden at home.

"What truly amazes me is the freedom to speak your thoughts, no matter how controversial, and my classmates listen and allow me to speak my mind," he said.

When Neddenriep and his wife, Katie, are in Reno for family functions, Halim is a frequent visitor. In fact, Kurt and Katie don't need to be around for Halim to stop in for a meal with the Neddenriep clan.

"Halim sees my family in Reno more than I do, because he goes to my mom's house for dinner nearly every Sunday and was even there for her birthday," said Neddenriep. "He is a member of my family."

Halim echoed Neddenriep's sentiment.

"Kurt and I are like family," Halim said. "We call each other brother." ■

DEPLOYMENT ROUNDUP

485th in deployment homestretch

By Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka
Battle Born Editor

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The Soldiers in the Nevada Army Guard's 485th Military Police Company can almost smell the sage brush.

Approximately 120 Soldiers are performing detention facility operations here on a mission that began last summer. The finish line is in sight, however, and the unit promises to be home within a few months.

"The Soldiers set to replace us have begun their training, and so far, all is good," said 1st Sgt. Steve Lawrence. "During these last few months, our mission of custody, control and care will remain our main focus."

Lawrence said the unit is performing well, and time is passing quickly.

"First platoon received the 'Housing unit of the Month' award from the brigade recently," he said. "We will be home in less than 100 days. We have our good and bad days, but luckily, I would say we have more good days than bad."



Twenty of the 485th Military Police Company's approximately 120 Soldiers take a break from their detention facility duties for a group photo. The unit is nearing the end of its deployment and will likely return to Nevada by midsummer. Photo: Courtesy of 485th Military Police Company

Some Soldiers have taken on expanded roles in the region and are conducting detainee release missions that entail transporting individuals via ground convoys, fixed-wing and rotary aerial transportation.

"The release missions are going well, and the brigade officials said we will continue doing those because we have been easy to work with," Lawrence said. "We bend over backward to plan, help, and assist on any type of mission."

NEWS BRIEFS



Force structure impact minimal for Air Guard

WASHINGTON – In March, military officials said the Nevada Air Guard will not be drastically affected by the imminent force structure changes stemming from the Department of Defense's strategic guidance based upon the 2013 Presidential Budget.

The anticipated impact includes four full-time positions eliminated within the Air National Guard's 232nd Operations Squadron based at Creech Air Force Base near Las Vegas.

The 152nd Airlift Wing in Reno will see no manpower reductions as a result of the announcement. The Air Guard will keep at least one flying unit in each state.

The 2013 Presidential Budget adjusts the Air Force's total end strength to 501,000, with net reductions of 3,900 active duty, 5,100 Air National Guard and 900 Air Force Reserve positions.

The active duty Air Force in Nevada, largely based at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, will gain 158 positions. The Air Force Reserve in Nevada will gain eight positions.

Battle Born writer scores Army journalism award

CARSON CITY – In a first for the Nevada Guard, the article "Lakotas land in Silver State" from the spring 2011 issue of *Battle Born* earned staff writer/photographer Sgt. Mike Getten a third-place finish for a news article in the Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Army Public Affairs Competition for 2011.

The story also placed third in the same category in the National Guard's Public Affairs Competition. In the same competition, his story "Sugarland Ranch sanctuary for deploying pet owners" from the summer 2011 issue earned a second place for a news feature article.

Reno Aces host military appreciation night June 1

RENO – The Reno Aces baseball club is set to host its military appreciation night June 1 when it plays the Tacoma Rainiers. Tickets are available for \$10, a \$4 discount off the regular price. The night will feature military displays, recognition of the

Nevada Guard's top Airmen and Soldiers, and the singing of the national anthem by a Guardsman. Fireworks will follow the game. For information or to purchase tickets, call (775) 287-9161.

Elko County Readiness Center project on track

CARSON CITY – The Nevada Guard's acquisition of the University of Nevada, Reno, Fire Science Academy in Carlin is progressing, and escrow on what will become the Elko County Readiness Center is expected to close later this spring.

The design phase for the remodel has been completed, and remodeling may begin as early as June. Detachments of the 593rd Transportation Company could begin training there by the summer of 2013.

Initial plans call for the Nevada Army Guard to build a 5,376-square-foot building and remodel two existing buildings to meet military specifications. The remodel project will include converting the fire station into a maintenance training and work bay, including storage space and a small gym.

New North Las Vegas Readiness Center promises to alleviate some growing pains

Nevada Army Guard still faces half-million-square-foot shortage

By Sgt. Mike Getten
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

LAS VEGAS – The construction of the Floyd Edsall Training Center here in 1995 began a 17-year-long building boom for the Nevada Army Guard that featured the construction of eight major facilities. Work on the ninth major project – the North Las Vegas Readiness Center – began with a ground breaking ceremony in January.

In the works for more than six years, construction on the 68,420-square-foot building finally began in midwinter. The facility should be ready by June 2013, and the 240th Engineer Company and the 100th Quartermaster Company will call the new center “home” after they relocate from the overcrowded Floyd Edsall building.

“The new facility will be a welcome addition to our building inventory and promises to alleviate some of our space issues,” said Chief Warrant Officer Tom McElroy, project manager. “Although the new facility offers some relief to the Nevada Guard’s overcrowding, it’s not the final resolution, because we still have a 500,000-square-foot shortfall across the state.”

The cost of the facility is about \$25 million. The price was set by a new-to-the-Nevada Guard public contracting method that requires the bidding contractor to set a fixed price for the construction at the start of the project. The state provided the land at no cost to the National Guard.



When completed in 2013, the 68,420-square-foot North Las Vegas Readiness Center will house the 240th Engineer Company and the 100th Quartermaster Company.

Illustration: Courtesy of Nevada Guard Facilities Management Office

“This method of contracting helps authorize the expenditures quickly, pays for the cost of the building in advance and should reduce cost overruns,” McElroy said.

The building, located north of the Edsall facility and accessed by Range Road, will include classrooms, conference rooms, an assembly hall, a distance learning center, a library, a physical fitness area, sensitive material storage rooms, storage facilities, a maintenance training bay, locker rooms and office security systems.

The last major Nevada Guard construction in the region, the Las Vegas Readiness Center on Silverado Ranch Boulevard, was completed in 2007. The Henderson Armory, the oldest Guard facility in the Las Vegas area, was completed in 1970.

Other major projects the Nevada Army Guard has completed since 1995 include: the Washoe County field maintenance shop in 1995, the Clark County field maintenance shop in 1995, the Sen. Harry Reid Readiness

Center in Reno in 1998, the Office of the Adjutant General in Carson City in 2002, the U.S. Property and Fiscal Office in Carson City in 2003, the Department of Emergency Management building in Carson City in 2006 and the Las Vegas Readiness Center’s field maintenance shop in 2007.

The state’s rural armories in Elko, Ely, Fallon, Winnemucca and Yerington were all built in the 1950s.

“It’s not likely we will tear down an existing armory when there is still a current shortage of space,” McElroy said. “New construction needs to catch up and eliminate some of our shortfall before we begin replacing armories. That’s why we continue to renovate the older buildings.”

Next up on the Nevada Army Guard’s construction list is a new field maintenance shop behind the North Las Vegas Readiness Center. Construction on that project is set to begin later this spring. ■

Nevada Guard Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Bill Burks, center, participates with government officials and building contractors in the ground breaking ceremony in January for the new North Las Vegas Readiness Center. The new facility should be completed by June 2013.

Photo: Sgt. Mike Getten, Nevada National Guard Public Affairs



HIGH ROLLERS, BOEING

SHARE MORE THAN JUST A LOVE OF AIRCRAFT

By Maj. April Conway, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

RENO – There are more than 6 million parts on a Boeing 777 aircraft and a few hundred thousand on an Air Force C-130 – and Tech. Sgt. Ladd Crooker knows them all.

As the quality assurance inspector for the 152nd Maintenance Group and a senior quality manager for Boeing's 777 commercial aviation program, it's his job to know millions of parts intimately and make sure the people installing them do, too.

For the maintenance group, Crooker reviews programs, tool control and safety issues. For Boeing, he's the Hourly Quality Skill Team captain that manages staffing for more than 3,000 hourly employees for Boeing Commercial Airplanes, and a 777 senior quality manager overseeing 12 first-line managers and 220 inspectors in the company's manufacturing division.

It's a statistical process control and process monitoring role he plays for both organizations. He said he cross-utilizes his military and civilian skills often.

"We have routine inspection lists in the Air Force for testing and maintaining quality

of our aircraft, and I use those processes all the time at Boeing," Crooker said.

The 45-year-old Airman said the Guard gave him a solid foundation for building quality planes. His National Guard experience coupled with stints in the Marine Corps as an aircraft mechanic and with Lockheed Martin as an F-18 airframe mechanic led to positions with McDonnell Douglas and Boeing as a scheduled maintenance supervisor on fighter jets.

The experience he acquired on those jobs prepared him for his current job at Boeing's Everett Twin Isle Programs in Washington state.

"The plant there is about the size of 75 football fields. By volume it's the biggest building in the world, so our C-130 hangar feels homey when I return to Reno for drill," Crooker said.

Aircraft quality inspection skills aren't the only things Crooker shares between the Air Guard and Boeing.

He also speaks and recruits for the aerospace industry on behalf of the Hire America's Heroes program. The nonprofit

organization, supported by Boeing, IBM, Starbucks and other partners, seeks to connect major corporations with the skills and abilities of service members.

"I enjoy helping those leaving the military and help them take control of their career," Crooker said.

Crooker contributes to the program by attending career fairs for service members and sharing the opportunities available at Boeing.

It's a two-way street. He also helps Boeing understand how someone with a certain Air Force specialty code or military occupational specialty would be an asset to the multinational company.

Crooker continues to commute from Washington to Reno for drills, leaving his wife and younger son at home (his older son lives in California) because he loves the people with whom he works in the 152nd Maintenance Group.

"The people here are the best," Crooker said of his Air Guard co-workers. "I've made some great friendships over the years, and they will be missed when I retire." ■



Tech. Sgt. Ladd Crooker, center, consults with Ellen Kiser and Tim Price about a skin quality improvement plan for the Boeing 777. Crooker's military and civilian jobs are closely related; he's the quality assurance inspector for the 152nd Maintenance Group and a senior quality manager for Boeing's 777 commercial aviation program. Photo: Courtesy of Boeing Communications Office

SPORTS NEWS

There's still time to shoot for Governor's 20 tab

By Staff Sgt. Philip Risi
Small Arms Readiness Training Section



Participants in the Adjutant General's marksmanship matches will compete in both pistol and rifle contests.

Photo: Sgt. Craig Kenison, 609th Engineer Company

CARSON CITY – There's still time for Silver State Guardsmen to aim to compete in the Adjutant General's marksmanship matches set for May 22-24 and shoot for an esteemed Governor's Twenty tab. The matches are open to both Soldiers and Airmen.

The Small Arms Readiness Training Section sponsors the annual event to kick off the competitive shooting season for the Nevada Guard. Winners will advance to the Winston P. Wilson National Marksmanship Contest in Arkansas later this summer.

The top 20 finishers in the Adjutant General's match are authorized to wear the Governor's Twenty tab that identifies the top 20 marksmen.

SARTS was established in Nevada in 2009 in an effort to improve Soldier and Airman marksmanship skills. The section performs sustainment training and focuses on preliminary marksmanship instruction, knowledge of weapons, train-the-trainer courses, and efficient use of time, ranges and ammunition.



Only the top 20 finishers in the Adjutant General's Marksmanship Matches are authorized to wear the Governor's Twenty tab for marksmanship excellence. Photo: Sgt. Craig Kenison, 609th Engineer Company

Competition matches like this offer Soldiers and Airmen the opportunity to test and improve their marksmanship skills. During the upcoming competition, Soldiers and Airmen will be evaluated on their knowledge of weapons, ability to perform under stressful conditions, and, of course, accuracy. Participants will be scored in both rifle and pistol events.

For information, call Staff Sgt. Philip Risi at (775) 287-9161 or Staff Sgt. Christopher Rozario at (775) 884-8406.

Rozario won a trophy during last year's Winston P. Wilson contest, Nevada's first since 1993. ■

Gold medal biathlon dreams melt at Guard championships

By Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka, Battle Born Editor

JERICHO, Vt. – Dreams of scoring the Nevada Guard's first gold medals at the Chief of the National Guard Biathlon Championships quickly melted away here in March as biathlon superpower teams from the Vermont Guard and North Dakota Guard easily glided past the Silver State's skiers. Biathlon is the military-based sport that combines cross country skiing and rifle marksmanship.

Vermont, featuring 1998 Olympian Sgt. 1st Class Dan Westover, dominated the 30-kilometer relay race and won by more than seven minutes. Westover, who scored a 17th place finish in the Nagano Games, didn't miss a shot on his opening leg of the relay as he propelled the Green Mountain state to an easy victory.

Nevada's team of Lt. Col. Julie Dietrich (152nd Airlift Wing), Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka (Joint Force Headquarters), Sgt. Craig Kenison (609th Engineer Company) and Pvt. Robert Hruz (609th Engineer

Company) could muster only a 14th place finish. The team's bright spot was its shooting, as it connected on 26 of its 40 targets.

In the 15-kilometer patrol race, North Dakota surprised the competition and finished 51 seconds ahead of Minnesota. Once again, Nevada was left in the powder and could only score 15th place.

In individual competition, Kenison was Nevada's top performer in the two-day pursuit race with his 23rd place.

"Despite the fact we didn't post any great results, we had a great week here in New England training and competing against some of the nation's best athletes," Kenison said. "We had to travel 3,000 miles to find decent snow this winter, but it was worth the effort to get here."

The Nevada Guard purchased six biathlon rifles this spring and now has the equipment to field a full complement of biathletes. Biathlon training will resume



Pvt. Robert Hruz, 609th Engineer Company, sets off for the anchor leg of the 30-kilometer relay race. Nevada finished in 14th place.

Photo: Sgt. Craig Kenison, 609th Engineer Company

next December. Call (775) 354-7610 for information on joining the team. ■

No stereotypical safari, Guerrero set to lead cadets on African visit this summer

Story and photo by Cadet Catherine Stokes, Public Affairs Intern

RENO — “E un prazer!” is what one says in the language of Crioulu when meeting a friend in the West African country of Cape Verde.

The greeting, roughly translated as “It’s a pleasure,” promises to be exchanged often this summer as Nevada Army Guard Maj. Jerome Guerrero and a contingent of Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets teach, work and make new friends throughout the island nation.

Guerrero, an associate professor of military science at the University of Nevada, Reno, will lead a contingent of ROTC cadets participating in the corps’ Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency program. While in Cape Verde, Guerrero and about a dozen cadets will teach English, work with disabled individuals, rebuild infrastructure, and learn about the Cape Verdean military.

Guerrero is the first UNR ROTC instructor to participate in CULP.

“As everyone in the military knows, it’s likely you will be asked to serve in a foreign country someday,” Guerrero said. “This experience gives the cadets a broader cultural perspective and helps make them well-rounded Army leaders.”

Cape Verde is about 350 miles off the coast of West Africa. The tiny country of only 2,500 square miles is made up of a cluster of 10 islands.

CULP provides opportunities for ROTC cadre and cadets to travel and work in countries including Costa Rica, China, Mongolia, Taiwan, Cambodia and several others.

Maj. Jerome Guerrero, second from left, informs cadets Travis Salley, far left to right, Michael Colyer and Jason Kilgore about the immunizations they will require before traveling abroad this summer. All four are set to participate in the University of Nevada, Reno, ROTC’s Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency program.



Although this will be his first passport stamp from Cape Verde, Guerrero is a seasoned traveler. He has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and has visited the Philippines, Mexico, Germany, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.

Guerrero realizes this trip isn’t for pleasure or sightseeing.

“I like the fact this trip will be unique in comparison to my other travels,” Guerrero said. “I will be leading the cadets, and I also get the chance to teach English.”



Two Nevada Guard Soldiers are among the hundreds of cadets nationwide participating in CULP in other nations. Jason Kilgore of the 609th Engineer Company will travel to the Philippines, and Travis Salley of the 106th Public Affairs Detachment will visit the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The Marshall Islands are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean just west of the international date line and slightly north of the equator.

Kilgore said he's excited about the prospect of experiencing a new culture and seeing a new country.

"I want to see the lifestyles of people outside the United States," Kilgore said. "It's a great way for the military to perform humanitarian work for underprivileged communities. This program displays the Army's ability to help people in need."

Salley said he applied for the program in order to broaden his viewpoints.

"This trip will provide me with a perspective of cultural and societal views outside of my American way of life," Salley said. "The program improves relations with other countries. If other countries see Americans helping with humanitarian efforts, they may want to expand their efforts, too." ■



Cape Verde
Fun Facts

Capital: Praia
Population: 450,000
Languages:
Portuguese, Crioulo
Area:
4,035 square kilometers
Currency: Escudo
Most popular attraction:
Climbing Mt. Fogo
(An active 9,000-foot volcano)

www.lonelyplanet.com/capeverde



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AWARDS

Air Force Achievement Medal



SSgt Daniel McMillan 152nd Maint Sqdn
SSgt Jeffrey Stumpf 152nd Maint Sqdn
SSgt Matthew Zierenberg 152nd Maint Sqdn
SSgt Peter Johnson 152nd Maint Sqdn
SSgt Bartley O'Toole Jr 192nd Airlift Sqdn
TSgt Joseph Puertos 152nd Log Readiness Sqdn
TSgt Kathy McEwen 192nd Airlift Sqdn

Army Achievement Medal



SSG Joseph Edwards 991st Aviation Troop Cmd
CW2 Robert McAfee 991st Aviation Troop Cmd
SGT Sabrina Radsaphone 991st Aviation Troop Cmd
SSG Richard Wayrynen 991st Aviation Troop Cmd
SGT Tim Stephenson JFHQ
2LT Nathan Stromberg NVARNG Med Det

Nevada Distinguished Service Medal



CW5 Stephen Karrick 991st Aviation Troop Cmd

Nevada Medal of Merit



Mr. Stephan Arzoin 152nd Civil Engineer Sqdn
Mr. Lawrence Smith 152nd Civil Engineer Sqdn
CW3 Aaron Southerland 991st Aviation Troop Cmd

Nevada State Commendation Medal



SFC Gertrude Montano 422nd Signal Bn

Nevada Humanitarian Service Ribbon



SSG Ryan Mooreback JFHQ
MSgt Robert Butchko 232nd Operations Sqdn
SMSgt Gilberto Carrera 232nd Operations Sqdn
SrA Benjamin Griffeth 99th Maint Sqdn
SrA Jonathan Hofer 99th Maint Sqdn
SSgt Christopher Coloma 232nd Operations Sqdn
SSgt Michael Jimenez 232nd Operations Sqdn
SSgt Brandon Upton 232nd Operations Sqdn
SSgt Jawann Wilson 232nd Operations Sqdn

SSgt Tristan Bacom 99th Maint Sqdn
SSgt Ronald Zaragoza 99th Maint Sqdn
TSgt Timothy Mader 232nd Operations Sqdn
TSgt Christopher Sipes 232nd Operations Sqdn
TSgt Matthew Lignelli 99th Maint Sqdn

Adjutant General's Outstanding Graduate Award



SFC Heather Carlquist JFHQ
SFC Jeremiah Mock JFHQ
SPC George Downey 422nd Signal Bn
SPC Deanna Truman 422nd Signal Bn
SPC Chase Rauchle 757th Combat Sust Spt Bn
SPC Joseph Giglio 92nd Civil Support Team
SSG Richard Rohweder 991st Aviation Troop Cmd
SSG Scott Smith JFHQ
PVT Robert Hruz NVARNG Rec/Ret

Nevada Overseas Deployment Ribbon



A1C Joe Franzen 152nd Log Readiness Sqdn
CMSgt James Ross 152nd Log Readiness Sqdn
Col Mitchell Sperling JFHQ
Lt Col Russell Earle 192nd Airlift Sqdn
Maj Brenda Lienke JFHQ
MSgt Jason Barlow 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SMSgt Craig Madole 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SrA Garrett Gonzales 152nd Civil Engineer Sqdn
SrA Otis Hawkins 152nd Civil Engineer Sqdn
SrA Michael Johnson 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SrA Jeffrey Stelle 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SrA Adam Willett 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SSgt Williams Boekenoogen 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SSgt Jon Cumings 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SSgt Desaree Pesina 152nd Intelligence Sqdn
SSgt Bryce Miller 152nd Log Readiness Sqdn
TSgt Jeannine Rainey 152nd Comptroller Ft
TSgt Daniel O'Hara 152nd Comptroller Ft
TSgt Rexford Barton 152nd Intelligence Sqdn

Nevada Recruiting Ribbon



SSgt John Lopez 152nd Aircraft Maint Sqdn

Nevada Honor Guard Ribbon



Capt Melissa Beauchamp JFHQ
Maj Todd Hudson 152nd Operations Grp

PROMOTIONS

COL/Col

Zachary Doser HHC, 17th Sust Bde

LTC/Lt Col

Beth Boschee 152nd Medical Grp

MAJ/Maj

Daniel Thielen NVARNG Med Det

Eric Beyersdorf 192nd Airlift Sqdn

CPT/Capt

Jason Yuhasz 152nd Airlift Wing

1LT/1st Lt

Dimitrios Kassebaum 192nd Airlift Sqdn

Nigel Harrison 1/168th MEDEVAC

Nicholas Benites 17th Sust Bde

Ryan Oroflo C Co, 422nd Signal Bn

Daniel Thomassian 485th MP Co

Joshua Armstrong JFHQ

2LT/2nd Lt

Matthew Shilk 92nd Civil Support Team

CW5

Joseph Baumann 1/189th Aviation

CW3

George Cohenno 777th Engineer Det

William Malley JFHQ

CW2

Jason Miller 1/168th MEDEVAC

WO1

Patrick Quinn HHC, 422nd Signal Bn

1SG/MSG/SMSGt

Michael Nelan 152nd Civil Engineer Sq

Timothy Spencer 152nd Civil Engineer Sq

Torry Thompson JFHQ

SFC/MSgt

Michael Henderson 152nd Comptroller Flt

Steven Givani 152nd Force Support Sqdn

Jeanie Beck 152nd Force Support Sqdn

Douglas Goedert 152nd Force Support Sqdn

Robert Malson 152nd Maint Grp

Jessica Bean 152nd Maint Grp

Jason Aceves 152nd Security Forces Sqdn

Shawn Plunket 192nd Airlift Sqdn

SSG/TSgt

Kevin Brun 152nd Aircraft Maint Sqdn

Alexis Anastassatos 152nd Maint Sqdn

James Bottge 152nd Security Forces Sqdn

Joshua Chaney 152nd Security Forces Sqdn

Michael Moore 152nd Security Forces Sqdn

Gary Schlauch 1/189th Aviation

Kenneth Gilliam 100th Quartermaster Co

David Henry 150th Maint Co

Mark Kennoy 17th Sust Bde

Christopher Staggs HHC, 17th Sust Bde

Lucas Mudloff 609th Engineer Co

Joseph Casey 72nd MP Co

James Green 72nd MP Co

SGT/SSgt

Russell Tom 152nd Comptroller Flt

Katie Rimbey 152nd Intelligence Sqdn

Bruce Wilkes 152nd Log Readiness Sqdn

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Kyle Williamson 152nd Security Forces Sqdn

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 Elizabeth Taylor 152nd Force Support Sqdn
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