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# WARRIORS

Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

WINTER 2009/2010

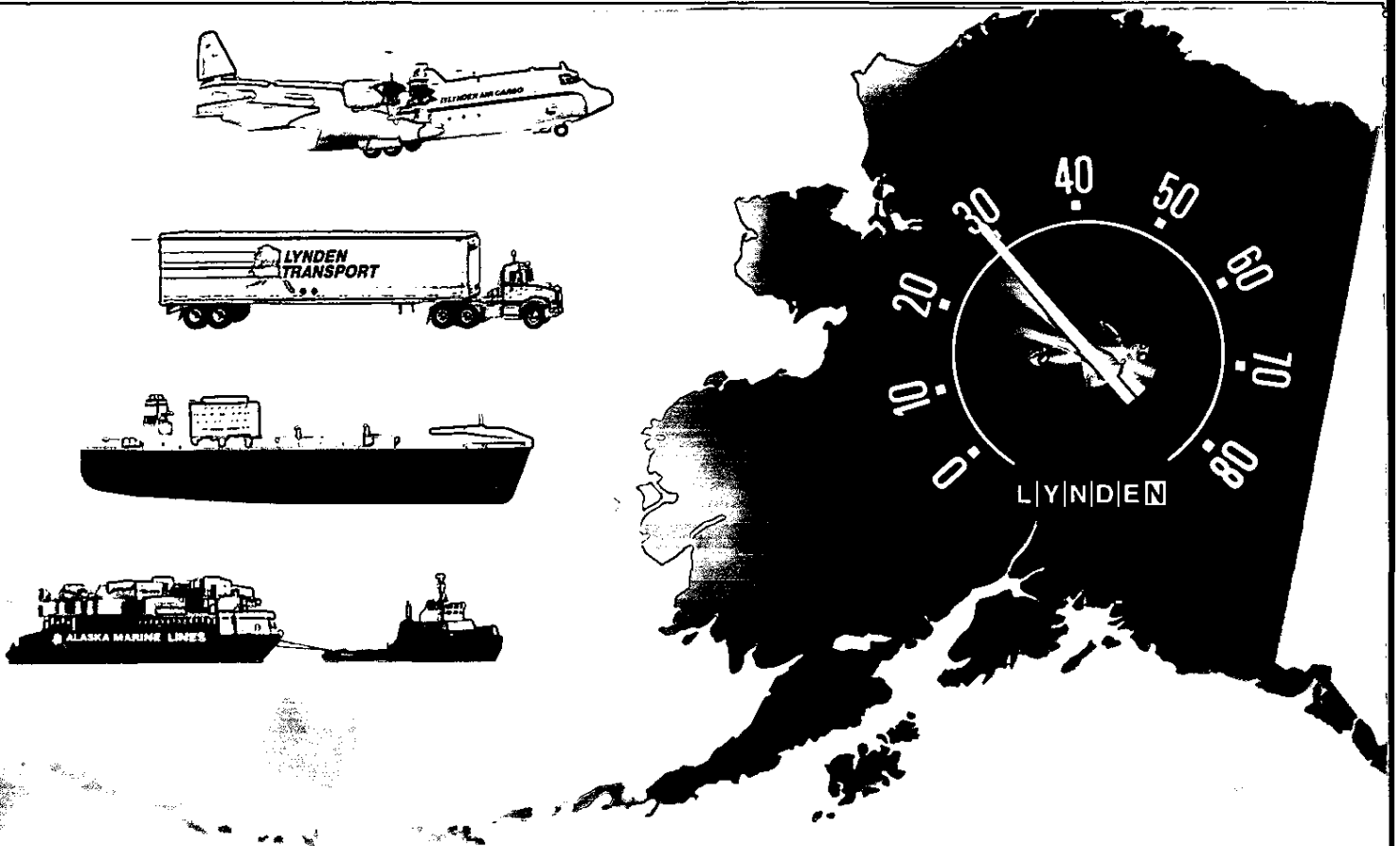


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# WARRIORS

Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



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### Welcome Home.

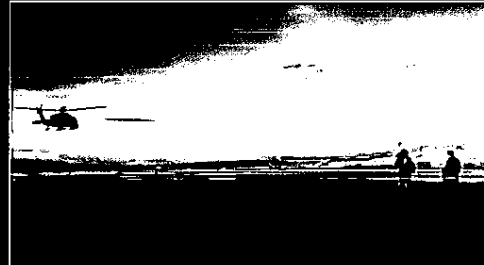
Brigadier General Thomas H. Kalkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, left, and Governor Sean Parnell shake hands with Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, upon their return to Alaska in November. The Guard members served a one-year deployment to Kosovo on a peacekeeping mission.



Photo: Courtesy of the Office of Governor Sean Parnell

Inset: Captain Becky Altenburg, a C-130 navigator with the 144th Airlift Squadron, smiles at her 13-month-old son, Torin, after returning home in December from a deployment to Afghanistan with 32 fellow Alaska Air National Guardsmen. The Airmen provided airlift, via C-130, ferrying people, equipment and supplies throughout the region in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



### Discovery Channel Highlights Guard.

A production crew from New York films an Alaska Air National Guard HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter as it departs from Kulis Air National Guard Base in December. The footage will be used for "Life or Death in Alaska," a television show to be aired spring 2010 on the Discovery Channel that chronicles seven of Alaska's most heroic rescues, and the survivors and rescuers who lived them. The show will feature the rescue of a 22-year-old sheep hunter from the Wrangell Mountains by the Alaska Air National Guard in August 2006. Photo: Kalei Brooks, DMVA Public Affairs

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### HOW TO REACH US

**Letters:** Letters to the editor must be signed and include the writer's full name and mailing address. Letters should be brief and are subject to editing. **Submissions:** Print and visual submissions of general interest to our diverse civilian employees, Alaska National Guard military members,

veterans and families are invited and encouraged. Please send articles and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to:

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# For the People

Governor Sean Parnell  
Commander in Chief



**Warm Welcome Home to Alaska.** Governor Sean Parnell shakes hands with Alaska Army National Guard Specialist Christopher Wainwright, 1/207th Aviation, as the Soldiers returned to Alaska at Elmendorf Air Force Base in November. Parnell thanked the Guard members for their service during their one-year deployment to Kosovo.

Photo: Courtesy of the Office of Governor Sean Parnell

The holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on what we have to be thankful for and to bestow our gratitude on the many people we call upon to keep us safe at home and abroad. The Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is essential to our safety and security.

It was an honor to welcome home members of the Alaska Army National Guard in November. I am proud of their accomplishments in maintaining a stable environment in Kosovo during their one-year deployment. This was the second deployment of Alaskans to Kosovo, where our National Guard members provided the security and training necessary for the region to achieve safety, freedom and stability. It was a great moment, shaking the hands of those fine Soldiers as they set foot back in Alaska, and one I will not forget.

We also welcomed home another group of aviators from the Alaska Army National Guard's 1/207th Aviation, just in time for them to ring in the new year with their friends and family. These Soldiers spent nine months in Iraq transporting high-priority equipment and personnel. Their training and professionalism led to a highly successful mission, and their efforts will help Iraqis in their efforts to create a year filled with renewed hope and peace.

As we endure winter weather in Alaska, I am grateful for our state emergency management personnel who constantly

monitor conditions across the state. Our EMS personnel are prepared to assist our fellow Alaskans in the event of a winter

storm disaster. With our new state-of-the-art mobile emergency operation center, we have interoperable communication capabilities during disasters, supplying a more streamlined response. These technological tools allow us to act quickly and effectively in critical situations, even in the most remote of Alaska communities.

I, like all Alaskans, am thankful for the commitment and sacrificial service of our Guard members and civilian employees, who keep our state and nation safe. As we gather with family and friends this new year, let us give our heartfelt appreciation to those serving our country and to their families. Through the very good work of the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, and because of the selflessness of our men and women in uniform, I know 2010 will be a positive, safer year for all Alaskans. Sandy and I extend warm wishes for the new year to each of you.

*Sean Parnell*  
Governor

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# The Adjutant General



**Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus**  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
& Commissioner, Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

## Exceptional Service to Alaska

The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs continues to provide Alaskans with exceptional service, and the start of the new year is an excellent opportunity to reflect on our significant accomplishments while cherishing time with our families.

Strong families are a key component to a successful organization, and for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, we work hard to assist all of our families, especially when our Soldiers and Airmen are deployed in support of overseas contingency operations.

Efforts by the Alaska National Guard Family Programs office, working with the Alaska Friends of the Guard and Reserve, led to two donations totaling \$15,000. These significant contributions made by TriWest and Best Buy aid in supporting our Guard families here in Alaska that need it most. Family Programs also held several family activities at the National Guard Armory on Fort Richardson, adding to the holiday season of giving back to our Guard families.

The Alaska Army National Guard triumphantly returned home to Alaska from both Kosovo and Iraq in November and December after exceptional deployments.

The Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment spent a year away from their families supporting a peacekeeping and peace enforcement mission to ensure stability in Kosovo. Our Guardsmen performed exceptionally well and were recognized for their efforts by U.S., NATO and coalition leaders. I was very happy to welcome them home, alongside Gov. Sean Parnell, when they returned to Alaska in time to spend Thanksgiving with their families. And how can we thank the Air Guard enough for their "just in time" delivery of F Company on New Year's Eve?

The Alaska Air National Guard operation tempo has been extremely busy here at home and in support to coalition forces in Afghanistan. From September through January, the 176th Wing deployed more than 200 Guardsmen in stages, rotating in and out of the theater of operations while providing C-130 airlift, ferrying

people, equipment and supplies throughout the region.

The Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management recognizes the challenges we face here in Alaska and works hard to provide a secure, safe Alaska every day. This fall, utilizing a one-time grant, emergency management personnel contracted a mobile emergency operation vehicle. This capability is vital to restoring communication with the State Emergency Coordination Center and first responders during disasters. With colder months ahead, this mobile operation center will be tested with community partners and could help save lives.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy began another class this fall, enrolling 192

cadets and continues to excel as number one in the nation in contacting and recruiting high school dropouts. Its success in teaching the youth of Alaska life-coping skills and service to their community, and by providing an opportunity for them to complete their high school education, has resulted in nearly 2,800 graduates throughout the last 15 years.

All of these accomplishments are due to the great service and sacrifice of our department members. As we start 2010, I want to thank all of our Alaska National Guardsmen, their families and civilian employees. Please do not forget the loved ones serving far from home and away from their families. I thank you for what you do and the great sacrifices you make. ■

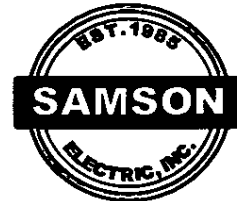


**Service and Smiles.** Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, right, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, shakes hands with Roger Nassuk Sr., a resident of Koyuk, during Operation Santa Claus in November. Nassuk retired from the Alaska Army National as a sergeant first class after 32 years of service. For more on Operation Santa Claus, turn to page 10. Photo: Private First Class Michelle Nash, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

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# Dispatches from the Front...

## Wounded Warrior Honored

By Captain Amy B. Slinker, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

**FAIRBANKS, Alaska ...** A former Alaska Army National Guardsman was honored and welcomed home in Fairbanks in November by family, friends and comrades at a luncheon held at Pike's Waterfront Lodge.

Specialist Jeremy Pierce, a recipient of the Bronze Star with valor and Purple Heart, was recognized along with past and present members of the Alaska National Guard at a brunch provided by Jay Ramras, owner of Pike's.

More than 250 people attended the program, including Fairbanks community members, Fairbanks-based Soldiers and Guardsmen who traveled from Anchorage, Barrow and the Kenai Peninsula. Many of the Soldiers were members of the 1/297th Cavalry who served with Pierce during his first deployment to Iraq with the Alaska Army National Guard.

"It's a great honor to be standing in front of these guys," Pierce said. "When you are clapping for me, know there are many people here who put their lives on the line."

The homecoming was Pierce's first trip back to Alaska after sustaining combat injuries while deployed to Iraq in August 2009 with the Oregon National Guard. He lost part of his left leg and part of a finger on his left hand. Pierce's hard work from physical therapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., was apparent, as he was able to proudly walk around the room greeting guests.

Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, presented Pierce with a solid silver coin for outstanding service to the United States and the state of Alaska. Imprinted on one side of the coin is the Alaska state seal, with the Alaska National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters seal on the other side.



**Honoring Heroism.** Sergeant Henry Monk, left, and Specialist Jeremy Pierce reunite during a November luncheon at Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. Monk and Pierce previously served together in the Alaska Army National Guard. Pierce was honored at the luncheon for his service and sacrifice as a National Guardsman. While deployed to Iraq with the Oregon National Guard, Pierce was wounded in combat and lost part of his left leg. Monk, a Fairbanks resident, is currently serving in the 1/297th Cavalry, Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Specialist Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

"We not only honor Jeremy, but we honor all of the men and women who are serving every day," said Alaska State Representative Nancy Dahlstrom, co-chair of the Armed Services Committee and leader of the luncheon program. "This is just a small token of the appreciation that we have for you and what you do." ■



**Military Appreciation at the Rink.** Lieutenant General Dana Atkins, left, commander of Alaskan Command, presents Brigadier General J. Randy Banez, assistant adjutant general – Alaska Army National Guard and Space and Missile Defense, with an Alaska Aces jersey in December during intermission of an Alaska Aces Military Appreciation game at the Sullivan Arena in Anchorage. More than 5,400 fans filled the stands to cheer on their team and show their support for all branches of the military. Photo: Mary M. Ball, U.S. Army Alaska Public Affairs

# Where in the World

## Soldier Excels in Singing Competition

By Sergeant Karina Turner  
DNVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** One Alaska Army National Guard Soldier from Eagle River got the opportunity of a lifetime while deployed this fall on a peace-keeping mission to Kosovo.

In hopes of keeping busy during the yearlong deployment, First Lieutenant Sarah Payeur, Headquarters Company Joint Operations Center liaison, 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, entered Operation Rising Star while deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

"Originally the Morale Welfare and Recreation director asked me to be a judge for Operation Rising Star, which is a singing competition similar to American Idol," Payeur said. "I told her I was really interested in competing though; I have a degree in theater, so for me, it was really just getting back in touch with my roots a little bit. It was something to take my mind off of being deployed and being away from my family."

"I was very happy to hear that First Lieutenant Payeur was selected to represent 1/207th Aviation in Camp Bondsteel during Operation Rising Star," said Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery Roach, 1/207th Aviation commander.

"She put in a tremendous amount of work in preparing for the competition, and her participation was a real morale booster for the aviation battalion."

After juggling five weeks of competition and her unit's mission of providing aviation support with UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to U.S. and coalition forces, Payeur proved to be unstoppable. She beat out all five of her Camp Bondsteel competitors and won the opportunity to compete worldwide in Washington, D.C.

"I didn't think I would win; I really just wanted to reconnect with something that I loved," Payeur said.



**Rising Star.** First Lieutenant Sarah Payeur, Joint Operations Center liaison for the Alaska Army National Guard's 1/207th Aviation while deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, sings "Life is a Cabaret" during Round 1 of the 2009 Operation Rising Star finals competition in November.

Photo: Tim Hips, Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation Command Public Affairs



**Black Hawk with Bells.** After Operation Santa Claus festivities in Kiritwan, Sergeant Don Chapman, 1/207th Aviation, escorts Mrs. Claus back to her "sleigh," an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from Juneau. Photo: Jolene Toupe Family Programs

"We are all very proud of First Lieutenant Payeur's accomplishment," said Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "Through her perseverance, she has brought great credit to her unit and the Alaska Army National Guard, and she is someone that can be an inspiration to us all in pursuing our goals, whatever they may be."

Payeur had a solid fan base of family and friends back home, as well as of Soldiers from 1/207th Aviation.

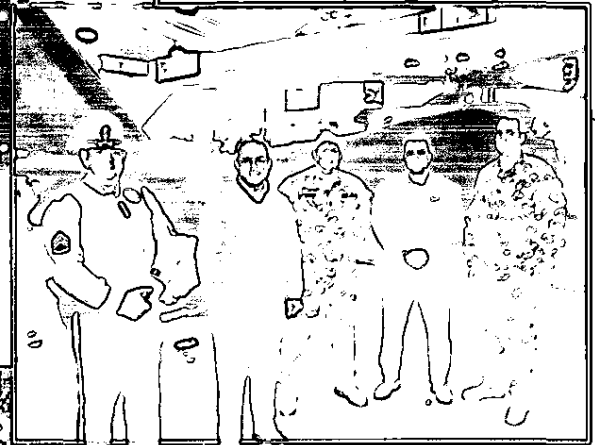
"Every Saturday, for five weeks in a row, they came out to support me," Payeur said of her comrades. "The aviation unit was really encouraging; they support everyone

in what they want to do, whether it's a softball tournament or basketball game, there is usually a big turnout and show of support. Hopefully, it gave them a break from what they were doing and helped their morale."

After winning the Camp Bondsteel competition, Payeur was one of 12 selected to compete worldwide in the Washington, D.C., finals, where she competed against other military members and dependents.

"I didn't make it past the first round in the D.C. competition, but I got a lot of good feedback from the judges, and it was the chance of a lifetime that I'm happy to have experienced," Payeur said. "I'm really

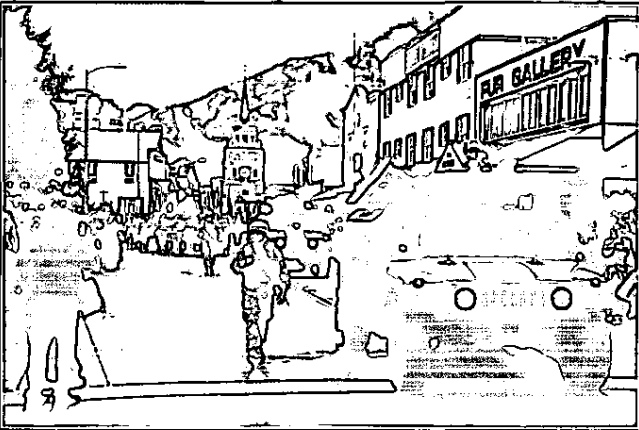
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**Black Hawk Pit Stop.** At the Alaska Army National Guard hangar in Nome, Governor Sean Parnell takes a moment to meet with a crew from 1/207th Aviation while he was in town in November. From left to right: Alaska State Trooper Sergeant Andrew Merrell, Governor Sean Parnell, Chief Warrant Officer Dave Stettenbenz, Chief Warrant Officer Two Matt Felter and Sergeant Nick Mikos. Photo: Courtesy Office of Governor Sean Parnell



**Universal Medicine.** Alaska Air National Guard Senior Airman Amanda Crowson, aerospace medical technician, 168th Refueling Wing, takes care of a patient while deployed to Southwest Asia. She is part of the 385th Expeditionary Medical Group and provides emergency medical services, sick call assessments and immunizations. "I love being able to get our personnel back on their feet and back to work to keep the mission going," said Crowson on her first deployment experience. Photo Courtesy of US Air Force.



**Alaska Day.** Members of the Alaska Army National Guard march through downtown Sitka during the Alaska Day celebration in October. More than 150 Soldiers took part in the four-day event, which commemorates Alaska's purchase from the Russians. The Soldiers were welcomed by the community and took part in many of the events offered during the celebration. Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson II, 49th Missile Defense Battalion.

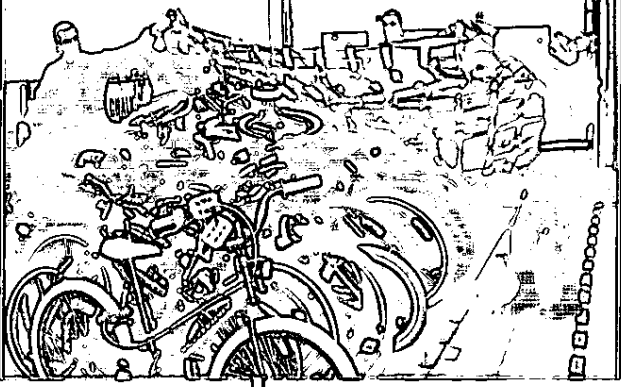
appreciative to have had the entire aviation unit behind me. When you are deployed, your unit becomes like your second family; you depend on each other for everything."

Raycur's unit returned to Alaska from Kosovo in November after successfully supporting more than 1,100 missions while deployed. Although her run for the Operation Rising Star title ended early, she hasn't given up on her love of music.

"I would probably compete again if there was another opportunity, but the event to that is I wouldn't want it to create a hardship for my kids," Raycur said. "So far now, I'm just going to start writing music again." □

Winter 2009/2010 • WARRIORS

**Bikes to Bagram.** Left to right Alaska Air Guardsmen Staff Sergeant Woody Miller, Senior Airman John Darnall, Senior Airman Ryan Pierce and Technical Sergeant Summer Rehak, all from the 176th Logistics Readiness Squadron, pull a top net over a pallet of refurbished bicycles in December. The bikes were airlifted by the Alaska Air National Guard's 144th Airlift Squadron to Afghanistan to be given to disadvantaged children. Photo: Technical Sergeant Shannon Olesco, 176th Wing Public Affairs.



**Homecoming Hugs.** Major Mike Cummings hugs his son, Gavin, after returning home from a deployment to Afghanistan with the Alaska Air National Guard. Cummings, a C-130 pilot with the 144th Airlift Squadron, was one of 33 Guardsmen who returned in December from a tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs.

RBI, Inc. They were then refurbished by Off the Chain, a nonprofit, all-volunteer bicycle collective in Anchorage. Their services are aimed at providing mobility to those whose only transportation options are bikes and who cannot afford maintenance elsewhere.

A group of Off the Chain volunteers came up with the idea of giving bicycles to underprivileged Afghan children. The big obstacle was getting them there. Organizers approached Lieutenant Colonel David Olick, a pilot with the Alaska Air National Guard's 144th Airlift Squadron because the squadron routinely flies personnel, equipment and supplies into the remote, war-torn country as part of a rotating deployment the unit fulfills.

Chris Himes, a long-term Off the Chain volunteer, said "I can't imagine any other way it could have happened. It's a perfect confluence of interests and abilities – the Air Guard being on the way anyway and being able to distribute the bikes, which we would never be able to do."

In December, a group of Air Guard members arrived at Off the Chain with a flatbed truck to pick up the bikes. Three days later,

Guard members at Kulis Air National Guard Base, deploying to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, loaded them onto a C-130 tactical airlift plane for the three-day flight. Once in Afghanistan, the bikes were handed over to a local U.S. military unit at Bagram Airfield for distribution to Afghan children.

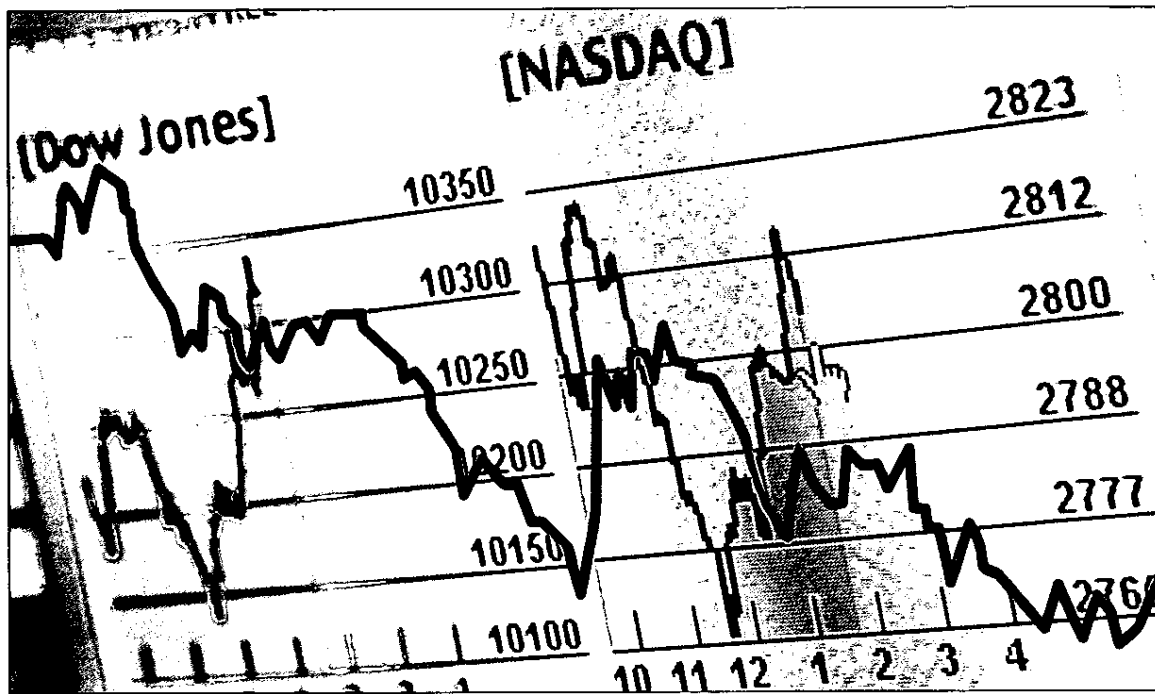
"With our Guardsmen rotating in and out of Afghanistan throughout the holiday season, it was the perfect opportunity to support a worthy cause and provide a little cheer for Afghan youth," said Brigadier General Thomas H. Kalkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. □

## Air Guard Brings Bikes to Afghanistan

By DMVA Public Affairs

**KULIS AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Alaska ...** More than 20 disadvantaged children in Afghanistan have received new bikes this winter thanks to a group of Anchorage volunteers and an assist from the Alaska Air National Guard.

The bicycles, together with parts and tools, were donated by the Anchorage Community YMCA, The Bicycle Shop, Paramount Cycles, Chain Reactions and



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# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

## Chaplain's Ministry Includes the Fallen and Those Who Honor Them

By Ed Drohan, Air Force Mortuary Affairs Public Affairs

**DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Delaware ...** For an Alaska Air National Guard chaplain, a deployment to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Center hit close to home.

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Lance Jennings' son served with the Air National Guard in Kirkuk, Iraq, in 2002. When your ministry revolves around serving those who have given their lives for their country, their families, and the men and women who provide the full measure of dignity, honor and respect for the fallen, you can't help but think about family members who have been in harm's way.

Jennings provided spiritual and moral support at the Dover Air Force Base, Del., center from September to January when he returned to his home unit – the 168th Air Refueling Wing. He had never been to Dover Air Force Base before, so he volunteered for the deployment.

The chaplain said he's done a tour of duty at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, ministering to wounded warriors, and his work at the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Center gave him a chance to see and appreciate not only the fallen heroes, but the professionalism of those who provide dignity, honor and respect for them, as well as care, service and support for their families.

As part of his duties, the chaplain and the rest of his "padre cadre" worked with families of the fallen who came to Dover to observe the dignified transfer of their loved ones. In his civilian ministry, he's provided comfort to families of accident victims, and while similar, the work here was different.

"We see death, but here, because of the violence of war, it is more intense," said Chaplain (Major) Richard Bach, a Maine Air National Guard chaplain who worked with Jennings.

The support and comfort the chaplains provide isn't limited to the fallen and their families though. They also provide a "ministry of presence" for the men and women called upon to prepare those fallen for the trip to their final destination.

Many of the young men and women who deploy here from around the country are exposed to stresses most people will never see, the chaplains said. Whether it's assisting with autopsies, cleaning personal effects so they can be returned to families, or dressing the fallen in the proper uniform for a funeral, exposure to the horrors of war can take its toll on individuals.

"These people are doing things for our heroes that they can't necessarily talk to their families about," Jennings said. "They see and do things that people can't understand unless they've been here."

Chaplains work closely with mental health specialists to help ease those stresses. They try to be very visible and establish relationships with workers throughout the center, they said.

"You have to develop trust before they'll talk," Jennings agreed.

One thing that impressed Jennings is the level of professionalism and devotion he saw in people who work at the center.

"There's camaraderie, especially in the back (where the fallen are prepared for transport)," Jennings said. "They move around together and there's a lot of humor in the morning, but when the preparation starts, things get quiet, and they focus on the task at hand."

The chaplains also helped with the center's Resiliency Program, which is designed to help people deal with the stresses they encounter in the workplace. They set up trips to off-base sites, including a trip to Arlington National Cemetery and a kayaking trip – trips that not only tied together the work they did here but also provided relief from stress.

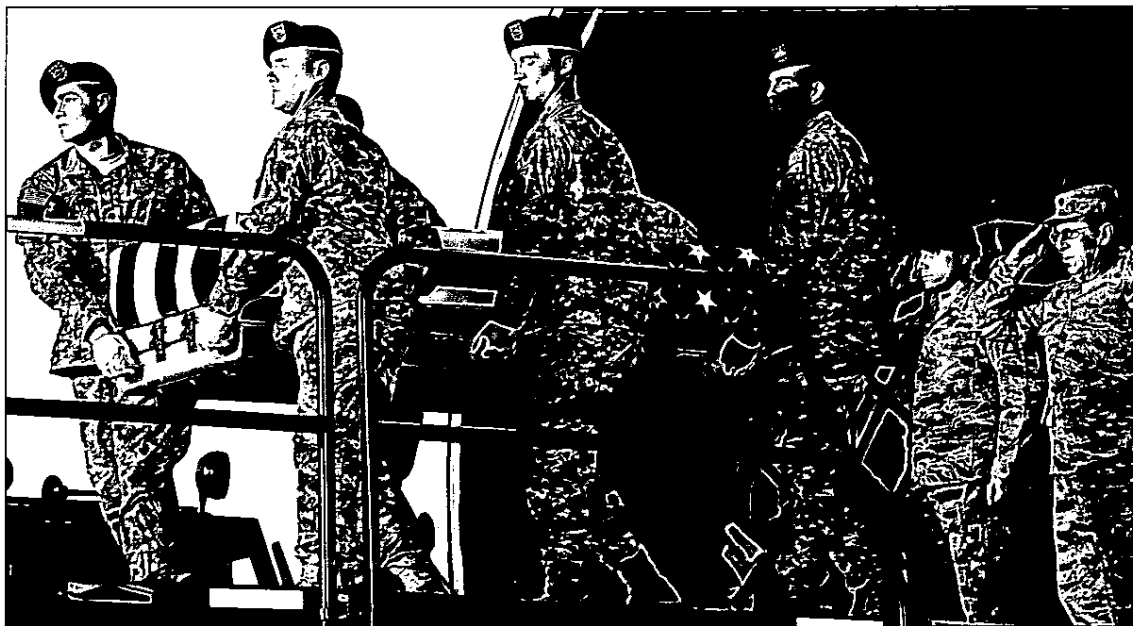
Jennings said he took part of the center home with him – he left Dover with memories, both painful and positive.

"We all have scars on our body, like when I fell on a bike and got gravel under my skin. Every once in a while you'll touch that scar and remember that life experience," Jennings said. "The analogy with those scars is that I remember the pain, the sadness, the grieving parents and spouses. But I also remember the pleasantries as well ... the personalities who have touched me in positive ways. They helped heal those scars." ■

### Saluting the Fallen.

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Lance Jennings, far right, salutes as an Army carry team moves a fallen Soldier during a dignified transfer event at Dover Air Force Base, Del. The chaplain was called upon to pray for the fallen warrior before the case was carried from the aircraft to an awaiting vehicle. Jennings deployed to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Center at Dover for about five months.

Photo: Jason Minto, U.S. Air Force





## Santa and Mrs. Claus Land in Koyuk



**Holiday Happiness.** Santa and Mrs. Claus pass a present to an excited Koyuk girl during Operation Santa Claus. Operation Santa Claus also visited St. George, Nondalton, Gambell, Klukwan, Pedro Bay and Kasigluk.  
Photo: Private First Class Michelle Nash, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

By Private First Class Michelle Nash, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** Dashing through the sky, in an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft, Santa, Mrs. Claus and a team of elves landed in Koyuk in early November.

This year marks the 53rd annual Operation Santa Claus, an Alaska National Guard program that brings the holiday spirit to remote Alaska villages with toys, books, fresh fruit, entertainment, ice cream

sundaes and a chance to get a picture with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

"This has put everyone in a good spirit for Christmas," said Grace Morris, a resident of Koyuk. "This is great for the kids, the adults and the whole community."

Approximately 300 residents of Koyuk gathered in the Koyuk Malemute School gym to commence the 2009 holiday season and to participate in the festivities.

"This was a great event that brought the whole community together," said Kim Hanisch, principal of the Koyuk Malemute School. "We have community events, but I've never seen such a great turnout for such a positive reason."

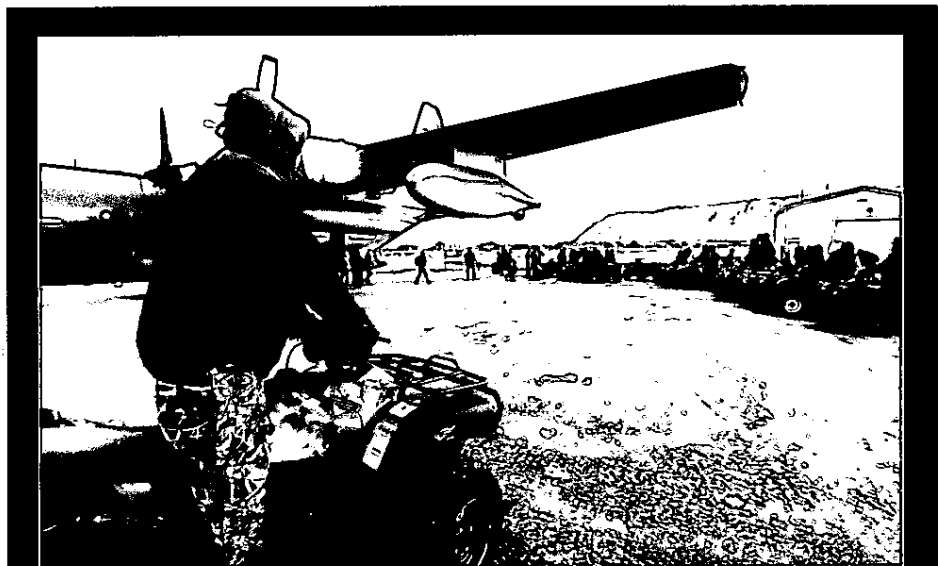
Operation Santa Claus not only brings a community together, but it also provides a unique and unforgettable experience.

"We assume that everyone has access to something as simple as ice cream," said Rich Owens, owner of Tastee Freez, who donated ice cream sundaes and provided one for every resident in the village. "But for some people this is the first time they've ever tasted ice cream or had the presentation of building an ice cream sundae."

Besides Koyuk, Operation Santa Claus visited St. George, Nondalton, Gambell, Klukwan, Pedro Bay and Kasigluk. ■

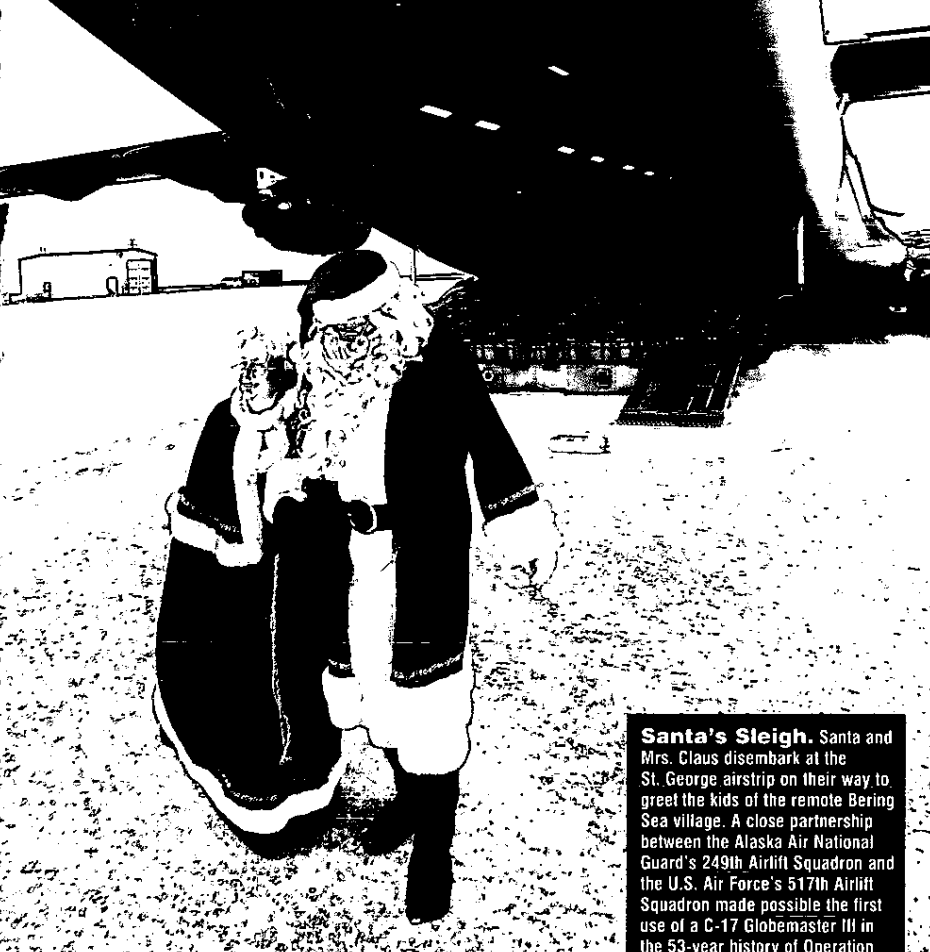


**Ice Cream Crowds.** Rich Owens, center in blue, owner of Tastee Freez, and a team of elves serve ice cream sundaes to the residents of Koyuk during Operation Santa Claus. Residents chose between chocolate or vanilla ice cream and toppings of caramel or chocolate syrup, whipped cream, sprinkles, strawberries, nuts and a cherry.  
Photo: Private First Class Michelle Nash, 134th Public Affairs Detachment



**Ready for Santa and Company.** Gambell resident Gerry Koonooka Sr. waits with the rest of the Operation Santa Claus reception committee for the offloading of an Alaska Air National Guard HC-130 aircraft in December. The Alaska Air and Army National Guard were in Gambell with a group of civilian volunteers as part of Operation Santa Claus 2009. Photo: First Lieutenant John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

# Christmas Cheer in St. George



**Santa's Sleigh.** Santa and Mrs. Claus disembark at the St. George airstrip on their way to greet the kids of the remote Bering Sea village. A close partnership between the Alaska Air National Guard's 249th Airlift Squadron and the U.S. Air Force's 517th Airlift Squadron made possible the first use of a C-17 Globemaster III in the 53-year history of Operation Santa Claus. Photo: First Lieutenant John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

By Senior Airman Nancy Goldberger, 176th Wing Public Affairs

**ST. GEORGE, Alaska ...** Instead of the sounds of jingle bells and hooves, the children of this remote Bering Sea island heard for the first time the powerful engines of an Air Force C-17 cargo jet ushering in their beloved Santa Claus in November.

Santa and Mrs. Claus were in St. George as part of Operation Santa Claus 2009. Now in its 53rd year, Operation Santa Claus is an outreach program for the Alaska National Guard and its community supporters.

The St. George visit marked the first time a C-17 had been used in conjunction with Operation Santa Claus. The new capability was made possible by the close working relationship the Alaska Air National Guard's 249th Airlift Squadron has developed with the Air Force's 517th Airlift Squadron. The 249th formed about two years ago and was formally activated

in September. It is in a "classic association" with the 517th; that is, it supplies flight crews and maintenance personnel who work side-by-side with their active-duty counterparts.

Nearly the entire village of St. George turned out to meet the Alaska Guard members and local Anchorage volunteers who brought with them a holiday meal, lively music and a planeload of gifts.

"This is great," said Carol Randall, the school principal. "Because we're not on the road system, they don't get to see stuff like this. The whole town was excited about this – they couldn't wait for this to happen."

"This trip was very special. Using the C-17 with both an active duty Air Force and Alaska Air National Guard crew demonstrated a great relationship between our two organizations, and I think it's a



**Holiday Music Maker.** Staff Sergeant Jeff Dahlseng, a trombonist with the Northern Light Brass section of the U.S. Air Force Band of the Pacific, performs for St. George residents as part of Operation Santa Claus 2009. Photo: First Lieutenant John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

mark of the future of the association between the Air Force and the Air National Guard," remarked Lieutenant Governor Craig Campbell, who traveled to St. George with Operation Santa Claus.

Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, described the mission as a great training opportunity.

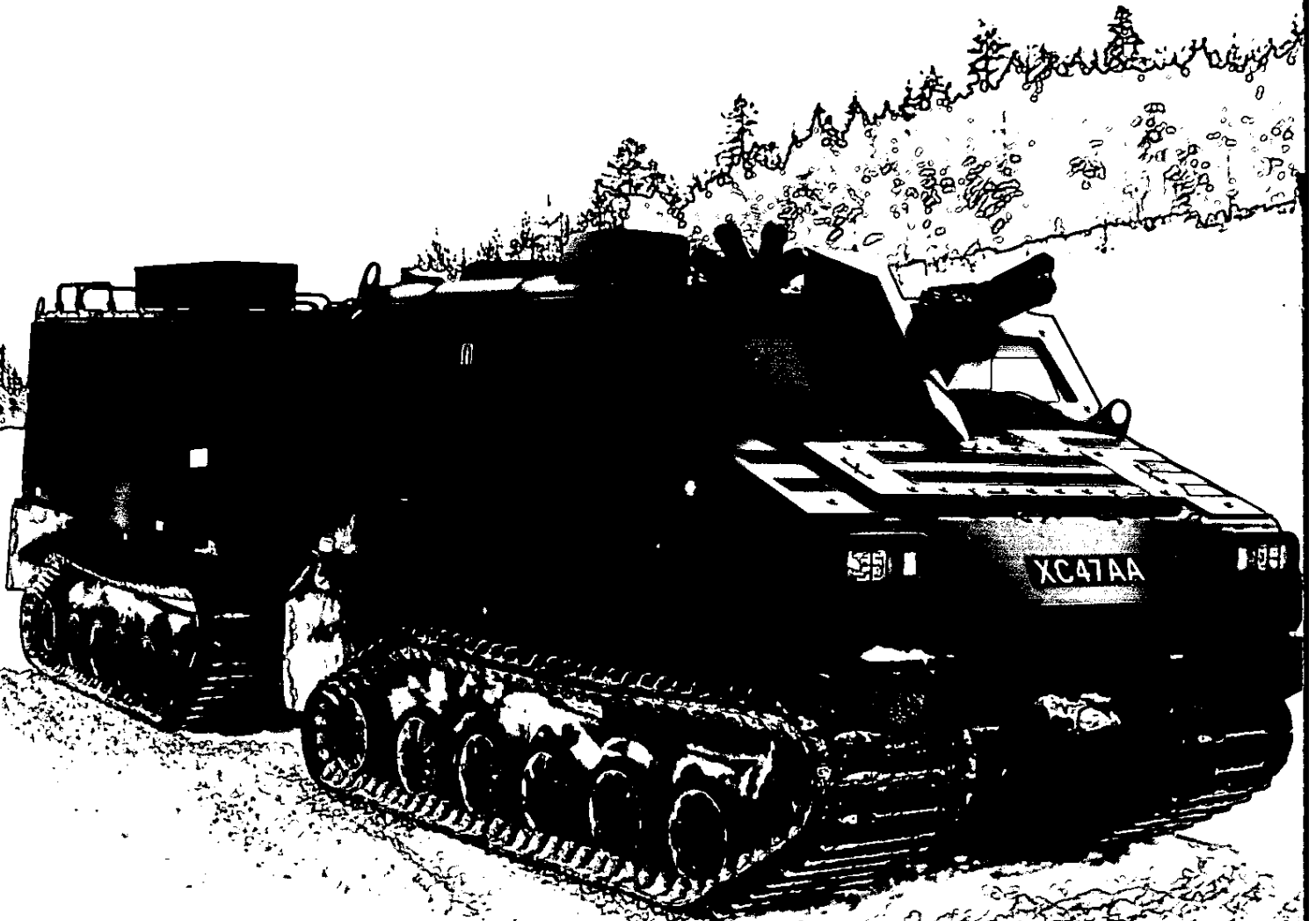
The mission allows Alaska's joint military forces to "take our tremendous military assets and apply them in such a positive manner to our communities, especially during the holiday season," he said.

"We get to bring a little bit of happiness with us," added Mrs. Claus. ■



**Unloading Santa's Supplies.** Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, stacks presents and water in a pickup truck for transport to the St. George School during the Operation Santa Claus visit there in November. Photo: First Lieutenant John Callahan, 176th Wing Public Affairs

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# Deployed Guardsman Honored as 'Top Forty Under 40'

By Kalei Brooks, DMVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska** ... An Alaska Army National Guard member currently deployed to Afghanistan has been named a national and state top 40, under 40 honoree.

Major Wayne Don, originally from Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island, was recognized by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development in its inaugural "Native American 40 Under 40," which honors 40 young native professionals across the country who have made significant contributions to their tribes and communities.

Don was also named as one of "Alaska's Top Forty Under 40," a selection by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the Alaska Journal of Commerce that recognizes the state's leading young professionals who demonstrated professional excellence and a commitment to their community. Don is a member of the Alaska Army National Guard and serves as the chairman of his village corporation, NIMA Corporation.

"There are some very accomplished people on the list, so it's very humbling and exciting to be included with such a distinguished group of people," said Don, who is currently serving a six-month deployment providing base security in Afghanistan.

Don is part of a two-member team from the Alaska Army National Guard embedded with the Mongolian Expeditionary Force in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The two Alaska Army National Guardsmen are working as tactical advisers, consultants on base security operations and mentors – serving to offer insight into the U.S. command structure and operational tempo.



**Deployed.** Major Wayne Don, Alaska Army National Guard, is currently deployed to Camp Eggers, Afghanistan, embedded with the Mongolian Expeditionary Force. Photo: Master Sergeant Scott Hardesty, Task Force Avenger



**Training with Mongolians.** Alaska Army National Guard Major Wayne Don, left, and Mongolian Armed Forces Major Javkhanbayar Dondogdorj discuss a traffic control point training scenario as the Mongolian Expeditionary Force executes it during Khaan Quest at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. Don deployed with Dondogdorj and the Mongolian Expeditionary Force as an embedded U.S. liaison in September 2009. Photo: Captain Amy B. Stinker, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

"Major Don is a testament to the strength of character and professionalism that is the Alaska National Guard," said Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "We are proud of his accomplishments and contributions not only to the Alaska National Guard and his community but to the nation as well."

Don, who joined the Alaska Army National Guard in 2005, said the best childhood lesson he learned was in kindergarten.

"My kindergarten teacher would have us march whenever we got too rowdy to re-establish order in the classroom," Don said. "I found out after she passed away that she was a former Marine drill sergeant. While in college I enrolled in ROTC and served 11 years on active duty and continue to serve in the Alaska Army National Guard. I think the lesson of good order and discipline started with learning to march and had an impact on my initial career choice."

The state "Top Forty Under 40" award was handed out at a luncheon in Anchorage in January. His children accepted the award on his behalf. ■

### Back in Alaska, Back to Snow.

Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, returns a salute to Sergeant Vinny Salzburn, 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, after the last flight of Guardsmen returned home from Kosovo in November. The Guard members returned from a yearlong deployment where they supported a peacekeeping and peace enforcement mission.

Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



# 1/207th Aviation Returns from Kosovo



**Supportive Sons.** Russell Seymour, 13, and younger brother, Randall, 8, show their patriotic spirit at the Alaska National Guard Armory while waiting for their father, Alaska Army National Guard Sergeant Shane Seymour, to return from a yearlong deployment to Kosovo.

Photo: Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

By Kalei Brooks, DMVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** After flying nearly 2,900 hours in Kosovo while supporting more than 1,100 missions, the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, Alaska Army National Guard, returned home to Alaska in November.

The Soldiers deployed for one year, spending time furthering their training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., and Hohenfels, Germany, before landing in Kosovo in February 2009 where they supported a peacekeeping and peace enforcement mission. While in Kosovo, the Guardsmen provided aviation support to U.S. and coalition forces with UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

"The 1/207th Aviation Regiment was highly praised by U.S., NATO and coalition partner leaders for their professionalism in providing air movement, reconnaissance, surveillance, aero-medical evacuation and helicopter fire-fighting capabilities throughout Kosovo," said Lieutenant

Colonel Jeff Roach, 1/207th Aviation commander. "Having the 1/207th Aviation Regiment present in Kosovo allowed NATO and coalition partners to provide a safe and secure environment for the people of Kosovo and ensured freedom of movement for all."

According to Roach, the most significant event during the deployment was providing air transportation throughout Kosovo to Vice President of the United States Joe Biden and then-Governor Sarah Palin on separate occasions. The unit also maintained day and night quick-reaction forces and was the first in the U.S. Army to transport the French-made VBL armored vehicle with a Black Hawk helicopter.

"Our Alaska Army National Guard members transported more than 8,000 passengers and successfully completed an important security mission to help maintain a peaceful environment in a region that has seen conflicts with its new, emerging government and social structure," said Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "We are proud of our Soldiers for providing critical aviation support to the NATO commander of Kosovo Forces to ensure stability in the region."

The unit, headquartered at Bryant Army Guard Airfield on Fort Richardson, brought eight Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters on the deployment. Guard members on the mission hailed from Anchorage, Eagle River, Wasilla, Palmer, Soldotna, Fairbanks, Nome, Bethel and Juneau.

1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, is the most deployed unit in the Alaska National Guard having previously deployed elements to Kosovo in 2004, as well as fulfilling missions in Iraq, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras. ■



**Reunited.** Staff Sergeant Jeremy Hanson is reunited with his children, Makenna, 18 months, and Talya, 3, along with his wife, Kathleen, during a welcome home event for 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, at the Alaska National Guard Armory in November.

Photo: Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

# F Company Returns from Iraq

**From Sand to Snow.** Soldiers from F Company, 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, arrive in Alaska on a C-17 flown by the Alaska Air National Guard's 249th Airlift Squadron. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



By Kalei Brooks, DMVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENLI, Alaska ...** After a nine-month deployment to Iraq providing aviation support, 30 Soldiers from the Alaska Army National Guard returned home to Alaska in late December, just in time to ring in the new year with family and friends.

Guard members from F Company, 1/207th Aviation, had been deployed since April 2009, transporting cargo, equipment and personnel across Iraq and Kuwait using the C-23 fixed-wing aircraft, which the company also flies here in Alaska. The Sherpa aircraft are able to take small loads and go to some locations where the larger aircraft of Air Force transports don't go.

"This was the third deployment to Iraq for this aviation company, and once again, the Guard members excelled in their mission," said Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "We are proud to welcome home these accomplished Soldiers and grateful for their continued service to our nation and great state."

The Alaska Army National Guardsmen arrived in Alaska on a C-17 flown by the Alaska Air National Guard's 249th Airlift Squadron. This was a true testament to the joint effort and collaboration of the Alaska Air and Army National Guard. This also marked the first time an Alaska Air

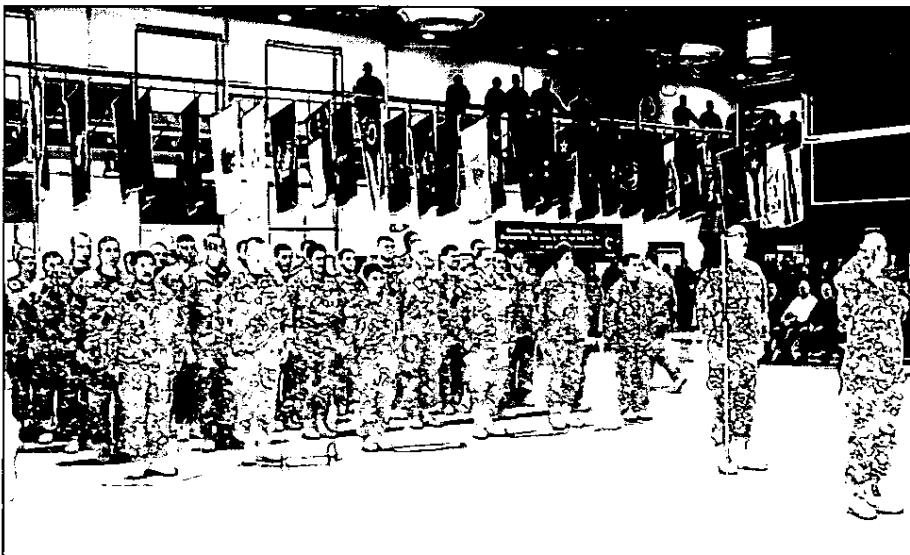


**Sweet Meeting.** Sergeant Levi Roy and his wife, Amber, smile at their daughter, who Roy met in person for the first time after returning from a nine-month deployment to Iraq with the Alaska Army National Guard.

Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

National Guard C-17 crew and aircraft picked up deployed Alaska Army National Guardsmen from Iraq to bring them home.

The deployed Soldiers call Anchorage, Eagle River, the Mat-Su Valley, Juneau and Fairbanks home. ■



**Back on the Home Front.** After a nine-month deployment to Iraq, 30 Soldiers from F Company, 1/207th Aviation, stand at attention during the unit's uncasing ceremony at the Alaska National Guard Armory in January. During deployments, unit guidons are cased, which represents the unit's absence on the home front; the guidons are then uncased when the unit returns home, signifying their return from the battlefield. Photo: Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs



**Mission Complete.** Lieutenant Governor Craig E. Campbell, left, and Colonel Tim DeHaas, chief of staff of the Alaska Army National Guard, shake hands with Alaska Army National Guardsmen returning in December from a nine-month deployment to Iraq.

Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

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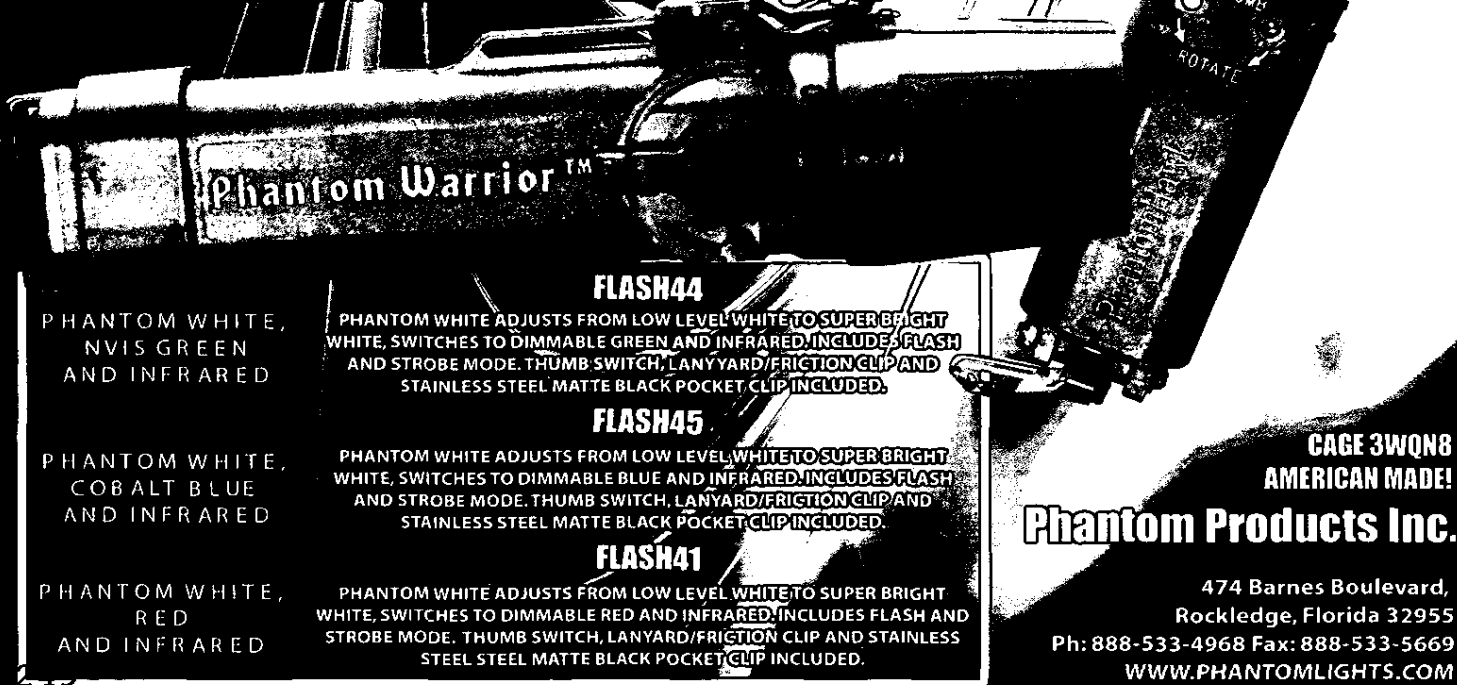
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# New Sergeant Major a Trailblazer



**Leading the Way.** Sergeant Major Lillian Aukongak's daughters, Sasha and Holly, change her shoulder boards to the rank of sergeant major during her promotion ceremony held at the Alaska National Guard Armory in October. Aukongak, an Inupiaq Alaska Native, is the first female Alaska Native to be federally recognized as a sergeant major in the Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

By Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** Military life is difficult; it's challenging and sometimes, it's just downright hard. Soldiers make sacrifices every day to serve in the military and have the privilege of wearing the uniform.

For one Soldier of the Alaska Army National Guard, those sacrifices and challenges have paid off. Lillian Aukongak, an Inupiaq Alaska Native, is the first female Alaska Native to be federally recognized as a sergeant major in the Alaska Army National Guard. She was pinned during a promotion ceremony held at the Alaska National Guard Armory in October.

"Right now I'm still kind of in disbelief," Aukongak said. "It's kind of hard for me to grasp that I'd be the first female Alaska Native in the Alaska Army National Guard to be federally recognized as a sergeant major. To me it's a privilege and a very humbling experience."

Challenges, however, are nothing new to Aukongak. She faced challenges at a young age. At six years old, she was orphaned and entered into the foster care system, where she and her seven sisters and two brothers were split up and sent to separate homes.

"Everyone has challenges and not everyone goes through what I went through," said Aukongak, who calls Golovin and White Mountain home, but was born in Nome. "But that didn't stop me from pursuing my goals and following my dreams. I've always had very positive sisters who kind of mothered me; because I lost my parents at such a young age, I really looked up to them and admired them from a distance."

When Aukongak was 18 years old, she decided that she needed to make a change in her life. She made a decision that would begin her journey to success and enlisted in the Alaska Army National Guard in Nome on Oct. 14, 1986.

Starting out as a radio operator for 1/297th Infantry (Scout) Battalion, Aukongak held several different jobs and moved up the

ranks quickly. She joined the Active Guard Reserve program in 1991, but the idea of earning a college degree was at the front of her mind. Aukongak began taking college courses while working full time and received her bachelor's degree in human services in 2007.

Aukongak believes education played a key role in her success and encourages Soldiers to take advantage of all the educational opportunities the Alaska Army National Guard has to offer.

"Attend your military education schools to progress in your career field," Aukongak said. "I encourage Soldiers to take advantage of what's offered to them and to do their best."

Twenty-three years into her career, the new sergeant major challenges Soldiers to take control of their careers and see how far they can make it. Aukongak is aware that because of her ethnicity and accomplishments, she is a role model for more than one reason, but insists that everyone can be a mentor and inspirational example.

"I believe that when you wear the uniform, regardless of your rank or background, you are a role model," Aukongak said. "You have Soldiers who admire you from a distance, whether you acknowledge it or not. The higher grade you make, the more you put yourself in a position to be a mentor and role model; I call it being admired from a distance."

"I personally have a lot of people whom I've admired from a distance," Aukongak added. "Command Sergeant Major Pamela Harrington and Sergeants Major Jane Dennis and Kerry Averett are just a few people I've admired from a distance."

"I think Sergeant Major Aukongak's accomplishment is a great triumph and success story," said State Command Sergeant Major Gordon Choate, Alaska Army National Guard. "She is a leader who our Soldiers can look up to, and she epitomizes the truth that Soldiers who live the Army values can achieve the highest ranks through leadership and hard work." ■



# Veterans

## Women Veterans Recognized for Military Service



**Longest Service.** Lieutenant Colonel Judy Mathewson, right, Alaska Air National Guard, gives a token of appreciation in November to Chief Master Sergeant Cindy Gollwitzer, 168th Communications Flight, recognizing her as the female veteran with the longest service in the 168th Air Refueling Wing.

Photo: Master Sergeant Brian Schlumbohm, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

By Lieutenant Colonel Judy Mathewson, Alaska Air National Guard

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** During Veterans Week, Nov. 7-11, 2009, as we celebrated 233 years of independence and freedom in America, the Alaska National Guard and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs combined forces to remember those who fought and have fallen to protect our freedoms – our women in the military.

Since Congress enacted the Women's Armed Services Integration Act in 1948, the number of women joining the ranks of the military has been on the rise. In 1950, women constituted just 2 percent of the military. Today, women make up about 15 percent of the military's active duty population and 15.5 percent in reserve capacities, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Women are the fastest growing population of veterans, with some 200,000 women who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

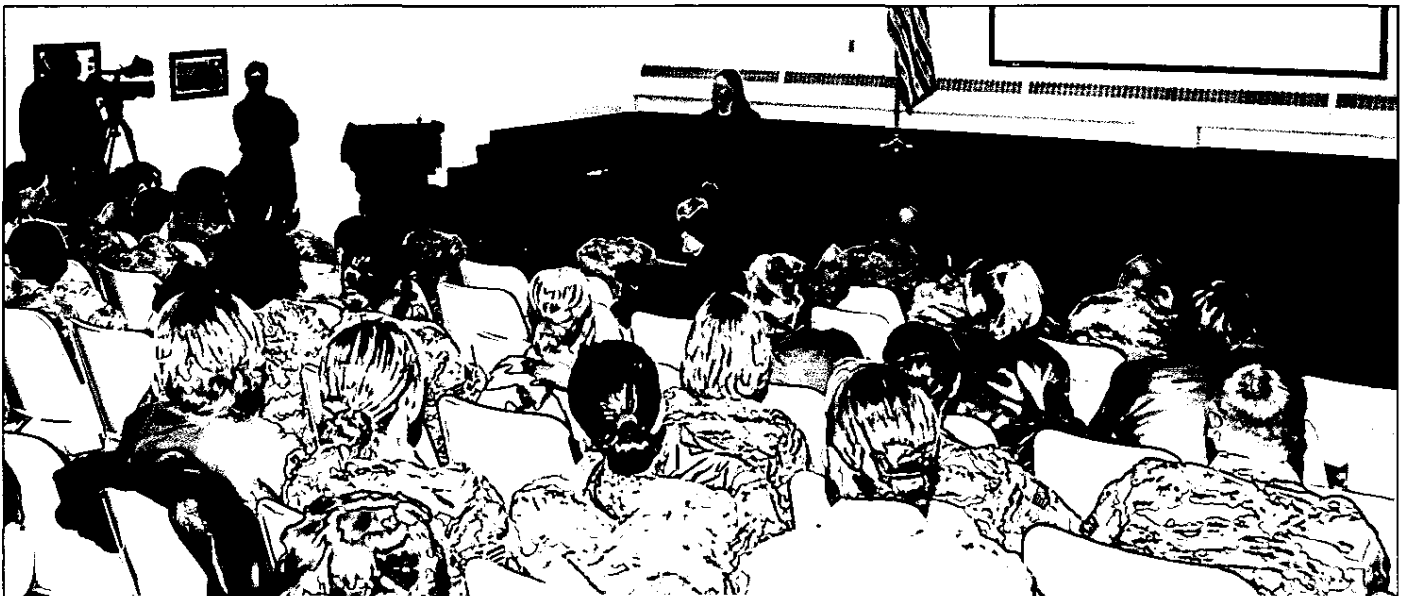
In recognition of all the women in Alaska who have served in the military, six Celebrating Alaska Women Veterans ceremonies were held in November, sponsored by the Alaska National Guard and the State Women Veterans Committee. These presentations were held throughout the state to educate women about their benefits and women-in-combat issues.

"It's important we pay special tribute to the more than 8,200 of the almost 1.83 million U.S. women veterans who call Alaska home today," said Brigadier General Deborah McManus, Alaska Women Veterans coordinator for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs and assistant adjutant general – Alaska Air National Guard. "Today, the women of Alaska continue to serve in every branch of the armed forces, including more than 750 in the Alaska National Guard, with unwavering pride, exemplary dignity and many outstanding accomplishments. It's important we recognize the unique mental and physical health care needs of women, particularly those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan."

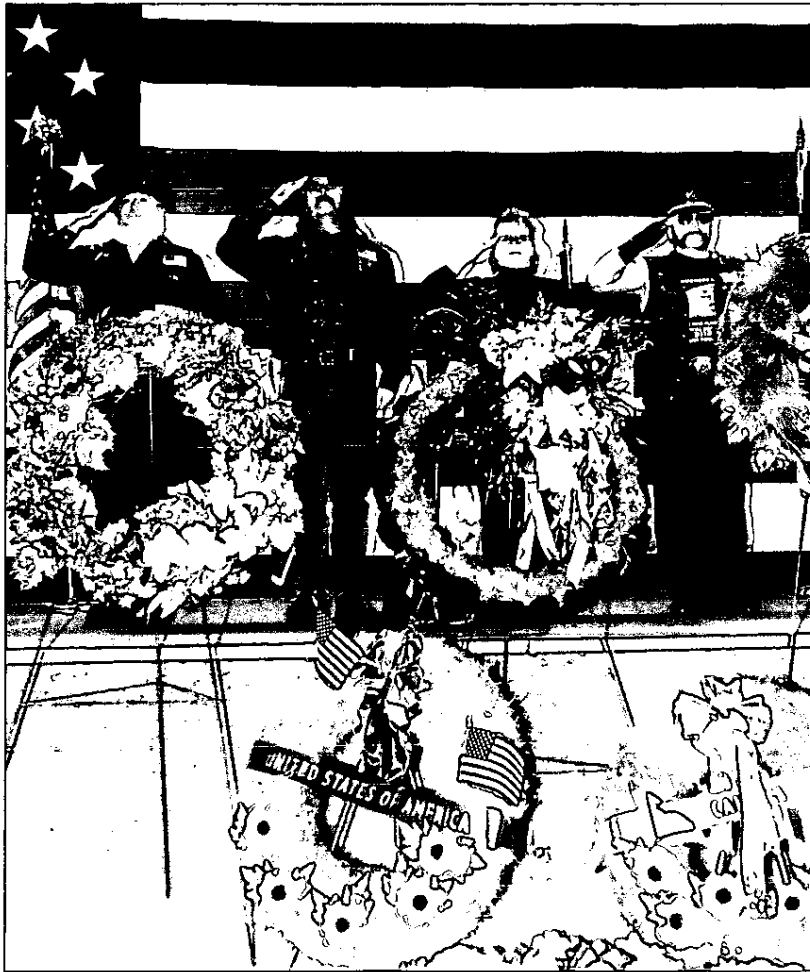
With continuing conflicts in both of those countries and 68 other locations, more stories need to be told from a woman's perspective. Each presentation in Alaska featured the documentary, "Lioness," which tells the story of four female Soldiers attached to all-male combat units in the Army and the Marines.

Shannon Morgan, the featured female Soldier, is now medically retired. Along with McManus, she spoke to Alaskans about available services and encouraged women veterans to apply for the benefits they have rightfully earned.

The Women Veterans Health Program – Veterans Clinic in Anchorage, Bassett Memorial Hospital in Fort Wainwright and the Vet Centers throughout the state – offer women veterans information, support and other health-related services. ■



**Encouraging Women Veterans.** Shannon Morgan speaks to a crowd at the Women's Veterans event held in November at the Alaska Air National Guard's 168th Air Refueling Wing operations group theater at Eielson Air Force Base. Morgan is a combat veteran who was attached to all-male combat units in the Army and Marines as part of the Lioness program. She came to Alaska to share her story and encourage women veterans to apply for the many benefits that are available to them. Photo: Staff Sergeant Daniel Heseton, 168th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs



**Saluting The Fallen.** Members of the Viet Nam Vets Motorcycle Club family salute during the fallen warriors ceremony held during the Veterans and Remembrance Day ceremony at the Alaska National Guard armory on Fort Richardson. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



**Advocate for Veterans.** Governor Sean Parnell congratulates Lieutenant Colonel Marc Hoffmeister, U.S. Army Alaska, during the state's Veterans and Remembrance Day ceremony in November, for earning the 2009 Governors Veteran Advocacy Award. Hoffmeister, who was injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq in 2007, also gave the keynote address stressing the importance of veteran support networks. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

## Season of Accomplishments

By Verdie Bowen, State Veterans Office

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** This is a wonderful time to be a veteran in Alaska. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is providing more health care to Alaskan veterans; the Alaska National Guard co-hosted six Celebrating Alaska Women Veterans events; the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs drew a large crowd for the Veterans and Remembrance Day event; and the state won a huge victory for Alaska Territorial Guard veterans.

To better serve veterans living in the southern Kenai Peninsula, the VA has established the Homer outreach clinic. This clinic will be open on Mondays, and appointments can be made through the Kenai VA Outpatient Clinic.

The Celebrating Alaska Women Veterans events were a great success. Events were held statewide, spreading awareness of benefits and entitlements that women veterans have earned and are eligible for. The goal was to spread awareness of the unique circumstances female veterans face and to encourage female veterans to apply for their benefits.

Many of Alaska's elected officials attended the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Veterans and Remembrance Day event this year. The keynote speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Marc Hoffmeister, U.S. Army Alaska, spoke about the importance of veteran support networks in Alaska and throughout the Department of Defense.

Governor Sean Parnell presented Hoffmeister with the Governors Advocacy Award for his efforts to provide service dogs to house-bound veterans and for his work organizing fishing trips in Alaska for wounded warriors returning home.

The 2010 National Defense Bill finally closed the last legal loophole regarding benefits for the Alaska Territorial Guard. This bill clarified the definition of time served in the ATG and will allow for additional retirement payments for qualified ATG members. The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is processing four new National Guard retirements and 19 new survivors' benefits packages under the bill. ■



## COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLE for Disasters in the Last Frontier

By Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** When disaster strikes in Alaska, the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management is tasked with coordination of critical services to protect the lives and property of Alaskans. In a state with a wide range of natural disasters and the ever present possibility of man-made emergencies, providing critical services can be a significant challenge.

Utilizing a special one-time grant, DHS&EM contracted for a mobile emergency operation vehicle capable of being dispatched to a disaster-impacted area for the purpose of establishing or restoring community communication with the State Emergency Operation Center. In September 2009, DHS&EM took delivery of the state's Mobile Emergency Operation Center.

MEOC is a 45-foot, state-of-the-art communication platform equipped with a radio dispatch center, disaster response work stations and a suite of information management technologies. MEOC's radio

dispatch center will allow incompatible radio systems to communicate with one another.

"Alaska has a diverse range of radio systems used by our emergency responders, which is a big problem because those systems can't talk to one another," said Karl Edwards, DHS&EM emergency management specialist. "MEOC is capable of bridging the radio connectivity gap and will allow emergency responders seamless communication."

A satellite-enabled Internet connection gives MEOC Voice over Internet Protocol phone service, Internet connectivity, video conferencing and video streaming abilities. A wireless router and hard-line capabilities expand MEOC's Internet connectivity beyond the walls of the vehicle to any nearby facility being used by responders. Interior and exterior video monitors, a 24-inch plotter, and a printing station make sharing information gathered through MEOC's communication system fast and easy.

"MEOC is not sitting and gathering dust while we wait for the next disaster to strike," said Bryan Fisher, DHS&EM chief of operations. "We will train our community partners to use the vehicle, make it available to other state agencies needing on-scene and self-contained communication capabilities, and MEOC will play a role in emergency response exercises. DHS&EM worked with the Alaska State Troopers to deploy MEOC to Hatcher Pass in December for a mountain rescue group's search and rescue exercise."

**Communications on the Go.** The self-sufficient Mobile Emergency Operation Center is loaded with communications equipment and can be rapidly deployed to any disaster-stricken community along Alaska's road system. Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM





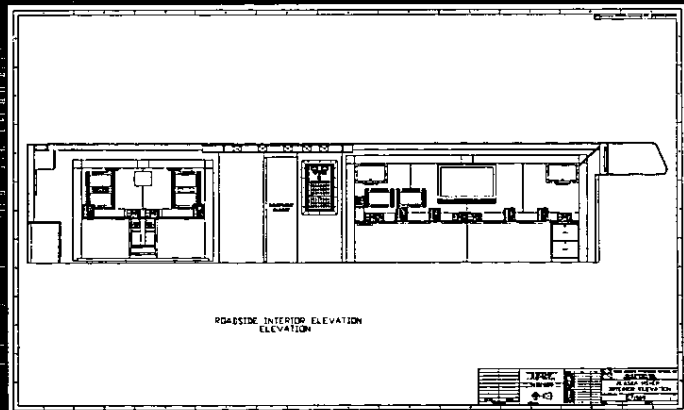
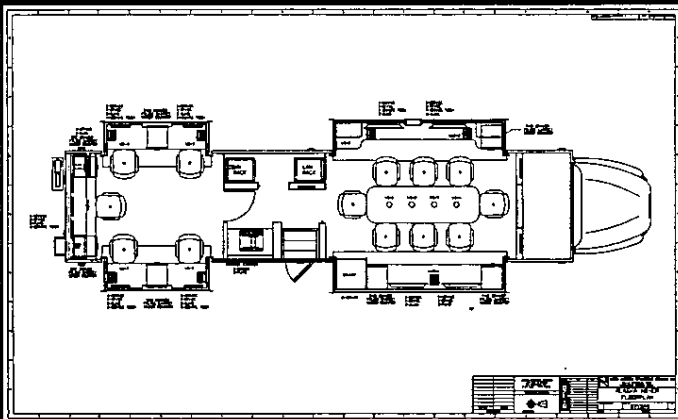
**Radio Dispatch.** DHS&EM personnel Sarah Puerner, left, and Karl Edwards test the Mobile Emergency Operation Center's ability to receive and transmit signals from 11 different types of radios. The MEOC dispatch center allows any of those radio frequencies to easily communicate with one another. Photo: Courtesy of DHS&EM

"The ability to have multiple response organizations on location with full communication capabilities is a great asset to the entire state," said Alaska State Trooper Captain Barry Wilson. "The Troopers look forward to including MEOC in exercises and events as part of our mission."

MEOC can travel anywhere on the Alaska road system that a large motor home can go, and once on scene, the vehicle can be fully operational in 20 minutes. MEOC allows DHS&EM staff to work longer periods on location without drawing on community resources. Critical goods and services will be swifter and better coordinated thanks to MEOC's communication capabilities.

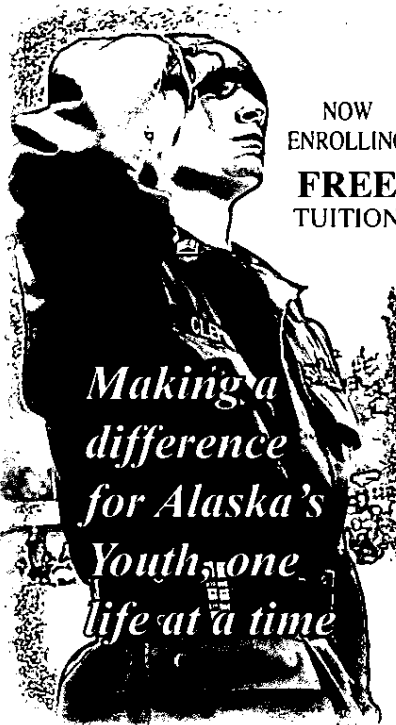
MEOC can be a Disaster Assistance Center by coordinating evacuations or assisting in locating temporary housing for Alaskans who are displaced by a disaster. DHS&EM's mission is to assist community leaders in dealing with the unexpected effects of a disaster, and MEOC will be a tremendous asset in providing an immediate communication capability.

If a future disaster strikes one of Alaska's road accessible communities, MEOC will be there augmenting local emergency response resources, providing reliable interoperable communication capabilities and supplying a host of information management technologies. ■



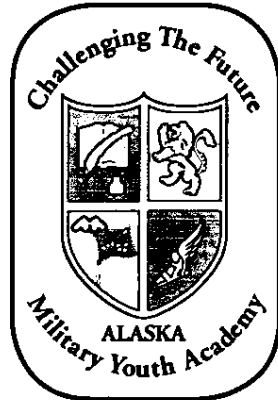
**Fully Equipped**—Among the equipment packed into the Mobile Emergency Operation Center are five radio dispatch consoles, five portable radio handsets, two 12.5-kilowatt generators, 16 Voice over Internet Protocol phones, 10 disaster response work stations with computers, a 34-foot pneumatic mast with a remote controlled video camera and one coffee pot. Photo: North American Catastrophe Services

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### LEADERSHIP/FOLLOWERSHIP

Learn positive leadership and followership responsibilities and positive roles within social groups.



### RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

Understand the civic responsibilities and the role of a positive citizen within the community.



### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Increase grade levels in reading and mathematics, attain a GED or high school diploma and pursue higher education.



### JOB SKILLS

Learn basic employment skills, resume writing, job interview techniques and career exploration.



### LIFE COPING SKILLS

Learn personal financial management, teamwork skills, anger management, and drug and alcohol avoidance strategies.



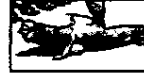
### HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Understand nutrition basics, substance abuse awareness and positive personal relationships.



### SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

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### PHYSICAL FITNESS

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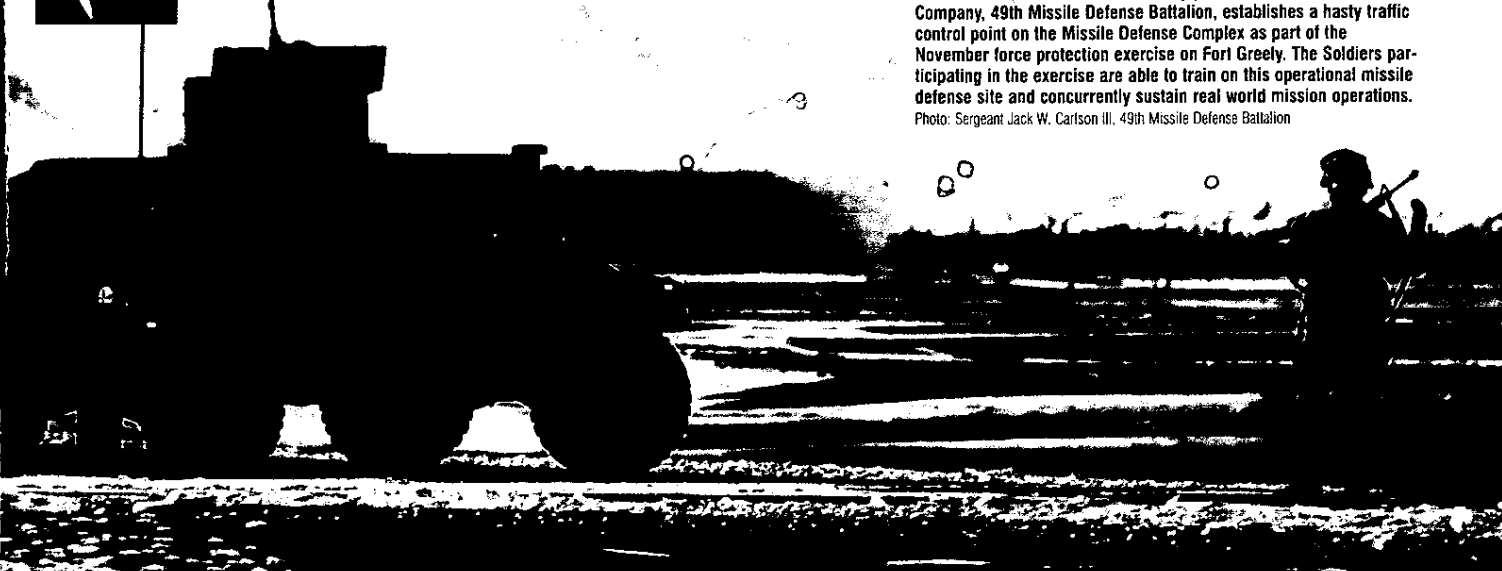
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# Missile Defense

**Force Protection.** A military police officer with Alpha Company, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, establishes a hasty traffic control point on the Missile Defense Complex as part of the November force protection exercise on Fort Greely. The Soldiers participating in the exercise are able to train on this operational missile defense site and concurrently sustain real world mission operations.

Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

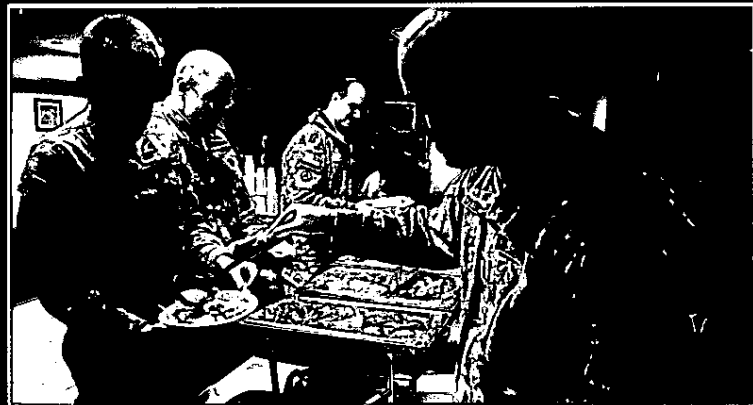


**Giving Thanks to Soldiers.** Command Sergeant Major Bradford Quigley, 49th Missile Defense sergeant major, carves one of the hams being served to the Soldiers of the battalion on Thanksgiving. More than 200 Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers man and secure the missile defense system on Fort Greely 365 days a year. Ensuring that Soldiers are well taken care of is one of the top priorities of command sergeants major.

Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion



**Security Search.** Specialist Julio Velez, military police officer, provides cover for the search of a simulated "hostile person" on the Missile Defense Complex at Fort Greely during a November force protection exercise. Members of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion, Alaska Army National Guard, participated in the four-day exercise developing teamwork, unit cohesion and mission readiness. Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion



**Thanksgiving Turkey.** First Sergeant Richard DeBilzan, right, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, helps serve a traditional Thanksgiving meal to the on-duty Soldiers of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion during the holiday. The tradition at the remote missile defense complex located on Fort Greely is that command elements will serve meals to their Soldiers during the holidays to give thanks to them for their sacrifices and hard work throughout the year.

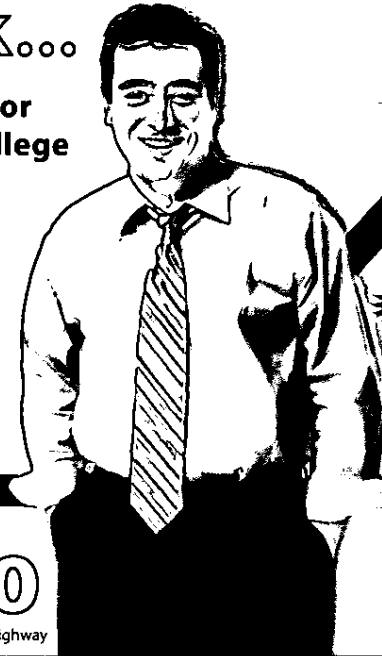
Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

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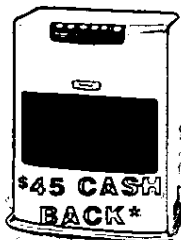
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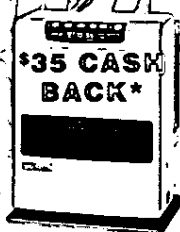
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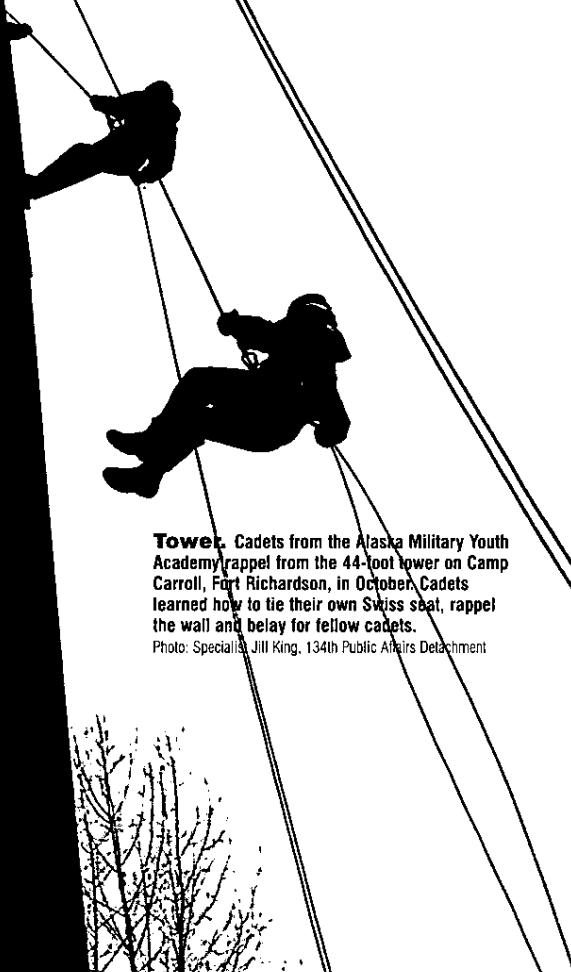
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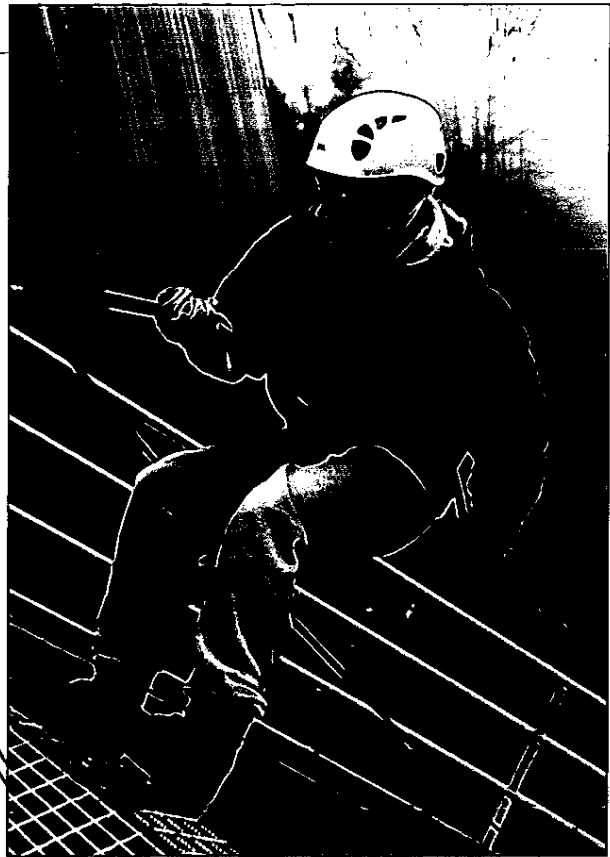


# Education

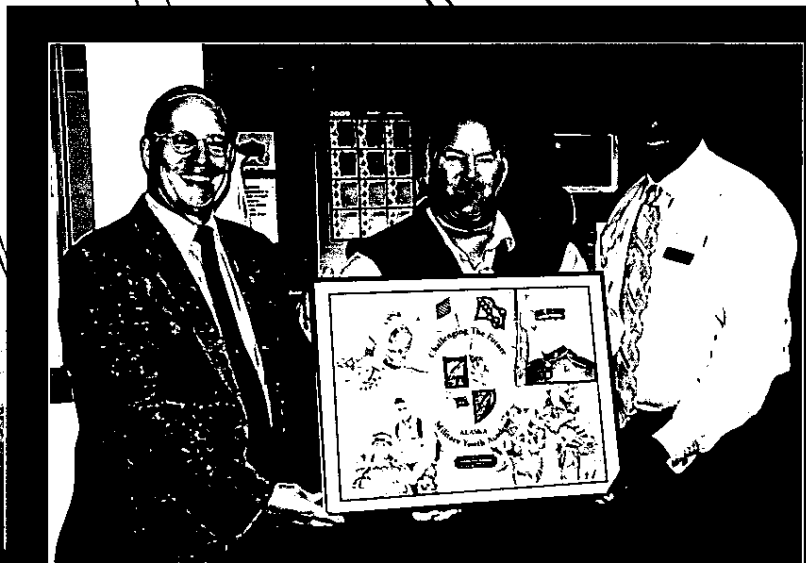


**Tower.** Cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy rappel from the 44-foot tower on Camp Carroll, Fort Richardson, in October. Cadets learned how to tie their own Swiss seat, rappel the wall and belay for fellow cadets.

Photo: Specialist Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment



**Rappel.** Cadet Jayce Hageman, from the Alaska Military Youth Academy, rappels down the practice tower during a confidence training exercise held at Camp Carroll, Fort Richardson, in October. The goal of the training was to instill cadets with confidence and team building skills to succeed in future events. Photo: Specialist Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment



**Thanks for Educating Our Youth.** Officer D. Scott Lofthouse, center, criminal intelligence officer with the Anchorage Police Department, receives an Alaska Military Youth Academy print in September from Director Craig Christensen, left, and Deputy Director Dr. James Jones for supporting the Alaska Military Youth Academy. Lofthouse educated staff members on gangs in Anchorage and also made presentations to cadets. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



**Interceptor Storage Facility.** During the ESGR visit to the Missile Defense Complex on Fort Greely, Jamie Abordonado, left, ESGR; Elizabeth Stamm, center, Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union; and J. J. Harrier, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, listen as Colonel George Bond, right, Missile Defense Agency – Alaska Region, briefs them on the role of the Interceptor Storage Facility. Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

## Supportive Employers Tour Fort Greely

By Jamie Abordonado, ESGR

**FORT GREELY, Alaska ...** Cold weather conditions didn't stop two supportive employers of National Guard and Reserve members from touring the Missile Defense complex at Fort Greely in late November.

J. J. Harrier, communications director for the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, and Elizabeth Stamm, marketing director for Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union, received a personal tour of the operations on Fort Greely to better understand one of the missions of the Alaska Army National Guard. These employers represent supportive businesses in the community, and providing them with an opportunity to experience what the Army National Guard mission is in an "active" capacity is why these tours are important.

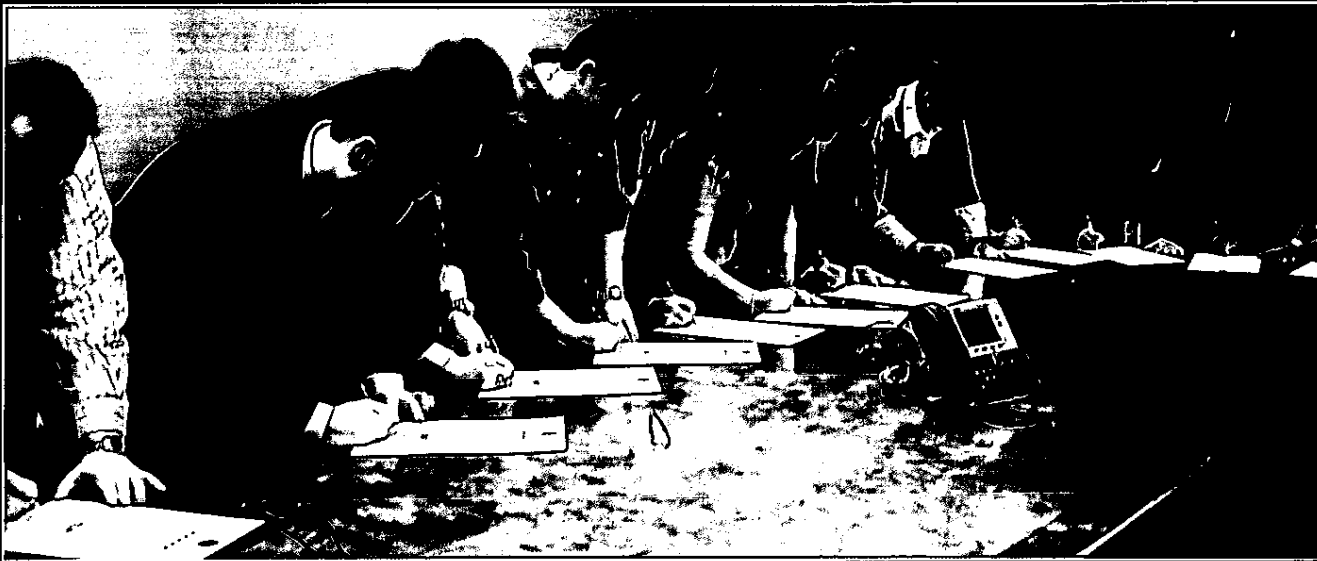


**Welcome to Fort Greely.** Members from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve tour pause with their hosts for a photo during the group's recent visit to the Missile Defense Complex on Fort Greely. The base houses the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system and is home to more than 200 Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers. From left: Captain Jesse Schexnayder, protocol officer, 49th Missile Defense Battalion; Colonel George Bond, assistant to the director, Missile Defense Agency – Alaska Region; Elizabeth Stamm, marketing director, Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union; Jamie Abordonado, executive director, ESGR; J. J. Harrier, communications director, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce; and Lieutenant Colonel Eric Maxon, public affairs officer, Alaska Army National Guard. Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion



**Windy Weather.** Jamie Abordonado, ESGR executive director, holds on to the safety handle leading down into the silo interface vault on the Missile Defense Complex at Fort Greely. The ESGR group visited Fort Greely on an uncommonly windy day, with gusts reaching 70 mph.

Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion



**Supportive Employers.** Sixteen branch managers of Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union in December signed a Statement of Support signifying their commitment to supporting their Guard and Reserve employees. They joined the 775 Alaskan employers who have already signed a Statement of Support with their local Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee. By signing with the Alaska ESGR committee, Denali Alaskan Federal Credit Union will publicly display their support of Alaska's National Guard and Reserve components. Photo: Jamie Abardonado, ESGR

"My trip to Fort Greely gave me more reasons to be proud as an Alaskan and to have a father in the Guard," said Stamm of her experience on the tour. "It's truly amazing what the men and women of Fort Greely do for our country. I was blown away by the capabilities of this small military base. Colonel George Bond

[assistant to the director of the Missile Defense Agency – Alaska Region] and his staff were welcoming and very knowledgeable."

All who attended described the wealth of information gained about the mission, the supportive elements, and the amount of protection provided at Fort Greely as extremely impressive. ■

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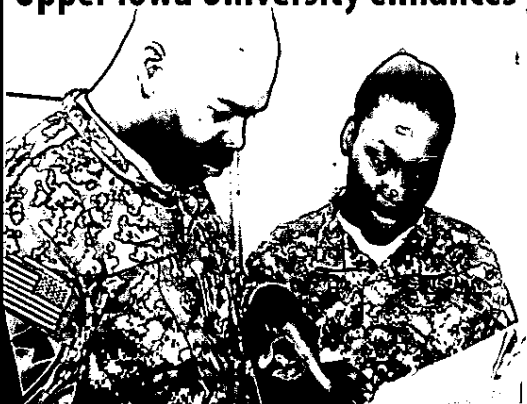
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# Family Support



## Helping Guard Families in Need

By Sergeant Karima Turner, DMVA Public Affairs

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska ...** The Alaska National Guard Family Programs shared in the spirit of giving this season to help Guard families receive toy donations from various organizations, businesses and individuals who wanted to give back to Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen and their families during the holidays.

In 2009, more than 400 toys were donated to the Alaska National Guard Family Programs intended for Guard families. The toys went toward making the holiday season a little brighter for Alaska National Guard families who might not have otherwise had the resources.

Gianna Varrati-Simmons, Alaska Army National Guard, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and Family Readiness Support assistant, worked tirelessly to get the word out to Guard commanders that families didn't have to go without presents during the holidays.

"Commanders see our Soldiers and Airmen on drill weekends, and word of mouth lets them know if there's a family in need," Varrati-Simmons said. "I really pushed the commanders to let me know if there was a family that needed a little extra help during Christmas, and through those efforts we identified nearly 25 families to assist."

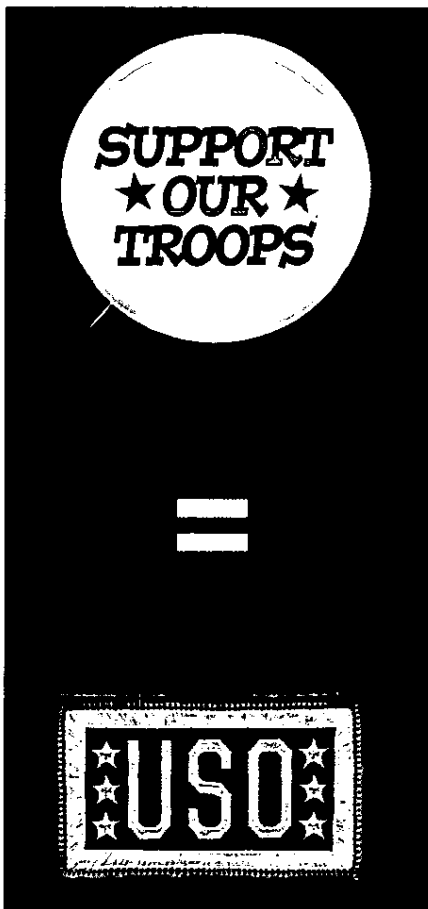
Varrati-Simmons said many of the Guard families were modest and didn't want anyone to know they needed assistance, so Family Programs really worked to reach out to them.

"At some point in our lives we have all needed a little help," said Kera Spaulding, Alaska Army National Guard, 38th Troop Command and Family Readiness Support assistant. "We have resources and donations to help service members and their families. These programs are in place because for a long time, people needed help, and we didn't have the resources; but now we do."

Varrati-Simmons said the main focus was to make sure families in need were able to provide a nice holiday for their children, but the effort to help families runs year round.

Often times, people don't realize it's OK to ask for help. It can be an issue of pride, but as the Guard stresses, it's one big Guard family and everyone is in it together.

"There are a lot of people who want to help out," Varrati-Simmons said. "We've all been there; we've all struggled at one point, and we want to make sure families know that we are here to help them because they are part of our Alaska National Guard family." ■



**Donation Dollars.** Colonel Cathy Jorgensen, left, commander of the Alaska Army National Guard's 38th Troop Command; Jan Myers, center, director of the Alaska National Guard's Family Programs; and Chief Master Sergeant Dennis Hogan, state command chief of the Alaska Air National Guard, proudly accept a \$5,000 donation from Best Buy to the Alaska Friends of the Guard and Reserve. Best Buy presented the check during the store's grand opening of its newest location in Anchorage in June 2009. Photo: Courtesy Jan Myers, Family Programs



# Who We Are...

## What is your favorite winter activity?

**Staff Sergeant Christopher Williams**  
213th Space Warning Squadron




"Snowmobiling – because it is fun and a great workout."

**Mary Sorensen**  
Family Programs



"I like playing in the snow with my son."

**Second Lieutenant Raymond Lowdermilk**  
Joint Forces Headquarters



"I really enjoy riding snowmachines. I haven't had much of a chance, since I've been out of state for seminary school, so I plan on making up for lost time."

**Staff Sergeant Jennifer Barto**  
213th Space Warning Squadron

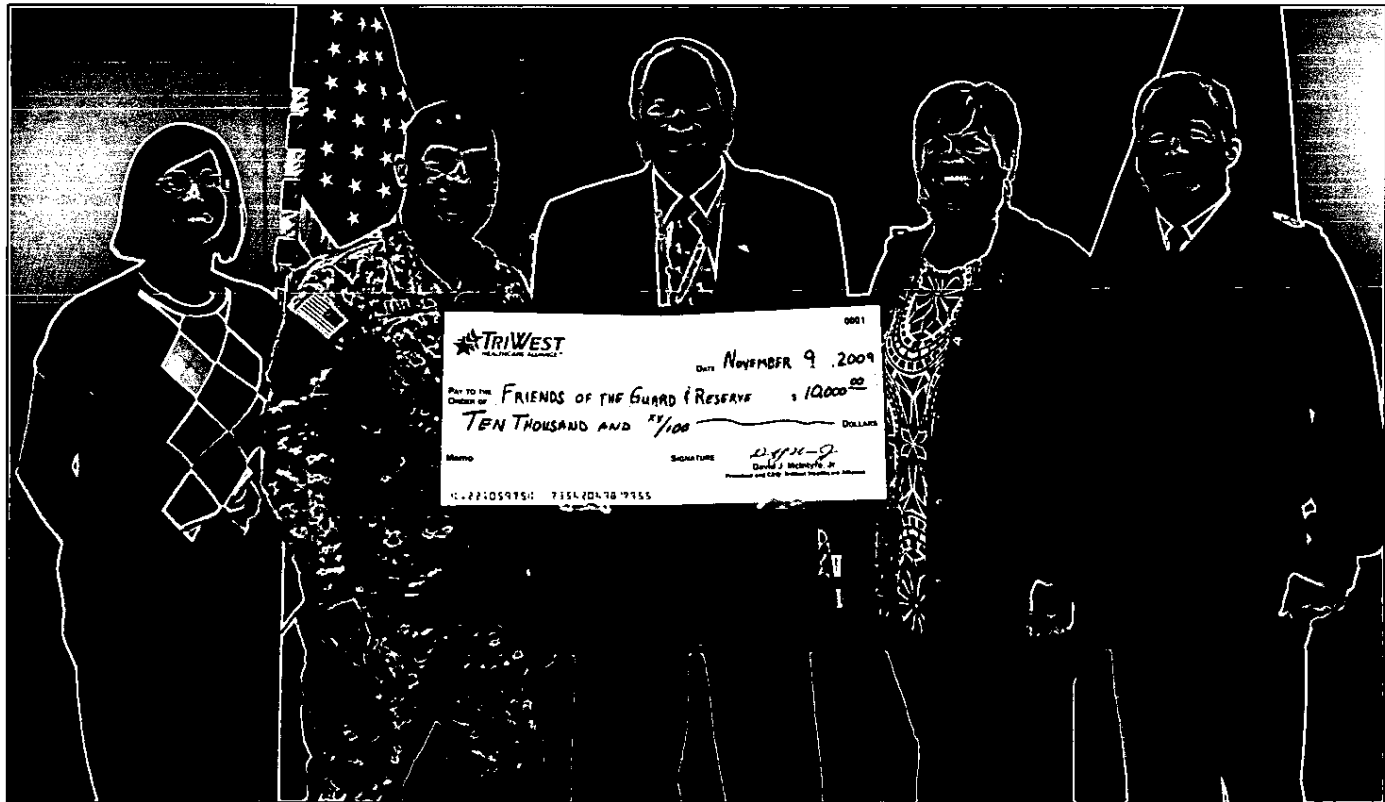


"My favorite winter activity is snowmobiling. It's another great way to enjoy Alaska!"

**Staff Sergeant Edwin Brunner**  
Family Programs



"My favorite winter activity is hiking and just being outside."



**Giving to the Guard.** Left to right: Jamie Abordonado, executive director of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve; Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard; Larry Sutterer, TriWest; Jan Myers, director of the Alaska National Guard's Family Programs; and Chief Master Sergeant Dennis Hogan, state command chief of the Alaska Air National Guard, smile during a November check presentation by TriWest. TriWest's \$10,000 contribution, its fourth annual contribution, is part of the company's holiday "Giving to the Guard" campaign that provides support to National Guard units throughout its 21-state west region. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs



# Awards • Decorations • Promotions

## Meritorious Service Medal



Lt Col Jessica L. Stealey-Kelsch . . .168th ARW  
 MSgt Ronald W. Lovell . . . . .168th ARW  
 MSgt Timothy J. Bogowith . . . . .213th SWS  
 Capt Shad Schoppert . . . . .176th CES  
 TSgt George Foley . . . . .176th MXS  
 MSgt Paula Parrish . . . . .176th MSG  
 MSgt George Tolly . . . . .212th RQS

## Air Force Commendation Medal



SSgt Brandilyn D. Hubbart . . . . .168th MOF  
 TSgt Gloria Rucker . . . . .212th RQS

## Air Force Achievement Medal



SSgt Donna Judkins . . . . .176th FSF

## Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal



MSgt Paula Parrish . . . . .176th MSG

## 176th Wing 3rd Quarter Awards

### Senior NCO

MSgt Heather Pineiro . . . . .176th ACS

### NCO

SSgt Zachary Darnell . . . . .176th ACS

### Airman

A1C Robert Williams . . . . .176th ACS

## PROMOTIONS

### Lieutenant Colonel

Rebecca Young . . . . .Med Det  
 Brent B. Buss . . . . .176th OG  
 Gregg A. Origer . . . . .144th AS  
 Jean M. Liebig . . . . .176th CF  
 James E. Harris Jr . . . . .249th AS  
 Robert H. Price III . . . . .144th AS  
 Richard D. Watson . . . . .176th OG

### Major

Carrie J. Howard . . . . .176th ACS  
 Russel L. Edwards . . . . .210th RSQ

### Captain

David Cunningham . . . . .49th MDB  
 Brian Bussell . . . . .297th BFSB  
 David Kang . . . . .297th BFSB

Joshua P. Roberts . . . . .210th RSQ  
 Jeremiah L. Brewer . . . . .144th AS  
 Jeremy L. Stephens . . . . .144th AS  
 Rebecca L. Altenburg . . . . .144th AS

### First Lieutenant

Andreas Bohman . . . . .297th BFSB  
 Georg Brendel Jr . . . . .297th BFSB  
 Benjamin L. Gray . . . . .176th STF  
 Jefferson H. Wood . . . . .144th AS  
 Donald G. Coffman . . . . .176th STF  
 Aaron H. Larsen . . . . .176th STF  
 Elizabeth A. Williams . . . . .176th MDG  
 Clarence M. Stevens III . . . . .176th ACS  
 Brian C. Nosich . . . . .176th OSF  
 Gary M. Weir . . . . .144th AS

### Second Lieutenant

Daniel P. Kozak . . . . .144th AS  
 Michelle Sabala . . . . .176th SFS

### Chief Warrant Officer Three

Brian Stephenson . . . . .207th AVN

### Chief Warrant Officer Two

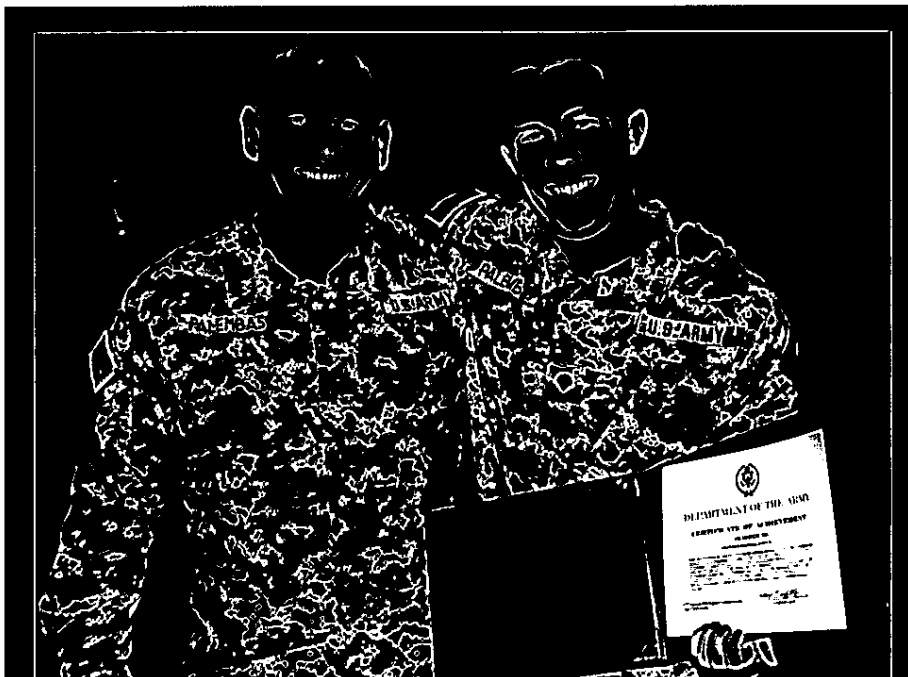
Nicholas Wise . . . . .207th AVN  
 Matthew Felter . . . . .207th AVN

### Chief Master Sergeant

Gerald J. McAleavy . . . . .176th LRS  
 Kristine M. Joyce . . . . .176th FSF  
 John C. Youngblood Jr . . . . .176th MXS

### Senior Master Sergeant

Shannon L. Amos . . . . .176th FSF  
 Jonathan R. Davis . . . . .212th RSQ  
 Geraldine C. Kile . . . . .176th MDG  
 Joseph J. Dibeneditto . . . . .176th ACS  
 Lance R. Jordan . . . . .176th OSF



**Warrior Leader Course Graduation.** Alaska Army National Guard Major James Palembas, 207th Brigade Support Company, congratulates his son and fellow Guardsman, Specialist Daryl R. Palembas, 297th Long Range Surveillance Company, after his graduation from the Warrior Leader Course in December. Specialist Palembas was the Distinguished Honor Graduate and Leadership Award winner from the class of 32 soldiers.

Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

## PROMOTIONS (continued)

Adam C. Blaum .....176th FSF  
James G. Williams .....176th MXS  
David B. Rodkey .....176th MXS

### Master Sergeant (Air)

Travis W. Oaks .....168th MXS  
Michelle N. Balagtas .....JFHQ-AK (Air)  
Roger D. Sparks .....212th RSQ  
Sean P. Mitchell .....210th RSQ  
Michael D. Pulanco .....176th SFS  
T.L. Stanbro .....249th AS  
Earl J. Singleton .....JFHQ-AK (Air)  
William H. Taylor Jr .....176th WG  
George H. Lockwood .....144th AS

### Technical Sergeant

Joy L. Dolton .....168th MOF  
Terry J. Ahlsen .....168th MXS  
Generoso M. Manahan .....168th AMXS  
Justin W. Young .....176th MXS  
Joseph G. Cooper Sr .....176th ACS  
Denise D. Cooney .....176th ACS  
Jennifer A. Meier .....176th MOF  
Shynowah L. Lee .....176th MDG  
Robert J. Baldwin .....176th CES  
George J. Smith .....176th AMXS  
Ronald A. Ratzlaff .....176th CF  
Brandy M.L. Boatwright .....176th ACS  
Tyrone N. Chisholm .....176th SFS  
Daniel J. Thornburg .....176th MXS  
Benjamin J. Ahrens .....176th MXS

George K. Lewis III .....144th AS  
Heidi M. Gould .....211th RSQ  
Anjanette G.S. McCain .....211th RSQ

### Staff Sergeant (Air)

Walker J. Haken .....168th AMXS  
Gregory M. Wood .....168th MXS  
Aaron I.B. Coman .....168th AMXS  
Audrey Lei B. Palacios .....168th LRS  
Alex R. Rivera Paz .....168th LRS  
Alisa M. Rivera .....168th LRS  
Cristal L. Webb .....168th LRS  
Peter C. Bernheim .....168th MXG  
Joshua A. Stevenson .....249th AS  
Travis A. Smith .....176th MXS  
Aaron J. Hug .....176th MXS  
Cassandra L. Aglietti .....176th ACS  
Jherenmichel B. Svoboda .....210th RQS  
Troy A.L. Simpson .....176th FSF  
Matthew A. Teigen .....212th RSQ  
Derek V. Frazier .....176th MXS  
Michael P. Zwiselsberger .....176th MXS  
Scott A. Toms .....176th AMXS  
Amanda G. Jordan .....176th MSG  
Brittany D. Shea .....249th AS  
Linda J. Kubacki .....176th MXS  
Dominic P. Sampson .....176th ACS  
Cody J. Grella .....176th CES  
Adam M. Woolley .....176th LRS  
Stanley J. Montgomery .....176th MXS  
Brian T. Garverick .....176th ACS

## RETIREMENTS

Lt Col Jessica L. Stealy-Kelsch .....168th ARW  
Lt Col Benjamin K. Baker .....168th ARW  
MSgt Karen M. Malone .....168th MSG  
MSgt Warren A. Daniels .....168th MXS  
SMSgt Andy S. Jefferson .....168th MSG  
MSgt Jan F. Dover .....168th MXS  
SSgt Blain S. Abbott .....168th AMXS  
TSgt Jennifer L. Hartwig .....168th MXG  
TSgt Charles M. Mathis .....168th MDG  
TSgt Robert L. Summers Jr .....213th SWS  
SFC Frank Phillips .....207th AVN  
SGM Jane Dennis .....JFHQ-AK (Army)  
COL Richard Williams .....JFHQ-AK (Army)  
CPT Richard Doering .....297th CAF  
SSG Thomas Cholok .....297th INF  
SFC Thomas Henry .....297th INF  
CPT Steven Craddick .....Med Det  
SFC David Powell .....R&R  
SSG Michael Wallin .....JFHQ-AK (Army)  
Lt Col Bruce Dougherty .....176th MDG  
MSgt George Tolley .....212th RQS  
CMSgt Karen Johnson .....176th MFS  
LtCol William Willinbrink .....144th AS  
SMSgt Jeffrey Jones .....176th SFS  
CMSgt Robert Price .....176th LRS  
MSgt Thomas Armstrong .....176th MXS  
SMSgt David Smith .....176th MXS  
SSgt Anthony April .....176th SFS  
MSgt Paul Bobby .....JFHQ-AK (Air)  
MSgt Nance Pitts .....176th ACS

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# Start of the Trail

## 176th Wing

Heather Jones  
John Buso  
Cody Inman  
Heather Paxson  
Jason Buck  
Shana Harris  
Christopher Morhain  
Asdrubal Peguero  
Roy Eason  
Christopher Geisler  
Matthew Crossman  
Brandon Pollock  
John McNutt  
Joshua McKinley  
Richard Alexander  
Charles Bowser  
Marc Pacudan  
Theodore Sierocinski  
Benjamin Schnell  
Jacob Keenhold  
Tia Boglin  
Stephanie Sampson  
Darrel Swan  
Miles Wong  
Tyson Bowen  
Mark Lockwood  
Kassi Stavenjord  
Robert Bowler  
David Akin  
Donald Haretuku  
Tyler Wehrl  
Jennifer Johnston  
Joshua Frye  
Roy Bouchet  
Kristy Dawbarn

## 168th Air Refueling Wing

Karla Workman  
Lacie Marsden  
Benjamin Hager  
Maria Perkins  
Byron Rager  
Joshua Poe  
John Phoenix  
Christopher Kobernuss  
Duane Middleton  
Tiffany Seale  
Monica Eusebio  
Victor Weber  
Hannah Moore  
Shawn McCarthy  
Scott Kvittem

## 207th Brigade Support Company

Sophie Tommy

## 490th Military Police Company

Douglas George  
Nicholas Ray  
Michael Shipton

## 297th Military Police Company

William Collier  
Ashley Douglas

## HHD 761st Military Police

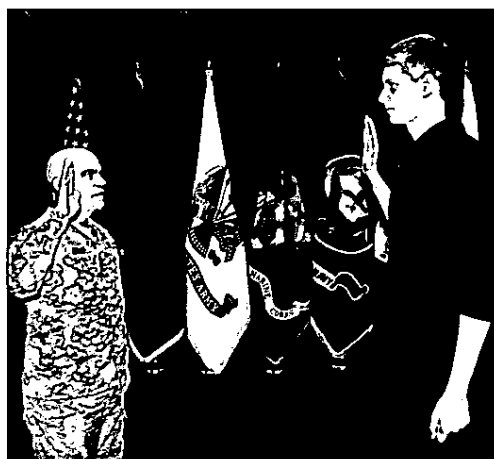
Miranda James-McGraw

## 297th Reconnaissance & Surveillance

Caleb Lovelace  
Kyle Papineau  
John Cleveland  
Corey Dahlman  
Patrick Howell

## 297th Signal Company

Polofeu Sappa  
Dillon Baker



**Joining the Guard Family.**  
Brigadier General Thomas H. Kattus, left, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, administers the Oath of Enlistment to Coleman Wenke in December. Wenke enlisted in the Alaska Army National Guard as a private and follows a family tradition of service; Wenke is the son of Alaska Air National Guard members Colonel Scott Wenke, 168th Air Refueling Wing commander, and Colonel Wendy Wenke, vice chief of joint staff. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

## 207th Aviation

Julie Ellis  
James Delpozzo  
Cassandra Pillans

## 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade

Esther Maka  
Laura Hildreth  
Garrett Mentzer  
James Howell

Crystal Cederquist  
Bo Boyscout

## 297th Cavalry

Zachary Parker  
Ryan Adams  
Gilbert Morales  
John Golden Jr  
Dylan Baggett  
Travis Selner  
Joshua Adams

## Warriors Training Schedule

Here are the inactive training dates for most Alaska Army and Air National Guard units. All dates are subject to change.

	Feb	March	April
<b>Alaska National Guard</b>			
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Air)	20-21	20-21	10-11
Joint Forces Headquarters – Alaska (Army)	19-21	27-28	23-25
<b>Alaska Army National Guard</b>			
297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade	19-21	26-28	April 17-May 1 (AT)
38th Troop Command	19-21	19-21	23-25
<b>Alaska Air National Guard</b>			
168th Air Refueling Wing	20-21	20-21	10-11
176th Wing	20-21	20-21	10-11
<b>Alaska State Defense Force</b>			
Headquarters	13-14	13-14	10-11



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hurts your physical conditioning.

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your gym shoes.

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more ways  
to reward  
yourself with  
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Line. It's free, and it works.

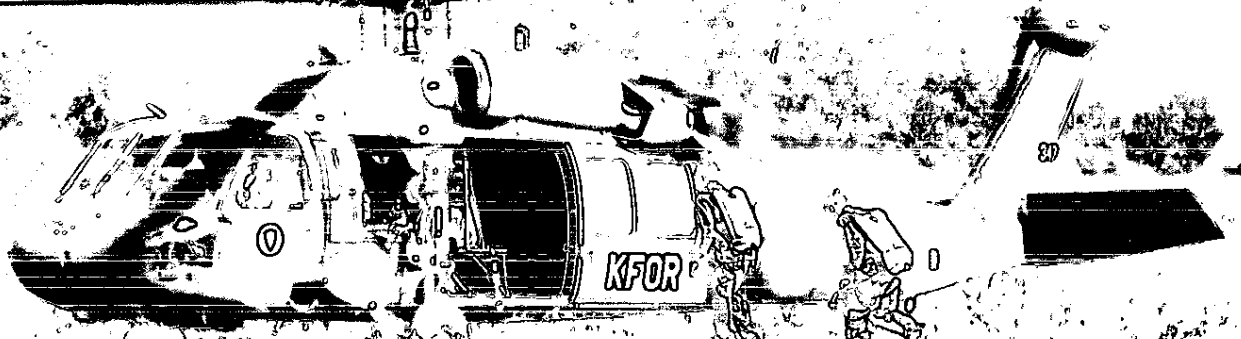
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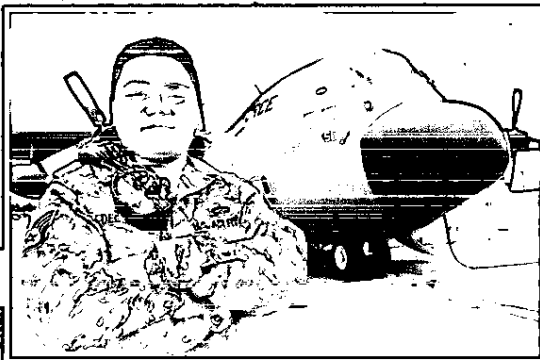




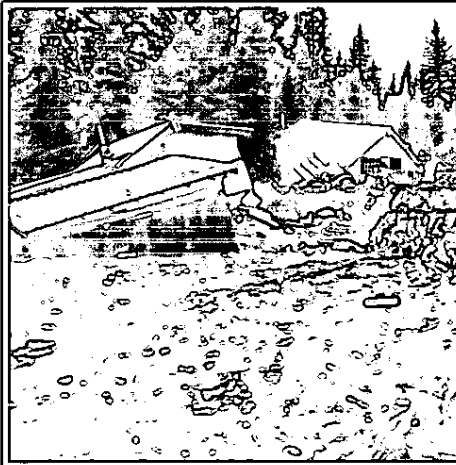
# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS



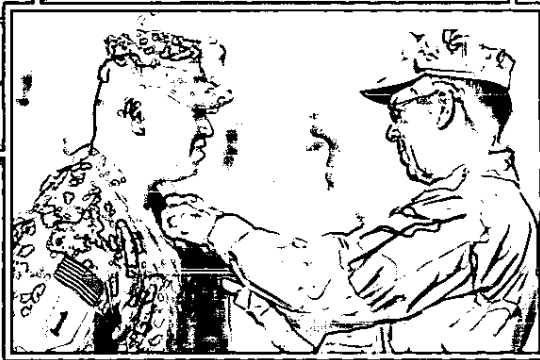
## ANNUAL



## REPORT



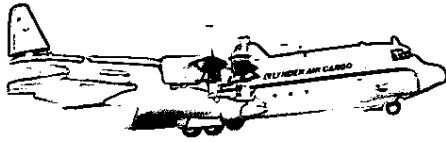
# 2009



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Commander in Chief



Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
& Commissioner of the DMVA



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# DMVA 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Main photo: Sergeant First Class Seth Gordon and Sergeant Zach Carbaugh, of 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, board a UH-60 with firefighting backpacks to stop a blaze downrange on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. Photo: Sergeant Ann Hayden, 1/207th Aviation

Inset photos (clockwise from top): Staff Sergeant Paul Deguzman, 176th Maintenance Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard, stands before a C-130 Hercules on the flight line at Kulis Air National Guard Base. Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team

Cadet Logan Douglas Lanni prepares to march with fellow Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets during the Chugiak-Eagle River Bear Paw Parade. Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Military Youth Academy

U.S. Navy Admiral Mike Mullen, right, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, pins the Combat Action Badge on Master Sergeant Fenumial Ilallo, of the Alaska Army National Guard, at Forward Operating Base Walton in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in April. Ilallo earned the Combat Action Badge along with fellow Alaska Army National Guard Sergeant First Class Jody Barnes during a cordon and search operation in which they and an Afghan National Army company came under small-arms fire from Anti-Coalition Forces. Photo: Petty Officer First Class Chad J. McNeely, U.S. Navy

Many homes along Eagle's river front were damaged, ripped from their foundations and/or completely destroyed by the relentless surge of water and ice during the spring 2009 flood season. Photo: Courtesy Department of Public Safety



## Reports:

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**Successful Program, Successful Cadets.** Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets from 1st Platoon, class 2009-2, take part in the Drill and Ceremony competition. This class produced 136 graduates during the 15th year anniversary of the program. Photo: Courtesy Alaska Military Youth Academy

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# For the People



Governor Sean Parnell  
Commander in Chief

## Making a Difference at Home and Abroad

This has been another extraordinary year for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. Alaska's Soldiers and Airmen, whether deployed overseas or currently at home, have performed remarkably in defending our nation and serving Alaskans in need.

We restructured the Alaska Army and Air National Guard this year in an effort to modernize, expand and reorganize to equip our Soldiers for 21st century missions. These critical improvements sustain our Alaska Guard members with the facility and personnel infrastructure necessary to fulfill state and national requirements. I am extremely proud of the Alaska National Guard's accomplishments in 2009.

Alaska's military is a vital asset to our state, and they are making a difference around the world. Our Guard members have proved their skills on the battlefield and have honed their abilities in the often harsh conditions of our great state. We are profoundly grateful for their assistance in rescue missions, their response to natural disasters, and their efforts in the fight for freedom and democracy. Missions are accomplished and excellence achieved!

These feats bear witness to the abilities of the extraordinary men and women who serve in our National Guard.

This year, Alaska faced numerous catastrophes – experiencing extreme flooding along the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, in the city of Pelican and in Southeast Alaska. Because of the outstanding preparation of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, the initial response and recovery efforts for each community was timely and efficient. Emergency managers continue to prove their ability to work collaboratively and effectively to respond and accurately assess the needs of Alaskans. I join all Alaskans in expressing our gratitude for their work.

As 2009 draws to a close, I am extremely thankful for the service provided by Alaska's Soldiers, Airmen and civilian personnel who dedicate their lives to the protection of our homeland. Their dedication in building Alaska's economy, providing local and national defense and delivering humanitarian relief around the world is invaluable. It is an honor to serve as your commander in chief, and I thank each of you for your service to all Alaskans.



**Checking on Progress.** On the ground in Eagle, Governor Sean Parnell ensures that the community's needs are being met during the rebuilding and cleanup process. From left: Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard; John Madden, director of the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management; Governor Sean Parnell; and Andy Bassich, Eagle rebuilding and construction team leader. Photo: Jack Heesch, FEMA



# The Adjutant General



**Brigadier General Thomas H. Kattus**  
Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard  
& Commissioner, Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

## A Year of Change and Exceptional Success

2009 was an extraordinary year for the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. Alaska had unprecedented natural disasters that included wildfires, volcanic eruptions, floods and coastal erosion. We continued to support a multitude of deployments for the Air and Army Guard to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and even Mongolia. We graduated the largest class in the history of the Alaska Military Youth Academy, investigated and recovered one of our Black Hawk helicopters damaged in a major non-injury accident in the mountains of Colorado, transformed and reorganized our entire Army maneuver element and awarded a \$20-million contract for construction of a new armory in Bethel.

The Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing continued its movement plans to Elmendorf Air Force Base, while the 168th Air Refueling Wing provided extraordinary support to the active-duty Air Force as Guard members responded to the relentless Russian military activity along our western border.

All the while, the Alaska Army National Guard's 49th Missile Defense Battalion stood ready to defend our nation in response to North Korean activity, and the Alaska Army National Guard had its first Soldier cross the Iditarod finish line in Nome. As always, Guardsmen kept our families and loved ones at the forefront in all we accomplished.

As if all this wasn't enough, we experienced a complete change in senior leadership with the resignation of Governor Sarah Palin in July. We conducted all this activity without pause or distraction to our focus. This truly is a tribute to the tremendous professionalism of every member of this organization.

You – the employee, the Soldier, the Airman, the veteran – stepped up to the challenge of completing the mission and did so in an outstanding manner. You confronted multiple tasks and took the time to address the needs of our Alaskan residents. You met their expectations in their time of need. You often risked your lives to save others and sacrificed much of your personal time for the safety and security of our

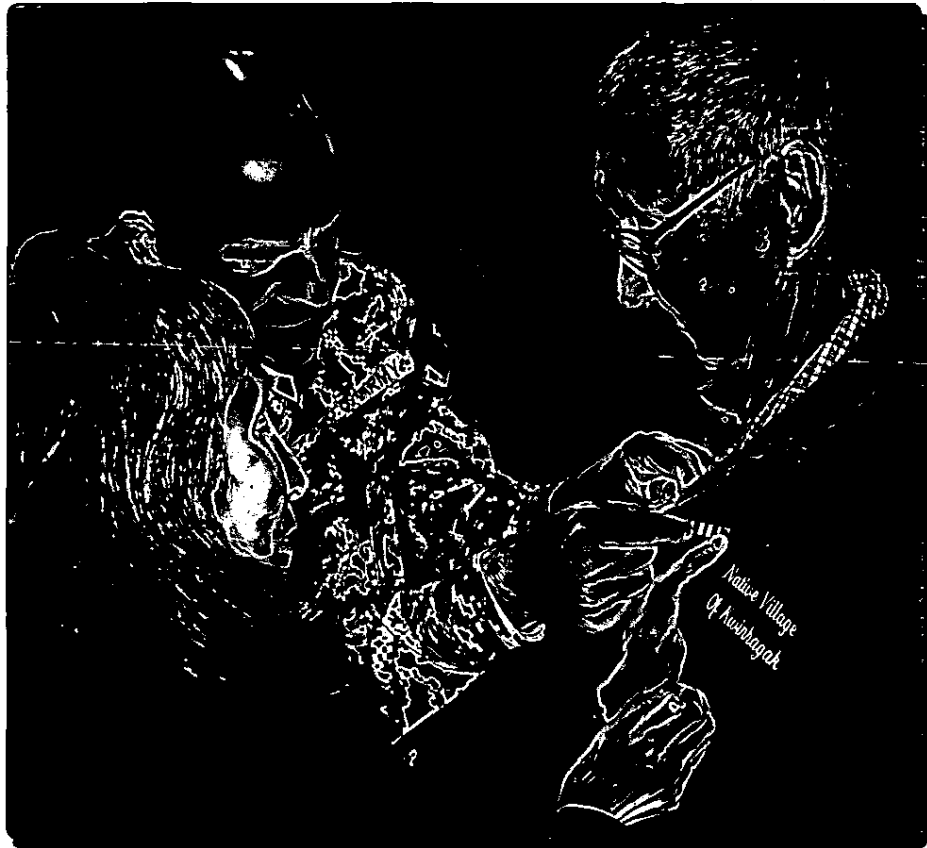
great state. There is no greater sacrifice in life and no greater success.

In the Veterans Affairs lane, we fought a tough fight with the federal government and won for our Alaska Territorial Guard veterans. The governor took the lead and worked with our congressional delegation to make sure the Department of Defense recognized the retirement benefits the ATG earned through their active military service time. Through this legislative victory, 23 elders received their full military benefits and 19 spouses received their federal benefits from their husbands' full service in the U.S. military.

We continued the Operation Santa Claus mission, now in its 53rd year. The Alaska National Guard will sponsor the

2010 Iron Dog snow machine race as part of the National Guard Bureau's effort to raise awareness of our community participation. This provides our Soldiers the opportunity to hone their military skills and exercise their communications, logistics and transportation capabilities, along with their adaptation abilities in the isolated, frigid check points along the trail.

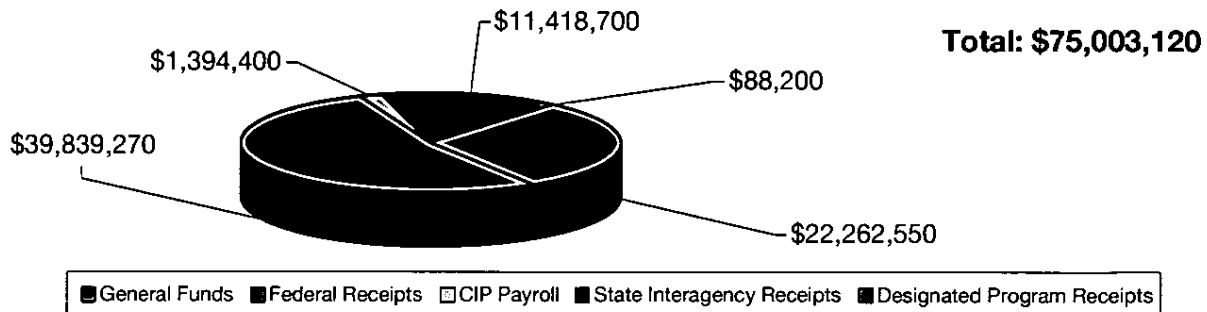
We will long remember 2009 as the culmination of the astonishing effort by an extraordinary group of great men and women that constitute Alaska's Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. I have never been more proud to be a member of such an exceptional organization as we continue to secure the state and defend the nation!



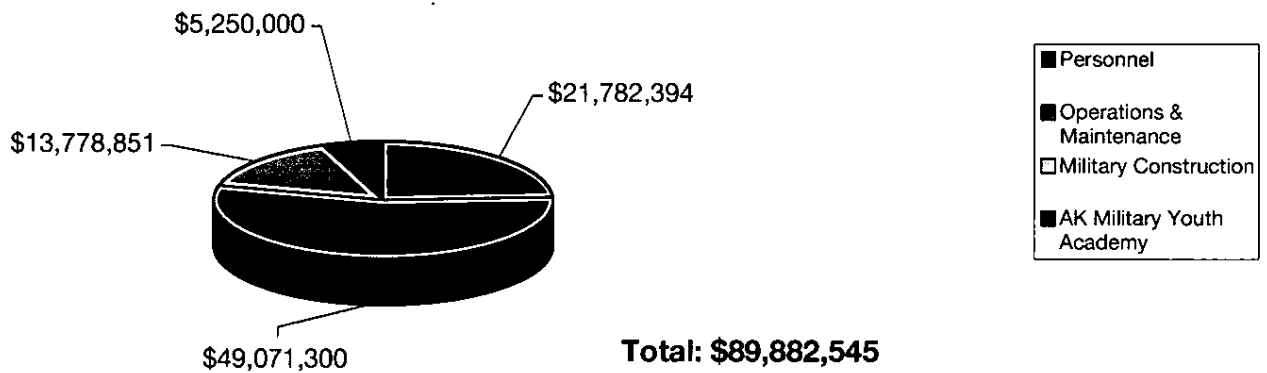
**Honoring Those Who Have Served.** Brigadier General Thomas H. Kattus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, helps pin an Alaska Territorial Guard service pin on the jacket of Alaska Territorial Guard member Paul Beebe with the help of Beebe's wife, Pauline, during an ATG ceremony in Quinhagak. Sixty-seven Alaska Territorial Guard members from Quinhagak were honored during the ceremony. Photo: Jerry Walton, DMVA

# DMVA... By the Numbers

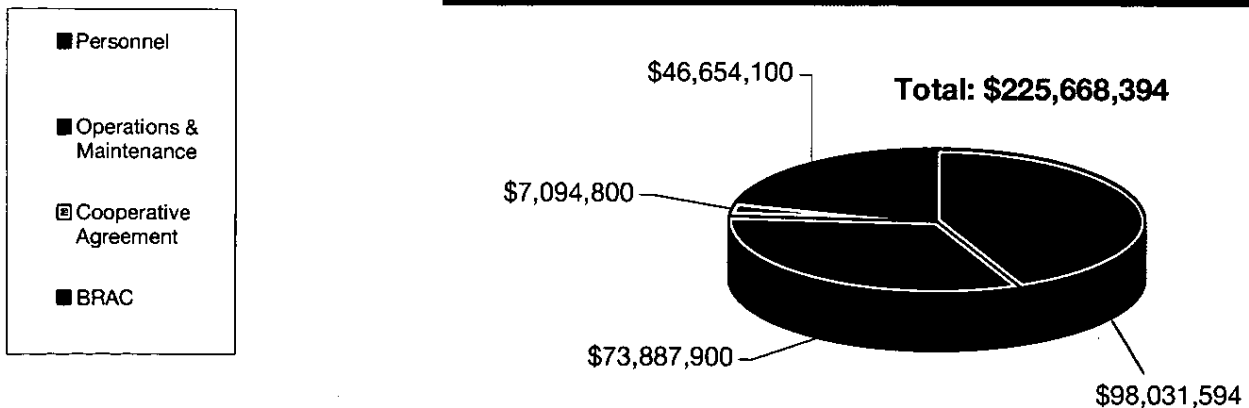
## DMVA SFY2009 State Operating & Capital Actual Expenditures



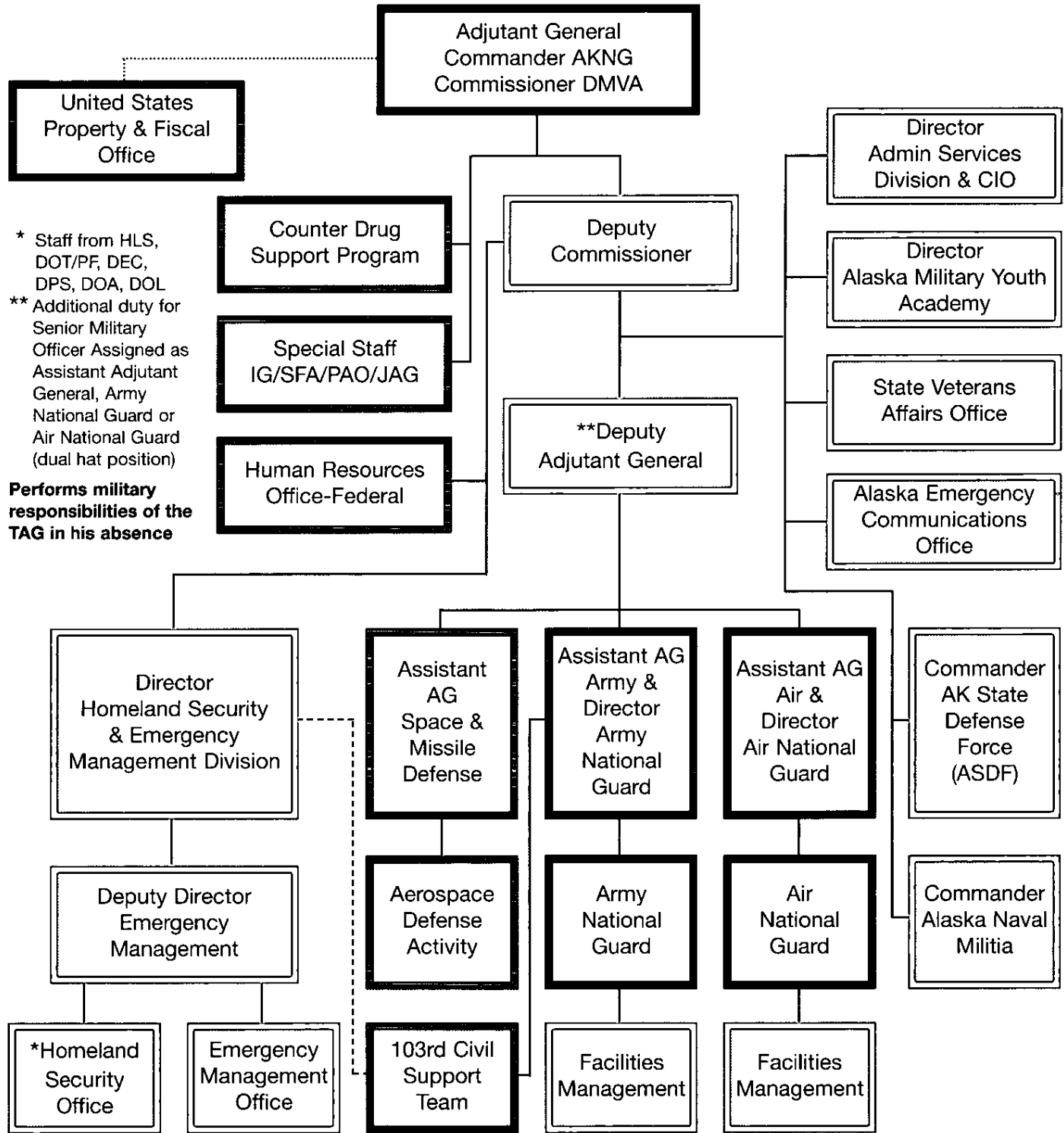
## Army Guard Funding in Alaska – FFY09



## Air Guard Funding in Alaska – FFY09



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# Veterans

## Serving Those Who Have Served



This was an exciting year for the Office of Veterans Affairs. Along with our new Governor Sean Parnell and Adjutant General Brigadier General Thomas H. Katkus, a new administrator was selected: Verdie Bowen. He was able to help the department meet and exceed all the 2009 goals while providing stellar support to the state's 77,000 veterans and their families.



**Recognizing Service.** General Gene Renuart, left, commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, congratulates Alaska Territorial Guard member Warren Matumeak in Barrow during an ATG recognition ceremony. Matumeak was given his official U.S. Army discharge certificate in recognition of his service in the ATG. Photo: Captain Uriah Orland, Alaskan Command Public Affairs

### Alaska Territorial Guard

The Alaska Territorial Guard Recognition Program is alive and well, and the top priority of the Office of Veterans Affairs. In order to find all 6,600 ATG members and provide them with the recognition they deserve, it takes a community effort.

Not long after World War II was over, these veterans were soon forgotten. But in 2000, Congress passed a law reflecting the true status of our ATG veterans and granted them full military active service for their time. This helped 26 of our retired National Guard members with ATG service to receive additional retirement funds. But like all good intentions, someone looked at the law, thought this was incorrect and froze the payments of these additional retirement funds. Then-Governor Sarah Palin and the state stepped in to fund the removed amounts until this could be corrected by Congress. Our two senators took this to action and corrected the oversight in the 2010 Defense Appropriations Bill.

We currently have two researchers assigned to the ATG project who spend most of their days researching records for information on our 6,600 ATG members. They have performed an outstanding job. To date, more than 900 U.S. Army discharges have been presented to members or their families, and we have 23 ATG members who receive additional entitlements.

The Office of Veterans Affairs has supported several ATG awards presentation programs and has covered numerous locations from Anchorage to Barrow. The record this year for the most ATG members presented with their U.S. Army honorable discharges

and who received the Alaska Territorial Guard Service Medal went to Barrow. The highlight of this presentation was the presenter: General Gene Renuart, commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command. Since the ATG recognition program started, Renuart is the highest ranking officer to present certificates to our ATG veterans.

We continue to make this program a top priority and have worked closely with several tribal communities and councils to find the remaining members.

### Veteran Service Officer Grant Management

This is another success story for the Office of Veterans Affairs. In order to receive the best service for our veterans, we have 12 veteran service officers located across the state. They provide free services to veterans, such as representation of veterans and their families while processing claims to the government for benefits earned while on active duty or in the Guard. They are well trained in these programs and certified through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

We received the best bang for our buck through this grant process, and this year alone, we were able to add a new agency: The Military Order of the Purple Heart. This brings our veterans service organizations to four certified agencies. The other VSOs are affiliated with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion and Disabled American Veterans.

These organizations were very successful this year in assisting our veterans. They returned more than \$31 million in past payments, while filing more than 10,000 claims for new earned entitlements. The continued success of this program is also measured through state veterans receiving annual compensation and pension payments. This year, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs sent \$142 million to veterans and their families and provided more than \$109 million in medical coverage.

### The Alaska State Approving Agency

This year has been a challenging year for our sole Alaska State Approving Agency Officer, Mercedes Angerman. With the introduction of the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, a slowdown in services and payments to our state veterans by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is at an all-time high. To date she has traveled to Oklahoma, met with all the universities located in Alaska and helped our congressional delegation understand the best way to construct a plan to ensure that all veterans were able to attain their educational goals.

This new GI Bill is the largest change to the veteran educational process since the first GI Bill was introduced after World War II. With this in mind, we are looking forward to all Post-9/11 GI Bill-eligible Alaskan veterans to be able to use their benefits under this new program. We currently have more than 800 approved programs of study at more than 60 education and training facilities across Alaska. The overall program has increased more than 5 percent, and we are projecting an increase of 12 percent before the end of FY 2010. Throughout the past year, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provided more than \$8 million in education funds to Alaska education programs. We know more growth is projected, and this is wonderful for Alaska and our veterans who live here.

## Other Significant Accomplishments

This year we added a new license plate to our veterans plate choices. We added the Gold Star Plate that allows the families of our fallen military members the opportunity to display their family's sacrifice.

The Military Order of the Purple Heart dedicated the new Purple Heart Trail in May. The highway trail runs from the Canadian border to Fairbanks and is marked with a distinctive Purple Heart Medal placard.

This year the Office of Veterans Affairs has introduced the Alaska Warrior Coin. This award is presented by the adjutant general to members of our armed forces who prove to be of warrior quality and are nominated by the Office of Veterans Affairs. We look forward to rewarding several deserving Alaskans this year.

Stand Down this year was outstanding. We were able to meet and speak to more than 700 underprivileged veterans located in Anchorage and Fairbanks. Our veterans were provided with medical and job placement assistance and were introduced to several social program entitlements. Also provided to the veterans were food and clothing.

We helped TriWest Healthcare Alliance, which administers the TRICARE program, understand Alaska's unique circumstances by facilitating a town hall meeting in the Mat-Su Borough. Changes were made to TRICARE allowing beneficiaries to keep their TRICARE prime status in the retiree insurance program regardless of drive time and distance.

In July, the first statewide veterans summit was held. This was supported by the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council and the newly formed Veterans Caucus. The AVAC held a series of town hall meetings across Alaska, collecting information from veterans on issues they experience in the state. It was attended by more than 200 members of the community and several members of the state

Legislature. This summit was so well received that it will become an annual event.

The Blue Star Banner program was a big hit this year, and we provided more than 1,000 Blue Star Banners to families who have members in the military. Key events at which we provided Blue Star Banners were the governor's picnics, veterans summit and the Mat-Su Potato Bowl.

This year, we assisted the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in supporting the Rural Health Pilot Project. This program offers medical and mental health services through a contract with the rural Native Health Care through purchased care. This program will continue in the following areas: Bethel Census Area, Dillingham

Census Area, Northwest Arctic Borough, City of Cordova, Bristol Bay Borough, Nome Census Area and Wade Hampton Census Area.

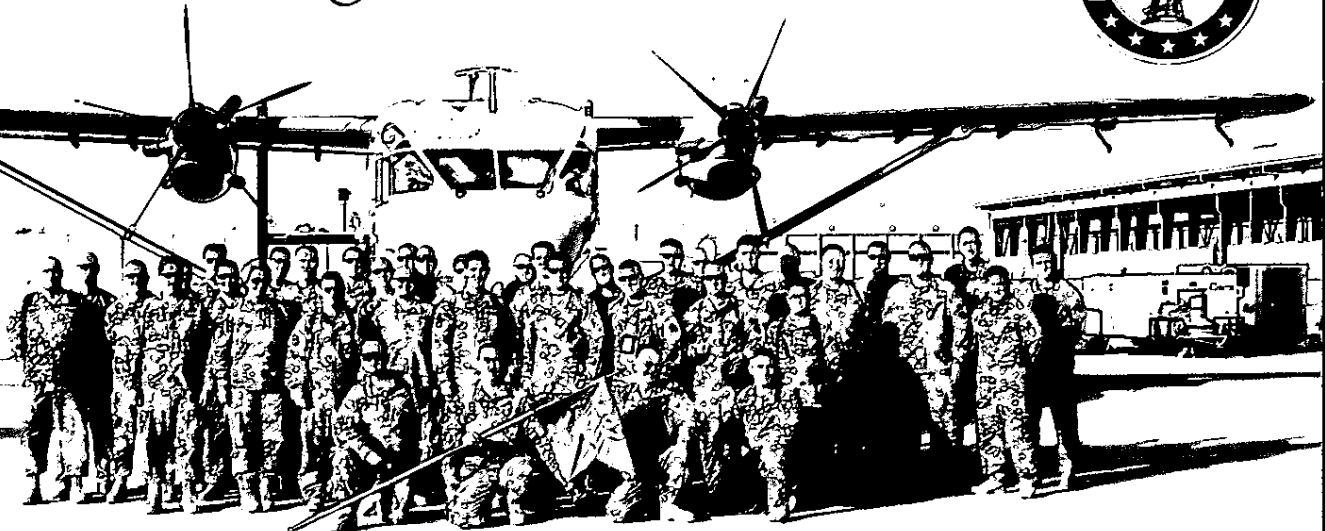
Lastly, the Office of Veterans Affairs assisted a team under a charter by the Alaska Legislature to study programs offered to families of our deployed military members stationed here in Alaska. We traveled to Fairbanks, Kodiak and Anchorage to understand all the programs. The programs under study were the Yellow Ribbon program, Family Services and the OneSource program. A report will be presented to the state Legislature in January with a recommendation to continue this study with town hall meetings next year.



**Stand Down.** U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant Aisha Abell performs a dental examination on a veteran during Stand Down 2009. Stand Down is a veterans outreach program designed to give a helping hand to veterans in need. Photo: Courtesy of DMVA Public Affairs

**Rolling Thunder.** Motorcyclists with Rolling Thunder arrive at the Alaska Veterans Memorial at Eysers Lake in Denali State Park for the 2009 Memorial Day event, which pays tribute to those military members who died in action. Photo: Mike Guy Hayes DMVA Public Affairs

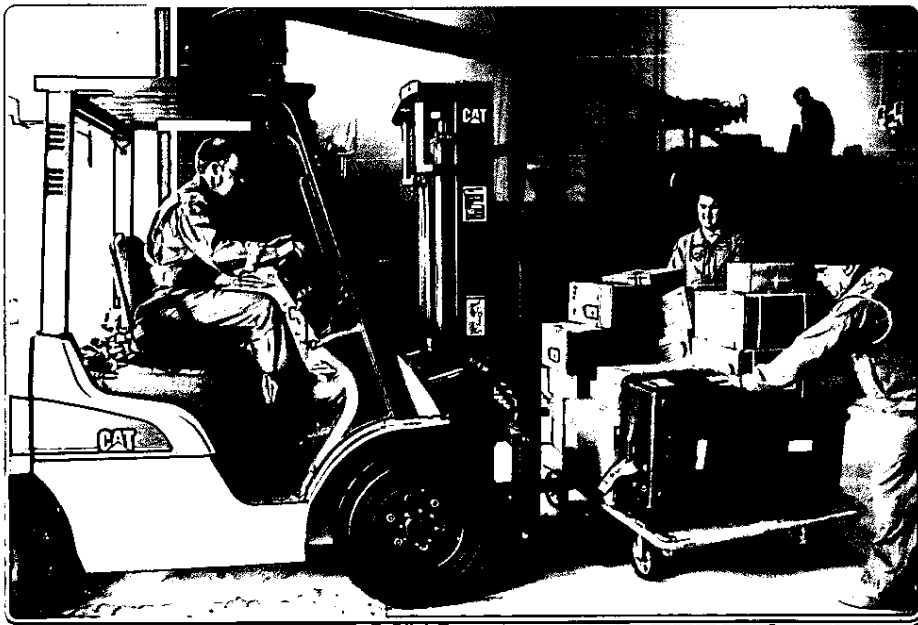
# Alaska Army National Guard



**Operation Iraqi Freedom.** Alaska Army National Guard members from F Company, 1/207th Aviation proudly display their unit guidon during a nine-month deployment to Balad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They provided logistics support transporting high-priority equipment, supplies and personnel using C-23 Sherpas across Iraq and Kuwait. Photo: Courtesy of F Company, 1/207th Aviation

## F Company, 1/207th Aviation

In April, F Company, 1/207th Aviation, mobilized and deployed to Iraq to provide fixed-wing air-movement support to the Multi-National Corps Iraq headquarters. The unit flew eight C-23 Sherpas throughout Iraq and Kuwait. This deployment marked the third time F Company had taken its flag into the combat theater to conduct the "last-tactical-mile" mission, the critical transportation of personnel and equipment on the battlefield. It was also the fourth deployment for several of the unit's Soldiers, who also deployed on earlier Black Hawk missions.



**Operation Arctic Care.** Pilots with the Alaska Army National Guard's 1/207th Aviation steady a load of supplies headed to one of 11 remote villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta as a part of Operation Arctic Care 2009. To ensure the success of Operation Arctic Care 2009, pilots, crew chiefs and mechanics put in long hours flying health care professionals and supplies to villages and provided routine maintenance and repairs to the five Black Hawks stationed in Bethel for the exercise. Photo: Courtesy DMVA Public Affairs



**Overseas Visitor.** Captain Michele Edwards, commander, A Company, 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, is happy to meet Vice President Joe Biden in May 2009 after his address to the troops at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. Edwards is from Bethel and deployed with the Alaska Army National Guard's Black Hawk unit. Photo: Courtesy of 1/207th Aviation

## Embedded Transition Team

The Alaska Army National Guard sent 15 Soldiers on a year-long deployment to Afghanistan to mentor leaders from both the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. During this third deployment of an Alaska Embedded Transition Team, the team trained Afghan leaders on both military and governance skills that promoted both security and peace in the southern regions of Kandahar and Zabul. Furthermore, many humanitarian missions were executed with the assistance of the ETT and its Afghan counterpart that

promoted the government's presence. These Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers often risked their lives traveling in remote parts of Afghanistan to bring comfort and aid to Afghan nationals on the edge of survival.

### **1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment**

The 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment, left Alaska in November 2008 for a deployment to Kosovo as the aviation element of the Multi-National Task Force-East that worked to maintain peace in that region. This deployment, the first for the battalion headquarters, included 149 Aviation Soldiers who conducted a variety of missions in Kosovo to include air movement operations, aero-medical evacuation and reconnaissance flights. The unit was equipped with eight UH-60L Black Hawk helicopters and was augmented with three UH-60A Black Hawk MEDEVAC helicopters from the Maryland Army National Guard. Together, the Aviation organizations provided "topcover" for the maneuver units working in the fledgling country.

### **49th Missile Defense Battalion**

The 49th Missile Defense Battalion, manned by more than 220 full-time Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers, remained ready, reliable and essential in 2009 in its mission to defend the United States and designated areas from the threat of a rogue nation's intercontinental ballistic missile attack. The Soldiers of the 49th operate the system and secure the Missile Defense Complex, located on Fort Greely, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Ballistic Missile Defense remains a topic of national and international interest. A number of media, senior U.S. government officials and military leaders visited the MDC in 2009. In June, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates met with Soldiers of the 49th and got a first-hand look at the Ground-Based Mid-Course Defense capability and facilities.

Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers from 41 states continue to make up a majority of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion. Troops and their families from as far away as Puerto Rico and Guam live and work at Fort Greely, where the U.S. Army garrison continues to enhance the quality of life at this far north military installation.

### **103rd Civil Support Team**

This year, members of the 103rd Civil Support Team-Weapons of Mass Destruction provided assessment and advice to first responders and industry members in response to suspicious packages arriving at state government offices, potentially hazardous material releases and disaster relief in American Samoa. Information provided by the 103rd helped prevent costly delays in the function of Alaska's vital infrastructure and industry. Additionally, the team provided subject matter experts for liaison and work with the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia in training its first responders.

### **State Support**

The Joint Director of Military Support/J3 Operations supported the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, in response to multiple emergencies this year. They responded to a request for Black Hawk helicopter water bucket drops to contain a dangerous wildfire at Shanta Creek on the Kenai Peninsula. During the Fairbanks-region wildfires, a security element of 100 percent traditional Guardsmen on state active duty orders was dispatched to conduct gate security and provide traffic control at the Division



**Missile Defense Up Close.** Secretary of Defense Robert Gates peers out of a Silo Interface Vault to view an operational ground-based interceptor during a visit to the Missile Defense Complex on Fort Greely in June 2009. Gates saw the nation's operational arm of its strategic missile defense capability and the Soldiers of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion who are charged with defending the nation.

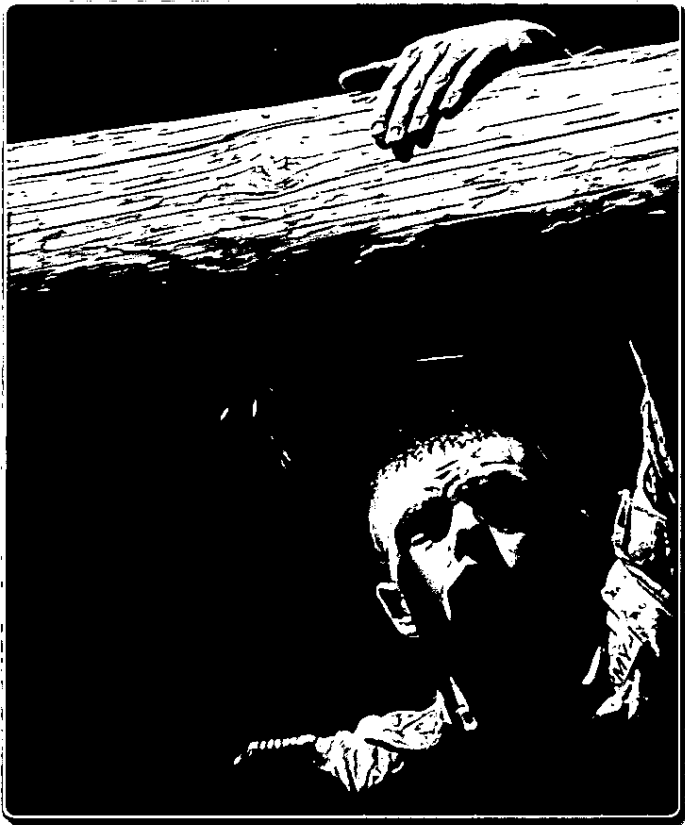
Photo: Sergeant Jack W. Carlson III, 49th Missile Defense Battalion

of Forestry's Incident Command Post. During Operation Flood Watch, potable drinking water was provided to the citizens of Eagle when massive ice-jams caused floods along the Yukon River. All the while, the effects of Mount Redoubt's occasional volcanic eruptions had to be monitored.

### **Counterdrug Support Program**

Throughout FY09, the Counterdrug Support Program's Drug Demand Reduction program continued to provide high-quality drug, alcohol and tobacco awareness presentations and "Stay on Track" academic programs to more than 18,000 participants.

During the summer of 2009, DDR continued to provide experiential education with the use of their high-ropes course that served more than 350 participants, representing 10 community-based organizations. This no-cost summer camp offered a savings of more than \$80,000.



**Alaskans Finish Strong.** Private First Class Justin Sekerak, 1/297th Cavalry Scouts, negotiates the obstacle course during the 2009 Northwest Regional Soldier of the Year competition held in May at Camp Murray and Fort Lewis, Wash. Sekerak and fellow Alaska Army National Guardsman Staff Sergeant Duane Ostrowski, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, who competed in the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year category, made a strong showing in the competition, finishing in second place.

Photo: Sergeant First Class Randall Wong, U.S. Army

In 2009, the DDR Rural Education Program continued to provide drug education programs to students in the village of Metlakatla, as well as all schools in Petersburg. The Mentor on the Trail was expanded with one DDR member escorting the Teacher on the Trail to several communities along the Iditarod Trail during the Iditarod sled-dog race.

During FY09, CDSP continued exceptional support to law enforcement in Alaska. They assisted with the training of more than 300 law enforcement officers with use of military ranges and several training classes. CDSP assisted law enforcement with more than 200 operations across the state resulting in the seizure of drugs, drug proceeds, vehicles and property valued in excess of \$9 million.

### **297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade**

The 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade is preparing for mobilization in the summer of 2012. In 2009, these outstanding Soldiers worked both job-skill training and equipment fielding with active-duty Army units. The unit will be working with the 67th BFSB from Nebraska as it conducts its final pre-mobilization exercises, honing its troop-leading skills and equipment lay down procedures at Camp Guernsey, Wyo. The 297th BFSB will also be involved in a state training mission to support civilian authorities in Exercise Vigilant Guard 2010.

### **38th Troop Command (Provisional)**

The 38th Troop Command provides command and control for 14 separate units spanning all areas of Alaska. Units encompass aviation, missile defense, contracting support, administration,

training, military police, public affairs, airborne infantry, and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive events response. They continue to provide a trained and ready force for the state and nation. In the past year, the unit deployed elements to Mongolia in support of Khaan Quest and aviation assets for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

### **Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership Program**

The Alaska-Mongolia State Partnership Program continues to grow and is recognized as a vital component in U.S. Pacific Command's policy in Northeast Asia. With a focus toward improving Mongolia's disaster-response ability, the State of Alaska and Alaska National Guard provided expert advice in the annual Gobi Wolf Exercise, a hazardous-material, first-responder exchange, medical exercise and health-care-systems model review. The Alaska Army National Guard broadened its international experience during Khaan Quest 2009 and a Soldier-family deployment seminar. Alaska continues to assist with Mongolia's efforts to bring stability to the world, by partnering with their army in Afghanistan. This deployment is the sixth iteration of Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers deploying with Mongolian forces.

### **Exercise Khaan Quest 2009**

The 761st Military Police Battalion participated in Exercise Khaan Quest 2009, a multi-national, peace-supporting operations exercise, at the Five Hills Training Center, Mongolia. It included several days of professional military education and culminated in a three-day exercise designed to train the Mongolian Armed Forces in U.S. military procedures. The Alaska Medical Detachment provided a team of doctors, nurses and medical support personnel who joined medical professionals from the Mongolian Armed Forces to provide care to more than 4,000 underserved medical and dental patients and conducted more than 5,000 animal examinations.

### **207th Regional Training Institute**

The 207th Regional Training Institute instructed and graduated more than 300 active-duty, Army Reserve and National Guard students from various noncommissioned officer education system courses. Highlights from the past year include hosting visiting Mongolian officers and introducing them to U.S. military training, providing validation support for mobilization and deployment, as well as supporting the reorganization of the Alaska Army National Guard's brigades.

### **Alaska Army National Guard Aviation**

Aviation operational tempo continued at a swift pace for the stay-behind forces as aviators conducted a variety of missions in Alaska. The helicopter crews participated in three innovative readiness training exercises: Arctic Care-Bethel, Chignik Road Survey and Newtok Village Relocation. They also conducted 27 rescue missions, had 26 saves and eight assists and responded to fires on the Kenai Peninsula.

### **Personnel**

The Personnel Office supported the transformation of Alaska Army National Guard units, executing more than 1,900 Soldier moves and loading 11 new unit formations into personnel databases. They ensured that Alaska Guard Soldiers received their pay in their new positions without delay or issue. The promotion of Sergeant Major Lillian Aukongak as the G-1 sergeant major marked the first time that a female Alaska Native has reached the highest noncommissioned officer rank in the Alaska Army National Guard.

The Recruiting & Retention Command brought more than 320 new Soldiers into the Alaska Army National Guard. This success was supported by the new Wasilla recruiting office. Recruiting efforts were boosted by Staff Sergeant Harry Alexie's outstanding 2009 dog sled racing season which culminated in his completion of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Medically, more than 900 physicals and health assessments were conducted for Alaska Guard Soldiers. More than 200 Soldiers were screened for world-wide exercises and deployments.

Finally, \$384,000 in state-issued educational benefits were disbursed to the Soldiers and Airmen of the Alaska National Guard. Process improvements now provide online tuition reimbursement application, thereby reducing request and payment times and making it easier for Guard members to continue their higher education.

## Chaplain

The Alaska Army National Guard's chaplains had a productive year serving deployed Soldiers, as well as reaching out to service members and families here at home. Strong Bonds is an Army-wide chaplain-led program that focuses on relationship and life skills with the goal of enriching marriages and relationships by providing weekend retreats for couples, families and singles. This past year they increased their offerings having provided Strong Bonds activities for nearly 200 couples and approximately 40 families and 30 singles.

## Facilities

A design and construction contract for a new Readiness Center in Bethel was awarded for approximately \$20 million, with the intent to begin construction in spring 2010 in order to support the Alaska Army National Guard's airborne infantry, aviation and military police units assigned to the area. In addition, \$3.2 million



**Honor Pole.** Members of the Alaska Army National Guard raise the Honor Pole outside Alaska National Guard headquarters at Camp Denali. The Honor Pole was designed by George Bennett Sr. of Sitka and carved by his son James Bennett. The Honor Pole honors the Alaska National Guard's past and present military members for their service to the country and state. Photo: Major Guy Hayes, DMVA Public Affairs

from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is being applied to nine energy-saving projects to help conserve natural resources.

Other major accomplishments by the Construction and Facilities Office are \$1.5 million water/sewer line to the Nome Army Aviation Operations Facility, numerous Bryant Army Airfield life-safety projects completed, and additions completed at both the Kodiak and Kenai Readiness Centers increasing indoor training space.

Our Environmental section received first place nationwide for its Environmental Restoration Program, closed 11 contaminated sites in rural Alaska, acquired Defense Environmental Restoration Program funding for an additional five sites in 2009 and secured a place-holder with Army Environmental Command for 20 remaining sites that are scheduled to be remediated for closure between 2010-2014.



**Khaan Quest.** Alaska Army National Guard Master Sergeant Eric Schlemme, left, and Major Wayne Don, center, join Mongolian Armed Forces Senior Sergeant Battulga Baatar to observe the tactics and techniques used by the Mongolian Expeditionary Force at Five Hills Training Area near Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, during Khaan Quest 2009. Schlemme and Don deployed in September as embedded U.S. liaisons with the Mongolian Expeditionary Force to Afghanistan. Photo: Captain Amy Slinker, 134th Public Affairs Detachment

# Alaska Air National Guard



**Security Forces.** Providing base security, Staff Sergeant Daniel Brion, 213th Space Warning Squadron, stands guard at Clear Air Force Station.

Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team

## *Supporting Alaska on the Home Front*

The mission of the Alaska Air National Guard is to recruit, train, equip and maintain America's finest Airmen. Tasked with this vital mission, we support worldwide contingency operations, State of Alaska emergency operations, and daily homeland security and defense missions. We also provide rescue forces on continual alert to protect life and property for the citizens of Alaska.

In 2009, Alaska Air National Guardsmen serving throughout Alaska met that mission by executing an extremely high operational tempo and deployment pace for yet another year.

Nearly 100 full-time Guardsmen assigned to the 213th Space Warning Squadron performed daily missile warning and space surveillance at Clear Air Force Station, ensuring the safety of our state and nation. The unit tracked more than 1.5 million space objects and maintained a watchful eye over numerous ballistic missile events around the world.

Located on Elmendorf Air Force Base, approximately 150 Alaska Air National

Guardsmen assigned to the 176th Air Control Squadron performed a daily air sovereignty mission in support of the Alaskan Regional Air Operations Center. Created to defend against potential bomber attacks from now-former Cold War foes, the Air Control Squadron today keeps tabs not only on continued probing by the Russians, but it also identifies and directs response to incursions of other unknown aircraft into Alaska airspace. In 2009, the Air Control Squadron was credited with 20 Russian Bear intercepts and during a NORAD alert force evaluation, they were given the highest rating achievable: "NORAD Mission Ready."

The highest profile of all Alaska Air National Guard missions remains search-and-rescue. The 176th Wing's rescue components consist of three squadrons. The 210th Rescue Squadron flies six HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters, highly modified search-and-rescue variants of the well-known Black Hawk. The 211th Rescue Squadron flies four HC-130s, a version of the C-130 "Hercules" specially equipped for aerial refueling and search-and-rescue missions. The 212th Rescue Squadron comprises the famed

**Search and Rescue.** Members of the 210th Rescue Squadron fly an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter near Spencer Glacier during a taping of the Discovery Channel show *Man vs. Wild*. The Alaska Air National Guard partnered with the show to highlight the Guard's search and rescue mission.

Photo: Kalei Brooks, DMVA Public Affairs

pararescuemen or "PJs" – elite rescuers trained in combat medicine, marksmanship, SCUBA diving and wilderness survival.

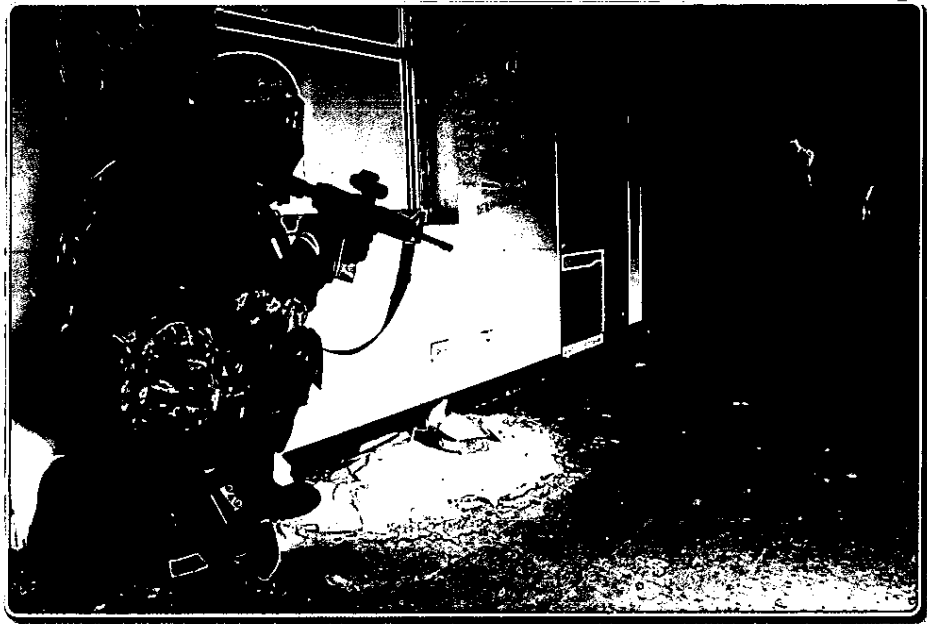
The search-and-rescue missions are coordinated through the 11th Rescue Coordination Center, a high-tech Air Guard facility located on Elmendorf Air Force Base. Together, the rescue package was credited with saving 34 lives from January to November 2009, with another 10 people assisted to safety.

The Alaska Air National Guard also partnered with the Discovery Channel's number one show in the United States – *Man vs. Wild* with Bear Grylls. The show, which promotes survival and search-and-rescue, filmed the opening sequence of its Alaska episode near Spencer Glacier in June with the help of the 210th and 212th Rescue Squadrons.

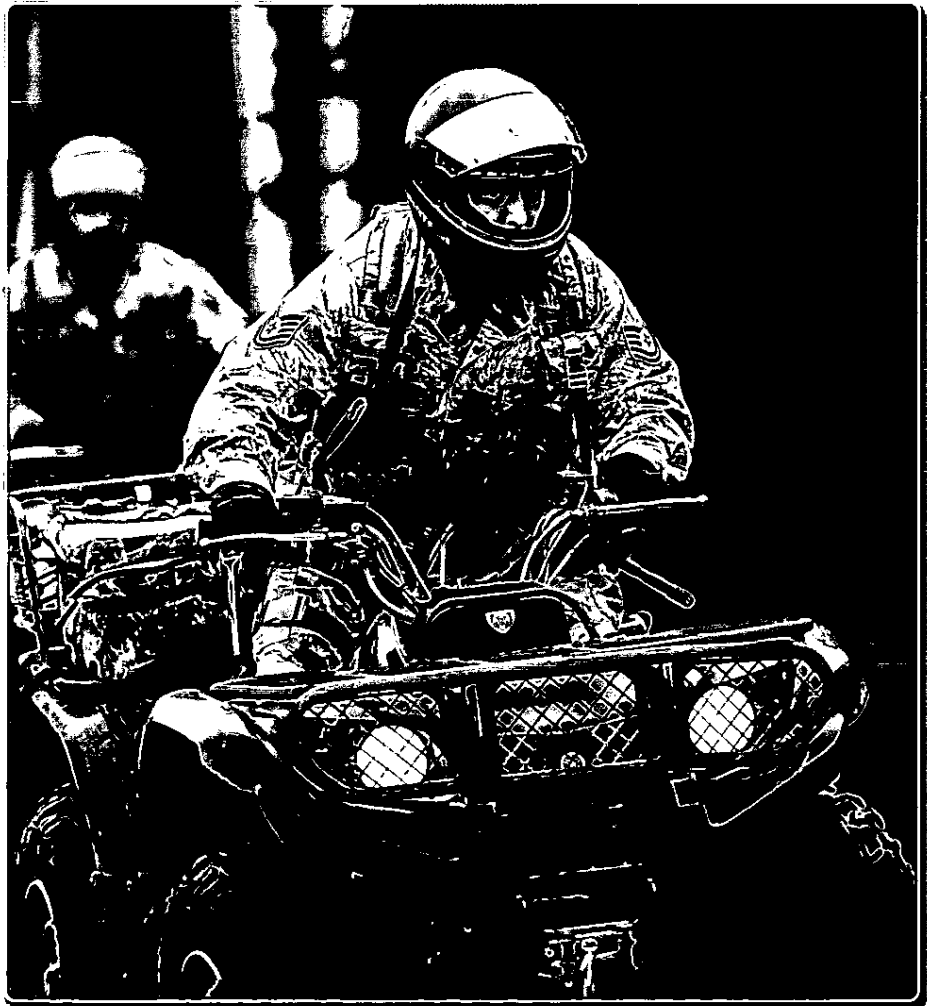
National and worldwide coverage through shows like *Man vs. Wild* provides the Alaska Air National Guard exceptional coverage and bolsters recruiting efforts. In fact, recruiting efforts throughout the last 18 months have resulted in an overall end-strength growth from 80.2 percent to 91.5 percent. New recruiting campaigns have included the opening of an office in Wasilla, extensive emphasis on unit referrals and individual involvement, additional recruiters, and new partnerships with public and non-public entities to increase rural Alaska recruiting opportunities.

The implementation of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure law, which dictated the Kulis Air National Guard Base closure and the relocation of the 176th Wing to Elmendorf Air Force Base no later than September 2011, is progressing smoothly. The Air Guard has received and obligated 100 percent of the \$135.05 million in federal funding for the BRAC directed facilities projects and will be in the process of moving its units, equipment and aircraft across town to Elmendorf Air Force Base by January 2011. In addition, the Air National Guard's Jewel Lake Armory will be transferred back to the state by March 2010.

In the interior region of the state, the 168th Air Refueling Wing was once again at the tip of the spear in providing support to homeland defense. In 2009, Guardsmen at Eielson Air Force Base performed 49 NORAD Homeland Defense-Air Sovereignty missions and transferred 3.3 million pounds of fuel. They continue their close working relationship with the active duty – nearly all of their "customers" are active-duty aircraft, many of which are on operational missions, and the wing's eight KC-135 Stratotankers transfer more fuel than those of any other Air National Guard tanker wing.



**Commando Warrior.** Senior Airman Wyatt Derner, 176th Security Forces, takes a knee as members of his team check a house for potential "enemies" during Commando Warrior Urban Operations exercise 2009 at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam. Photo: Airman First Class Courtney Witt, U.S. Air Force



**Four-Wheeler Focus.** Technical Sergeant John Stoliz, front, and Staff Sergeant Shane Potwin, both security forces members from the 213th Space Warning Squadron, patrol wooded areas at Clear Air Force Station on all-terrain vehicles. Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team

## Defending America and Strengthening Relations

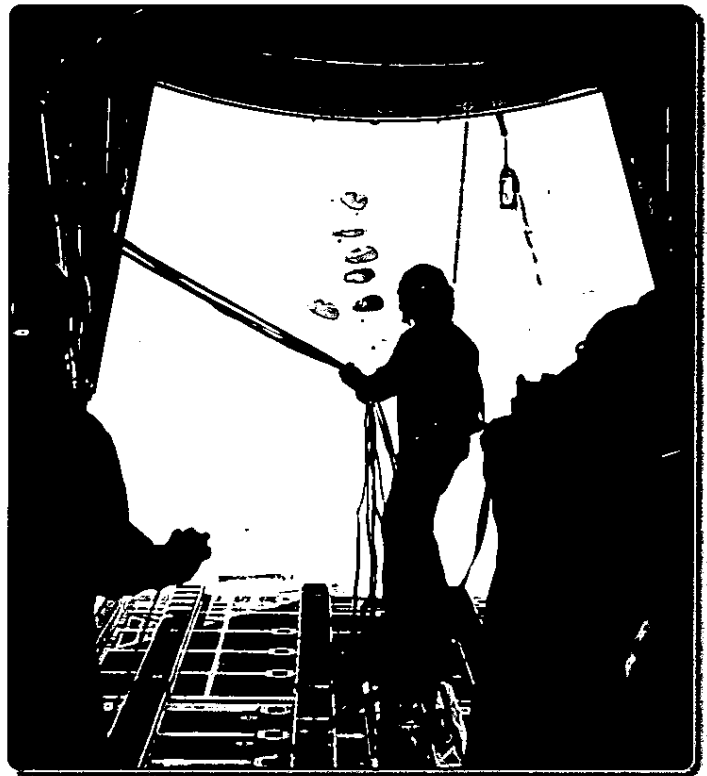
Alaska Air National Guardsmen answered the call to defend not only Alaska but the United States in the Global War on Terrorism, while supporting humanitarian and good-will missions around the world.

In 2009, approximately 180 members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 144th Airlift Squadron and 176th Maintenance Group deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Aircrews flew air-land and air-drop missions in support of coalition ground forces across the entire nation of Afghanistan. The Airmen rotated through Bagram Air Base serving approximately 45- to 120-day tours.

Approximately 200 members of the 168th Air Refueling Wing and 176th Wing fulfilled the Air National Guard Air Expeditionary Force commitment to Middle Eastern countries to provide various support in KC-135 air refueling operations, aircraft maintenance, base security, medical care, personnel, and chaplain services to the coalition forces in support of Operation Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

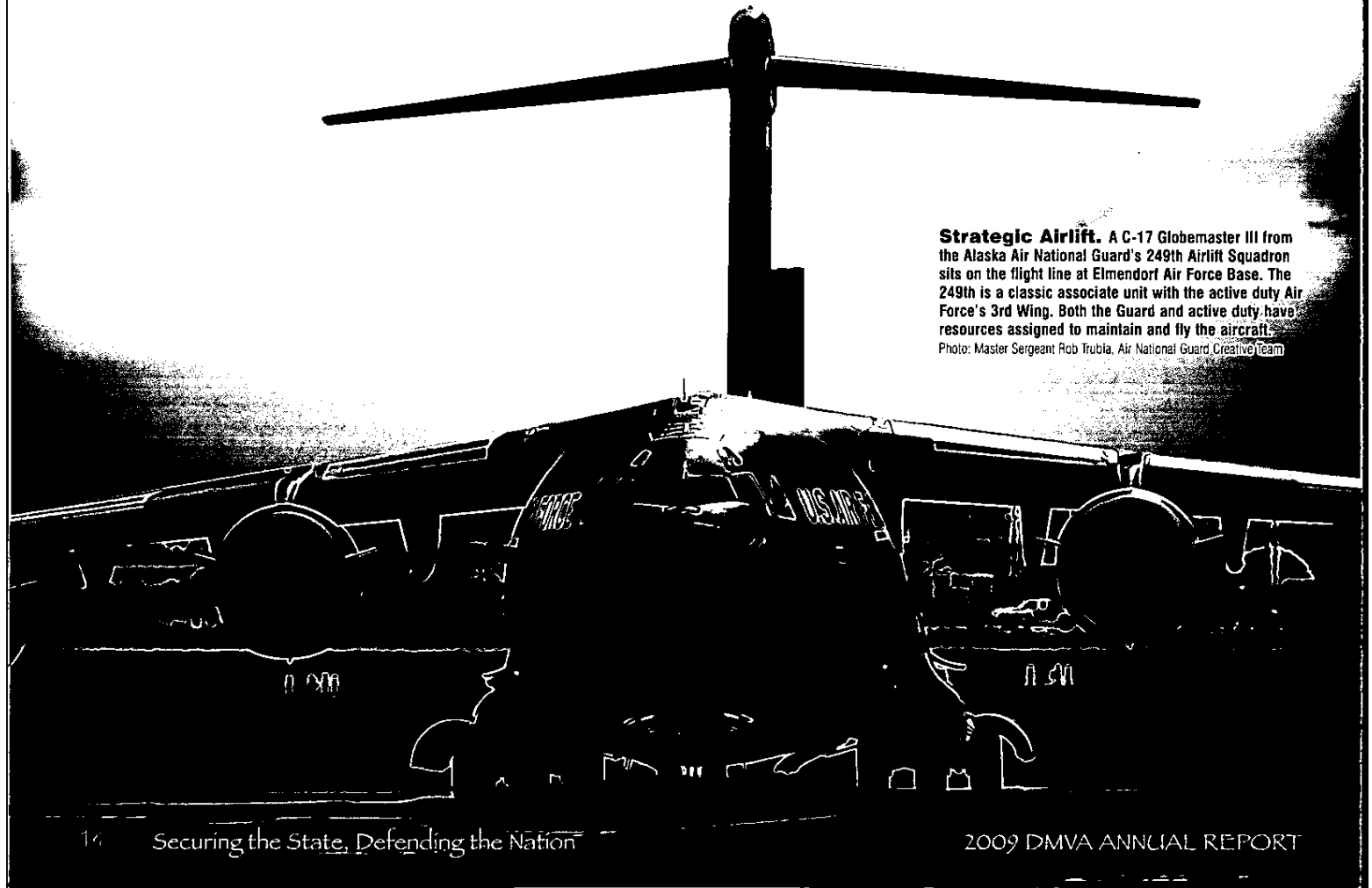
About 130 members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing deployed to Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany, to support military operations throughout Europe. Aircrews flew passengers and cargo on missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Africa Command.

Members from the 176th Wing took part in Khaan Quest, a multinational peacekeeping operations training exercise held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, each year and driven by the National



**Afghanistan Air Drop.** Senior Master Sergeant Glen Tillman, center, and Senior Airman Nathan Grilliot perform a combat airdrop mission in Afghanistan with the 176th Wing's 144th Airlift Squadron while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Photo: Retired Colonel Tim Grams, 176th Wing



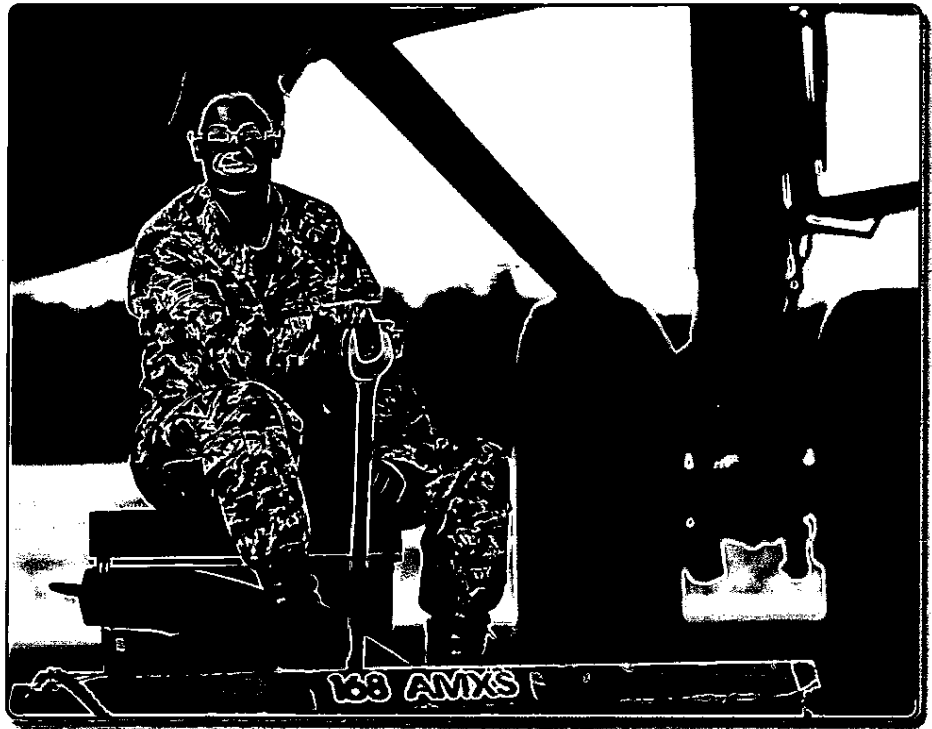
**Strategic Airlift.** A C-17 Globemaster III from the Alaska Air National Guard's 249th Airlift Squadron sits on the flight line at Elmendorf Air Force Base. The 249th is a classic associate unit with the active duty Air Force's 3rd Wing. Both the Guard and active duty have resources assigned to maintain and fly the aircraft.

Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team

Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program, which pairs the Alaska Guard with Mongolian forces. The 176th Wing deployed medical providers, technicians, and equipment representing optometry, dental, orthopedics, veterinary medicine and nursing services as part of joint/multinational medical teams. The team provided medical care to several underserved villages in central Mongolia, and many residents saw a doctor for the first time in their lives.

Guardsmen from the 176th Wing and 168th Air Refueling Wing assisted multiple Indonesian communities during Operation Pacific Angel 2009. Pacific Angel, a humanitarian assistance mission sponsored by U.S. Pacific Command, is designed to support areas in need in the Pacific region. It is conducted in locations throughout the Pacific theater to support the U.S. military charter of capacity building in partner nations.

Alaska Air National Guardsmen provided air refueling, transportation, engineering and medical support to those in need, while building important civil-military relationships and regional awareness of the personnel involved.



**Tanker Maintenance.** Senior Airman Cody Smith, an aircraft mechanic, is one of the proud members of the 168th Maintenance Squadron from the 168th Air Refueling Wing, which specializes in KC-135 refueling tanker missions, based at Eielson Air Force Base. More than 600 members of the Alaska Air National Guard call the 168th Air Refueling Wing home.

Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team



**Training Mission.** 144th Airlift Squadron members Captain Robert Stratton, right, pilot, and Staff Sergeant Darryl Wilson, flight engineer, fly an airdrop training mission in a C-130 Hercules. Photo: Master Sergeant Rob Trubia, Air National Guard Creative Team

# Homeland Security & Emergency Management



## River Watch

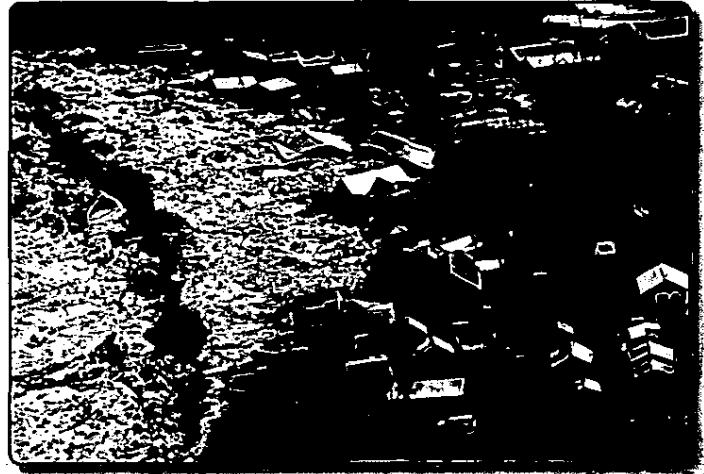
Each spring the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management partners with the National Weather Service River Forecast Center to conduct aerial observations of ice-jam, flood-prone river systems across Alaska. The River Watch teams consist of a DHS&EM emergency manager and a National Weather Service hydrologist. The River Watch teams are able to fly over the rivers, observe river conditions, compare the information to River Forecast Center data and then issue flood warnings to the communities or assist with flood response efforts.

The River Forecast Center had predicted an above-average flood potential for the 2009 spring breakup. In the weeks before spring breakup, DHS&EM emergency managers coordinated with other state and federal agencies to raise situational awareness and open lines of communication. The updated Spring Flood Guide was distributed to Alaska riverside communities, and vulnerable communities were contacted to see if they needed assistance.

## Spring Flooding Response & Recovery

This spring, ice-jam flooding of historic levels affected communities along many Alaska rivers with communities on the Yukon and Kuskokwim most affected. Emergency response activities included providing housing for disaster victims; providing for emergency needs such as food, water, health care, and power needs identified by communities; and supporting local evacuation efforts.

After a complete damage assessment, the most significantly affected areas of the state were declared eligible for federal individual and public assistance. Individual assistance provides grants to individuals and households who sustained damages to their real property, personal property or transportation. Public assistance programs are available for local and tribal governments



**Massive Flooding.** During the 2009 spring flood season, many communities along the Yukon, Kuskokwim and other river systems were affected by ice-jam flooding. Eagle was the hardest hit when ice jumped the banks and crushed homes, businesses, vehicles and anything else within its reach. Photo: Courtesy of Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

and certain nonprofit entities with damages to critical public infrastructure. DHS&EM worked as an advocate for individuals, household and local/tribal governments to ensure that federal assistance programs were fully utilized.

The flood recovery effort was complicated by the wide geographic distance between affected communities; the short summer season and FEMA staff not familiar with Alaska's unique operational challenges. More than 760 Alaska households and renters applied for and were granted more than \$6.8 million in disaster-related individual assistance. More than 250 public assistance scope-of-work project worksheets were written with the majority obligated for funding. The State of Alaska activated Public Assistance and Individual Family Grant programs for affected areas not designated for assistance in the federal declaration allowing those communities to receive assistance from the state only.

## Disaster Housing Task Force

Shortly after the 2009 spring flood response effort was finished, DHS&EM held the first Alaska Disaster Housing Task Force meeting. The task force brought together state, federal, local, nonprofit and tribal organizations with a role in housing in Alaska. Each member organization identified programs that could be used by flood-affected communities. The DHTF provided communities with an interactive forum to articulate their needs to potential sources of assistance.

Skilled volunteer labor was one of the greatest needs identified by the communities. FEMA and Alaska Disaster Housing Task Force member Alaska Voluntary Organization Active in Disasters filled that need by calling upon voluntary organizations such as Samaritan's Purse, Mennonite Disaster Services and Christian Reform World Relief Committee to meet the communities' requests. The Alaska Disaster Housing Task Force supported the transportation, lodging and feeding of the volunteers working in remote communities.



**Rebuilding Mission.** Mennonite volunteers finish the final cabin in Eagle 106 days after the housing mission began. The Disaster Housing Task Force played a major role in organizing and supporting more than 500 volunteers who contributed to the rebuilding effort. Photo: Courtesy of Roy Williams

In all, more than 500 volunteers donated more than 17,000 hours of labor with an approximate value of \$2 million. The DHTF organized the procurement and delivery of cabin kits and building materials in Eagle, Stevens Village, Tanana and Akiak.

## Preparedness

The Biannual Preparedness Conferences brought emergency managers and other responders together to train and discuss current threats. Evacuation workshops were held to help communities prepare for evacuations in their regions. DHS&EM and the National Weather Service certified Yakutat as Alaska's sixth Tsunami-Ready Community. Tsunami sirens were installed in Sand Point, Yakutat, Cordova, Sitka, Valdez, Whittier and the Kenai Peninsula Borough. On March 25, DHS&EM and other partners conducted a successful statewide test of the Tsunami Alert System.

## Training

In 2009, Incident Command courses 100, 200, 300, 400, 700 and 800 were given by DHS&EM training staff or a community training partner. During the 2009 spring flooding response, several flooded communities that had just undergone incident command system training utilized that training during the response. This year DHS&EM sponsored the first Alaskan All-Hazards Type III Communications class and offered a Basic Public Information Officer course to statewide participants. DHS&EM also sponsored the first statewide Public Safety Explorer Youth Summit held in Fairbanks, where 40 students and mentors participated.

## Planning

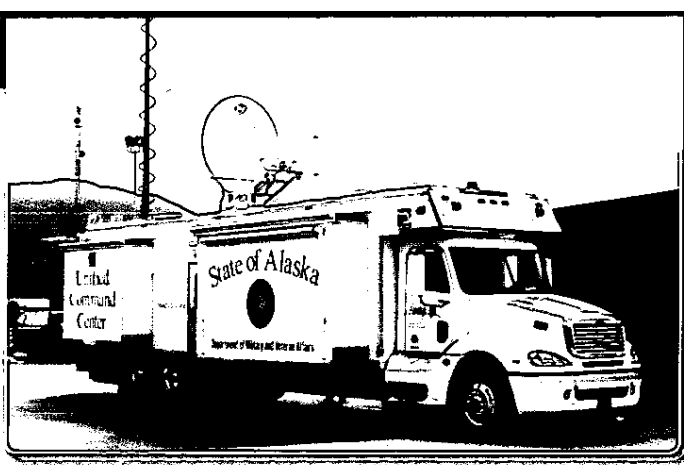
The DHS&EM Planning Section completed the Division's Continuity of Operations plan, which identifies techniques that the state and community emergency response partners can use to deliver critical goods and services during and after a disaster. In addition, DHS&EM updated the State Emergency Operations Plan and is in the process of updating the State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

## Mount Redoubt

Beginning in March, Mount Redoubt, located on the west side of Cook Inlet, began a series of eruptions that lasted until early May. Ash fall was reported in Kodiak, Valdez, the Mat-Su Borough and other areas of southcentral Alaska. The State Emergency Coordination Center held daily meetings during the most active time period and other meetings as needed with the Alaska Volcano Observatory, National Weather Service, state agencies and local jurisdictions. The ash fall affected air, ground, and sea transportation options, which threatened the supply of goods and services across the state. DHS&EM coordinated with private sector organizations through the Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection to ensure that critical services like food, water, power and transportation would not be interrupted. A public information campaign was launched to give people volcanic ash safety tips.

## H1N1 Influenza Pandemic

In May, DHS&EM established a unified command with the Department of Health and Social Services to monitor the emerging H1N1 emergency and to distribute anti-viral medications and personal protection equipment. The flu fighting supplies were distributed to 39 hub locations as an influenza outbreak precautionary measure. In October, the first H1N1 vaccine doses became available, and DHS&EM supported DHSS distribution of the vaccine and related influenza prevention information.



**Communications on Wheels.** The Alaska Mobile Emergency Operations Center can be set up and ready for operation in a matter of minutes. The MEOC is equipped with a full range of communication technologies and can be deployed anywhere along Alaska's road system. Photo: Jeremy Zidek, DHS&EM Public Affairs

## Mobile Emergency Operations Center

In September, DHS&EM took delivery of the Mobile Emergency Operations Center. The MEOC is a 45-foot motor coach equipped with Alaska Land Mobile Radio, disaster response work stations, satellite television, wireless internet, radio dispatch consoles, and satellite enabled phone and internet communication equipment. The MEOC brings robust phone, satellite and radio communication capabilities and can be deployed anywhere along Alaska's main road system. Phone and internet communication lines can be deployed from the vehicle to provide or supplement communication capabilities to any permanent or temporary emergency structure. The MEOC was purchased by the state with funding from the Buffer Zone Protection Grant.

## Pelican

In a 48-hour period in August, the city of Pelican received approximately 10 inches of rainfall that destroyed a large section of flume that fed the community's water supply and hydroelectric plant. In response to a city of Pelican request for a disaster declaration, DHS&EM worked with the city, the Department of Environmental Conservation and other organizations to address the situation. Temporary repairs to the flume restored the water supply. DEC and the Alaska Energy Authority are working with a contractor in the city of Pelican to upgrade the water delivery infrastructure and provide a permanent solution to the water supply issue. In September, Governor Sean Parnell issued Administrative Order 251 authorizing up to \$100,000 to be dispersed from the State Disaster Relief Fund to pay for the city of Pelican's emergency response cost.

## Grants

In 2009, the Homeland Security Grant Program brought \$7.3 million to the state under the State Homeland Security Program, Citizen Corps Program and Metropolitan Medical Response System. The HSGP enables the state and local communities to prepare for and mitigate against natural and man-made disasters. An Emergency Management Performance Grant fund of \$2.7 million will go to enhance state and local emergency management capabilities for all hazards mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. An additional \$885,162 in grant program awards were received for Buffer Zone Protection Program, Earthquake Hazards Reduction State Program, Emergency Management Performance Grant and Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant. DHS&EM submits grants for federal funding on behalf of Alaska communities and ensures that grant requirements are met.

# Alaska Military Youth Academy



The Alaska Military Youth Academy is part of the National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program, which helps high school dropout, at-risk youth focus and get back on track with their lives, and produces program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults. The Youth ChalleNGe Program is a 17.5-month program that consists of a 22-week residential phase based on the traditional military training model followed by a year-long post-residential phase. The Alaska Military Youth Academy serves the needs of 16- to 18-year-old Alaskans and is located at Camp Carroll on Fort Richardson.

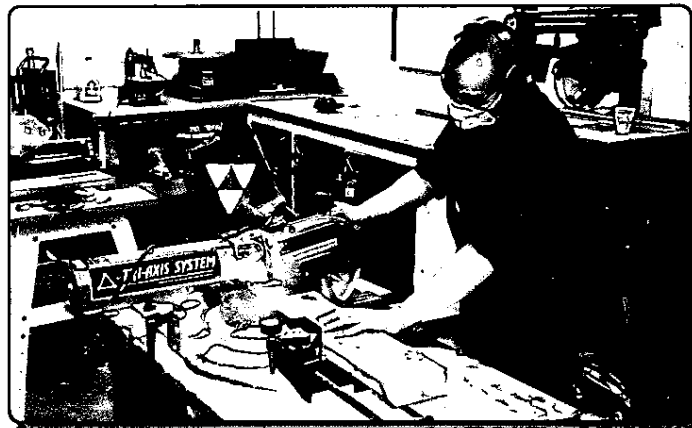
## Serving Alaskans and Changing Lives

This year has been another progressive year of change, yielding outstanding results within the Alaska Military Youth Academy.

Cumulatively, the Academy exceeded 2,926 graduates who are demonstrating exceptional success in their lives and futures. Without exception, the Academy has a proven track record of success and demonstrates unlimited potential to serve Alaska and Alaska's high school at-risk youth in the future.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy's tuition-free ChalleNGe program, located on Fort Richardson within the Camp Carroll training site, is designed to provide at-risk 16-year-old through 18-year-old Alaskan youth who have dropped out of high school with an opportunity to complete a high school education or earn a GED, gain healthy life skills, and develop leadership and teamwork skills that will prepare them for life-long success.

Alaska's ChalleNGe program is based on historically tried and



**Job Skills.** During an industrial arts woodshop training session, a cadet uses a table saw to start a construction project. Cadets receive hands-on training in many different areas as part of the ChalleNGe Program before graduation.

Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Military Youth Academy

proven U.S. military training methods and structure. The structure and discipline allow cadets to focus on goals and to fully participate and perform during the mentally and physically demanding 22-week residential phase. The Academy is not a military "boot camp." The mission of the ChalleNGe program is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of at-risk youth.

**Honor Graduate.** Alaska Military Youth Academy cadet Nichole Barnes, honor graduate for graduating class 2009-2 and corps first sergeant, is one of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's more than 2,926 graduates in its 15-year history.

Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Military Youth Academy

- The Academy ranks #1 in the nation per capita with regard to contacting and recruiting high school dropouts into the program.
- The Academy ranks in the top three academies nationally with regard to the number of cadets graduated above the published target graduation population.
- In January 2009, the Alaska Military Youth Academy received the national USO ChalleNGe Award for the "Most Progressive Program" in the nation.
- Nationally, the Alaska Military Youth Academy is one of only five ChalleNGe programs nationally accredited to issue high school diplomas.
- The Academy is producing 118 percent more than its target graduation population per year. The Academy ranks in the top three ChalleNGe programs nationally in this area.
- In 2009, the Academy celebrated 15 successful years of producing graduates who are leading productive lives.
- Class 2009-01, which graduated 161 cadets in February 2009, was the largest graduating class in the Academy's 15-year history.

To graduate from the residential phase, cadets are required to pass eight core components, which include academic excellence, physical fitness, job skills, service to the community, health and hygiene, responsible citizenship, leadership/followership and life coping skills. The residential phase further prepares cadets to successfully continue in the program's year-long post-residential phase where students pursue their documented future plans.

To provide Alaskan youth and families easier access to Academy information and facilitate the application process, the school maintains two satellite offices – one in the Dimond Center in South Anchorage and another in the National Guard Armory in Fairbanks. Since the opening of the admissions office in Fairbanks, applications from interior and rural Alaska have increased and continue to remain high. The classes that were conducted in 2009 reflect some of the best applicant-to-candidate show rates ever experienced by the Academy.

During the spring and fall of 2009, the Academy achieved maximum use of the Academy's capabilities by seeking the maximum number of applicants per class and ensuring that all candidates capable of participating in each class were invited to attend. The last four classes represent the highest average number of applicants and graduates in the 15-year existence of the Academy. The Alaska Military Youth Academy is ranked #1 in the nation with regard to contacting and recruiting high school dropouts. In 2009, the Academy celebrated its 15th year and was awarded the national USO ChalleNGe Award as the "Most Progressive Program" in the nation.

Graduation metrics for the spring class of 2009, Class 2009-01, show that the class graduated 161 cadets. This is the largest graduating class in the 15-year history of the Academy. The fall class, Class 2009-02, graduated 136 cadets. These graduation statistics demonstrate that the Academy is producing 118 percent more than its target graduation population. In this area, the Academy ranks in the top three programs among all ChalleNGe programs.

As of Oct. 1, 2009, the Academy has graduated more than 2,926 ChalleNGe cadets. The Academy is proud that 100 percent



**Confidence Builder.** Cadet Breanne Tiedeman, Alaska Military Youth Academy class 2010-1, rappels during a confidence training exercise held at Camp Carroll, Fort Richardson. The goal of the training is to instill cadets with confidence and team-building skills to succeed in future events. Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Military Youth Academy

of the cadets graduating from the spring class of 2009-01 were placed for success after completion of the residential phase.

The Academy's main campus located at Camp Carroll provides living facilities, food services, academic classes, vocational training, counseling, medical services and administrative support 24 hours a day, seven days a week for ChalleNGe cadets. The Alaska Military Youth Academy is accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. The Academy is also an Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development GED testing site.



**Community Participation.** Cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy's class 2009-2 participate in the Chugiak-Eagle River Bear Paw Parade. This graduating class stood out in the area of community service and learned early on about giving back and self-sacrifice. Photo: Courtesy of Alaska Military Youth Academy

# DoD STARBASE Alaska



## Nurturing the Next Generation in Math and Science

Department of Defense STARBASE is a partnership between the military, local school systems and communities.

STARBASE is a premier educational program, sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. At STARBASE, students participate in challenging “hands-on, mind-on” activities in aviation, science, technology, engineering, math and space exploration. They interact with military personnel to explore careers and make connections with the “real world.” Students also learn teamwork, goal setting and the importance of staying off drugs.

STARBASE Alaska’s goal is to motivate students to explore science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, as they continue their education. The program serves students who are historically underrepresented in STEM.

STARBASE is a world leader in introducing the latest STEM curriculum to elementary students. The inquiry-based curriculum, developed on 13 core concepts, engages students in exciting experiments and technology activities. The program is rigorous, relevant and has a “wow” factor to achieve maximum learning.

STARBASE core curriculum concepts are Newton’s Laws of Motion, four forces of flight, Bernoulli’s Principle, model rocketry, properties of air, development and use of technology, properties and states of matter, flight simulation, space exploration, goal setting, teamwork and substance abuse avoidance.

Each year STARBASE Alaska has grown in size and scope of its original mission. During the 2009 school year and summer sessions, STARBASE Alaska at Fort Richardson reached more than 1,500 students in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas. This diverse group of young people came from more than 20 different schools.

In the summer months, we were able to reach out to special groups such as the families of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs and students from Education Talent Search – UAA. In addition, we offered Level II summer classes in the areas of aviation, technology and space exploration to students who attended STARBASE during the school year.

We also continued Teacher Kits to reach more classrooms and support the Matanuska-Susitna School District. STARBASE Alaska continues to expand its reach into the community through participation in local school science nights, Girl Scouts Technology Day and Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Annual Picnic.

By becoming “Partners in Education” with local school districts, STARBASE Alaska continues the mission of educating and developing responsible, productive, life-long learners and critical thinkers capable of assisting and leading America successfully in the 21st century. Together with the help of parents and teachers – 1,570 chaperone hours and 1,035 teacher hours in 2009 – STARBASE Alaska is making a difference in the lives of its students.

### 2009 Highlights:

- Held three week-long summer camps with an emphasis on aviation, technology and space exploration
- Hosted an event for 26 Foreign Defense Attaches in October
- Held three off-site STARBASE classes for schools that couldn’t raise the transportation funds to get to the STARBASE campus



**Reaction Experiment.** Sixth graders from Orion Elementary School experiment with mixing baking soda with cola, water, lemon juice and vinegar to determine which ingredients would be best to launch a rocket based on the reaction.

Photo: Courtesy of STARBASE



**Robot Demonstration.** During STARBASE’s Technology Summer Camp, Officer Jeff Morton, Anchorage Police Department, gives students a demonstration of the robots the department currently uses. Photo: Courtesy of STARBASE



**Molecule Toss.** Sixth graders from Orion Elementary School demonstrate the different states of matter: solid – little movement; liquid – more movement; gas – lots of movement, using balls to represent molecules. Photo: Courtesy of STARBASE

### Ethnicity of Student Population

Multiracial .....	78
Hispanic .....	78
American or Alaska Native .....	154
African American .....	104
Asian/Pacific Islander .....	130
Caucasian .....	1,066
Other .....	21

Number of Students Registering:  
1,651

Male ..... 847  
Female ..... 784

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Alaska State Legislature  
HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Agenda

Thursday, February 4, 2010

HB 300 APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS  
HB 302 APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

FY11 Governor's Budget Overviews:

Continued from 9:00 AM meeting:

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Jeff Jessee, Chief Executive Officer  
Dr. William Doolittle, Chairman, Board of Trustees  
Laraine Derr, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees

To The Call Of The Chair:

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Presenters:  
Brig. Gen. Tom Katkus, Commissioner and Adjutant General  
McHugh Pierre, Deputy Commissioner

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

POSTPONED TO A LATER DATE