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FLYER

Vol. XXXVII No. 4—April 2015

INSIDE

- Change of command
- Meet the new commander





By Col. Lee Smith
120th Airlift Wing Commander

Meet the new commander

Sharing his extensive active-duty experience

Col. Leslie "Lee" Smith comes to the 120th Airlift Wing from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where he recently served as the 86th Airlift Wing vice commander. He has more than 20 years experience with the C-130 aircraft and has over 4,000 hours of flight time in C-130, C-20 and C-21 aircraft. Col. Smith has also flown more than 550 combat and combat support hours during Operation JOINT GUARD, SOUTHERN WATCH, IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

Col. Smith is a 1992 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy.

"When I went to the academy I wanted to fly fighters just like everyone else in my generation," he said. "At the time the Air Force Academy was the best way to achieve that goal."

While at the academy, Col. Smith participated in a two-week flying program with a cargo aircraft and crew. Upon his return he decided airlift is where he wanted to be.

"The mobility life is what I really want to do," Col. Smith said. "I went to pilot training with the intent to fly airlift. All my instructor pilots in pilot training were C-130 guys and every single one of them loved the Herc (Hercules). They also loved what they did and that really appealed to me. The fact that they also dealt so much with the Army - it was a good fit."

Smith is looking forward to commanding the 120th Airlift Wing. This is an exciting time for the Guard and the Air Force.

"For the wing and myself personally, this is a great opportunity to learn about another component," Col. Smith said. "As much as I hope to share what I know about active duty and the C-130 mission, I hope to learn from the Guard members themselves about life as a Guardsman in the Air Force. This is going to be a great learning experience all the way around."

Col. Smith's starting point at the 120th Airlift Wing is to immerse himself in the Guard culture, see how things operate and go from there.

"Initially my priorities are to listen and watch... how the 120th does things and use that opportunity to see where I need to focus my efforts," he said. "At the same time I want to prepare for the exercise in August and be sure we're hitting the milestones and doing what we need to achieve Full Operational Capability by the end of the conversion in the fall of 2016."

A dual-status commander is a rare entity with both the Air Force and the Air National Guard. Col. Smith has accepted the challenge to command the Montana Air National Guard.

"Doing something new and different and challenging myself is something I find personally satisfying", Col. Smith said. "At the same time I recognize I'm going into an unfamiliar situation and there's a bit of humility needed with that."

By 1st Lt Robin Allen, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

"This is going to be a great learning experience all the way around."



Col. J. Peter Hronek presents his first commander's coin to his wife, Traci, before relinquishing command of the 120th Airlift Wing to Col. Lee Smith March 3, 2015. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson)



Vol. XXXVII No. 4—April 2015

Col. Lee Smith,
Wing Commander
Maj. Cody Smith,
Public Affairs Officer
1st Lt. Robin Allen,
Public Affairs Officer

FLYER STAFF

Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson,
Photojournalist
Tech. Sgt. Christy Mason,
Photojournalist
Tech. Sgt. Michael Touchette,
Editor/Photojournalist
Staff Sgt. Lindsey Soulsby,
Photojournalist
Senior Airman Nikolas Asmussen,
Photojournalist

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated. The deadline for unsolicited submissions is Saturday of the UTA.

Commander's Page...Pg. 1

Pg. 3...Change of Command

Col. Lee Smith takes command of the 120th Airlift Wing

C-130 Stands... Pg. 4

Recycled maintenance stands provide added safety for aircraft maintainers

Pg. 5-6...MTANG and FANG

Jacksonville deployment

Center Pictorial ...Pg. 7-8

Views from the change of command

Wajer Family... Pg. 9

Pg. 10...To Save a Life

MTANG officer talks potential suicide victim down from jumping off bridge

Training Rodeo...Pg. 11

No horses or cows at this event

Pg. 12...The Adventures of Vigilante and Noose

Lock down your personal information

History of MTANG...Pg. 13

Pg. 14...News you can use

Faces of the Guard...Pg. 15

Front cover: Col. Lee Smith receives the flag of the 120th Airlift Wing from Montana Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. Bryan Fox during the unit's change of command ceremony March 7, 2015. Smith replaces Col. J. Peter Hronek as the wing's 19th commander. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Tech. Sgt. Michael Touchette)

Change of Command

Col. Lee Smith takes command of the 120th Airlift Wing

A C-130 Hercules aircraft undergoing maintenance in the 120th Airlift Wing's main hangar provided the backdrop for a historic change of command ceremony conducted in front of a formation of Airmen during the March unit training assembly.

Air Force Col. Leslie "Lee" T. Smith accepted command of the wing from Air National Guard Col. J. Peter Hronek in a ceremony presided over by the Commander of the Montana Air National Guard, Brig. Gen. Bryan Fox.

In addition to civic leaders and local government officials, the visiting dignitaries at the ceremony included Montana Governor Steve Bullock, Air Mobility Command Commander Gen. Darren McDew, the Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau Lt. Gen. Joseph Lengyel and **Montana's Adjutant General of the Montana Air National Guard** Maj. Gen. Matthew Quinn.

General Fox highlighted many accomplishments the wing achieved during Col. Hronek's five-year tenure as wing commander.

"Colonel Hronek, your leadership has been simply magnificent," said General Fox. "You successfully led the wing through three of the most significant challenges we've ever faced. The conversion from the F-16 to the F-15, the preparation and execution of two air sovereignty alert missions, and the total force initiative challenges which realigned the F-15 mission away from Montana and replaced it with the C-130 flying mission."

Col. Smith provides an extensive active-duty Air Force



Col. Lee Smith shakes hands with Col. J. Peter Hronek at the conclusion of the 120th Airlift Wing's change of command ceremony March 7, 2015. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson)

experience that includes flying C-130s at a time when the unit continues with a conversion from fighters to transport aircraft.

A command pilot with over 4,000 hours of flight time in C-130, C-20 and C-21 aircraft, Col. Smith has also flown more than 550 combat and combat support hours during Operations JOINT GUARD, SOUTHERN WATCH, IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

Prior to taking command of the 120th Airlift Wing, **Col. Smith's previous assignment was serving as the 86th Airlift Wing's vice commander at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.**

MTANG leadership considers Col. Smith's command of the 120th Airlift Wing as being one which will pay long-term dividends and serve to build trust and understanding between the active duty and Air National Guard components.

General Fox is optimistic that the knowledge gained through this new arrangement can be carried forward for future assignments and also helps pave the way for further integration here and throughout the Air Force.

"We collectively have the potential to weave the combat power of our active duty and the Guard forces into one fabric to best serve this great nation," said General Fox. "We're getting a truly great leader at a great time."

Col. Smith looks forward to learning more about the Air National Guard and share his active duty experience with the Montana Air Guard unit.

"My big thing will be to instill what I know about the C-130 mission, and then help build that heritage and that culture here," said Col. Smith. "The 120th is an outstanding unit, they've done some great things in the past with other platforms and they're still learning about the C-130, so it's my hope I can share what I know and my knowledge and love for the 130 with the Airmen here."

Col. Hronek and his wife Traci will be moving to Helena, Montana, where he will serve as the vice chief of Joint Staff of the Montana National Guard at the Joint Forces Headquarters at Fort Harrison.

By Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

Stands up for safety

Recycled work stands increase maintenance safety

The 120th Airlift Wing recently added 12-piece steel maintenance stands to the inventory of equipment used to inspect and maintain the unit's C-130 Hercules aircraft.

Using these stands in the regularly scheduled aircraft maintenance process will ultimately increase the safety of the technicians working on the aircraft, said the 120th Maintenance Group isochronal dock supervisor.

Master Sgt. Douglas Buckler said the wing's recent conversion from the smaller F-15 Eagle fighter aircraft to the much larger C-130 transport aircraft presented a series of challenges for his section.

"Among the challenges was the problem of accessibility to areas located above the technician's head while performing maintenance," said Buckler. "Safety considerations are always at the forefront of the technician's mind and performing maintenance in any elevated position compounds these concerns. This steel colossus allows safe and virtually unrestricted access to the upper parts of the aircraft."

The stands were originally discovered by a unit member while he was delivering materials from the wing to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. He has since retired from the Montana Air National Guard.

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Eddie Ingman noticed the stands unused at the Air Force base and asked about the availability of transferring the equipment to the 120th Airlift Wing. Ingman knew that a set of stands were scheduled to be shipped to the unit but would not be delivered for nearly 18 months. This delay could possibly create safety issues for maintenance personnel working on the aircraft.

Ingman's inquiry and legwork pursuing the equipment resulted in the stands being transferred to the wing. This set up a series of events that involved eight unit personnel travelling in four flatbed trucks to Texas to take the stands apart, load and transport the equipment back to Montana.

Buckler said the stands were transported safely home but the reassembly process had to wait until the current phase of the recent hangar remodel was completed.

"Master Sergeant Keith Bennett had to cut some of the larger pieces of the stand in half with a cutting torch so

they could fit on the flatbed in Texas," said Buckler. "When they got home he had to re-weld the cut sections and the isochronal shop and the aerial repair shop personnel had to reassemble the piles of metal without the assistance of any kind of directions."

120th Airlift Wing Ground Safety Manager Senior Master Sgt. Ronny Grina appreciated the ingenuity demonstrated by the Airmen who located, disassembled, transported and reassembled the stands in the hangar.

"I think the individuals involved in procuring the stands demonstrated excellent attitudes toward personal safety, workplace safety, cost-saving and recycling," Grina said. "We have some very dependable and talented Airmen who regularly demonstrate these attitudes."



A portion of 12-pieces of C-130 Hercules exterior access maintenance stands provided by Dyess Air Force Base are assembled in the 120th Airlift Wing's main hangar in Great Falls, Mont., on Jan. 30, 2015. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson)

Maintenance personnel are now enjoying the safety benefits provided by the C-130 exterior access stands that travelled nearly 1,500 miles from Texas to their new home in Montana.

"The ISO and aerial repair shops are ecstatic about their new maintenance stands," said Buckler. "Lots of teamwork and elbow grease has paid off in a big way."

By Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

Nothing bland at Camp Blanding

MTANG and FANG take on training



Guardsmen take time out from training to pose for a group photograph. Front row: Tech. Sgt. Holly Griffin, Staff Sgt. Andrew Naumann, Staff Sgt. Marcus Jackson, Airman 1st Class Jacqueline LeBrun. Back row: 2nd Lt. Aaron Jewett, Staff Sgt. Mitchell Snead, Chief Master Sgt. James Long, Senior Airman Lizelle Lapuz, Airman 1st Class Alexander Jorgenson, Senior Master Sgt. Alison Allwine and Senior Master Sgt. Stephen Shovlin. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)



EOD members Tech. Sgt. Ryan Dugan, Tech. Sgt. Kristina Garcia, Master Sgt. Raleigh Rogers, Tech. Sgt. Scot Lawson, Tech. Sgt. Mitch Johnson and Staff Sgt. Frank Green kneel in front while a charge is detonated in the distant background. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)

Thirty-eight members of the Montana Air National Guard deployed to Jacksonville, Florida, and integrated with the Florida Air National Guard for two weeks of specialty training in February 2015.

Deployed members of the 120th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight participated in training located at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center near Starke, Florida.

The training is designed for active duty, National Guard and Army Reserve units as well as local law enforcement.

CBJTC has been a training facility since World War II consisting of 72,000 acres housing facilities where MTANG members completed training on the discharge of conventional explosives, survival evasion resistance and escape, convoy procedures, improvised explosive ordnance, M-107 .50 caliber sniper rifle, night operation land navigation, repelling, and F-15 Eagle familiarization.

One of the training exercises included a kill house which

was created by a prior EOD technician filled with booby traps, devices and hidden rooms. The 120th Airlift Wing EOD discovered the simulated clandestine methamphetamine laboratory that had not been discovered by an



Air National Guard firefighters work to extinguish a ground-fuel fire at the Fire Academy of the South located near Jacksonville, Fla. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)



Staff Sgt. Lance Turner pulls adjusts the rope attached to Staff Sgt. Brandon McGovern during rappelling training that was offered at Camp Blanding's Joint Training Center. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)

EOD team in over two years.

"The live-fire training was pretty impressive," said Tech. Sgt. Scott Hackett, who serves as a team chief of the 120th Fire Department.

"The training in Jacksonville was invaluable for us," said 1st Lt. Chad Brown, training officer in charge of the deployment. "We were able to take processes that we normally have to simulate and actually play them out from start to finish. Being able to train outside of our norm with folks that we aren't familiar with and actually putting hands on helps build confidence in everyone."

Also deployed with the EOD team and fire department were 120th Civil Engineer Squadron members from power production, operations and emergency management squadrons. They were also joined by members of the 125th Fighter Wing of the Florida Air National Guard.



Air National Guard firefighters wearing full firefighting gear practice putting out a simulated aircraft engine fire at the Fire Academy of the South located near Jacksonville, Fla. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)

Personnel from the Power Production, Emergency Operations and Emergency Management Flights from the Civil Engineer Squadron also participated in the deployment.

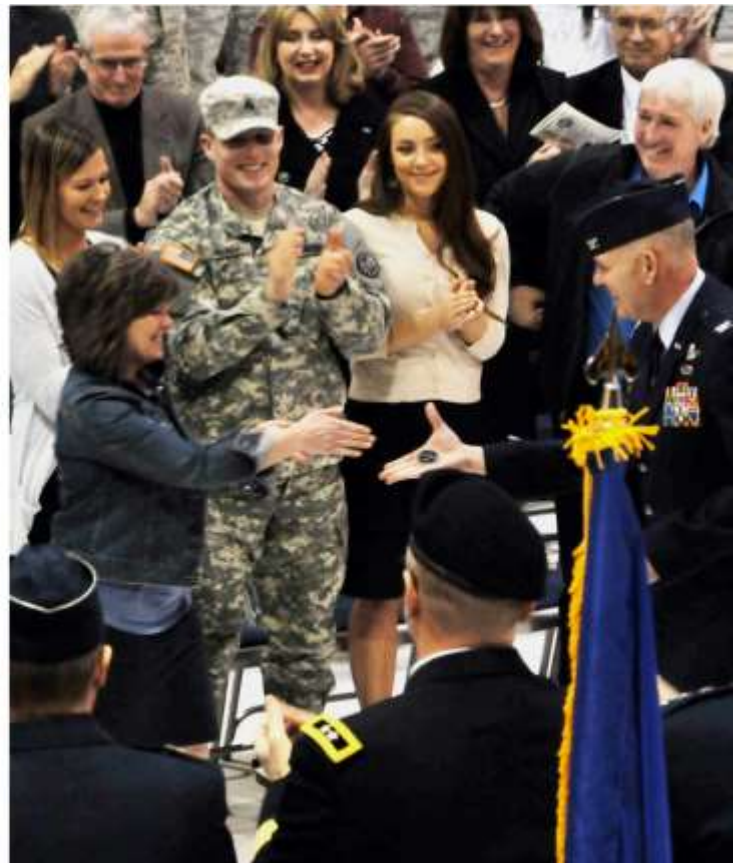


Students and instructors pause for a group photo at the aircraft training located at the Fire Academy of the South. Front row: Staff Sgt. Brandon McGovern, Staff Sgt. Olin McCrumb, Senior Airman Joseph Chavez, Senior Airman Cameron Jones, Staff Sgt. Lance Turner, Staff Sgt. Brett Whitmore, Tech. Sgt. Joshua Wendell, Airman 1st Class Mark Gleason. Back row: Instructor, Master Sgt. Ron Martin, Senior Airman Taran Dixon, Tech. Sgt. Scott Hackett, Senior Airman Zachary Holmes, Staff Sgt. Greg Bleyer, Staff Sgt. Joseph Tinsley, Master Sgt. Ken Misone, Staff Sgt. Sean Mabry. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Master Sgt. Anthony Barille)

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Soulsby, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office



ABOVE: Montana Governor Steve Bullock thanks Col. J. Peter Hronek for his service to the Montana Air National Guard. OPPOSITE TOP: Col. Lee Smith receives his first salute as commander of the 120th Airlift Wing. OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Col. J. Peter Hronek receives his final salute as commander of the 120th Airlift Wing. BELOW RIGHT: 120th Airlift Wing outgoing Commander Col. J. Peter Hronek presents his first commander's coin to his wife, Traci. BELOW LEFT: Lt. Col. Michael Layman stands at the front of the 120th Medical Group formation. Montana Air National Guard photos/120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office.





CHANGE OF COMMAND

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2015



All in the (Guard) family

Wajer family members proud to serve in uniform

The Montana Air National Guard is like a big family with a hometown feel. For the Wajer family, the MTANG is their family. Five members make up the Wajer family including retired Master Sgt. Michael Wajer, 1st Lt. Tammy Wajer, Tech. Sgt. Andrew Wajer, Staff Sgt. Ashlee Wajer and Airman First Class Adam Wajer. Together they have served over 58 years of military service with over 41 of them being for the MTANG.

Michael started with what seemed like a tiny ripple back on Feb. 24, 1983 when he enlisted into the active duty Air Force, which coincidentally also happens to be his wife **Tammy's birthday. With his enlistment, brought a tidal wave of Wajer children to join the Montana Air National Guard.** Today his wife and his three children continue to serve the MTANG in multiple capacities.

Tammy joined as a teen with three goals in mind. She wanted to serve her country, travel the world and get an education. She served as an engine mechanic for eight years while on active duty and had a small break in service. This break reminded her she was missing something, which lead her to join the Guard. Tammy has worked in many different jobs for MTANG, including being an Airman Leadership School satellite instructor while Ashlee attended the class.

"No one frowned upon the connection," said Ashlee. "She helped us all equally and it was nice to see her be a leader for everyone.

With her master's degree, Tammy knew the best way to help the MTANG with the conversion from the F-15 Eagle fighter aircraft to the C-130 cargo aircraft was to become a navigator, a critically manned field. She commissioned in December of 2014.



Left to Right Airman First Class Adam Wajer, Staff Sgt. Ashlee Wajer, retired Master Sgt. Michael Wajer, 1st Lt. Tammy Wajer, and Tech. Sgt. Andrew Wajer. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson)

Michael and Tammy are currently on the sunny beaches of **Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida, but it isn't all fun and sun for Tammy as she is completing her training to become a navigator.** After training at NASP, Tammy will complete her training in Montgomery, Ala., and then return back home to Montana where she will be flying on missions for the 120th Airlift Wing as a fully qualified navigator. She will also be returning to her part-time job as a flight attendant.

Michael joined MTANG after a six-year service break **because he didn't want to throw away 10 years of active-duty service.** When it came time for his children to join, he said the Guard was familiar to them because he had been enlisted their entire lives.

"They knew what the Guard had to offer," said Michael. "I didn't push them; I guided them into good career fields."

Andrew joined the MTANG for educational opportunities and to learn a trade. He currently is a student at Montana State University studying mechanical engineering and is a welder for the 120th Airlift Wing. His dreams are to one day own a small fabrication shop.

Ashlee started at the MTANG in the medical flight, but has recently crossed over to work in the aerial port as a traditional Guardsman. She is on a manpower authorization tour in the finance office and attends classes at the College of Technology Great Falls for nursing.

"A lot of people don't know about the guard," Ashlee said "[Dad] always made sure we got a decent job."

Adam is attending technical school at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Texas, to become a firefighter. He knew he wanted to be a firefighter and stay in Montana, so he figured his opportunities to be a civilian firefighter would increase with Guard experience.

In 2014, Michael found himself attending three Air Education Training Command ceremonies; Adam graduated from basic military training, Ashlee graduated Airman Leadership School and Tammy graduated the Academy of Military Science. Michael and Tammy also support graduations and ceremonies of members of the unit when possible, as they consider the Montana Air National Guard as their family.

It is hard for the family to be in training all over the country and not be in Montana together, but the good news is Andrew will be visiting Florida this month.

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Soulsby, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

Awareness and action saves life

Potential suicide victim talked down from jumping off bridge



The Sixth Street Bridge spans the Sun River on the Southwest side of Great Falls. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson)

When Maj. Lis Schmidt prepared for drill Feb. 7, 2015, she had no idea the impact she would have on another person's life that day.

The day started like any other Saturday of drill: roll call and routine office work, followed by a trip to Malmstrom Air Force Base to complete her annual Air Force physical fitness assessment.

However, this day was about to become anything but routine.

As Schmidt made her way back to Gore Hill after completing her fitness test she observed a young lady in her early 20s standing on the edge of the Sixth Street Bridge.

"She looked distraught," said Schmidt.

Schmidt pulled her car to the side of the road and parked her car.

"No one had stopped yet," Schmidt said.

Schmidt called 911 to get emergency responders on the way, then approached the young lady and started a conversation with her.

"I told her 'Hi, my name is Lis,' and tried to get that personal contact," Schmidt said.

That is when Schmidt learned the girl wanted to end her life. She had been dealing with a difficult relationship

and felt like life was no longer worth living.

Another man stopped and attempted to help talk the woman back to safety.

The young lady was over the water and Schmidt and the man coaxed her back toward land.

"She wanted her coat and by that time there were a lot of people watching, not knowing what to do," Schmidt said. "I told her if she wanted her coat and keys she needed to come back over to our side to retrieve those for herself."

The woman then crossed back over the guard railing to safety and walked off of the bridge.

"By that time the cops had pulled up a little ways down the street," Schmidt said. "She was walking away from the river and the cops stopped her and put her in the ambulance."

Schmidt said that despite the woman being distraught, screaming and yelling at her, Schmidt attempted to talk to her in a low, calm voice.

"It was a natural instinct to pull over and try to help her," Schmidt said.

Schmidt attributes her experience in her civilian job as a school counselor and the suicide prevention training she received through the Guard for preparing her to take action in this situation.

"You don't have time to think, you just have to go and do it," Schmidt said. "You have to make split second decisions to save a person's life."

The entire incident lasted only 15-20 minutes, but seemed a lot longer to Schmidt. It was cold and windy and Schmidt was dressed in her physical training clothes. The other man who stopped to assist was dressed in jeans and a t-shirt.

"I was concerned about how many people had passed her, and no one took the time out of their day to stop and get involved," Schmidt said.

Schmidt's vigilance, situational awareness and courage to take action prevented a young woman from taking her own life and serves as an important lesson to her fellow Airmen.

"Here in the Guard we've had Guardsmen take their own lives," Schmidt said. "Know the signs."

By Tech. Sgt. Michael Touchette, 120th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs Office

This was our first rodeo

National Guard Bureau implements new training style

More than 100 members of the Montana Air National Guard participated in self-aid buddy care and chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear, and explosive weapons training held on Feb. 7, 2015 in the unit's cold storage building and the headquarters training room. The training packed 13 computer-based training modules into a bite size four and a half hour chunk.

This is a new way for the MTANG to complete training; in the past the members would complete these modules annually on a computer individually which could take over fifteen hours. Those who participated in the rodeo will not need to accomplish this training again for three years.

"The National Guard Bureau implemented this 'rodeo' style training to decrease time spent on CBTs and increase time spent in work areas on Air Force specialty code training," said Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Franklin, 120th Airlift Wing force development superintendent.

SABC and CBRNE training modules were the main focus. The trainees were separated in two different groups to be in a



Airman of the Montana National Guard check over the ties and snaps of their chemical warfare gear in the unit's cold storage building during expeditionary skills rodeo training Feb. 7, 2015. (Montana Air National Guard photo/Tech. Sgt. Christy Mason)

manageable size for the hands-on training.

SABC training presented video training along with hands on in



Staff Sgt. Steven Koenes, 120th Airlift Wing metals technology specialist simulates a post attack reconnaissance sweep at the expeditionary skills rodeo training Feb. 7, 2015. (Montana Air

smaller group training with an instructor whom administered a quiz for each section and demonstrated bandages, splints and chin lifts.

"Working as a group is better than as an individual," said Senior Airman Cody Hagestad, SABC instructor. "[The training] is more hands on, which makes for a better learning environment." During the CBRNE section of the training, instructors lead the trainees through

slideshows which educated them on what to do in case of a chemical attack. The instructors assisted in marking the joint service lightweight integrated suit technology, or chemical warfare gear, with M-9 chemical detecting paper and adding a name tag to individual's helmets. Trainees donned their gear using the buddy system and instructors inspected for discrepancies. While in chemical warfare gear, members moved through five different stations inspecting, removing and protecting items from simulated chemical attacks.

Great feedback was given to the trainers and coordinators of the event, where improvements have already been made for the June unit training assembly.

"It's nice to have it done for a while and it's better than CBTs," said Senior Airman Daniel Henry, 120th Airlift Wing cyber transport technician.

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Soulsby, 120th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

THE ADVENTURES OF VIGILANTE AND NOOSE



OH,
GREAT!
MORE
FRIENDS!



BAD PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS
LOOKING TO STEAL PERSONAL
ONLINE INFORMATION.

HAAAA!
FOOL!!

NOOSE SHARES HIS
PERSONAL INFORMATION
OVER SOCIAL MEDIA WITH
NO REGARD TO WHO
VIEWS IT. NOT GOOD!



UH-OH

I'LL SHARE THE AIR
FORCE SOCIAL
MEDIA HANDBOOK
WITH NOOSE!



ALWAYS A GOOD WINGMAN,
VIGILANTE GOES TO NOOSE'S AID.

DON'T BE A LOOSE NOOSE, ALWAYS LOCK DOWN YOUR INFORMATION!

A FEATURE PROVIDED BY 120TH AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

History of the Montana Air National Guard

APRIL – MAY 1965

In April, 16 new recruits posed in front of one of the unit's F-89 Scorpion aircraft wearing newly issued Air Force field jackets. The new Airmen were getting ready to attend Air Force basic training later in the year.

Nearly 20 years following the end of World War II the citizens of Great Falls gathered downtown to recognize members of the local military community. Montana Air National Guard Airmen paraded up First Avenue North and down Central Avenue during the Armed Forces Day parade on May 15. A reviewing stand was set up in front of the former Liberty Theater. The highlight of the parade was a nine-ship flyover of the parade route consisting of three F-89 Scorpions and three F-102 Delta Daguers assigned to the Montana Air National Guard and three F-101B Voodoo aircraft from the 29th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Malmstrom Air Force Base.

1965



News You Can Use

Free camps for Guard children

Junior Wilderness Survival Camp, June 16-17, 2015, for ages 7-12.

Youth will travel to the KOA Campground in Great Falls, Mont., to set up camp and begin the adventure with communication and bullying prevention exercises. Youth will learn how to prepare their meals in the wild, learn about healthy food choices and the nutrients in different foods - not just for them but for the animals they will care for at the campground. Additional camp opportunities include swimming, hiking, biking and fun games.

Wilderness Survival Camp June 30 - July 1, 2015 or July 1 - 2, 2015, for ages 13-18.

Youth will travel to Sun Canyon Ranch in the Bob Marshall Wilderness area and travel by boat up the river where they will saddle up their horses and ride into camp. Teens will learn how to set up camp and prepare their tents, fish for dinner, and learn how to cook on an open campfire. Youth will learn how to make the camp secure from wildlife and gain valuable wilderness skills in this fun camping experience.

For more information or registration, contact Catherine McNeil, 4-H military program coordinator at 406-439-8570.

2015 Strong Bonds Retreats - building resilient Airman

ANG Strong Bonds is fully-funded and Chaplain Corps-led by the NGB/HC Strong Bonds Support Team members along with the support of the local ANG wing leadership. Airmen and their families attend with others in the unit who share the same unique challenges. During the state/wing ANG Strong Bonds Training Events (retreat), Airmen, couples and families participate in small group activities that reveal common bonds and nurture friendships. In addition, Airmen and families gain awareness of community resources that can assist with concerns about health.

Marriage Enrichment- May 15-17

Location: Whitefish

Family Retreat- August 21-23

Location: Wyoming (Location TBA)

For more information contact Paige Held, Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager at 406-791-0122.

Consultants here to help

Military Family Life Consultants provide anonymous and confidential assistance to military members and their families in problem solving issues resulting from deployment, reunions, reintegration, and/or other times of change.

Their goal is to prevent family distress by providing education and information on various topics. If you (or someone you know) need to talk, contact Malmstrom Air Force Base Airman and Family Readiness Center at 406-731-4900.

DoD salutes Family Programs

WASHINGTON - The war on terrorism that began with the 9/11 attacks has meant that unprecedented numbers of reserve troops have been called to active duty.

On Feb. 27, the Department of Defense, as it has done for the past 15 years, honored the top unit in each reserve component for its outstanding programs that support unit missions and family readiness.

Richard O. Wightman Jr., principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, hosted the Pentagon's Reserve Family Readiness Awards. He expressed the department's gratitude for family readiness support programs around the country that allow Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Guard members to serve around the world without having to worry about the challenges of life on the home front.

"To these unsung heroes, we owe much," Wightman said. "They have given their time, freely, without any guarantees of accolades or reimbursements, yet they sacrifice their evenings, weekends and time with family in the selfless service of others."

Representatives of the seven reserve components accepted the award, co-sponsored by the Military Officers Association of America.

Want to be in the Big Sky Flyer?

If you enjoyed this month's Big Sky Flyer center photo layout and would like to feature your shop or section in a future display, please contact Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson at 791-0226.

We're always looking for opportunities to photograph our personnel in their work environment doing interesting and visual activities. This is an opportunity for you to recognize your employees or co-workers for all of their hard work.

Faces of the Guard

Douglas father/son share enlistment date



Master Sgt. David Douglas and his son, Airman Basic Matthew Douglas were given their oaths of enlistment during the March unit training assembly March 7, 2015. The event was significant in that it marks Matthew's entry into the Montana Air National Guard family and is the final oath to be taken by David, who will be within two years of mandatory retirement when this term of enlistment is up.

David, the 120th Maintenance Group's training manager, joined the Montana Air National Guard as an avionics maintainer in 1993 after having served on active duty.

Matthew has enlisted as a C-130 loadmaster. He does not currently have a school date and will be in the student flight preparing to attend basic military training.

By Tech. Sgt. Michael Touchette, 120th Airlift Wing
Public Affairs Office

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120th AW/MTANG
2800 Airport Avenue B
Great Falls, MT 59404-5570