

NEW LOOK & FEEL

WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

EVERGREEN

MAGAZINE
FALL 2015

pg. 4

HEAT OF THE BATTLE

How the Guard helped battle largest wildfire in state history



f eatures



Exercise Grizzly Defender **18**



Largest Wildfire in State History **4**



The Great ShakeOut **24**



Operation Husky Airborne **36**

“For those of you who don’t know Chief Almond, she is an amazing airman who will work hard for you in her tenure,” said Chief Master Sgt. Tim Tyvan, former Senior Enlisted Advisor during the Change of Responsibility Ceremony at Camp Murray Parade Field Sept. 12. “She is approachable and will be the first one to rise up and take action for every soldier and airman in a time of need. You are all in great hands.”



Photo courtesy of Capt. Jeff Rogers

Background

After last year's record-breaking fire season, one might have thought it safe to assume it would be years before our state saw a similar disaster.

Washington state officials and emergency responders knew better.

Though there were no fires burning at the time, hot, dry and desert-like conditions prompted Washington Gov. Jay Inslee to issue an emergency proclamation for the entire state on June 26. Not long after, a series of lightning strikes in the north-central region of the state ignited what would become the largest wildfire season in the state's history. More than one million acres burned, shattering last year's record.

In preparation for the predictably large fire season, members of the 161st Infantry Regiment got a head start on their training by earning their fire-fighting Red Card certificates just months earlier, which would make them immediately available to support the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) when called upon—and called upon they were.

In total, nearly 1,500 guardsmen were activated this season to serve in one capacity or another. Most were ground forces working alongside DNR on the fire lines. Many flew helicopters with water buckets, some manned traffic control points, while others served food at a mobile kitchen.

Wildfires

HEAT OF THE BATTLE

A look at how the National Guard helped combat the largest wildfire in Washington state history

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JASON KRIESS,
CAPT. JOSEPH SIEMANDEL
&
STAFF SGT. VIRGINIA M. OWENS

1 GROUND FORCES

First Battalion, 303rd Cavalry Regiment comprised the bulk of the approximately 500 Red Card trained ground troops with individual volunteers coming in from various other units.

During annual training in June, the soldiers went through Red Card training from DNR.

“It shows us the basics of firefighting – what to expect, what to do in situations, things to avoid, how to communicate, how fire reacts to wind,” said Spc. Jack George, A co. 898th Brigade Engineer Battalion. “Basically, they were anticipating us being called up this year. It was just a matter of when.”

The initial call-up was for 10 hand-crews consisting of 20 soldiers each. For two weeks, the hand-crews helped DNR fight the Chelan Complex fires near the resort town of Chelan.

Because of the extensive training the soldiers received during the summer, they were able to go right to the fire line upon activation. DNR trained soldiers to be firefighter type one crew bosses, which allows them to be more independent from supervision, freeing DNR personnel to be utilized

BECAUSE OF THE EXTENSIVE TRAINING THE SOLDIERS RECEIVED DURING THE SUMMER, THEY WERE ABLE TO GO RIGHT TO THE FIRE LINE.

elsewhere on the fire line.

The soldiers used many different techniques employed by firefighters to control the wildfires, including “back burning.” Back burning is performed as a way to reduce the amount of flammable material that is available for an already burning wildfire.

Soldiers also constructed firebreaks or fire lines using back hoes and shovels. A firebreak is designed to slow down the move-



Photo by Capt. Joseph Siemandel

“Basically, they were anticipating us being called up this year. It was just a matter of when,” Spc. Jack George said.

2 AVIATION

As flames spread, DNR requested aviation assistance from the Washington National Guard. Multiple UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were quickly mobilized, armed with Bambi Buckets. Each bucket carries 660 gallons of water which assisted firefighters on the ground,

“The main effort is actually on the ground,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Travis Marzolf, a pilot with C Co. 1-140th Aviation. “Our job is to get signals from the ground and then hit those hot spots with water to cool down the area.”

This year, the Washington National Guard was limited to providing Black Hawk units due to an upcoming mobilization for the CH-47 Chinook units of the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion. Through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the states of Minnesota, Wyoming and Colorado provided additional helicopters



Photo by Sgt. Michael Cummings

and crews to assist with the fight.

During the month of August, 10 helicopters from the four states dropped more than 1.5 million gallons of water on the record setting wildfires.

“We were restricted so many days from flying,” said Maj. Gen. Bret D. Daugherty, Washington adjutant general. “Whether it was wind speeds, smoke causing bad visibility or equipment malfunctions, our guardsmen did their absolute best and they did it safely, which is just as important.”

3 COMMUNICATIONS

As the fires grew, so, too, did the mission sets for the National Guard. As communication systems became damaged or destroyed by flames, the Guard was asked to provide critical communication support to help firefighters, guard members and first responders talk with one another. The Guard was able to assist by providing its Joint Incident Site Communication Capabilities (JISCC).

Members of the 252nd Combat Communications Group, C Co. 898th Brigade Engineer Battalion and 56th Information Operations Group set up JISCCs around the state, maintaining communication for first responders and guard members



Guard helicopters dropped more than 1.5 million gallons of water



working in remote areas that may not have had cell phone coverage.

“We provide critical communications for the firefighters and the guardsmen,” said Airman 1st Class Philip Clapin, 252nd Combat Com-

munication Group, who served at the Carpenter Road Fire near Spokane. “I live about an hour and a half away and it means a lot to help.”

By the end of August, all Washington National Guard JISCCs, as well as equipment from Oregon, were deployed to the front lines of the fires.

4 Medics

When a disaster strikes, accessible, quality healthcare is a critical resource. The Washington National Guard supplemented its civilian counterparts with teams of guard medics who treated both firefighters serving on the front lines and civilians being evacuated from areas all around Eastern Washington.

“Primarily our biggest customers are [in need of] foot care,” Sgt. Annie Parrish said. “Just like the infantry, these people are working on their feet, and preserving their feet is the best way to support the fire-fighting force.”

“Preserving their feet is the best way to support the firefighting force,” Sgt. Parrish said.



Sgt. Parrish, a traditional Guardsman with C Co. 181 Brigade Support Battalion, was one of the many guard members who volunteered to help, putting off her new civilian job start date for an unknown number of days to put her military medic skills to use.

“We’ve had civilians come in. Mostly cuts and bruises and stuff like that. They’re hurting themselves doing evacuation activities,” Parrish said.

Parrish and fellow Army medic Spc. Tri Nguyen worked out of a tent at the Okanogan County Fairgrounds with several civilian medics—a tent only slightly larger than the hundreds of others housing firefighters.

While the mission didn’t require life-saving measures, Parrish recognized the importance of her assignment and the comfort her presence provided.

“Even if it’s ‘boo-boo’ medicine, it’s still an integral part of the care that we provide.”



5 TRAINING

As the fire threat grew over the dog days of summer, hundreds of traditional guard members reached out to their units volunteering to help.

Under the direction of DNR in late August, more than 250 of them completed the 40-hour comprehensive training and hands-on drills needed to join the fire fight. An otherwise unplanned training event, the firefighting red card certification was conducted out of resource necessity.

“Being able to have the surge capacity with these Guard units is awesome. It gives us so much more strength and ability to react to these large wildfires,” said Chris Heaton of the U.S. Forest Service.

The newly certified guard members were sent out to fire lines to replace the more than 250 who were certified earlier in the year.

“Everyone out here is a volunteer so the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens

motivation and morale is really high; they just want to get out on the line,” 2nd Lt. Amber Sadoski said.

Representation was diverse; some 14 different units from the Washington Army and Air National Guard were represented.

“These are the people next door to me who are suffering and losing their homes, and this is the best way to step in and be a part of something bigger than myself,” Sgt. Markus Cromwell said.

This is the best way to step in and be a part of something bigger than myself,” Sgt. Markus Cromwell said.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens



6 CIVIC RELATIONSHIPS

One unique facet of the Washington National Guard is that it has members living in communities across the state. Having more than 8,200 guard members across 39 counties in Washington helps the Guard understand the unique needs of each community and provide much needed support to the residents that are affected by disasters.

Through prior engagement with emergency managers in each county, the Washington National Guard built relationships with key individuals prior to the start of the fires. This enabled the Guard to ensure the best support was provided.

During the busy month of August, Daugherty visited citizens and met with elected officials to ensure the needs of



their citizens were being addressed.

As soldiers and airmen provided much needed help and assistance, communities returned the favor with their support. Neighbors opened their doors and provided lodging, food, water, supplies and any necessities the guard members would need. The towns of Omak and Curlew even opened up their high schools for guard members to sleep in.

“The accommodations were nice. I was sleeping in a high school math classroom; it was quiet and allowed me the chance to re-energize,” said Capt. Drew Nevins, commander, 506th Military Police. “The school provided food and television and internet as well.”

Soldiers and airmen provided help and assistance.

Communities returned the favor with their support.



7

Future

When Daugherty took over as the adjutant general in 2012, he identified that after 11 years of supporting the federal war fight that the Washington National Guard had fallen out of touch with their state mission. One of the first things he focused on was the fight against wildfires, which had shown a gradual uptick in size and intensity over the last few years.

Gov. Jay Inslee said during his press conference on August 27 that the longer, more intense fire season is becoming the “new normal” for Washington.

In an effort to continue to provide the best support to citizens from the Washington National Guard, plans are in the works to implement additional Red Card training and work closer with first responders through relationship building and training events.

“The strike team concept Washington has implemented is the model for the rest of the nation,” said Gen. Frank Grass, chief, National Guard Bureau, who also made a special trip to see the fire lines in Eastern Washington. “We currently have more than 4,000 Guard members across the western United States activated for fire support. We need to take this model and get the rest of the country on board.”



STATE OF EMERGENCY

How partners across the region assisted with wildfire efforts

Story by Steven Friederich

A historic fire season appears to be coming to a close as the last major fire in Eastern Washington was turned over to local control on Sept. 28 and the state Emergency Operations Center returned to its normal phase one operation a few days before that.

Altogether, more than 1.1 million acres have burned since June, according to reports posted by InciWeb, the inter-agency all-risk incident information management system. The actual number is likely higher once smaller fires not included in the InciWeb system are eventually tallied up. Some of the fires remain in “mop up” mode and likely will continue to smolder until heavy rains or snow come, according to fire officials.

That compares to last year, when 98

fires burned 386,972 acres, according to the annual report produced by the National Interagency Fire Center. In 2012, another busy fire year, there were 77 fires totaling 259,526 acres, the fire center reported.

“We had two record-setting fire years back-to-back,” said Robert Ezelle, the director of the Washington Emergency

“It really, truly was a team effort.”

- Robert Ezelle

Management Division. “Our Emergency Operations Center was extremely busy. It was a challenge, but our state government partners pulled together wonderfully and it really, truly was a team

effort.”

For 41 days, from Aug. 16 to Sept. 25, the state Emergency Operations Center at Camp Murray was activated at a Phase III level, bringing in partners from across the region to help with wildfire efforts in what turned out to be the most active wildfire season in years and saw the tragic death of three firefighters.

It’s the second time the Emergency Operations Center was activated this year at such an elevated level. The first time was spurred by a wildfire that hit the city of Wenatchee burning several homes in June.

This most recent activation brought a surge of support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency into the Emergency Operations Center.

Ezelle said he appreciated the personnel support from FEMA, as well as all the different state agencies, who lent a hand.

The state Department of Commerce helped oversee efforts to bring back power to fire-stricken areas, Ezelle noted. The state Department of Health helped distribute more than 100,000 N-95 masks to communities across Central and Eastern Washington. The masks were important to filter out fine particles as heavy smoke hit the region. The Red Cross worked with state agency partners, including the Department of Social and Health Services, to provide shelters that housed hundreds of people and served thousands of meals.

Washington Technology Solutions led efforts to help restore communications in fire-stricken areas arranging to bring cell phone towers on wheels and cell phone boosters of various types to aid fire crews. On top of Omak Mountain, two cell phone towers serving the re-

gion had lost power, had its generators run out of gas and no longer had working batteries of any type. As a result, a crew hiked up the mountain – with fires all around – bringing gas for generators and helped get the towers back in order.

Numerous communities had to be evacuated at a moment’s notice with partners from all levels assisting in that effort.

“We have so many positive stories on how everyone came together,” Ezelle said.

Ezelle noted that the agency provided assistance to local partners upon request, including requests to help look after the most vulnerable populations. He noted that work was done to help residents with limited English proficiency and more would be done in



Tom Banse of Northwest Public Radio snaps a selfie wearing an N-95 mask in Eastern Washington. More than 100,000 of these masks were distributed by the state. Courtesy photo

the future.

On Aug. 19, firefighters with the U.S. Forest Service died near Twisp. The firefighters were Richard Wheeler, Andrew Zajac and Thomas Nelson Zbyszewski.

Their memorial service was televised into the state Emergency Operations Center, which participated in a state-wide moment of silence -- three minutes of silence, one minute for each life lost.

The Washington Emergency Management Division continues to offer its sympathy for the family and friends impacted by the deaths of the firefighters. To send condolences or support, [visit this page](#).

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Bridging the GAP

DelBene Announces Bill to Protect National Guard Families

Since 2010, more than 5,000 National Guard members across the country have served on full-time Federal Duty status as part of regional Homeland Response Force (HRF) teams.

Story & photo by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens



In August, U.S. Rep. Suzan DelBene introduced legislation to ensure National Guard members who work on Federal Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) status retain health coverage when activated to assist with a natural disaster, such as the devastating SR 530 landslide last year.

“Following last year’s tragic landslide...I was distraught to learn that some of these members and their families were at risk of losing health-care coverage because of their participation in the disaster response,” DelBene said. “Congress must act to ensure health coverage is protected for the brave men and women called

into duty to respond to natural disasters and state emergencies.”

In Washington, this directly impacts the Homeland Response Force (HRF).

When in full-time status, HRF units are federally funded, but they can also be used to respond to state and local emergencies — at the expense and under control of the state’s Governor.

However, for these Guard members to assist in a state emergency, they must be taken off Federal Duty and placed temporarily into State Active Duty status, inadvertently causing a break in their health coverage.

DelBene’s legislation would extend

health coverage for full-time federal Guard members and their families when the member is responding to a state natural disaster or emergency.

“When a disaster strikes, our state needs every resource possible,” said Maj. Gen. Bret Daugherty, the state’s adjutant general.

“We need to have the ability to send our highly trained men and women out the door quickly, without worrying whether they lose their healthcare. I thank Congresswoman DelBene for recognizing this problem, and proposing a common sense solution that ensures our full-time Guardsmen are able to keep their federal health care during a state response.”

GRIZZLY DEFENDER



Photo Essay by Sgt. Matthew Sissel

More than 60 Washington Army National Guard soldiers from 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Spokane, Wash., along with nearly 300 Canadian Army Reservists from 41st Canadian Brigade Group participated in Exercise Grizzly Defender from Aug. 13-25 at Canadian Forces Base Wainwright in Alberta, Canada.

The exercise tested combined arms training in a contemporary operating environment scenario. The training integrated U.S. and Canadian soldiers and focused on offensive tasks including patrols, raids, convoys, information operations, and traffic control points.

To increase the realism of the scenario, professional actors were hired to play the role of civilians on the battlefield and were cast as residents, local police, a mayor and religious figure, as well as opposing forces. The soldiers had to interact with civilians in peaceful, tense, and armed-conflict situations throughout the exercise.

The focus on offensive warfighting skills within the context of realistic, challenging, and engaging training scenarios tested the resolution and determination of leadership and



troops at all levels.

Canadian Army Reserve Lt. Col. Kyle Clapperton, commander of the Calgary Highlanders, highlighted the value of an integrated U.S. and Canadian training environment.

“This week has been a great opportunity to bond and to learn from each other as professional soldiers to fight our wars for our countries,” Clapperton said. “This is important — we don’t fight alone, we fight together. We are each other’s strongest ally.”

PLANNING

“It’s important to break the plan down to a detailed level so each soldier knows exactly what he needs to do,” said Second Lt. Ryan Derrick, a platoon leader with the 161st Infantry Regiment. “There is always a chance that something will go wrong, so knowing the commander’s intent is essential to adjusting fire in the event of obstacles.”



TACTICAL MOVEMENT

“Infantry movements and tactics look simple from a distance, but they actually require a lot of practice to move and flow as a cohesive unit,” said Spc. Alex Maldonado, an infantryman from Seattle and member of the 161st Infantry Regiment. “It’s a perishable skill and must be rehearsed regularly in order to stay proficient.”

Canadian Forces Base Wainwright’s training area consists of varied terrain including open fields, dense tree lines, steep hills, roads, bridges, and small villages, each of which require different infantry movements and tactics. As an integrated force, both U.S. and Canadian soldiers had to learn each other’s tactics, techniques, and procedures in order to operate together successfully.



COMMUNICATION

“Communication itself is an enormous challenge in any mission,” said 2nd Lt. Ryan Derrick, a platoon leader with the 161st Infantry Regiment. “Usually if something goes wrong, it’s because of miscommunication.”

Communication is a critical component to the success of any mission, but it often breaks down. In order to minimize communication, appropriate planning and rehearsals are essential.

“Everyone should have a crystal clear idea of what they are going to do,” Derrick said, “then you have less need to communicate.”





TREATING CIVILIANS

Professional actors played the roles of opposing forces and civilians on the battlefield, and they were instrumental in helping to simulate a realistic scenario. The soldiers had to interact with them in order to successfully carry out their missions.

“They made it a real-life experience for every soldier out there, especially for the medics who had to treat them,” said Spc. Ryan Maybee, a medic with the 161st Infantry Regiment. “From the crying and the screaming to the moulage applied for their wounds, the actors made it hard to tell whether it was real or training.”

MOVING CASUALTIES

“Moving casualties eats up a lot of manpower and it’s a physical challenge,” said Sgt. Reed Dyer, a fire team leader with the 161st Infantry Regiment. “It’s a reminder to the leadership that you have to plan for that manpower, and it’s a reminder to everybody of the importance of physical fitness.”



EMD DIRECTOR DEMONSTRATES

Shake Out™

Story by Steven Friederich

W

ith his portable emergency kit in tow, Washington Emergency Management Director Robert Ezelle squeezed under a table a few days before the Great ShakeOut, the state's annual earthquake drill.

This year's drill allowed anyone to participate, not just on the actual date of Oct. 15, but days before or even after. The point, says earthquake programs manager John Schelling, is just to get the public to participate.

"It's great if someone can do it on Oct. 15, but if they can't, just practice when you can," Schelling says. "The important part is just to practice."

Ezelle, as the head of the state division responsible for preparedness, wanted to show people how it was done. To help the experience, the Great ShakeOut has audio and video recordings available to make the scenario feel more realistic.

"This is the Great ShakeOut, one of the largest earthquake drills ever," the recording says with



sound effects in the background.

"Practice now so you can protect yourself during a real earthquake," the recording adds over the next minute. "This



"Practice now so you can protect yourself during a real earthquake."

is an earthquake drill. Right now, drop, cover and hold on. During a real earthquake, the ground might jerk strongly and knock you down so protect yourself from objects that can be thrown across the room."

Ezelle, ducking under a table in the state Emergency Operation Center's policy room and putting his arms around his head to protect it, said the audio makes it feel a bit more realistic.

"It's a great intro and something people can play that adds impetus to the drill," Ezelle said.

In addition to earthquake planning, coastal communities are working on tsunami preparation.

Tsunami warning sirens on coastal Washington activated Oct. 15 with the real sound of the siren - along with messages indicating that it was a test. Typically, monthly tests include the playing of the Westminster chimes, followed by an abbreviated voice message. But it's important to test out the real siren sounds so the public is familiar with its

sound and local governments can use it as a training opportunity. All counties with the All Hazard Alert Broadcast sirens were scheduled to participate except for Whatcom County, which opted out this year, but may participate in a future year.

There was also a push to have people take pictures of themselves practicing under desks or using proper earthquake techniques and post those photos to social media using the hashtag #washakeout.

More than 1 million people across the state participated at 10:15 a.m. on Oct. 15.

The drill is typically done the third Thursday in October. Next year's ShakeOut will be held at 10:13 a.m., Oct. 13, 2016.

More information on ShakeOut can be found online www.shakeout.org/washington and via [Twitter](https://twitter.com)

Around the Department

Members from the Asia Pacific Cultural Center perform a native dance to kick-off the Washington Military Department Diversity Matters Day celebration at Camp Murray Sept. 10. Demonstrations included music, dancing, local food favorites and information from more than 30 cultures around the world.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens



Around the Department

Members of 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, participate in a deployment ceremony, Oct. 4, 2015, for their deployment early next year. Hundreds of Soldiers and family members packed the Army Aviation Support Facility on Joint Base Lewis-McChord to watch the ceremony.



Photos by Spc. Danielle Gregory

Around the Department

State and federal employees came together for food and fun at the Washington Military Department summer picnic Aug. 13. The annual event brings together members from all departments to promote collaboration and breakdown organizational silos.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens



Around the Department



The 56th Information Operations Group celebrated the opening of its new readiness center on Joint Base Lewis-McChord Sept. 29 with a ceremonious ribbon cutting. The new facility was a collaboration between The Seattle Corp of Engineers, RQ Construction and the Washington National Guard.

Photos by Capt. Joseph Siemandel

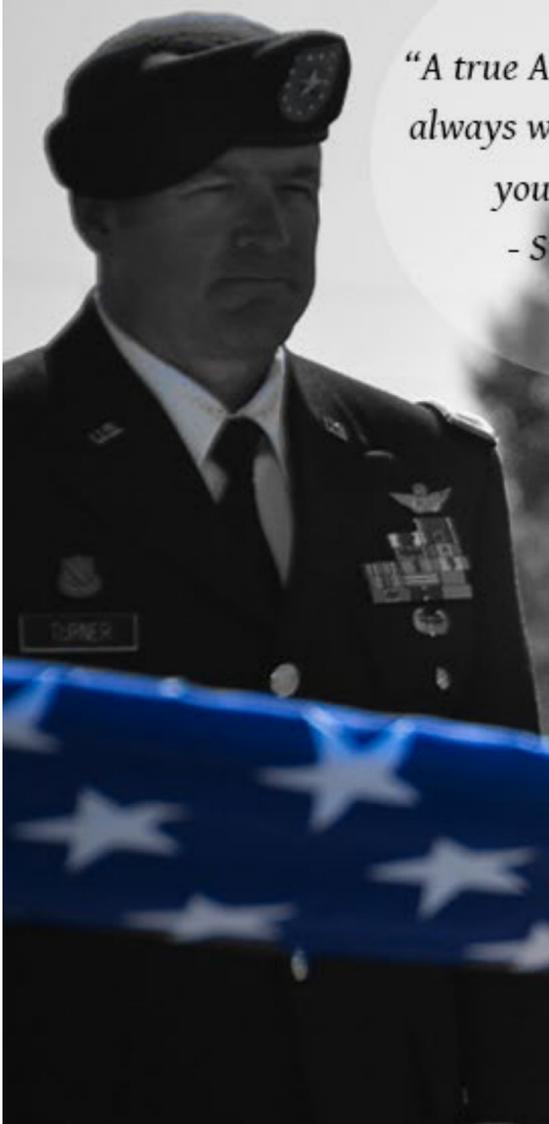
Video Feature

Members of the 10th Civil Support Team are ready at a moments notice to respond to a Chemical, Nuclear, Biological, Radiological, or Explosive threat to citizens of Washington state.



Video by Staff Sgt. Koleen Elsberry

Happy Retirement
Col. Gregory Allen
27 years of dedicated service



"A true American Hero and always will be. I will follow you anywhere."
- Steve Strand

"Nothing but respect for the man. A great leader I am proud to have served under."
-Stefan Wolak

"You set the standard sir. It will take a hell of a leader to replace you."
-Matthew Rupp



Photos by Steven Friederich

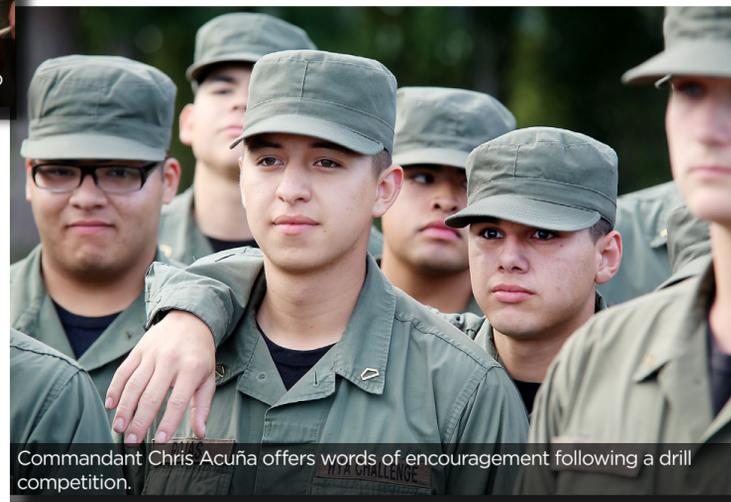
Inside the Youth Academy



Cadets listen as First Platoon Supervisor Darrell Stoops speaks, "Every time we go out there, we improve. You see what you do wrong and you just keep practicing until we do it better. I believe in you."



Third Platoon at the Washington Youth Academy took home a prized ribbon to display with their flag after besting the other platoons in a drill and formations competition on Sept. 23. It's the second time this year that the Eagles have won the honor.



Commandant Chris Acuña offers words of encouragement following a drill competition.

"Every time we go out there, we improve. You see what you do wrong and you just keep practicing until we do it better. I believe in you."



State Rep. Brad Klippert spends time with Youth Academy cadets during a recent visit to the state capital Oct. 1. Every cycle, the Washington Youth Academy spends a day learning about state government. Klippert is also a Lt. Col. in the Washington National Guard.

Day 1

Officer candidates gather their bags as they arrive at JBLM on in-processing day for OCS Phase III. OC's from 22 states settled into their barracks and were issued weapons before bedding down for the night.

Days 2-3

Officer candidates navigate through the Field Leadership Reaction Course with their squads. This was the first opportunity candidates had to be tested as leaders in a field environment.

Day 4

Officer candidates completed the combat water survival course. While in full uniform, candidates swam across the pool while holding their rifles above the water and stepped off a high platform while blindfolded, among other tasks.

Day 5,6,7, 8: Situational Training Exercises

Candidates practiced squad based leadership courses. In a series of objectives each candidate's leadership ability was tested in realistic battle simulations.

Days 7 & 8: Patrol STX

Candidates practiced platoon based leadership courses. In a series of objectives each candidate's leadership ability was tested in realistic battle simulations with a larger force.

Days 9 & 10: Leschi Town

Officer candidates moved into an intensive urban training area and began urban training scenarios. Leschi town offers unique challenges in the form of simulated explosions, civilian interference, and fully furnished houses and buildings.

Day 12: Confidence Course

OC's attempted the JBLM confidence course, a series of obstacles that tested them both physically and psychologically. Candidates were challenged with assessments of balance, agility and bravery.

TWO-A-DAYS

Working around the clock to fuel the force



*"The reason the American Army does so well in wartime is that **WAR IS CHAOS,** and the American Army practices it on a daily basis."*

During the 2015 Officer Candidate School phase III, meals were prepared by the Washington National Guard Joint-Force Headquarters training site command. The cooks worked long hours at the Courage Inn dining facility, fueled by a passion for cooking and a dedication to helping fellow soldiers.

Their days began at 3 a.m. and finished as late as midnight. After the meals have been prepared, they transport it to the OCS training sites. They feed 208 candidates plus cadre, supporting them with two meals a day.

"It's a good experience," said Spc. Shireena Smith, a JFHQ cook. "It's really encouraging to serve candidates who will pave the way for future soldiers."

The JFHQ cooks were given a taste of active duty at the Courage Inn. The kitchen is much larger than what they are used to and has more advanced equipment. The brand new appliances make it possible to accommodate the food needs of the officer candidates.

"The Courage Inn is really state of the art," said Maj. Jack Claros, an officer with JFHQ. "We all really appreciate the opportunity to come and use the best equipment."

The OCS Phase III training gives JFHQ cooks an opportunity to bond through their love of cooking. They are gaining experience with new equipment and food preparation methods. The knowledge the cooks gain will be invaluable in their future military and civilian careers.

"This has been a real learning experience," said Smith. "It's important to ask questions and keep learning in the kitchen."



OPERATION HUSKY AIRBORNE:

Army and Air assets fly high (and low)

Airmen from the Washington Air National Guard's 116th Air Support Operations Squadron participated in Operation Husky Airborne Aug. 8 to practice jumping out of a Boeing CH-47 Chinook helicopter, evacuating casualties, and collaborating with partners in the Army National Guard.

The primary goal of the operation was to "get familiarity with Army air operations with a Chinook," said Capt. Nate Carlson of the 116th. The 116th worked with the Army Guard's 66th Theater Aviation Command and the 19th Special Forces Group, Special Operations Detachment Pacific to conduct Operation Husky Airborne. "We have good integration with

them," said Carlson.

"We are practicing an insertion method of how we get to work," said Master Sgt. Tavis Delaney, a Tactical Air Control Party operator in the 116th. "It's a method for us to get to work, one of many ways to get to a job site."

The 116th members practiced low- and high-altitude jumps. "There are situations where we need to jump into a place undetected, so we try to stay off the radar by jumping as low as we do," said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Gonzalez, a jumpmaster from the Army 4th Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group located at Joint Base

Story by 2nd Lt. Hans Zeiger,
194th Wing



An Army Guardsman helps an Air Guardsman to prepare for his jump from a Chinook helicopter during Operation Husky Airborne Aug. 8, 2015. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Rider

Lewis-McChord.

"The military freefall is at high altitude for entries in places where they don't want to get detected either. So we have really high jumps and really low jumps. We can jump as low as 800 feet in training. The lowest we're going to go is 1,250 feet."

Delaney said that parachutists in the 116th aim to practice air jumps every other month to maintain their job currency.

The 116th depends on Army aviators, including Army National Guard partners, to conduct these practices. "We don't have our own chutes or jumpmasters," said Delaney. "We wouldn't be able to put this on if the Special Operations Detachment Pacific wasn't helping us out. The big thing is the interoperability in working with the Army National Guard," said Delaney.

The Army Guard works across military services to provide helicopter transport. "The uniform doesn't matter to me," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Nathaniel Thompson, the Chinook pilot and a member of the 66th TAC. "People come from far and wide to be supported."

"I have an element of eight men who load onto the helo and are dropped off," said Tech. Sgt. Louis Awua, Red Flight Operations NCO for the 116th and an air assault team leader. "Most of the training is centered on helicopter landing operations and medevac 9-line." Medevac 9-line is "the template used to evacuate casualties," said Awua. "Familiarity with the tactics, techniques,

and procedures of different types of helos helps us support Army or Marine Corps ground commanders," said Awua.

In theater during wartime, TACPs would jump with communications and tactical equipment along with a rifle and MREs, said Staff Sgt. Brant Shaw as he took his seat in the Chinook.

Operation Husky Airborne was part of Team 116 Organization Day

and Barbeque, attended by service members' families and employers, who were able to see the squadron in action and learn more about its mission.

"There are situations where we need to jump into a place undetected, so we try to stay off the radar by jumping as low as we do."

MISSION ACCOUNTABILITY & PEOPLE



At the start of my tenure at the helm of the Washington Air National Guard, I established a clear set of priorities for the Airmen within my command. Those priorities included Mission, Accountability and People (MAP).

I continue to see living examples of what it means to understand and embody these priorities. I could not be more proud of our Airmen's efforts to focus and provide support to Washington State and to our Nation.

Airmen like Master Sgt. Troy Carle of the 194 Wing who embodied the priority of mission in our state-level domestic operations by working tirelessly to establish the digital and high frequency communications network that made the Evergreen Tremor Exercise a success. Troy was not only on the front lines of the communication effort, but participated in the staff process well above his grade level.



By Brig. Gen. John Tuohy
Assistant Adjutant General,
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As Tristan Atkins, the director of aviation for the Washington State Department of Transportation put it, "he is an apex leader with unlimited potential and abilities."

Examples of hard work are numerous, but often the strain of competing requirements from your ANG service, civilian career, and life can become overwhelming. It is moments like those that can lead to poor decisions. That is one of the reasons why my second command priority, accountability, is so important.

We are obligated to be accountable in our actions, our spending, and our training to the people of this state and this nation. Accountability is also important in our discipline and lawful actions. Most importantly, accountability is a major pillar in the Air Force Core Value of integrity. Having a moral compass or inner voice that tells you to do the right thing even when no one is looking is incredibly important to earn and keep the public trust.

I currently serve on an Air National Guard committee working to refine our accountability procedures and put into place processes that help us to be better stewards of our resources. We must control and appropriately use our funding.

Accountability can be embodied in many ways, but a great example of this is the 141 Air Refueling Wing's Government Purchase Card audit that had zero discrepancies and was labeled as a state benchmark program. Another example is the 225

Air Defense Group who made it through a U.S. Property and Fiscal Office audit of their continuity of operations plan with 100 percent effectiveness and exceeding all requirements.

Finally, any organization's most important resource is its people. Each of you plays an important role in our mission readiness. Equally important is our relationship with our people. Getting to know each other on a personal level builds a camaraderie that not only brings us together each drill weekend, but also serves as a safe place for our people to handle life's bumps with each other.

We lost one of our great people last year when Senior Master Sgt. Wilbert "Tre" Norton III died suddenly. A testament to the embodiment of our people was seen in what happened after Sgt. Norton's death. Our team pulled together to ensure we had representation at his funeral services, completed fundraisers for his surviving family members, and held a memorial run in his honor. That team is still pulling together and completed a food drive this month in his honor. It is those relationships, those people that make the ANG great.

These command priorities are not something that I can develop and enforce from the top if I expect them to be successful. Instead they need to be a part of our culture and permeate every aspect of our lives. The Airmen highlighted here are recent examples of many of you that work hard to incorporate the MAP priorities into your day-to-day work.



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