

# BIG SKY FLYER



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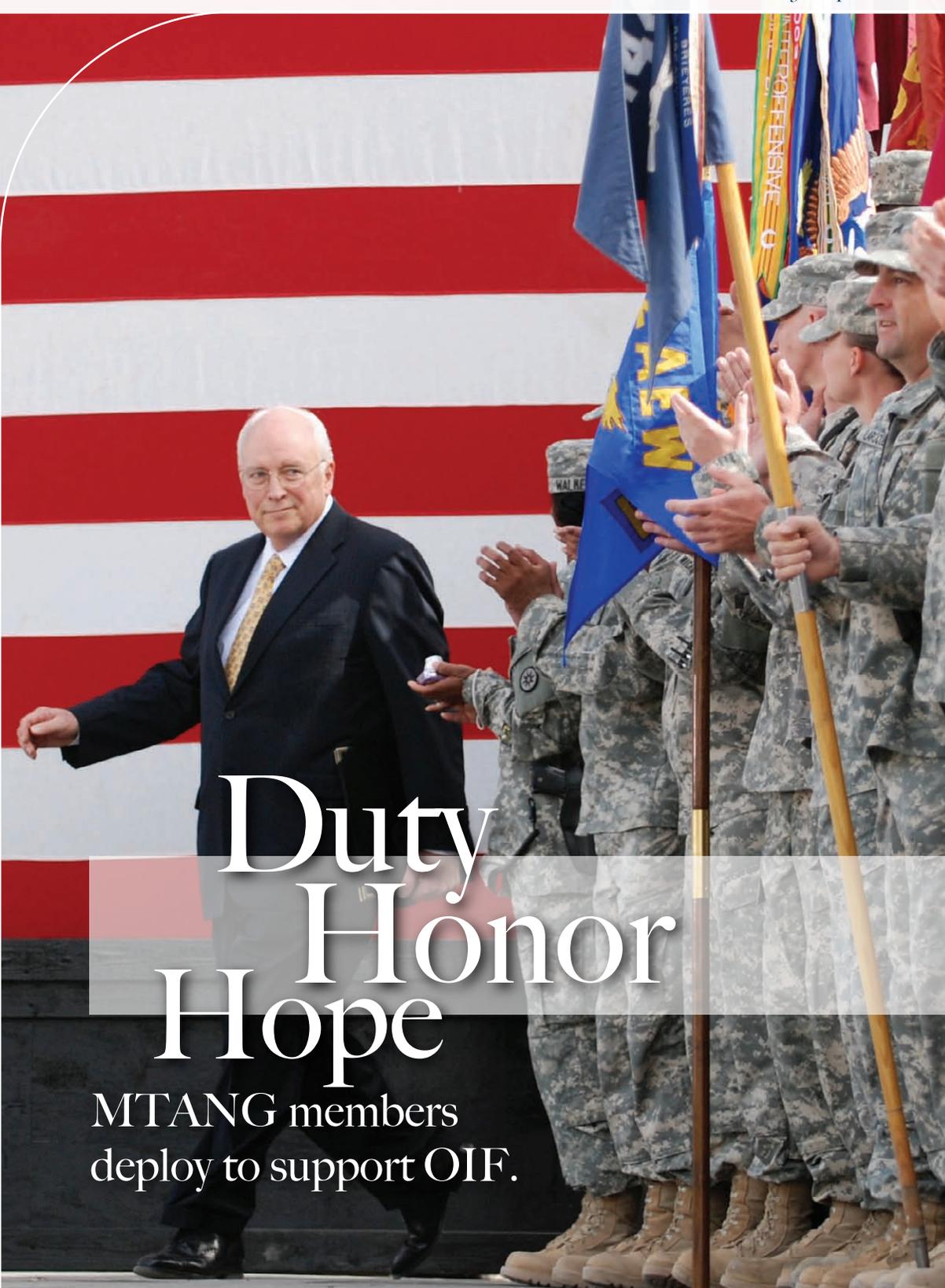
## { INSIDE }



Gov. Schweitzer addresses those deploying.



Maj. Gen. Prendergast (Ret.) is taking an active role in the battle against meth use.



# Duty Honor Hope

MTANG members  
deploy to support OIF.



By Col. Michael J. McDonald  
120th Fighter Wing Commander

# Challenges Abroad and Close to Home

Always Prepare to Serve both Federal and State Missions

As the MTANG and the 120th Fighter Wing, we are most obviously engaged in an epic war campaign, one that has lasted longer than World War II and has no foreseeable end in sight – the Global War on Terror. The Aviation Package will get a reprieve after its return in May as the Wing converts to the F-15 for a few years, but we'll continue to have ECS and RED HORSE commitments and deployments during that time. This Big Sky Flyer, and the next quarterly edition, will highlight the preparation efforts, the deployment, and the transition back to peacetime.

But every bit as critical to the future of the MTANG are some less visible “campaign wars”, ones that deserve and demand just as much of our attention as the “away fight” in the AOR’s.

“As the MTANG and the 120th Fighter Wing, we are most obviously engaged in an epic war campaign, one that has lasted longer than World War II and has no foreseeable end in sight – the Global War on Terror.”

First on the list is what separates the Guard from the Active and Reserve components – our State mission. While snowpack levels are at least average in most areas of Montana, it will take several years of above normal moisture levels to reverse the dangerously dry conditions in our forests. We need to be prepared to respond to our governor’s call if the fire situation develops this summer.

Our second campaign is also a long standing one. We’re very operationally focused and tend to pay far more attention to getting the job done rather than ensuring that we’re getting the job done correctly – IAW all applicable directives and instructions. In fact, one of our Wing Goals addresses just that: “How we get there is as important as where we end up.” However, we have two battles in this campaign that will help us direct our energies toward the compliance side: the upcoming conversion and the Unit Compliance Inspection. We won’t be able to say, “I’ve been doing this job on the flightline for 21 years,” because we’ll have never had our hands on these airplanes before. And the UCI will force us to take

a look at all of our processes that don’t convert to make sure we’re fully up to date and able to seamlessly interface with all of the ANG and AF support systems currently running.

Our final campaign is the “ANG Strength Fight.” Simply put, our State HAS to be at 100 percent manning by 1 Oct 2009. We in the field have been given some great tools recently that should help immensely. And we have a Superstar Recruiting and Retention Team that is energized beyond belief. And both the RED HORSE and the Wing will be adding to that Team by transferring on-board AGR authorizations from their normal assignments to Recruiting duties.

But the real fight isn’t only a recruiters’ responsibility, it’s an organizational responsibility. The Wing is going to follow the success stories of Security Forces, of Services, and of the RED HORSE, and get our commanders and supervisors fully engaged advertising and selling their shops to potential recruits. Equally important, we need to continue to foster the type of environment that keeps our members wanting to come back and work with and beside us.

These are challenging campaigns to be sure – but exciting ones as well. We are literally setting the stage for the future of the MTANG. Roll up your sleeves and join in the fights!



An F-16C Fighter Aircraft from the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq awaits clearance to takeoff for a combat mission over Iraq.

## Commander’s Column . . . 1

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Local, state and federal agencies achieve real success in the battle against DUIs and MIPs.

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Native American members of the MTANG share some of their heritage and culture through dancing.

### pg. 9 Back to Balad

For the second time in the MTANG history, nearly 200 volunteers pack their bags and head off to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

### Front Cover

45 members of the 120th FW watch on as Vice President Dick Cheney speaks to uniformed service members at Logistics Support Area Anaconda on Balad Air Base, Iraq, March 18, 2008. Cheney was in the area visiting with service members deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Sander)

## pg. 11 Protected by RED HORSE

The 219th RED HORSE Squadron of the MTANG builds a much needed bunker to provide safety for some EOD airmen at Davis-Monthan AFB.

## pg. 12 Making Good Use of Retirement

Maj. Gen. John Prendergast (Ret.) is making a difference in the state’s fight against methamphetamine abuse.

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# USA0013

## Campaign Aims at Lowering DUIs and MIPs

In 2006 a coalition of local, state and federal agencies received a grant from the Department of Defense to help curb underage drinking in the local community. The coalition has since developed a program that includes providing alcohol sales compliance training for employees of the bar industry, regular alcohol compliance checks on businesses that serve alcohol, and the sponsorship of alcohol free events for airmen.

According to Great Falls Police Department Officer Steve Pre'tat, the coalition has been able to focus their combined energy on a common goal. "When we started up our coalition, what we found out was that there were so many people doing the exact same things, only spread out. We started a coalition that had all the major players in town. We took the Montana Air National Guard, we took Malmstrom Air Force Base, we took the Cascade County Sheriff's Office, the DUI Task Force-we took all of these different entities and brought them all together in one coalition. We brought everybody together and now we have a general idea of where we are going versus everybody going in different directions," said Pre'tat.

One visual aspect of the local program is the 0013 campaign featured in television public service announcements and billboards in the Great Falls area. The first two numbers in the campaign relate to the goal of zero alcohol being served to individuals under the age of 21, and zero DUI offenses. The second two numbers address those individuals that do consume alcohol to limit consumption to only one drink per hour, and to have no more than three drinks maximum each night. This program allows for the responsible drinker to keep their blood alcohol content well below the legal limit. It's all about keeping young airmen safe and free from the administrative discipline that would result from an alcohol related arrest.

Montana Air National Guard aircraft and personnel were featured prominently in one of the television public service announcements that encourage airmen to "live by a higher code." 120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Officer Maj. Rick Anderson saw the unit's participation as a service to the community of Great Falls. "Because we are very community driven and community oriented, we were asked by the Great Falls Police Department if we could help sponsor this program. We did a public-service announcement in which we had one of our



Maj. Jason Greene serves as the talent for the 0-0-1-3 public service announcement that was produced on base.

F-16 aircraft take off with the 0013 in the heads-up display, and the pilot flashed the 0013 symbol, and it got people interested in knowing what the 0013 program is," said Anderson.

The local community and Malmstrom Air Force Base have seen a reduction in DUIs and MIPs during the first year of the program. "The statistics are pretty interesting themselves. Within the first year, Malmstrom Air Force Base has reduced their DUIs by 26 percent. They've reduced their MIPs by 42 percent. We on the other hand, in Great Falls have reduced all DUIs by 33 percent, and all MIPs across the board by 33 percent, and that's just in the first year," said Officer Pre'tat. "We don't really know if it's our program that's making a difference, we'd like to think it is," he added.

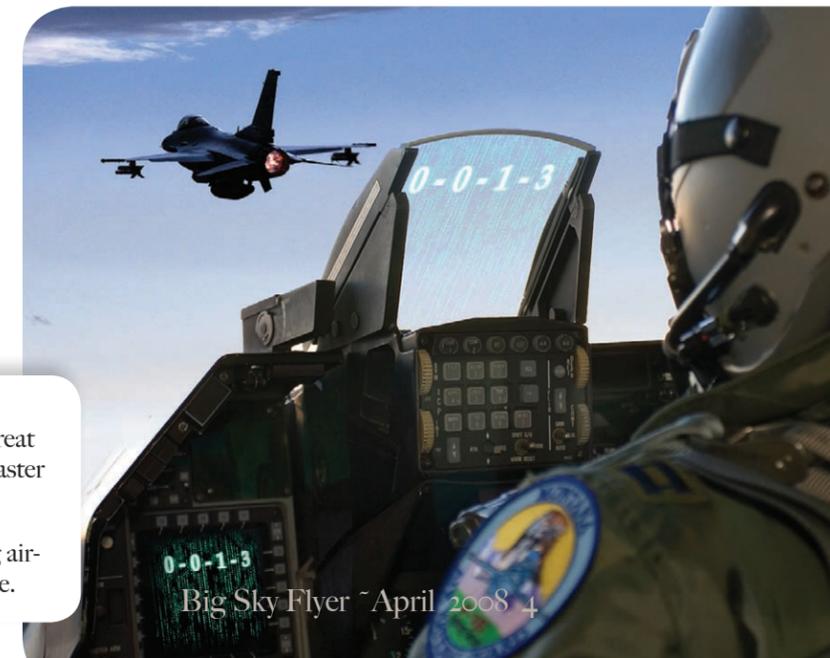
The 120th Fighter Wing leadership views this program as being vital to educating their airmen and the community's youth on the hazards of irresponsible drinking. "We in the Montana Air National Guard are very excited about this program. We live here too. We're members of the community and we care about the young people and all members of this community," said Maj. Anderson.

For more information on the 0013 program visit their website at [www.usa0013.com](http://www.usa0013.com).

Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson  
120th Fighter Wing Multimedia Manager

MID: Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Community Coordinator Officer Steve Pre'tat at work in his office at the Great Falls Police Department. (U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson.)

BOTTOM: A composite image featuring 120th Fighter Wing aircraft is available for download at the [www.usa0013.com](http://www.usa0013.com) website.



“Hopefully it will bring a little awareness to the Native American culture and our way of life. It will teach people about our differences, so we can learn something about each other.”

- Staff Sgt. Natani Pete



ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Natani Pete performs a fancy dance during the presentation for unit members.

RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Natani Pete and Master Sgt. Daisy Sherman lead unit members in a traditional Native American dance. (U.S. Air Force Photos by Staff Sgt. Christy Mason.)

# Cultural Diversity Program Builds Awareness

## MTANG Members Learn about Native American Heritage

The Minority Council had its beginnings in 1999 and is now known as the Diversity Council. Senior Master Sgt. Laurie Fox, the wing human resource advisory, is in charge of the group. “It’s comprised of any volunteers, but it is mostly the minorities in our unit. What we are trying to do is figure out ways to get the different cultures introduced in the unit. One way to introduce the Native American was to have some traditional dancing,” said Fox.

November is recognized as Native American Awareness Month. This past November was the first year that a special program was held. “There are eleven Native Americans in the Montana Air National Guard,” explained Master Sgt. Daisy Sherman. “The presentation of Native American dancing, like pow-wow dancing, will help Guard members learn a little more about the Native American culture. My fellow Air Guard members will then become more in tune with Native Americans,” said Sherman. Sherman performed the side-step jingle dance during the presentation.

Staff Sgt. Natani Pete, a member of the 120th Communications Flight, demonstrated fancy dancing, a new style of dance. “The fancy dance is a contemporary style dance to the pow-wow,” said Pete. “The older folks dance a lot slower, and the younger kids want to do something different. So we do more moves, a little more action, then just a slow pace around the circle,” said Pete. Participants at the event also had an opportunity to join in the circle dance at the conclusion of the program.



“Hopefully it will bring a little awareness to the Native American culture and our way of life. It will teach people about our differences, so we can learn something about each other,” said Pete.

Cultural events will be held throughout the year, to recognize the Hispanics and African Americans in the unit. Contact Senior Master Sgt. Laurie Fox if you would like to get involved with the Diversity Council or would like additional information.

Tech.Sgt. Charlie Heit  
120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

An F-16C Fighter Aircraft from the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq performs a combat mission in the skies over Iraq. Montana Air National Guard personnel from the 120th Fighter Wing are currently deployed to Balad AB, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Maintenance and operations personnel work closely together to maintain and fly these aircraft. The aircraft support a multitude of missions to include close air support for ground operations and reconnaissance missions. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeff Stoermer.)



# Nearly 200 Volunteer as the MTANG Goes Back to Balad

In the early morning hours of Feb. 29, nearly 200 members of the 120th Fighter Wing of the Montana Air National Guard deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, to help fight the Global War on Terror. For some of the Montanans, this would be their first trip to a war zone. For many other individuals, this is their second or third trip to the overseas conflict.

While in Iraq, the pilots, maintenance and support personnel are assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and their tasking will be to provide close air combat support for the ground troops that are serving in the field. Many days of planning and coordination by unit personnel resulted in a flawless down range deployment of wing members.

Last minute legal, medical and personnel issues were resolved when unit members processed through the Personnel Deployment Function, or PDF Line. According to 120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs Officer Maj. Rick Anderson, the line was credited with creating an efficient mode of out processing the deployment participants. "The Personnel Deployment Function line is the last chance for checks and balances of all the things that the people deploying need to do, and to make sure everything is in order before they go to Iraq," said Anderson.

Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer made a special trip to Great Falls to offer his thanks and moral support to the departing troops. "You are the best trained, best equipped warriors in the history of the world," said the Montana National Guard Commander in Chief. "You have a mission and you're trained to do it. Every family in Montana will be praying for you while you're gone, and I personally will pray for every one of you." The governor also spent time meeting with the Montana airmen and discussing their concerns about the deployment before departing the base to return to the Montana State Capitol.

This will be the second tour to Iraq for Staff Sgt. John Kramer, an aircraft fuels system craftsman. The repeat volunteer looks forward to serving his country during the Iraq deployment. "I feel like I can look back on this someday and say I was a part of it, I helped secure the country and that gives me a good feeling to know that I was a part of the team that took care of this place," said Kramer.



ABOVE: Governor Brian Schweitzer shakes the hand of Master Sgt. Duane Wilson.

BELOW: An F-16C Fighter Aircraft from the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq awaits clearance to takeoff for a combat mission over Iraq. Pilots from the 120th Fighter Wing, Montana Air National Guard are deployed to Balad AB, Iraq, flying combat sorties in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Christy Mason.)

Patriotism also plays an important role for Master Sgt. Duane Wilson, a munitions system craftsman. "This is one of the things I signed up for when I originally enlisted. As far as the American people are concerned, we're doing this for you. We're honored to do this, we're all volunteers and we're glad to do this. It's just a proud event."

The Montanans are proud to be able to take their wealth of experience to the fight. Tactical Aircraft Maintenance Journeyman Senior Airman Brittany Williamson feels that her first deployment as a member of the Montana Air National Guard will be an opportunity to put her aircraft maintenance training to good use while she serves in a combat zone. "I'll be doing phase inspections, which involve basically a quick run through, inspecting the plane, taking it apart as quick as we can and putting it back together so that it's mission capable," she said.

This is the 120th Fighter Wing's second large scale deployment to Iraq since Operation Iraqi Freedom began in 2003.

Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson  
120th Fighter Wing Multimedia Manager

## 120th Fighter Wing Takes Unique Capabilities to the Fight in Iraq

Air Force and Army tactical commanders require reconnaissance systems to collect intelligence information in adverse weather and in all light conditions. Without such information, tactical commanders may be forced to operate without vital knowledge of enemy strength, location, and intentions. Today's tactical film systems cannot meet the needs of the tactical commanders due to lack of timeliness and cumbersome support requirements. The F-16 aircraft from the Montana Air National Guard utilizes a unique image capability. Theater airborne reconnaissance systems, or TARS for short, provide the tactical commander improved operational capabilities and is able to send the commander the vital information and battlefield requirements in near-real time. This greatly increases the war-fighting efforts. "We're able to get very detailed imagery with these TARS pods. The detailed images are used by the ground forces and the commanders extensively," said the 120th Detachment Commander and the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Mark Scharf.

The Montana Air National Guard is part of a three-unit coalition to support the Air Force mission. "We're part of a coalition of what the Air Force calls an Air Expeditionary Force (AEF), in which personnel deploy to a combat zone for approximately 120 days," said Scharf. Those 120 days are split into three-separate time frames that three guard units fill. Montana is sharing this rotation with units from Wisconsin and Iowa. "We have good experience, the pilots and maintainers are very experienced and we bring that maturity here, so that maturity and the experience make up for the fact that we're here for such a short time," said Scharf.

About 175 airmen from the 120th Fighter Wing of the Montana Air National Guard departed Great Falls for Iraq in the early morning hours of Feb. 29. Airmen deployed are performing maintenance and support functions as the 120th Fighter Wing provides F-16 C fighter jet air support to ground forces. Five F-16s belonging to the MTANG are also in Iraq and are being flown by Montana pilots as well as pilots from other units. The deployed airmen are assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing while in theater and are working side by side with active-duty Air Force servicemembers. Morale among those deployed remains high.

Maj. Rick Anderson  
120th Fighter Wing Chief of Public Affairs





# Protected by RED HORSE

## Bunker Provides Safety for EOD Airmen

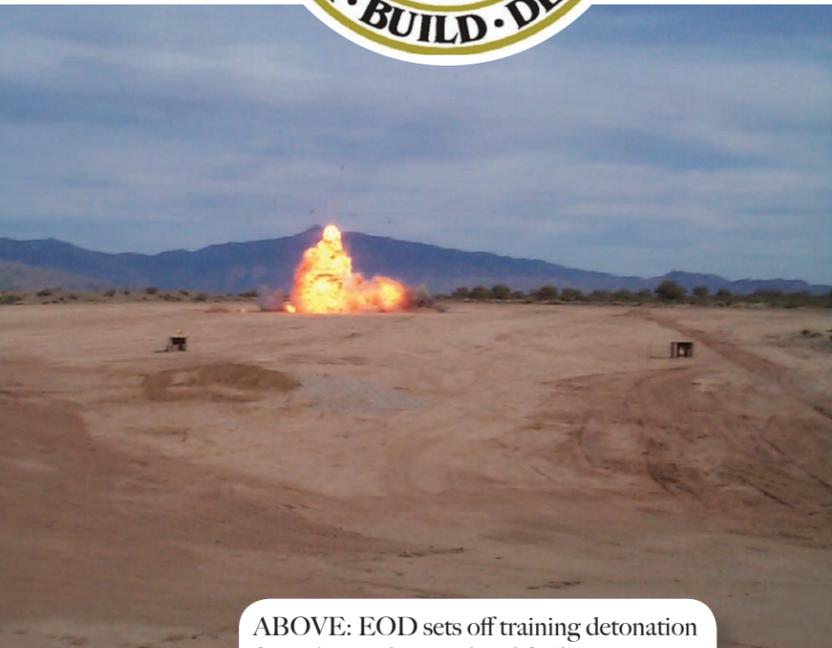
Guardsmen from the 219th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) unit, at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont., finished building a bunker for the 355th Civil Engineer Explosive Ordnance Disposal team at Davis-Monthan Feb. 15.

The new EOD range bunker is a safe house for EOD Airmen to work in that is far enough away from any blast, which they can use as an ignition point to detonate ordnances. "It is awesome anytime you can improve the safety factor at a base," said Master Sgt. Robert Brewer, RED HORSE project manager. "It is essential to the mission." The EOD requested a new safety shelter because the one they had didn't satisfy their safety needs. The 17 RED HORSE members, who are known for wearing their traditional red hats, have built similar bunkers in Africa, but began construction at D-M Jan. 22.

The bunker is constructed mostly of concrete masonry-unit blocks. The CMU blocks are 8x8x16-inch concrete blocks that make up CMU walls. The masonry blocks are pre-cast concrete blocks that have been molded to a specific shape and size and are used to build a block or rock retaining wall. The CMU blocks are known for being durable, self contained, low maintenance and fire resistant. They are suitable for the most stringent fire ratings. "This bunker was made to last and will ensure the Airmen have adequate protection," said Sergeant Brewer.

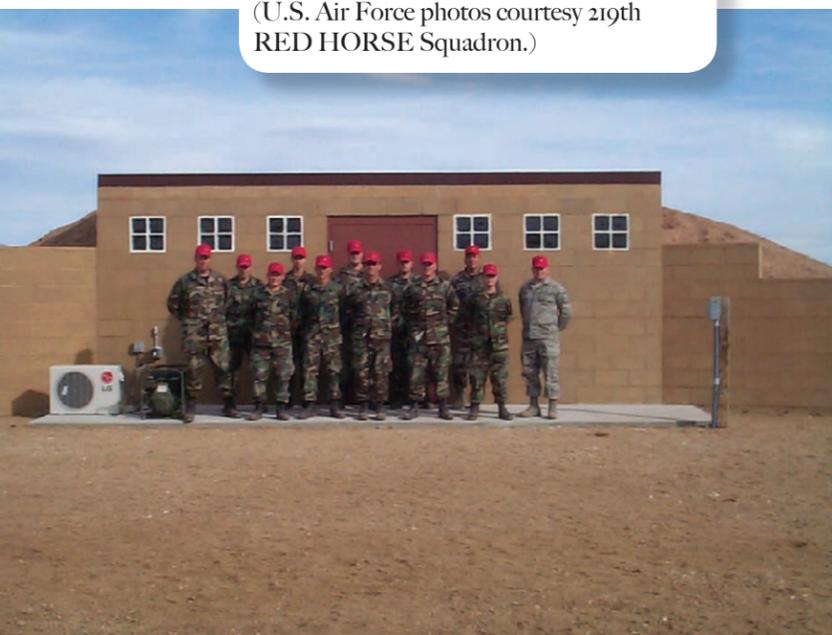
In addition to the blast shelter, the Guardsmen stained the walls desert tan, and trenched and installed more than 1,400 feet of conduit, which contained the electrical blast wire, between the blast points and the EOD Range bunker. "The new bunker is a 100 percent improvement over what we had," said Master Sgt. Robert Hannon, EOD flight chief. "They (RED HORSE) did a fantastic job."

By Airman 1st Class Jamie L. Coggan  
355th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



ABOVE: EOD sets off training detonation from the newly completed facility.

BELOW: Montana ANG RED HORSE members stand in front of the recently completed EOD Safety Shelter. (U.S. Air Force photos courtesy 219th RED HORSE Squadron.)



# Retired Adjutant General Still Giving Back

When he retired from active military service on Aug. 31, 2004, Maj. Gen. John Prendergast said there was only one thing he would volunteer his time to in retirement. At the end of 46 years in the Montana National Guard, spending more than 10 of those years as adjutant general, Gen. Prendergast knew he wanted to do something to help kids or veterans.

Gen. Prendergast received many requests for his time after his retirement, but finally found a way to help kids and veterans. In early 2005, Gen. Prendergast was approached by Tom Siebel, who was putting together an advisory council to help combat methamphetamine abuse in Montana. Seeing the opportunity to make a difference at the grassroots level, Gen. Prendergast accepted a seat on the board.

"No more stats, no more lectures, we needed to be hit between the eyes," said Gen. Prendergast.

The Montana Meth Project aimed right between the eyes of Montana teens with what they believed to be the largest statewide anti-methamphetamine campaign in history. The goal of this program was to reduce the frequency and prevalence of methamphetamine.

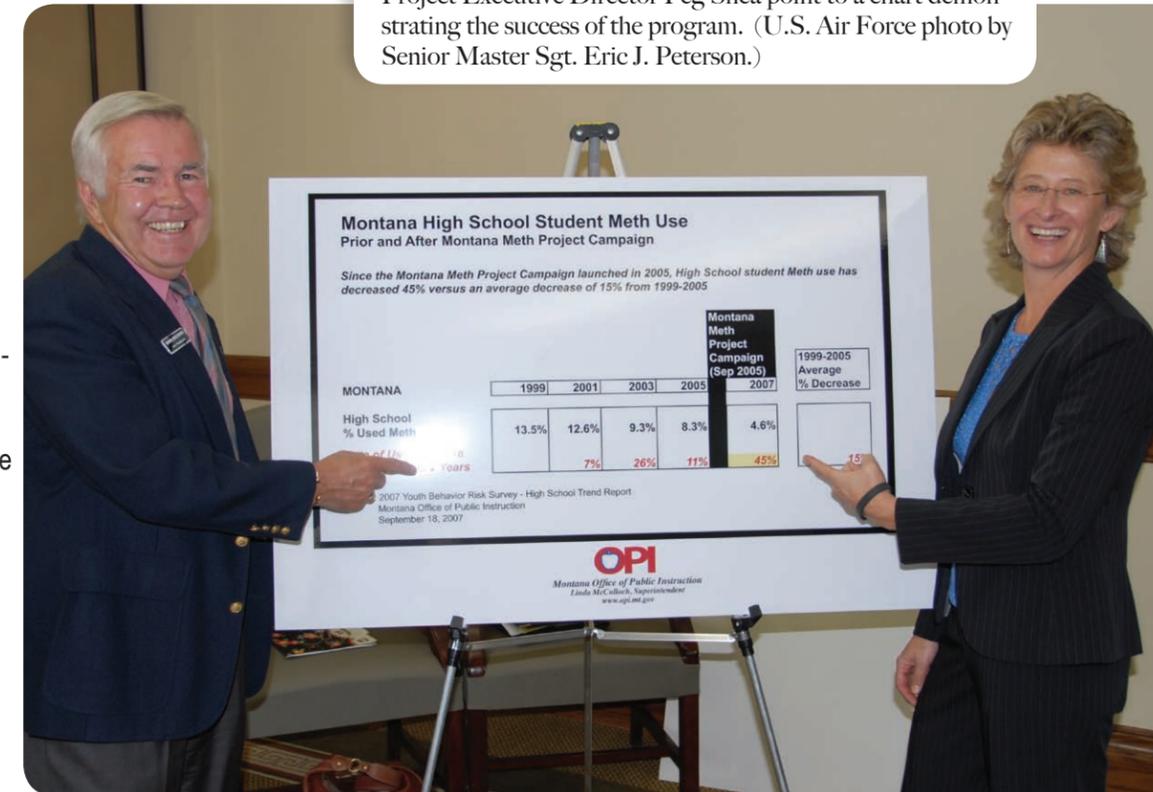
The Montana Meth Project was developed as a large-scale prevention program aimed at significantly reducing first-time Meth use through public service messages, public policy and community outreach. The Meth Project is funded by a grant from the Siebel Foundation.

"The methamphetamine problem in Montana is real. The drug has disastrous implications, and our findings show that Montana's young people have ready access to meth, making them highly vulnerable," said Tom Siebel, Chairman of the Montana Meth Project.

When the Montana Meth Project launched in September 2005, the Office of National Drug Control Policy ranked Montana fifth in the nation for meth abuse. The Montana Depart-

ment of Corrections reported 50 percent of the inmates in the Montana State Prison were incarcerated for meth related crimes. And the Montana Attorney General's office reported 50 percent of foster-care admissions were meth related.

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) John Prendergast and the Montana Meth Project Executive Director Peg Shea point to a chart demonstrating the success of the program. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson.)



Gen. Prendergast was also concerned with the further potential for methamphetamine abuse. "One of my major concerns is with our Soldiers coming home with posttraumatic stress disorder, is the accessibility of meth," said Gen. Prendergast. "If they are looking for an escape, it is very easy to find."

Since 2005, Gen. Prendergast has given presentations, been a part of town hall meetings, talked with meth users, and passed out bracelets bearing the words that represent the whole point of the Montana Meth Project... Not even once. Gen. Prendergast has also taken the Montana Meth Project message and research to the tribal veteran's council and the National Guard Bureau.

"Our focus is 12 to 18-year-olds, but it is great if you can help the older ones," said Gen. Prendergast. "I have met some wonderful young kids who are off meth."

By Tech. Sgt. Scott Farley  
120th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

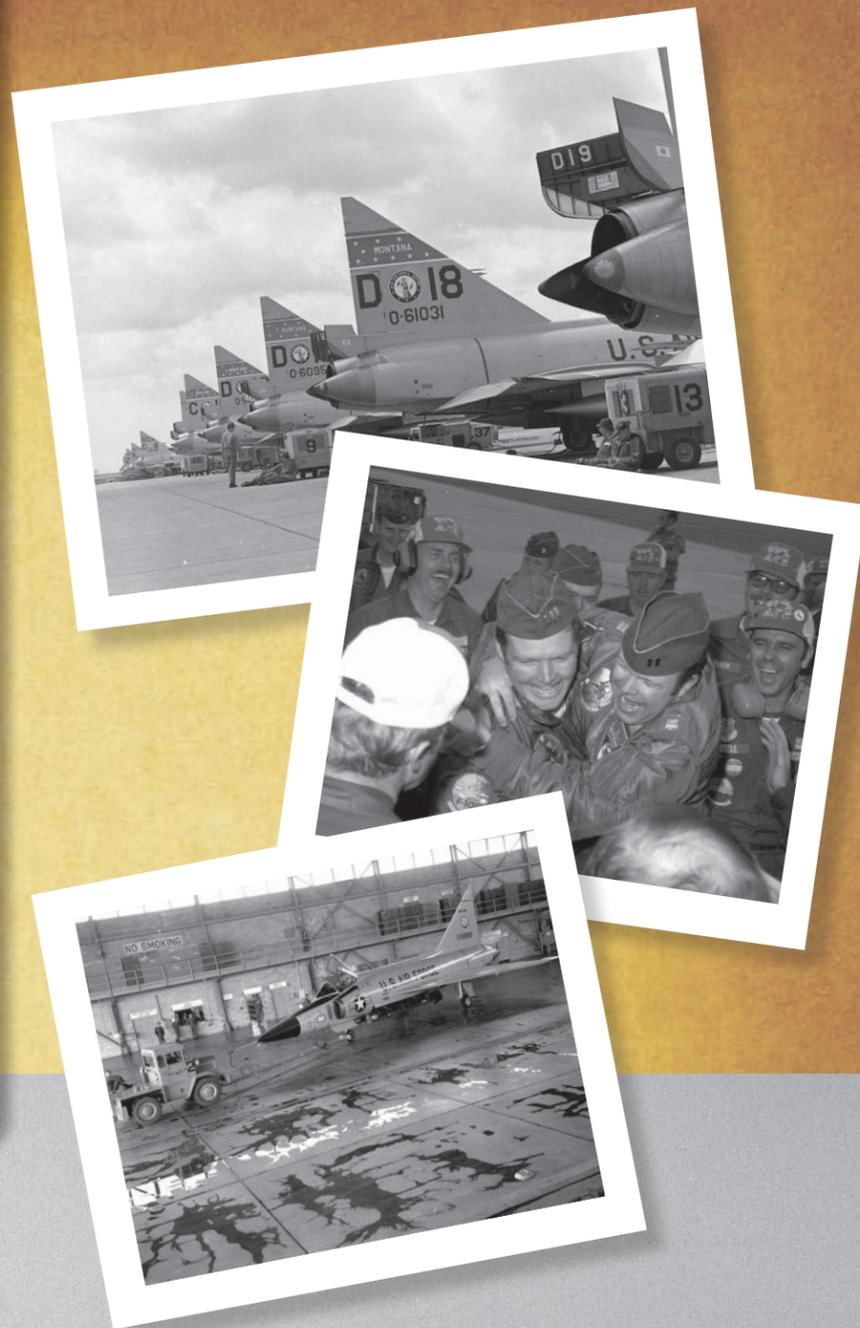
# HISTORY Of THE MTANG

The Montana Air National Guard turned 60 on June 27, 2007. There are so many stories to tell, it is difficult to abbreviate our history without minimizing our many achievements. Instead of a detailed list of events, here is the third in a series of the top historical eras that span the years.

## THE DELTA WINGED FIGHTERS: 1966-1986

In 1966 our unit entered the supersonic age when it converted to F-102 Delta Daggers. During the Vietnam era, the unit was never tasked, but two pilots volunteered for active duty and served there. F-106 Delta Darts arrived in 1972.

By Master Sgt. Al Garver  
Joint Force Historian



# The News You Can Use

## Junior Enlisted Council Up and Running

A new voice will be heard, representing all Montana Air National Guard Airmen. This voice, better known as the Junior Enlisted Council, hopes to be the eyes, ears and opinion for junior enlisted personnel.

The purpose of the Montana JEC is to function as a social and professional organization established to enhance the morale and esprit de corps of all junior enlisted personnel, facilitate cooperation between members, provide a forum for its members to meet, share personal experiences and expertise, and assist one another and to function as an added channel of communication within the chain of command.

Recent activities saw JEC members participating in Winterfest and also assisting with the 2007 Dining Out. These, and other future activities, will show JEC dedication to their mission statement and help allow all junior enlisted members to have a voice. JEC officers and council members sincerely hope to get that voice not only heard, but acted upon.

Any enlisted member of the Montana Air National Guard that holds the rank of E-1 through E-6 can become a member. Monthly meetings are held in the small dining room in Building 62 each UTA on Saturday at 2 p.m.

Attend a meeting to find out more or contact a JEC officer for more information.

2008 officers are:

Staff Sgt. Crystal Langford (Services), President  
Staff Sgt. Ralph Hemmah (Finance), Vice President  
Tech. Sgt. Kathie Frank (LRS), Secretary  
Senior Airman Jo Lynn Howse (LRS), Treasurer  
Tech Sgt. Kimberly Lord (LRS), Treasurer

By Staff Sgt. Crystal Langford  
120th Fighter Wing Services

## Retirement Celebration

Unit members, family and friends are invited to celebrate a retirement party to be held at the Trades and Industries Building at Montana Expo Park on May 31, 2008, from 4 p.m. to midnight. Col. Mark Meyer, Col. Fred Fairhurst, Lt. Col. Greg Thielman, Chief Master Sgt. Gary Hajek, Senior Master Sgt. Mark Giskaas, Senior Master Sgt. Paul Meier, and Master Sgt. Mark Barker have worked a combined total of 239 years of military service. Dinner, drinks (BYOB) and music will be provided. Individuals interested in attending should contact Senior Master Sgt. Mark or Sue Giskaas at 406-453-3120, or 406-788-6697.

## CCM Roger K. Larsen \$250.00 Scholarship fund information

CCM Roger K. Larsen's family is extremely appreciative of the very generous donations made to the CCM Roger K. Larsen Scholarship Fund. Roger would be so proud to know that this Scholarship Fund will be dedicated for many years to come, as a true reflection of his legacy.

The CCM Roger K. Larsen Scholarship fund will be made available to the Montana Air and Army National Guard members, their spouse, and their unmarried dependants. In addition to the scholarships awarded to the Air and Army National Guard, a like yearly donation will be made to the Challenge Program, Roger K. Larsen Memorial Fund, initiated by John and Leta Nugent of Butte.

**Applications will be made available at the following locations:**

- MTANG - Master Sgt. Steve Hagan, 791-0138
- MTARNG - Dorrie Hagan, 324-3239
- Russell Country Credit Union  
- 761-2880 or (1-800-772-4343)
- Mrs. Ann Roger's Residence - 965-3131

DEADLINE POSTMARK DATE FOR SUBMISSION TO THE CCM ROGER K. LARSEN SCHOLARSHIP IS 31 JULY.

# Faces of the Guard

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ABOVE: Members of the 120th Fighter Wing Honor Guard provided the color guard detail for the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in downtown Great Falls on March 17. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson.)

BELOW: Col. Douglas E. Fick, commander of the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont Air National Guard, does a pre-flight check of a Montana Air National Guard F-16C aircraft prior to flying it back to his unit located at South Burlington, Vt. The Vermont unit will be accepting the F-16Cs as the 120th Fighter Wing readies to accept their new F-15 mission and aircraft. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric J. Peterson.)



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