

★★★ BIG SKY
FLYER

Vol. XXXIII, No. 6 - August 2011



INSIDE



Lots of fun at
Camp Runnamucka



Fit to lead

Quite the show at the

FLIGHT
★ **OVER THE**
FALLS





By Col. Pete Hronek
120th Fighter Wing Commander

A Busy Summer and a Solid Future

Intel Targeting Group another bright note for our future.

Vigilantes,

I am sure many of you were expecting a quiet summer, and it has turned out to be anything but! As always, you stepped up to the mission and tasks at hand and did an amazing job. I cannot thank you enough for your dedication and not throwing me under the bus!

To highlight what you have accomplished: First was the ORE in June, and the preparation and adjustments in May to make it a great consolidated training/ORE week. My hats off, especially to the Readiness Management Team, for nailing the concepts and boosting the readiness level of all our Airmen. The maintenance team also put forth a great effort in getting the sortie production rate up to recover from a couple of tough months due to depot and alert requirements. June was also a month where our deployed Airmen at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickham brought it all together in its Alert Force Evaluation by achieving superior results. The IG team noted the DET as the best performance they have seen in a very long time with many best practices!

We rolled into July first by hosting the Vermont Vipers for our annual Hang 'em High combat training, followed by a deployment to Sentry Eagle at Klamath Falls, OR for large force exercise training. Both of these exercises went a long way toward our readiness and aircrew upgrades.

To cap off the month, we hosted an Open House air show with Malmstrom AFB to show our community what we do best and to thank our community for their support of our Airmen who sacrifice much in their service to our country. I realize sponsoring an event is way beyond what we are tasked to do, but there are over 40,000 avid supporters who are very appreciative of you volunteering to do this for them and who will continue to generate goodwill for us as we serve into the future.

Our future continues to solidify with the announcement of the Wing being the preferred site for the Intel Targeting Group. This, along with the C-27, secures us for great long-term missions and keeps the best full and part-time force in place to continue outstanding service to our country in very volatile times as our government works to meet our budgeting challenges. We have much work to do to continue the current mission and transition into the future, but this work is all positive compared to the fate many other Air Guard Wings are facing.

Finally, the August UTA brings all the hard work together as we celebrate our many accomplishments with our families. This busy weekend allows our families to see what great accomplishments you have done all year and also thanks them for the support they give us to get the missions accomplished. I could not be prouder of you all and for always meeting the challenges in very dynamic times.

Thank you for keeping your faith in me and your leadership as we navigate into a very bright future.

Our future continues to solidify with the announcement of the Wing being the preferred site for the Intel Targeting Group.



A four ship of F-15s fly over the flag on Overlook Park during the annual Flag Day celebration in Great Falls. (photo by Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson)

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FRONT COVER: An F-15 from the Montana Air National Guard turns over the crowd and Blue Angel F/A-18s during the Flight over the Falls, held on July 30th and 31st at the MTANG. (Photo by Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson)

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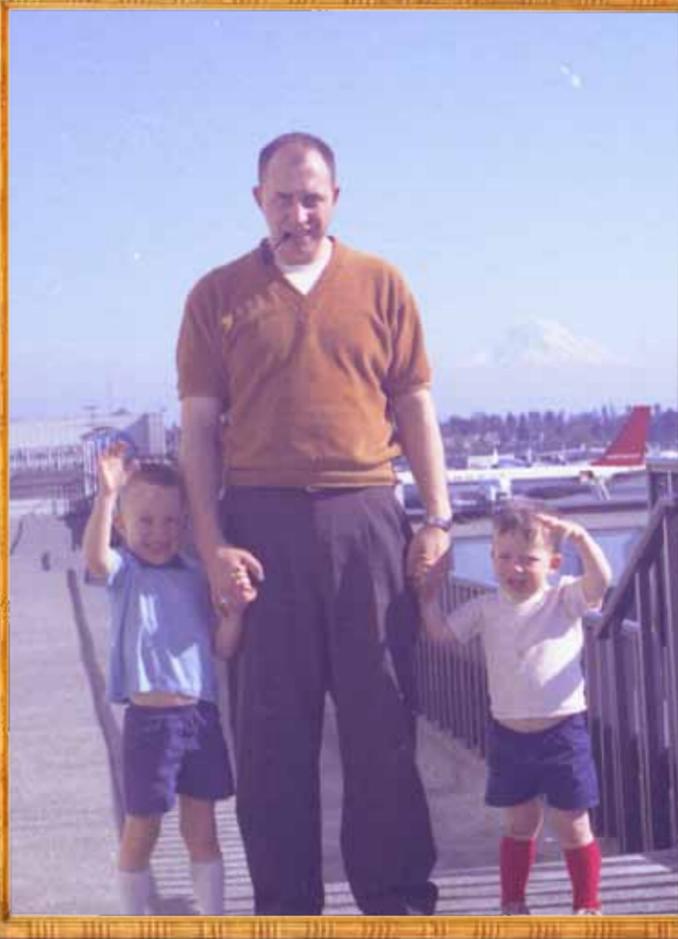
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My dream of flight came from Dad.



LEFT: Cliff Scharf and sons Mark (L) and Joe (R) watching airplanes at Seattle in 1966. ABOVE: Dad and I after flying together in 2007. (Photos provided by Col. Mark Scharf)

A Tribute: The Greatest Man I Ever Knew

My retirement in August will culminate a 32 year military career that has been everything I could have imagined, and many things I could never have imagined. The military, and for the past 12 years, the Montana Air National Guard in particular, has been the entirety of my life—something I cannot disentangle from easily nor without the reflection of where different paths might have taken me. Having read a number of these “I’m retiring soon” articles in my day, there are many different things folks say. If you choose not to read the rest of my words, please at least know how much I have been honored to work for each and every one of you—the men and women who serve our country. Thank you for being part of my life as I complete a lifelong dream and start another chapter. It has been my unparalleled honor to serve with you, in peace and in combat.

Sadly, my father cannot attend my retirement ceremony, and I would like to write about Dad here, and publicly acknowledge the roll he’s

played in my career and life. My father is in the very advanced stages of Alzheimer’s disease and is currently in a special home for Alzheimer’s patients, needing supervision and help with the most basic life tasks. He is unable to speak discernable words and rarely recognizes his closest family, including me. As best we can tell, what remains of his mind lives in the foggy past. As our family struggles through this, every single day I think about Dad and the man he was to me.

My dream of flight came from Dad. Ever since I can remember, I wanted to fly airplanes. I learned as an adult, Dad’s boyhood dream was also to fly. He often related stories of watching thundering P-51 Mustangs at the Boise Airport; unfortunately, a major ear infection prior to the age of antibiotics destroyed his hearing in one ear, and disqualified Dad from military service. Instead, he continued his education and ultimately built a successful business as a psychologist. Later in life, he earned his civilian pilot rating and I’m proud to say Dad was an excel-

lent pilot in his own right. My father did something very important for me as I exuded this same strong desire to fly—he guided me through the myriad of paperwork required to enter the US Air Force Academy. I had a severe case of senioritis with an ROTC scholarship in hand, and a berth on an Alaska salmon fishing boat that summer—the stuff of true adventure! Dad gently reminded me of my ambitions for the Academy—he said I could always turn down a USAFA appointment, but if I did not complete the paperwork (the beginning of a career hating military paperwork, I might add) I would never realize my goal of attending the Academy. He did not force me—he encouraged me at just the right time. Several months later I received the phone call offering me a position in the USAF Academy’s class of 1983 beginning 10 days after my 1979 high school graduation. Dad escorted me to the Academy, flying on an airline that stopped in Great Falls, Montana, where I snapped a picture of a future I could never imagine. By the way, I learned later that year the Alaska salmon run was a bust.

Dad was always there. I established a lifelong habit of telephoning my parents weekly while attending the Air Force Academy, regaling Dad and Mom with stories of woe and hardship. They worried the entire week until the next phone call, only to hear the problem vanished as quickly as it appeared. Dad was there when I swore my first oath of allegiance at age 17, and my oath of commissioning four years later. Dad visited virtually every Air Force base I was assigned, watching me fly the jets I dreamed of flying. He watched

me solo in the T-38 at pilot training, and rode behind my taxiing F-16 at MacDill AFB to watch me launch on a student training sortie. When I sought out the Maintenance Pro-Super to specifically thank him for his kindness to Dad, I remember the Pro-Super telling me every father ought to get see his son realize a dream—I was again reminded Dad was an integral part of my aviation career.

Dad was the epitome of calm as I explained to my parents before I deployed to fly combat sorties over Iraq in February 1991. He was calm seven Middle East deployments later the last time I deployed to Iraq—this time not only to fly, but to command and keep safe men and women whose job it was to serve our nation in combat. By then Dad was very sick with Alzheimer’s, and yet he grasped the gravity of the assignment. We spoke often while I was in Iraq and as throughout my career, he provided the insight from a man with a shared passion. He understood what was running through my veins as I chased this dream of flight, as well as the commitment to people under my command. He had the maturity to offer words of wisdom I badly needed.

As I transition to my post-military career and finish flying military fighter jets, I think of Dad constantly. I currently have a great job with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, have started a civilian aircraft maintenance business with a partner, and I am hopeful to begin a local charter flying service—I wish I could talk about it with Dad. I increasingly respect Dad’s decisions to branch into his own business with the responsibilities to his young family so many years ago. While Dad’s fiscal discipline was the weak link in his business endeavors, Dad earned money by helping people, and he answered to his own judgment on how to do that. I can only hope I enjoy a fraction of the success Dad achieved in his business, and certainly with the people he helped over the years.

Dad taught me something else, and maybe I will slightly violate my intent to not preach during a retirement address. Dad had a patience with people—an ability to forgive, to overcome hard feelings, to move forward beyond anger or hurt. It is easy to write someone off and be done. Much more difficult, but infinitely more rewarding, is to see true recalcitrance and observe an honest behavioral change, and give another chance. This is my plea, then, to my extended family at the Montana Guard—please give someone who is trying to change the opportunity to do that. Give that person a second chance...maybe even a third chance. My Dad had faith in his fellow man and woman—so do I, and I hope you will too.

And to Dad—for so many years ago when you gently guided a restless, impatient young boy to a dream, and for your invaluable insight throughout my life and career, thanks for the gift of my lifetime. You’ll always be with me.



By: Colonel Mark T. Scharf
State Director of Operations,
Montana Air National Guard
Retirement: 31 August 2011

Senior Leadership Sets the Pace

Members of the 120th FW Leadership take on the fitness test



Col. Hronek and other members of the 120th Fighter Wing's leadership take part in the fitness test at the new facilities located at Malmstrom Air Force Base. (U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson.)

Colonel Pete Hronek and members of the 120th Fighter Wing's senior leadership completed their fitness tests at the Malmstrom Air Force Base Fitness Center on Saturday of the July Unit Training Assembly. The senior leaders were tested by members of the 120th Services Flight Fitness Assessment Cell on their performance of sit-ups, push-ups and the mile and a half run.

Staff Sgt. Alesha Waltman serves as a member of the Fitness Assessment Cell and monitored the Senior Leadership during their fitness tests.

"We weigh them and make sure that their paperwork is up to date and everything is current, make sure that everything is safe, and they're ready to do their sit-ups, push-ups and the run," said Sergeant Waltman.

The \$12 million Fitness Center was completed in May 2009, and features numerous weight machines, treadmills, a climbing wall and a one-eighth mile running track located on the upper floor. Twelve laps around the level, cushioned track equals the distance required for the test.

The weather can be a factor in whether unit members can run the track located at the 120th Fighter Wing, so the indoor track at Malmstrom provides a good option to complete the run. A digital clock mounted on the wall of the facility allows runners to monitor their progress.

The Fitness Center also welcomes members of the Montana Air National Guard to use its facilities during off-duty hours. This can be convenient for airmen living on the east side of Great Falls, but Col. Hronek reminds unit members that the 120th Fighter Wing also maintains a first-class fitness center located on its base.

Col. Hronek said that making fitness a regular part of an airman's lifestyle will help improve their health, decrease their stress and make them ready for combat. "We're Airmen-warriors and we can be out in combat at any time. You've got to be able to take care of yourself, and be confident that the person next to you can take care of themselves too," he said.

Sergeant Waltman enjoys being able to help unit members succeed with the annual fitness requirement.

"I like the motivation. If you have a great attitude about the team, everybody else will," she said.

Physical fitness remains a key element of combat readiness. "We like to fly, fight and win so whether it's in the air or on the ground we've got to be in shape," said Col. Hronek.

This was the second year that the senior staff completed their fitness test during the month of July. Col. Hronek says that the Senior Leadership plans to maintain that testing schedule in future years.

By: Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson
120th FW Public Affairs

Training Transformation

Computer Based Training (CBT) takes the classroom to the computer



Senior Master Sergeant Tiffany Franklin completes one of the online computer based training courses offered through the Air Force ADLS. (U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson.)

The days of studying key information that you highlighted in Air Force career development courses (CDCs) are long gone, says the 120th Fighter Wing training and education manager.

Senior Master Sgt. Tiffany Franklin says that for most Air Force job specialties the multiple volume, heavy paper CDCs have been replaced with online computer based training (CBT) courses.

Many ancillary training subjects have also transitioned to the CBT method of learning. The Total Force Awareness (TFA) training currently includes 16 subjects due for members to complete on a one time, annual or biennial basis.

The high-tech change is not only saving trees, but it's become more efficient as the Air Force adds additional education requirements to an already tight training schedule.

Sergeant Franklin estimates that between the ancillary training, professional military training and the various new electronic CDCs there are between three and four hundred online courses available. Unit members can complete many of these courses while logged on at home.

"Computer based training is flexible, it's interactive. On guard drills we're trying to fit 30 hours of work into two eight hour days. It just doesn't work, so it's a good thing for guardsmen to be able to do it on their own time," said Sergeant Franklin.

Master Sgt. Connie Fertterer serves an additional duty in the 120th Logistics Readiness Squadron as a unit training manager. She schedules and tracks the training of 76 members of her squadron, teaches in the classroom environment and often troubleshoots CBT technical issues. The quality of the education provided by the CBT is directly related to the amount of time and effort put forth by the member, she said.

"The CBTs are of a very good quality, I have to admit that. If you sit there and actually go through them there's a lot of information, a lot of knowledge and most of them are well put together," said Sergeant Fertterer.

The introduction of CBTs to the Air Force training program has placed more emphasis on an individual's responsibility to complete the required training.

"We need to take the responsibility to train, so I do think that they need to step up and complete their training," said Sergeant Fertterer. Sergeant Franklin considers the CBT training to remain the standard for delivering Air Force CDC and ancillary training. During the last 60 days two new CBTs have been issued for personnel to complete. The repeal of the Don't Ask Don't Tell Policy and the Frontline Supervisor's Training are new mandatory subjects.

"It just seems to be the best way for the Air Force to implement training and get it done quickly. I definitely see more computer based training coming in the future," said Sergeant Franklin.

By: Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson
120th FW Public Affairs

AFE Team Ensures Aircrew Safety

The safety of the pilot is the chief concern of Master Sergeant Osier's crew.

It takes a group of skilled and highly trained 120th Fighter Wing airmen to ensure the safe operation of a Montana Air National Guard F-15 Eagle fighter aircraft. While most jobs are dedicated to maintaining the airframe, the main responsibility entrusted to the nine members of the Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) section concerns the safety of the aircraft's pilot.

The AFE specialists fit, inspect, maintain and repair the gear that pilots use every day, such as oxygen masks, flight helmets, night vision devices and anti-G garments, but they are also responsible for the emergency equipment carried on each mission. Members of the AFE section are confident that if parachutes, flotation devices or survival kits are ever needed the pilot can be rest assured this vital life-saving equipment will work as designed. The AFE career field motto, "Your Life is Our Business, Last to Let You Down," is a standard that the members live by.

"They know the perfectionists that we are, they know that they are getting the absolute best gear," said Master Sgt. Raegen Robertson, an aircrew flight equipment technician. "They have 100 percent

confidence in everything we do, and that is probably the biggest reward we receive," he said.

The AFE members interpret blueprints and specifications used for fabricating covers for F-15 wheels and engine intakes using industrial-quality sewing machines. They also maintain and repair the specialized flight clothing that pilots wear while flying the F-15.

An additional responsibility is to provide aircrew continuation training to the pilots. Two personnel are currently qualified to teach emergency procedures for ejection situations and ground survival skills. To be certified to teach these classes, section members need to attend combat and water survival schools, the physiological chamber and also complete the Air Force principles of instruction course. The training is tough and demanding, but the subject matter deals with issues that can mean the difference between life and death.

Sergeant Robertson, a qualified aircrew continuation trainer, attended combat survival training at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash. He says the school consisted of classroom and field training that included a simulation

where he was treated as a captured airman in a POW camp. "That was a whole different experience. You definitely learn a few things about yourself," he said.

There's a wide variety of equipment that must be periodically inspected with detailed technical data to be followed. Inspecting a parachute is a two-person activity and can sometimes take an entire day to complete based on its condition.

"The work that I do-knowing that I could potentially save someone's life-that makes a big difference in what you do. It makes your job fulfilling," said Staff Sgt. Naomi Bottomley, an aircrew flight equipment technician.

Master Sgt. Bob Osier, the superintendent of the aircrew flight equipment section, has over 11 years experience in the career field and considers the high-caliber quality of his personnel to be the reason for any success his section has experienced.

"I think what makes us stand out are the people. As superintendent, I'm blessed to have the personnel that I do in this section who possess such a dedicated work ethic, attention to detail and pride in ownership. The combination of these three things is what gives our shop the success it has on a daily basis," he said.

By: Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson
120th FW Public Affairs



TOP: 120th Fighter Wing Master Sgt. Raegen Robertson and Tech. Sgt. James Raines inspect a helmet during a post-flight check in the Aircrew Flight Equipment section on June 24, 2011. MIDDLE: 120th Fighter Wing Staff Sgt. Naomi Bottomley works on a piece of flight clothing in the Aircrew Flight Equipment section on June 23, 2011. BOTTOM: 120th Fighter Wing Senior Airman Neil Kolve inspects a helmet during a post-flight check in the Aircrew Flight Equipment section on June 24, 2011. (U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson.)

The U.S. Navy Blue Angels Number Five and Number Six begin their performance during Montana's Military Open House. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.)

FLIGHT ★ OVER THE FALLS



FLIGHT ★ OVER THE FALLS

The U.S. Navy Blue Angels demonstration diamond formation “breaks” over the Great Falls International Airport during Montana’s Military Open House. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. John Turner)



BELOW: 1. A Soldier applies face paint to a young attendee. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. John Turner) 2. Montana Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. Bradley Livingston, State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell Brush, Montana National Guard Adjutant General Brig. Gen. John Walsh, and 120th Fighter Wing Commander Col. J. Peter Hronek pose at the Flight over the Falls. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. John Turner) 3. A MiG-17 Fresco of the MiG Fury Fighters ignites its afterburner (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.)

BELOW: 1. Major Anthony Brim speaks to Montana’s Military Open House attendees at the 120th Fighter Wing’s F-15 “Eagle” static display. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 2. Explosive Ordnance Disposal team members show their high tech capabilities. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 3. Tech. Sergeant Tammy Joo performs the national anthem prior to the air show. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.)



Security Forces look on as one of the 120th Fighter Wing's F-15 Eagle open the show with a flyby. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.)

FLIGHT ★ OVER THE FALLS





U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson and Staff Sgt. John Turner

LEFT TO RIGHT: 1. U.S. Navy Blue Angels Commander Capt. Greg McWherter stands in front of his F/A-18 Hornet after the performance. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 2. Montana's Military Open House attendees speak with a member of the Montana Army National Guard about their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 3. U.S. Marine Corps C-130 "Fat Albert" lifts off. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 4. Theresa Eaman performs during the Flight over the Falls (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 5. Explosive Ordnance Disposal team members show their high tech capabilities(U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. John Turner) 6. Flight over the Falls was popular with young and old. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 7. A Security Forces Airman sits atop a Humvee on display at Montana's Military Open House. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.) 8. A U.S. Marine Corp Recruiter helps a young attendee perform pull ups. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Eric Peterson.)



Retirees back to work in the HQ building

Retired members of the 120th Fighter Wing family help showcase our history



Membership in the 120th Fighter Wing brings with it a sense of belonging to a family, but that family relationship doesn't necessarily end when an Airman retires from the unit.

A group of Montana Air National Guard retirees continues to meet monthly for breakfast in Great Falls to discuss their former careers, unit activities and current events. Many of these retirees regularly assist with the family day picnic, help assemble deployment packages for the Family Support Program and lend a hand when other retirees are in need of help.

Retired Col. Fred Fairhurst, the former 120th Support Group Commander, recently asked 120th Fighter Wing Commander Col. J. Peter Hronek if there was a project on base that the group of retirees could assist with. Col. Hronek suggested that they could help with placing historical photographs and artwork back onto the walls of the recently remodeled Headquarters Building.

Fairhurst took the idea to the retiree's breakfast and asked retired Senior Master Sgt. Mark Giskaas, who last served as the Production Superintendent in the 120th Maintenance Group, to help enlist volunteers to assist with the project.

"I put out an email and we got a few people to come and help out and hang the pictures. If there's a need, they'll come out to help," said Giskaas.

Fairhurst appreciates being able to review the 120th Fighter Wing history as depicted in four encased photomontages highlighting the major missions, its aircraft and personnel. "I just like seeing the progress that the unit has made through the years in obtaining new missions and doing such a great job fulfilling the requirements of those missions," he said.

Fairhurst says that the retirees may consider taking on an additional project in the future. They've been asked for assistance to build two additional encased photomontages that will highlight the last fighter aircraft that was assigned to the 120th Fighter Wing, the F-16C Falcon, and the current fighter aircraft, the F-15C Eagle.



TOP: Retired Chief Master Sgt. Dana Darko and retired Senior Master Sgt. Mark Giskass view one of the four encased photomontages highlighting the major missions, aircraft and personnel assigned to the 120th Fighter Wing which were recently placed on the wall of the newly remodeled Headquarters Building on July 20, 2011. ABOVE: Retired Senior Master Sgt. Mark Giskass, retired Col. Fred Fairhurst and retired Chief Master Sgt. Dana Darko hang a lithograph on the wall. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson.)

"I think once you've had a career in the Air National Guard you realize that we're getting a lot to do without much to do it. And so, if the retirees can come up and take a little bit of this excess load off of those who have important jobs to do maybe we can make a contribution toward keeping the place looking good," he said.

Giskaas says that the retirees can also share important information about their retirement benefits during their breakfast meetings. He tries to pass on the information he gains during trips to family program conferences.

"It keeps them in touch with the benefits that they need to know about. There's quite a few that do retire that don't even know they have benefits, other than the check that comes when they hit 60. So it's just keeping them informed," he said.

By: Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson
120th FW Public Affairs

Off to Camp Runnamucka

The week long camp helps kids with growing up in military families

At first glance, Camp Runnamucka looks like it could be a typical summer camp for kids.

The camp was held at Camp Rotary, located in the Little Belt Mountains near Monarch, Mont., from June 27 through July 1. The site features furnished cabins, a covered activities area, a new bathroom facility and a cooking and dining building.

The campers can participate in games and crafts. They also take part in teambuilding activities that include water balloon volleyball, a survival hike and the chance to talk about common experiences related to their parent's deployment.

Children aged nine through 17 can apply to attend the week-long camp. Priority is given to those whose parents have recently deployed or will soon deploy on a tour of service for their country.

"Military children have unique challenges and situations that a normal camp wouldn't, so we're able to get them together and meet with their peers and see kids that are going through the same things that they are missing—a loved one or being away from a loved one. So it's very nice for them to have that time together," said Sara Cease, the State Youth Coordinator for the Montana National Guard and the Director of Camp Runnamucka.

This year, 72 campers and 15 junior counselors attended the camp. The children attend camp based on their parent's membership in the Montana National Guard and the active duty services, but there is no service rivalry present, such as promoting Air Force blue or Army green.

"It's all about the kids and bringing them some good activities.

There's no color, other than the good old red, white and blue," said Holly Wick, the 120th Fighter Wing Airman and Family Readiness Program Manager, and the Camp Advisor now serving her fourth year at the summer camp.

Twenty Montana National Guard service members or the spouses of service members volunteered to work as staff members at the camp, leading activities and workshops and serving as cabin parents. The volunteers also included a medic from the Army National Guard and several Air National Guard cooks.

Staff Sgt. Eric Giskaas is a member of the 120th Fighter Wing and volunteered to serve as a cabin parent during the week-long camp. This is his fourth year volunteering for the camp he once attended as a youth.

"I remembered how much fun I had and how much fun all of the adults had made it. I really wanted to contribute back to the camp that I had experienced. I wanted all of the kids to experience the same kind of fun that I had," said Sergeant Giskaas.

A camp highlight was the fly-in of two Army National Guard OH-58 Kiowa helicopters that landed in camp to give the children an opportunity to see the aircraft close up and to share the positive message of staying drug free. The fly-in was organized as part of the Montana National Guard's Drug Demand Reduction program.

The campers also learn about community service by making tables, benches and bat houses that will be left behind

as improvements to the camp.

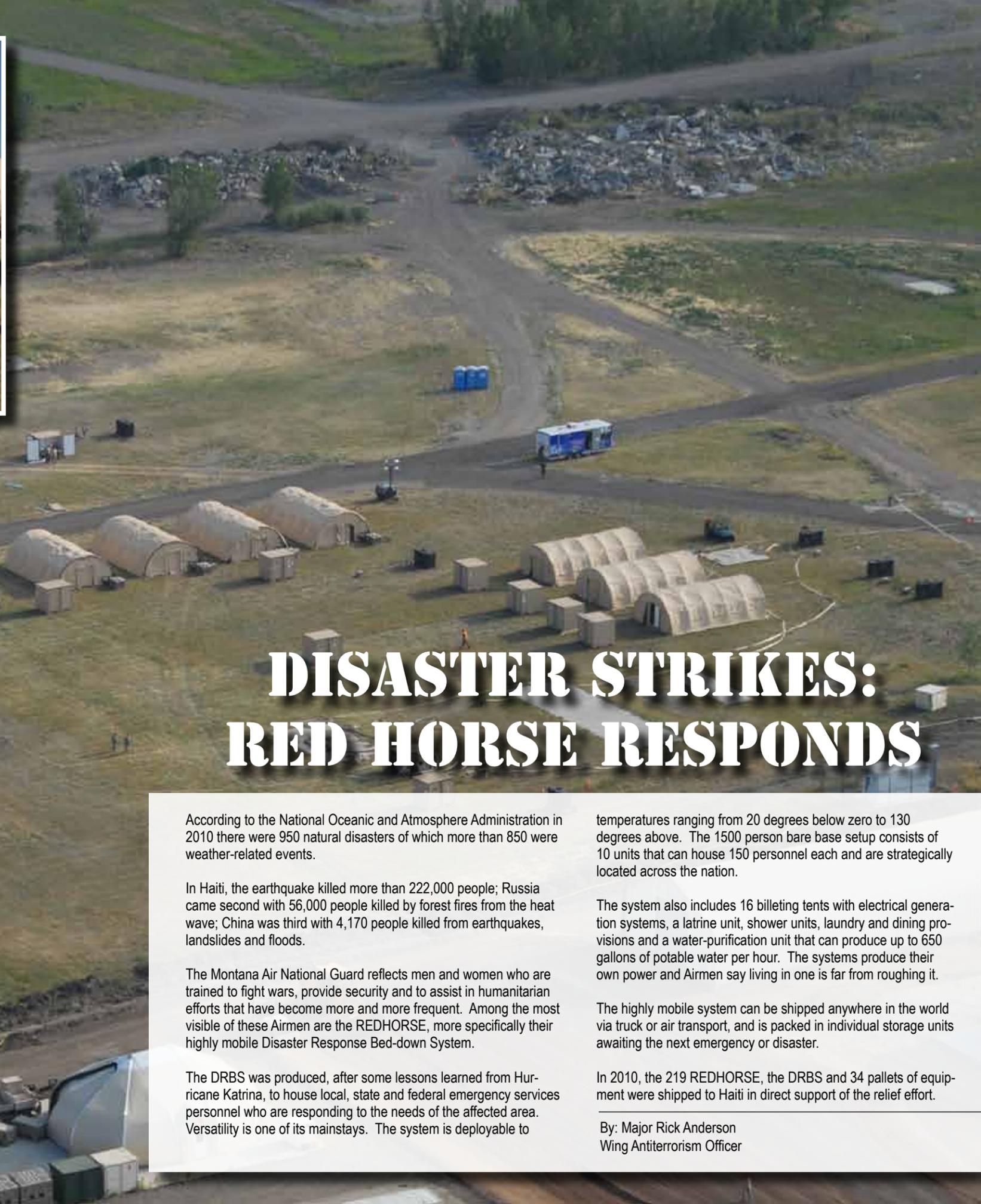
"It's a win-win for all of us. They stay here at the camp, so the kids get to learn about community service and giving to others too, because so many people give to them as a military family," said Wick.

By: Senior Master Sergeant Eric Peterson
120th FW Public Affairs



TOP: Brig. Gen. Joel Cusker leads the campers in a cheer at Camp Runnamucka, located in the Little Belt Mountains near Monarch, Mont. The week-long summer camp is organized to serve the children of Montana Army and Air National Guard and active duty personnel. BOTTOM: Lt. Col. Garth Scott discusses the operation of a OH-58 Kiowa helicopter at Camp Runnamucka. U.S. Air Force photos by Senior Master Sgt. Eric Peterson.





DISASTER STRIKES: RED HORSE RESPONDS

According to the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration in 2010 there were 950 natural disasters of which more than 850 were weather-related events.

In Haiti, the earthquake killed more than 222,000 people; Russia came second with 56,000 people killed by forest fires from the heat wave; China was third with 4,170 people killed from earthquakes, landslides and floods.

The Montana Air National Guard reflects men and women who are trained to fight wars, provide security and to assist in humanitarian efforts that have become more and more frequent. Among the most visible of these Airmen are the REDHORSE, more specifically their highly mobile Disaster Response Bed-down System.

The DRBS was produced, after some lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, to house local, state and federal emergency services personnel who are responding to the needs of the affected area. Versatility is one of its mainstays. The system is deployable to

temperatures ranging from 20 degrees below zero to 130 degrees above. The 1500 person bare base setup consists of 10 units that can house 150 personnel each and are strategically located across the nation.

The system also includes 16 billeting tents with electrical generation systems, a latrine unit, shower units, laundry and dining provisions and a water-purification unit that can produce up to 650 gallons of potable water per hour. The systems produce their own power and Airmen say living in one is far from roughing it.

The highly mobile system can be shipped anywhere in the world via truck or air transport, and is packed in individual storage units awaiting the next emergency or disaster.

In 2010, the 219 REDHORSE, the DRBS and 34 pallets of equipment were shipped to Haiti in direct support of the relief effort.

By: Major Rick Anderson
Wing Antiterrorism Officer

HISTORY Of THE MTANG

1961

From the August 1961 Scorpion archives.

Year Round Field Training

The National Guard Bureau has placed their stamp of approval on our request to conduct the "Montana Plan" or year round field training plan. A comprehensive operations plan will be drawn up in the near future for guidance use of all sections.

Another Tyndall AFB Operation

Approximately 25 airman and 25 officers will participate in another firing exercise at Tyndall, AFB, Florida beginning 20 August 61. The airmen will be there for 15 days, the officers for about 6 days in a stretch with a second group going to Florida about 27 August. The airmen will depart via California NG C-97.

Installations Business Booming

Several projects are now going on to expand facilities of your Air National Guard. Several are near completed and some have just started. A remodeling of Operations briefing room is currently being done. This will include an operations battle control station and complete briefing facilities with sliding blackboard, movie screen, bulletin board, etc.



The News You Can Use

MTANG Combat Dining In

The Top 3 and Junior Enlisted Counsel would like to invite all enlisted members of the Montana Air National Guard to the first ever, MTANG Enlisted Combat Dining In. It will be held on 10 September 2011, 1600-2000 hours in Building 67, Warm Storage. ABUs, BDUs, or DCUs are the only authorized attire. All Airman attending must process through the "Gate-Way" tent and be prepared for battle and an evening full of fun. Chow consists of Pulled pork, beans, and coleslaw. Refreshments will be available.

Cost:

\$5.00 for E-6 - E-9

\$1.00 for E-1 - E-5

Please contact your Chief or Master Sgt. JP Gunter for tickets.



DFAS myPay goes Mobile

myPay, the online pay account management system for all U.S. military personnel, military retirees, and many federal civilian employees, has gone mobile. Now myPay users can check pay statements on the go using a smartphone or other mobile device that has a web browser.

The myPay home page, login, Leave and Earning Statements, and Retiree Account Statements have been optimized for smartphones, and key account information is presented in an easy-to-read format. Here's how it works:

1. Launch your smartphone or other mobile device's web browser.

2. Go to mypay.dfas.mil. Login to myPay using the same Login ID and Password you use on your computer. myPay will automatically detect that you're using a mobile device and load a mobile version of the site.

Help is available at the Customer Care Center, which is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern. The toll-free number is 888.332.7411.

Source: www.dodlive.mil/index.php/2011/07/my-pay-goes-mobile/

One-stop Shop for Guard Members.

The departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have created a one-stop website for Guard members to access and administer their service benefits-related information in a secure manner, said the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. "It's a tool for personal information organization," he said. "The sooner you get in and get up to date, the easier it is for everything to fall into line, especially in the event something unforeseen happens and your family needs information."

Related Links:

www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal



Chiefs Retired Corner

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Steve Lyczewski

RESPECT FOR THE FLAG

I have noticed several times lately that retirees have been uncertain on how to conduct themselves during the passing of the Flag or even during the playing of TAPS at a funeral.

I have copied a section of the US Code for your information. We all served proudly and should continue to respect our Flag and pay respect to our fallen.

4 USC Sec. 9 01/07/2011 -EXPCITE- TITLE 4 - FLAG AND SEAL, SEAT OF GOVERNMENT, AND THE STATES CHAPTER 1 - THE FLAG -HEAD- Sec. 9. Conduct during hoisting, lowering or passing of flag -STATUTE- During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

To update your information, please contact one of the following:

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Steve Lyczewski 406-452-4445

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Mark Giskaas 406-453-3120

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Gary Hajek 406-899-3838

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 a good opportunity for you to recognize your employees or co-workers for all of their hard work.

Public Affairs
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Faces of the Guard

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Technical Sgt. Don Kirby is off to Texas



A 120th Fighter Wing crew chief is taking 13 years of Montana Air National Guard experience to his new position as the Air National Guard liaison for the 17th Training Wing located at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. Tech. Sgt. Don Kirby will be reporting to the active duty training base in June to serve as a point of contact between Air National Guard students and their home base during their technical training in the intelligence and firefighting career fields.

Sergeant Kirby was an active volunteer at the 120th Fighter Wing, serving as a National Guard summer camp counselor, a member of the Honor Guard and a member of the Crash Recovery Team. He also played the part of Santa Claus for the families of MANG members during several wing holiday events.

“The ride was absolutely awesome. I was filled with exhilaration the majority of the flight. I was able to laugh and just enjoy the feeling of the G-forces. Looking at the

beautiful air and the sky, it was sunny and hot up there above the clouds. The total experience was breathtaking,” he said.

What suggestions does he have for the next lucky unit member to be able to fly in the back seat of the F-15?

“I would encourage the next winner of an incentive flight to be confident in the maintenance that is performed on these aircraft, trust in the pilot and remember the important things during the training that they’ll receive. And they’ll have the ride of a lifetime,” he said.

