

# DAKOTA PACK

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD • FALL 2010

## « TRAINING

Firefighters receive real  
world training

## « DEPLOYMENT

A day in the life of SD's  
211th Engineer Company

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**Submissions:** Print and photo submissions of general interest to members of the SDNG, their families, civilian employees, veterans and retirees are invited and encouraged. Please send article and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to: [chad.carlson@us.army.mil](mailto:chad.carlson@us.army.mil), 605.737.6268. Submissions are subject to editing. Electronic submissions are preferred and digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.

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Magazine of the South Dakota Army and Air National Guard

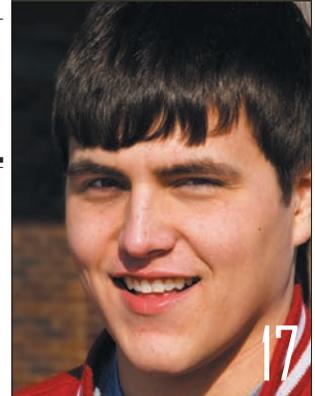


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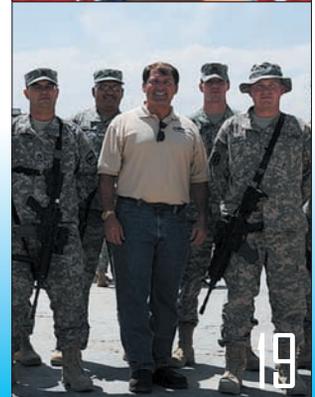
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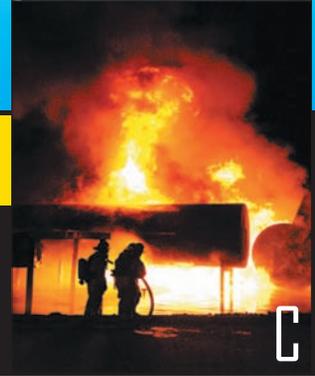
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## On the cover

Military firefighters from Illinois, Massachusetts and South Dakota participate in a firefighting simulation June 14, 2010, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Sam Otto)

## From the Adjutant General...



**Maj. Gen. Steven R. Doohen**

The National Guard of today is drastically different from what it was just a decade ago.

Historically, the National Guard was mobilized as a last resort, used more as an augmentation force. We know that since September 11, 2001, the National Guard has undergone a major transformation, and if it were not for our dedicated men and women in uniform and their families and employers who support them, we could not accomplish our mission.

South Dakota Soldiers and Airmen continue to support the Overseas Contingency Operations as they are deployed to various places around the world. Even in the resource-constrained environment we live in today, we manage to play a significant role in supporting the war fighting efforts in places like Iraq and Afghanistan and ongoing humanitarian missions like the one in Haiti.

You, the Citizen-Soldier and Airman, have stepped up to the many challenges we face serving in uniform.

Our overseas deployments take their toll on the individual, the family and employers alike. Although our readiness remains very high, make sure you don't neglect your personal well-being. Our

most important asset is you, so ensure you are doing all you can to remain a viable and integral part of the South Dakota team.

I expect the demand on our forces will remain high for the foreseeable future, so I ask that you remain prepared as we move forward. Continue to seek opportunities for improvement and adaptation to an ever-changing environment.

The South Dakota National Guard is always ready, always there to accomplish the mission at hand.

I want all of you to know that I am extremely proud of each one of you for your service and sacrifice to our state and nation. I am honored to serve as the Adjutant General for the South Dakota National Guard. Thank you.

Good day!

Steven R. Doohen  
The Adjutant General

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# South Dakota Engineers developing Afghan Army ties

Story by Jan E. Dougherty  
203rd Engineer Battalion

FOB SHARANA, Afghanistan - In the 24 years he has spent in the South Dakota Army National Guard, it is perhaps 1st Sgt. Wade Hofer's most challenging assignment.

But it is also his most potentially rewarding.

Hofer has been tasked with helping develop a unit of the Afghan National Army to perform the same kind of route clearance mission his own company, the 211th Engineers (Sappers), performs every day. And while it hasn't come easy, clearly he sees improvement.

"I've been tasked to train one company in route clearance and basic engineering at FOB Rushmore and here at Sharana," he told me during an interview here in mid-May.

"They have come a long way from day one. Their leadership is beginning to stand up more. They are making progress."

So far, "we've done the basic stuff - patrolling, command wire sweeps, talking to the locals, going through towns," he told me, adding that he has been working with his current ANA platoon since February, via a directive that came down from the highest levels in the chain of command.

Route clearance is a complex mission, requiring a vast amount of training and no small amount of experience in order to achieve success. Moreover, tactics must constantly change, given the enemy's resourcefulness in finding new ways to plant improvised explosive devices, their weapon of choice.

And while Hofer's ANA platoon has a long way to go before it's ready to operate independently, the first sergeant is training them precisely for that day.

"We're trying to get them to do their own route clearance on hard-ball roads, where they can dismount and, therefore, better learn what



**"They have come a long way from day one. Their leadership is beginning to stand up more. They are making progress."**

**-1st Sgt. Wade Hofer**

they need to be doing," he said. "They would like to run their own Route Clearance Patrols. They will plan and run missions in front of us. They will provide the lead and we will follow."

On a recent mission the developmental progress of the ANA engineer unit was evident. The patrol encountered an IED detonation that missed the military convoy but struck a civilian transport vehicle not far behind, causing minimal damage. Hofer advised the platoon as it moved in to help civilian authorities control the area and conduct an investigation.

At the end of the mission, there were areas where the ANA platoon needed much improvement. And it was clear the platoon, given its

capabilities, wasn't ready yet to operate on its own.

But it was also evident that, with more training and experience, they would be capable of learning the complexities of route clearance operations in an environment as fertile with IEDs as their own country.

"I'd like to see them get equipment so they can run their own RCPs," Hofer said, reflecting on the day's mission. "They need to be kicked out of the nest and start doing it."

As U.S. and coalition forces continue to battle the Taliban-led insurgency, they are also putting a great amount of effort in the training and development of Afghanistan's own military and security forces.

It's a monumental task to rebuild an army shattered by years of internal conflict, and this route-clearance preparation operation is but one moving part in the machinery of progress. Citizen-Soldiers like Hofer are instrumental in accomplishing this vital part of NATO's military strategy in Afghanistan.

## ENLISTED SPOTLIGHT

NAME: Todd Grabow  
UNIT: 82nd CST  
AGE: 35  
FULL-TIME POSITION:  
1st Sgt.  
HOMETOWN: Hill City  
FAMILY: Wife, Tessa;  
Daughter, Tia, 15;  
Twin Boys, Tate and  
Tanner, 2  
PETS: Dog (Pepper),  
Cat (Duchy)



**1st Sgt. Todd Grabow**

**WHEN I'M NOT AT WORK YOU'LL FIND ME:** Pulling security on the perimeter of my home to keep the high school boys away from my daughter and keeping my twin boys from destroying everything they come in contact with.

**THE ONE THING I TREASURE THE MOST:** A shadow box from my late father containing his jump wings, dog tags and Airborne memorabilia from the 101st.

**HEROES:** Steve Prefontaine, world class runner who died in a car accident at age 24. Those around him always told him he wasn't big enough or fast enough. He defied the odds and proved them all wrong.

**NOBODY KNOWS THIS ABOUT ME BUT:** I am pretty good at table tennis. I am the 1995 doubles champion at Black Hills State University. Ping-pong was possibly the reason I was on academic probation during my 1st semester of college.

**THE ONE PERSON (ALIVE OR NOT) I'D MOST LIKE TO HAVE OVER FOR DINNER & WHY:** Maj. Dick Winters, who was portrayed in the book/movie Band of Brothers. His leadership style and philosophy is something that I try to emulate.

**IF HE/SHE ISN'T AVAILABLE:** Gordon Ramsey from Hell's Kitchen. I would make him prepare the meal and yell at him the whole time.

**IF I WIN THE LOTTERY TOMORROW:** I would invest in passive portfolios containing income producing real estate, selected value stocks, inflation-protected bonds which will in turn generate enough passive income to support my dream retirement lifestyle...yeah right! I would donate a substantial amount to cancer research, as this disease has affected many that have been close to me.

**THE BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT:** "You are entrusted to make good decisions on the spot, so make the decision and deal with the consequences if that decision turns out to be the wrong one."

**THE BEST ADVICE I HAVE TO GIVE:** Mistakes are painful when they happen, but years later a collection of mistakes is called "experience" and that's what will lead us to success.

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# Ammunition hits the road

Story by Spc. Jacqueline M. Guerrero  
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BLUE GRASS ARMY DEPOT, Ky. – Soldiers from the 740th Transportation Company, Milbank, were filled with high morale as their bus left Crane Army Ammunition Activity’s (CAAA) tent city to prepare for their return to the Blue Grass Army Depot for their next mission during their two-week training, June 2010.

“These are my boys,” said 1st Lt. Eliann Carr of the 740th TC.

The 740th conducts the transportation of live munitions with an M-915A3 line haul truck tractor from here to CAAA, Ind., during their extended combat training at Operation Golden Cargo 2010.

Golden Cargo is the latest in a series of annual training operations sponsored by Joint Munitions Command and executed by reserve component units. The 310th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, an Army Reserve unit located in Indianapolis, is leading the operation.

“Our mission is to transport munitions to and from Crane Army Ammunition Activity,” said Capt. Robin Flint, commander of the 740th. She said that this mission is vital training for her Soldiers because a wartime situation would require this type of mission.

“This mission helps the ammunition depots complete their mission and at the same time provides training for theater operations,” said 1st Sgt. Douglass Borchert of the 740th TC.

The drivers transport approximately 1,200 short tons of ammunition every other day making it a 200 mile trip daily, said Flint.

“This is a really good exercise for the Soldiers in our company,” said Flint. “This mission is something that we could very possibly do in a wartime situation. The coordination here at BGAD, went smooth with our support assets and the civilians helping us with our loads have been great.”



Photo by Spc. Jacqueline M. Guerrero

The 740th Transportation Company of Milbank, conducts a convoy to Blue Grass Army Depot from Crane Army Ammunitions Activity June 12. The purpose of the convoy was to transport ammunition from one depot to another while providing National Guard Soldiers required annual training.

## Four S.D. officers complete U.S. Army War College



Courtesy Photo

South Dakota Army National Guard's Lt. Col. Bill Freidel, Lt. Col. John Holter, Col. Jeff Marlette and Lt. Col. Marshall Michels graduated from the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle, Pa. Marlette graduated from the ten-month resident course June 12, while Freidel, Holter and Michels graduated from the 26-month distance learning course July 23. The U.S. Army War College prepares selected military, civilian and international leaders for the responsibilities of strategic leadership in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational environment. The course focuses on developing senior leader competencies necessary for success in a contemporary operational environment. Completion of this course gives the student a master's degree in strategic studies and makes the Soldier eligible for general officer grades.

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## OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

NAME: Robert (Bob) DeJong  
 UNIT: 139th BSB  
 AGE: 44  
 FULL-TIME POSITION: Counterdrug Coordinator - SONG  
 HOMETOWN: I grew up in Clear Lake, SD.  
 FAMILY: Wife, Kelly; Stepchildren, Macy, McKale, Jennings



Maj. Robert Dejong

PETS: We have two small Munsterlanders, Gus and Hondo

WHEN I'M NOT AT WORK YOU'LL FIND ME: In the fall I try to hunt pheasants as often as I can. My entire family and I are devoted SDSU Jackrabbit fans so we try to attend as many sporting events as possible. I am the type of person that needs to be doing something; idle time is not my thing.

THE ONE THING I TREASURE THE MOST: Getting together with my entire family for an event like a holiday and playing cards, talking smart, having a huge meal, etc.

HEROES: I really don't have one specific hero, but if I did, I think it would be Brett Favre. He has overcome a lot of obstacles in his life and still persevered (i.e. an addiction to prescription drugs, wife's cancer, being over 40 years old and still being an awesome quarterback!)

NOBODY KNOWS THIS ABOUT ME BUT: I am pretty much a softy when it comes to kids and I can play a mean game of pinochle.

THE ONE PERSON (ALIVE OR NOT) I'D MOST LIKE TO HAVE OVER FOR DINNER & WHY: President Reagan. I thought he had this way of making the citizens of this country feel safe and proud to be Americans.

IF HE/SHE ISN'T AVAILABLE: Joe Mauer, catcher for the Minnesota Twins

IF I WIN THE LOTTERY TOMORROW: I would save money to ensure my family would live comfortably and debt free. The remaining money would be donated to establish an SDSU Jackrabbit Scholarship and to a cancer organization called "Max's Ring of Fire" which is a neourblastoma children's cancer research foundation founded by my cousin, Melissa, and her husband, Andy, in memory of their son, Max.

THE BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT: Was from my mother: "Treat others the way you would like to be treated and no matter how bad things seem, they could always be worse".

THE BEST ADVICE I HAVE TO GIVE: Be yourself, and it's OK to be different. Live your life to the fullest today, because remember, you can sleep when you're dead.

# Army, Air Guard maintain end strength

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON - Both the Army and Air National Guard missed their recruiting goals for June, but their end-strength numbers were still within congressionally mandated limits, Guard officials said.

In June, the Army Guard met 94 percent of its monthly recruiting goal with 4,544 accessions, while the Air Guard reached 99 percent of its goal with 501 accessions.

"This is good news for the Guard and the American people as it demonstrates that our nation and its allies can continue to depend on a strong and ready force of Citizen-Soldiers despite the high volume of continuing foreign and domestic demands placed on the National Guard," said Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard.

As of June 30, the Army Guard was just shy of 363,000 Soldiers, which is about 4,700 Soldiers above its congressionally mandated end strength of 358,200.

However, end-strength numbers are authorized to be almost 3 percent above that

mandated limit, Guard officials said.

Recruiting numbers in both the Army and Air Guard that were set well before this fiscal year will continue to be adjusted throughout the remainder of the fiscal year to maintain authorized end strength, Guard officials said.

"We set a goal to bring this many people in, but we may not need to bring that many people in because people aren't leaving," said Air Force Col. Mary Salcido, chief of recruiting and retention for the Air Guard.

High retention rates have also contributed to the adjusted recruiting goals.

"The ability of our leaders at the company level to impact a Soldier's decision to remain in the ARNG contributes to our ability to have formations that are available to defend this nation's freedom and protect its borders," said Army Lt. Col. Ron Walls, chief of the Army Guard's strength maintenance division. Salcido agreed that keeping experienced Airmen in the service translates to a better qualified force.

"The nature of the National Guard is a more mature force," she said. "That means we're a better force, because we've been around the block. We know it, we've done it, we've fixed it before, and we're not going to make the same mistakes."

But the challenge, said Salcido, is balancing that experience with the needs of a changing mission set.

"As far as force management goes, when you change missions, then you see the leveling of that because the older guys go out, because they don't want to retrain," she said.

As a result, recruiting and retention efforts constantly change to meet those needs.

"We have our challenges, but we're doing pretty good," said Salcido. "We're very proactive with seeing what's out there first and changing the way we do business to better meet the needs and challenges we face."

"The future looks great," she said. "We're making end-strength and that's the ultimate goal."

## John L. Levitow Award winner

Story by Master Sgt. Sara Hilmoe  
114th Fighter Wing

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. - Master Sgt. Casey E. Bullis, a Watertown native and a member of the 114th Operations Group of the South Dakota Air National Guard, distinguished herself as the John L. Levitow Award winner for Class 10D of the Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., July 21.

Bullis is one of only a handful of Air National Guard members in the academy's history to be awarded this honor.

She received it due to her outstanding academic achievement, leadership and communication skills, and peer votes while attending the seven-week course.

The Levitow award is the pinnacle of achievement for enlisted professional military education in the United States Air Force.

"It's been years since we've had an Air National Guard Levitow winner at the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy. This

class had 457 graduates, 30 Air National Guard Airmen, but only one Levitow," said Command Chief of the Air National Guard, Chief Master Sgt. Chris Muncy. "We couldn't be prouder."

The mission of the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy is to educate senior enlisted leaders by effectively delivering professional military education designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of senior NCOs while reinforcing a war fighter's ethos.

"I am incredibly honored by this experience and the corresponding responsibility. I look forward to continuing my lifelong education," said Bullis.

Bullis is a full-time Active Guard Reserve Knowledge Operations Manager for the Operations Group of the South Dakota Air National Guard and resides in Tea with her husband, Michael, and two sons, Isaac, 3, and Samuel, 18 months.



Master Sgt. Casey E. Bullis proudly displays the plaque she received as the recipient of the John L. Levitow Award for Class 10D of the Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., July 21.

## McKinley tells Guard enlisted force to prepare for prolonged overseas role

Story by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ST. LOUIS - The National Guard likely will continue to play a significant role in overseas contingency operations for the foreseeable future, the chief of the National Guard Bureau said.

"Just like we have in Kosovo for 14 years and the Sinai [and] the Horn of Africa, I think the National Guard will be asked to stay longer ... and give [our] civilian-acquired skills to ... emerging government," Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley told about 1,800 Guard members attending the 39th annual conference of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS).

"The things that we bring from our civilian occupations will mean that the National Guard will be in huge demand for years to come," McKinley said.

During a July visit to Iraq and Afghanistan, McKinley said he was struck by the contrast between the two countries.

"What I ... felt in Iraq ... is the Iraqis are [on] the verge of taking control of their own destiny and their own country by forming a government and moving out," he said.

This time, as McKinley rode from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad to the airport, something had changed from previous visits: Security along a route once infamous for violence was provided entirely by the Iraqi military.

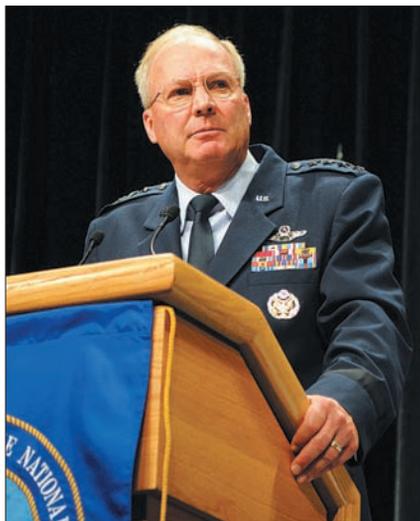
"It gave me a sense of hope that ... this country has the potential to turn a corner and to make a stand on its own and to determine its own destination," he said.

In Afghanistan, McKinley found a hot war - and a surge in which the Army National Guard is playing a key role.

"There's going to be some pretty rough days and months ahead," he said. "Two vastly different theaters, but similar circumstances in which the men and women who make up our National Guard are contributing greatly on the battlefield."

McKinley's recent trip in theater ended with a visit with wounded warriors at Landstuhl, Germany - a visit that underlined the true sacrifices Guard members are making.

"We're going to be at this for a very, very long time," McKinley told conferees from an association of more than 85,000 members, which promotes the status, welfare and



Gen. Craig McKinley

professionalism of the enlisted personnel of the Army and Air National Guard.

"The only thing that can take this nation down is [loss of] our will to fight and to remain free and to remain strong. ... Do not give in to those who would say that the American will to stay free and remain the beacon of hope is waning, to those who say that the era of American independence and potentially our role in the world as the world's superpower is waning.

"Because on those young men and women's shoulders rest our hopes and our future, and I have a great deal of confidence in them that we will get it right."

All Guard members - from McKinley to the newest enlistee - stand on the shoulders of our predecessors and mentors, the 26th chief of the National Guard Bureau said.

"None of us go this route alone," he said. Each state and territory and the District of Columbia, "For decades - for centuries - have given their young men and women for service to their state and to their nation."

McKinley said the time he spends with enlisted Soldiers and Airmen is inspiring.

"For anyone who doubts that this nation is committed to remaining strong and being the beacon of hope for the rest of the world, all you have to do is look in the faces of these young men and women," he said.

The National Guard is at a historic peak of excellence, he said.

"With the leadership of the adjutants general - working for the governors - we have the finest, most talented, most capable, most resilient, most battle-tested National Guard, arguably, in the history of the United States of America," he said. "One of the finest, most well-trained, most well-led, most inspired forces that we could ask for."

Because when the nation calls out the Guard, it calls out America. "Much of the reason this nation is so strongly behind its armed forces and what it is doing is because we've called out the Guard," McKinley said. "We've involved all of our 3,300 communities around our states and territories and the District, and citizens understand what's at stake."

Recognition of servicemembers' sacrifices - regardless of politics - is in stark contrast to the Vietnam era, McKinley said, and the implementation of the Total Force concept is one reason why.

"It's a different Guard," he said. "The National Guard had a different role ... 'One weekend a month. Two weeks in the summer.' How distant and remote those phrases are, but, for many of us, that was our National Guard.

"We had under utilized equipment, equipment that was old, not serviceable. We weren't able to give to the Soldiers and Airmen the kinds of training that made them full-up. But today ... our voices are heard not only in the Pentagon but in the White House, and that's a significant achievement that we can all be very, very proud of."

A newly formed council of governors has amplified the Guard's voice among elected and appointed civilian leaders.

"What's at stake very simply is the quality of life, the liberty and freedom that we all enjoy, that which many of us have given our finest hours to," McKinley said.

"Less than one percent of the American population serves in uniform and so when you look at the 460,000 National Guard men and women and see them at the gas station, you see them at the shopping mall, you have to say that this conflict - ... the struggle against radical extremism - is going to be fought and won on the backs of young men and women who are firmly supported by the citizens of their communities."

# Tour de Kota team logs 478 miles

Story by Master Sgt. Sara Hilmoe  
114th Fighter Wing

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. - A blur of red and blue bikers whiz by onlookers of the 2010 Tour de Kota.

Airmen, spouses and friends of the 114th Fighter Wing made up the 14 riders on the six-day tour, June 6-11. Their route encompassed South Dakota and included parts of Iowa and North Dakota covering more than 478 miles, primarily through backroads and byways.

The long journey culminated months of training and encouragement from each other to get ready for the tour.

It was greatly needed as day one brought excessive headwinds coupled with many hills over the first 82 miles.

It challenged not only their strength and endurance, but faith that they would make it.

"We were fighting 30-plus-mile per hour winds for most of the first day," said Ariel Keating.

Keating's friend, Liz Johnson, who rode with her agreed the conditions were challenging.

Arriving in Tea, S.D., the first day Johnson said, "I got here and thought I could keep going, but then I thought, 'I don't need to be a hero.'"

Marcus Brandenburg volunteered to help the riders by driving the Air National Guard truck and trailer with their gear throughout the trip and kept the riders in good spirits.

"I stopped every seven to ten miles for them to get water or an energy drink," Brandenburg said. "It was a lot of fun. People were asking about the [Air] Guard, which is great."

The riders appreciated the help and Brandenburg even rode some of the miles on a bike. Despite crazy weather conditions throughout the week, nothing kept the riders from having a good time and finishing strong.

Overall, the annual event was a great success.



Courtesy Photo

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. - Members of the South Dakota Air National Guard Tour de Kota team were; (back row left to right) Kevin Miller, Marcus Brandenburg, Jake Lackas, Jeff Denotter, Ariel Keating, Tim Wenzel, Russ Walz, Carey Haugen, Liz Johnson, Bruce Lee, (front row left to right) Brian Voges, Gail Punt, Al Punt, Troy Erlandson and Mike Haugen.



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# Region 6 Best Warrior Competition

## Two Soldiers represent state in Alaska

Story by DC Chad Carlson  
Public Affairs Office

Sgt. Chasity Oswald and Spc. Andrew Bogenrief represented the South Dakota Army National Guard in the Region 6 Best Warrior Competition at Fort Richardson, Alaska June 11-13.

Oswald, representing South Dakota's noncommissioned officers, and Bogenrief, representing South Dakota's enlisted Soldiers, made it through three levels of competition leading up to the Region 6 competition, which included company, battalion and state level boards.

The three-day competition was designed to test Soldiers' leadership skills, fitness and knowledge on a wide range of Army information and field skills.

The competition included a mile-and-a-half obstacle course with 13 different obstacles, from climbing ropes to confidence ladders.

Oswald, now deployed to Afghanistan with the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, said this was her favorite part of the competition. The sense of accomplishment she felt after completing each obstacle would motivate her to keep pushing on to the next obstacle.

"I have never done anything more challenging in my military career," said Oswald. "I had a lot of fun and even though it was a competition, everyone helped out and continued to support each other."

Bogenrief, a culinary arts student at Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minn., agreed the obstacle course was challenging and added it was very physical and brutal on his body.

Bogenrief was a Private First Class during the warrior competition until recently when he was promoted to the rank of Specialist.

"It was the best of the best competing and it was nice to see what other states have to offer," said Bogenrief.

"I think it's good for him and the unit," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Peery, 740th Transportation Company, 1st Platoon noncommissioned officer in charge. "We've only had one or two Soldiers in the state make it as far as he had in this competition. He has a can do attitude, he's a hard worker and the first one to get the job done. This experience will take him far on his road to becoming an NCO."

Oswald, a native of Viborg, said she always strives to do her best and it is accomplishments like this that make her realize how much her hard work has paid off.

"During my short time as commander, I have learned that Sgt. Oswald is an invaluable resource for Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the entire 196th MEB," said Capt. Michael Webb, commander of HHC, 196th. "She is an extremely hard worker who is very proficient in her area. When I have a question, she always has the answer and is instrumental in keeping this company running smoothly."

**"This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I was proud to serve my state."**

**-Sgt. Chasity Oswald**





Sgt. Oswald checks her target to examine where the bullet holes hit to help her determine how to adjust the sights on her weapon.

Photo by Sgt. Karen Person



Photo by Sgt. Karen Person

Sgt. Oswald focuses in on her target by looking through the sight at the firing range.



Photo by Sgt. Karen Person

Spc. Bogenrief is watched closely as he does push-ups during the physical fitness test during the Warrior Competition.

# Group supports coalition troops

Story by Sgt. Matthew Nedved  
Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

For U.S. and coalition forces stationed in Kabul, executing their mission to support the counterinsurgency strategy is key to future stability and security for the nation's capital. Ensuring they have what they need to do the job is key for members of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard.

As the new Kabul Base Cluster Installation Command, the 196th provides sustainment support for nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces stationed throughout 11 military bases in the city.

One of the main efforts for this support comes from the 196th's base support group at Camp Eggers. These Soldiers provide support for tenant units on the camp in multiple areas; from administration and logistical support to building oversight, maintenance and service contracts.

The 16-member BSG team is working with military forces, local Afghan workers and civilian contractors to facilitate daily operations on Camp Eggers. They also work closely with the other camps within the KBC to help sustain their on-going missions.

"One thing we are looking to do is take contracts throughout the KBC and streamline them into one master contract in order to make it more cost efficient," said Lt. Col. Todd Goldammer, BSG Eggers officer in charge.

One challenge for the Camp

Eggers staff is addressing the vast number of personnel on camp. With the base originally configured to support a population of approximately 1,300, finding room to accommodate the more than 2,000 people currently there, with the existing infrastructure, presents a bigger challenge.

"There is a constant flow of

**"Trying to stand up the Afghan forces and train them so they can protect their country and take over - that is the main mission here in Afghanistan and for us."**

-Lt. Col. Todd Goldammer

people in and out of this little facility. We have two major roads and it looks like New York City on a busy day when things are active," said Goldammer, of Sioux Falls, "It's a lot of moving parts, everybody is going everywhere and we need to make sure it's managed effectively."

Although Camp Eggers is located in a heavily populated area of Kabul with a large amount of traffic, access to the camp is very restricted and heavily guarded. There are many levels of force protection from private security contractors to U.S. and coalition forces. Goldammer says this is important for peace of mind for troops stationed there. Although the force protection is strong,



Courtesy photo

(From left) Maj. Troy Ness, 1st Lt. Lucas Scheibe and Lt. Col. Todd Goldammer, all members of the 16-member base support group for Camp Eggers, in Kabul, Afghanistan. All three Soldiers are deployed with the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard.

he says there is still room for improvement.

"I want to improve base force protection measures because of the increase in troop living and working spaces. We need these things to ensure our servicemembers have the best protection possible," said Goldammer.

Another challenge the Eggers team is working on is finding room in the confined camp area. There is a steady flow of new troops arriving on the Eggers compound. With little office space and limited living areas; Soldiers are living three to an area in order to make room for everyone, with some sleeping in tents or other temporary facilities.

"We are still seeing a surge of new residents coming in here. We are trying to build as quickly as we can to accommodate them," Goldammer said. "Having the right amount of space is important to the service-members, so it's important to us to set it in place as soon as we can."

Currently, 10 building contracts on Camp Eggers are under way, with another 15 more waiting to begin.

One of the main goals for Camp Eggers is to increase the size of the facility in order to expand the mission, which includes such things as teaching the local Afghans to read and write.

"More office space would make things more comfortable for all of the tenants. We are looking at spaces for more gyms, but that means we are taking away from something else," Goldammer said. "Our goal by the time we leave is the camp will be built up and more comfortable for the tenants, along with improved force protection, more defenses and smoother access in for visitors."

The Eggers BSG is also hoping to start integrating the local Afghan workers and the Afghan National Army alongside U.S. and coalition forces - providing them with better training and a full understanding of their job when they are ready to take over base responsibilities when American forces leave.

"Trying to stand up the Afghan forces and train them so they can protect their country and take over - that is the main mission here in Afghanistan and for us," said Goldammer.

# Rachel Maddow Show broadcasts live from Camp Phoenix

Story by Sgt. Rebecca Linder  
Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs



Photos by Sgt. Rebecca Linder

It's not common when TV stars, celebrities or even news hosts come to a war zone, but Afghanistan was in for a treat when Rachel Maddow, the host of "The Rachel Maddow Show" on MSNBC, broadcast her show live July 7 and 8 from Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Maddow and her crew traveled around different parts of Afghanistan for nearly a week to report on the war effort and talk with servicemembers about their mission here. The show chose Camp Phoenix as a prime location in the capital to report the stories they covered during their visit.

Maddow is well known for her liberal viewpoint on news, but after watching her show, one Soldier had a different impression of her war coverage.

"I thought she was very genuine in her approach and her views," said Lt. Col. Andy Gerlach, support operations officer for the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard.

Gerlach not only had the opportunity to watch part of the live show but also visited with Maddow after the show.

"I was really impressed with her knowledge of not only the military, but also Afghanistan. She has a really good understanding of military operations, the importance of it and the political aspects of the mission here," he said.

Maddow traveled to different cities throughout Afghanistan including Kabul and Kandahar and learned about the military's counterinsurgency strategy of gaining the support of the Afghans by helping them develop governance, security and a partnership with U.S. forces.

"She has a good grasp of the military and the Taliban and she knows what the Taliban is trying to do in terms of controlling the hearts and minds of the people. But she also talked about our COIN doctrine and

**Rachel Maddow of "The Rachel Maddow Show" interviews Staff Sgt. Robert Schmidt, a member of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, July 7. Schmidt, a former Marine and a highway patrolman, is a team leader for the 196th Security Force team stationed at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan.**

that we are trying to do the same thing," said Gerlach. "She understands that this isn't only a military operation, but also grasps all the aspects of the people; including civilian and political aspects."

During one of the live broadcasts, Rachel hosted International Security Assistance Force Command Sgt. Maj. Michael T. Hall, where they talked about Afghan security forces and if they will be ready to take over the responsibility from U.S. forces on the expected drawdown date of July 2011.

"We will be here as long as we need to be to be able to support them," said Hall. "There needs to be mutual trust between the Afghan and U.S. forces."

Although the U.S. plans on being here for another year, "The confidence of Afghan soldiers is at a confidence level I've never seen before," said Hall.

After traveling around Afghanistan for a week, Rachel and her show have come and gone. However, she said she plans on playing more footage of her journeys in Afghanistan on her show.

"The show was a success," said Capt. Anthony Deiss, director of public affairs for the 196th Public Affairs section, who helped coordinate the set up for the show. "It was a great opportunity to work with Rachel and her crew. She was very appreciative, thankful and supportive for our efforts in Afghanistan."

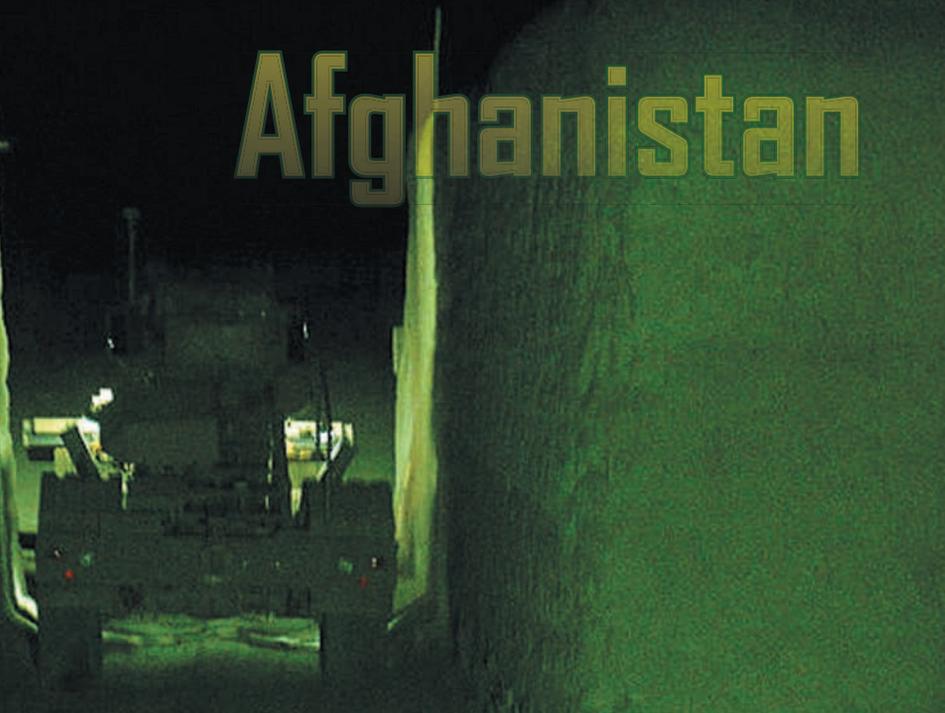
# 211TH COMBAT ENGINEERS

Story by Sgt. Jan E. Dougherty  
203rd Engineer Battalion

For crews of Second Platoon, 211th Engineer Company (Sappers), South Dakota Army National Guard – the “Big Dogs,” as they are called – the trip here was as monotonous as it was long.

Assembling at FOB Sharana before sunrise, Second Platoon members and their interpreter, Habib (not his real name), gathered in cool temperatures under a clear, deep purple pre-dawn Afghan sky for their mission brief.

## Afghanistan



It has become a familiar process since first taking up their route clearance mission in November: prepare their trucks for combat, receive a brief that spells out the dangers that lie ahead of them, and then mount up – always without question or complaint.

And while their role here – finding IEDs, or improvised explosive devices, buried along the roads they patrol – has not gotten any easier since they first arrived after mobilization training at Fort McCoy, Wis., as part of the 203rd Engineer Battalion, Missouri Army National Guard, their ability to perform their mission has vastly improved.

But no amount of training and improvement is a guarantee that somewhere, sometime, in some place a resourceful enemy won't find a way to strike.

And on a recent mission, the Big Dogs were reminded of why they are here.

### WILDERNESS

It is remote and isolated, to be sure. Indeed, the patch of Afghanistan where the Second Platoon patrolled recently might best be described as “The Wilderness.” Rural and desolate, this outpost in the southern portion of Paktika Province represents, by the presence of a contingent of U.S. troops, a guarantee to the region's scattered

settlements that NATO hasn't forgotten about them.

But getting here is no picnic. Much of the route is primitive and uncomfortable. And, on the first day of their mission, windy conditions kicked up so much hazy dust that it choked crews inside their vehicles and made visibility extremely difficult.

Still, some found reason for optimism and reassurance.

“I feel better with the helicopters overhead,” said Sgt. First Class Jon Albers of Madison, when speaking of the two Apache gunships that provided overhead route security for the convoy for much of the mission. Nevertheless, Albers, accustomed to the ambiguity and unpredictable nature of the enemy, reflected on the challenge of this particular mission.

He said the platoon hadn't been down this route in some time, and “you just never know when or where” the enemy would concentrate. The route could be littered with IEDs or it could be clear of them,” he noted ominously.

The crews pulled into Kushamond in late afternoon after a bruising, battering ride in their MRAPs. The wind was blowing the dust in sheets and the Big Dogs struggled to shield themselves from it. So strong was the wind, in fact, most of the Velcro-style window flaps on their assigned sleeping tent wouldn't hold.

The incessant thrashing of the flaps was noisy and distracting, but crews seemed to ignore it as they slowly filed into the tent and each chose a dust-covered cot in which to drop off assault packs and spread out sleeping bags.

### WELCOME SHOWERS

Second Platoon had no pressing duties to attend to on the second day of their mission, so many took advantage of the opportunity to sleep in.

Others, perhaps accustomed to getting up at an earlier hour, rose and dressed, some heading off to the chow hall, while still others found the showers. Cramped and dirty, the small white conexes that served as the showers for the small outpost were nonetheless welcome; the water was at least hot.

By mid-morning everyone had risen, showered and had chow, the majority performed various maintenance duties for the trip home to FOB Sharana the next day. Afterward, the men of the Big Dog platoon relaxed – with a game of cards, a book or magazine, or an additional nap.

In the early afternoon, however – perhaps around 1 p.m. or so – several of the napping crews were jolted suddenly from their racks by the sound of a crashing boom which, in the initial seconds sounded like an explosion



within the compound. In reality, it was the sound of one of the base's 155 mm howitzers, conducting live-fire exercises.

"It wouldn't surprise me if we didn't have a few of them (IEDs) waiting for us on the way back," Albers said.

### STARRY MORNING

The morning of the third day began early, with crews being "on the trucks" well before dawn. The Big Dogs' mission, besides simply getting back "home" to Sharana, would be to clear the route for a combat logistics convoy filled with vital supplies for the base and much-needed parts for vehicles.

Crews huddled around Master Sgt. John Dornbusch of Wessington Springs, the convoy's commander, for the traditional brief.

"Intel says there could be some IEDs along the first part of the route, but probably not past that," Dornbusch said. "Still, we need to pay attention the entire way."

The brief concluded, Second Platoon mounted up and, once communications checks were performed between vehicles, they got the convoy set and ready to depart well before their scheduled departure time. But instead of being permitted to leave early, Dornbusch, over the radio, informed his unit they were instructed to wait.

Part of the reason for that was the addition of a small infantry detachment that would accompany the convoy for the earliest part of its mission in order to respond to threats and to provide dismounted personnel for questioning or detaining potential enemies.

### "ALL STOP"

An hour later, the convoy got its go-ahead from the tactical operations center. Slowly, methodically, crews guided their vehicles out of the front gate and along the bumpy, dusty route that would take them, eventually, back to their own base.

Early on, crews managed a steady 5-6 miles-per-hour pace - a good clip considering the dilapidated nature of the road on which they traveled. But soon the driver of the lead vehicle - a mine-hunting Husky - called for an "all stop."

"I've got a pretty solid ping on my left panel," said the driver over the radio to Dornbusch. "Send the Buffalo forward to investigate."

The Husky's mine-detection equipment had sounded a strong alarm that something could be hidden in the ground beneath the road, so before the convoy could proceed any further, the source of the ping would have to be examined. That meant that the convoy's largest MRAP, the hulking Buffalo, would have to use

its powerful hydraulic arm to dig through the dirt. It didn't take long for Dufek, who was operating the Buffalo arm, to report a find.

"Looks like we've got a charge about the size of a paint can, wrapped in plastic," he said over the radio. "We'll move it off to the side for explosives ordnance disposal."

As Dufek and the Buffalo team continued to examine the site, a detachment of U.S. and Afghan National Army soldiers converged on a nearby qalat, or living compound, that appeared to be inhabited by a couple of Afghan families. Three men, two women and several children could be seen moving in and out of the qalat as the soldiers arrived to question them about the IED find.

### LONG DAY AHEAD

More than an hour had passed before the convoy was cleared to move forward, but in the meantime, Dornbusch had been informed by the U.S. forces, acting in conjunction with the ANA, that upon questioning one man from the nearby qalat said there were "multiple IEDs" along the route ahead of the Big Dogs. Additional intelligence reported "as many as eight Taliban operatives" in the area as well, and that the convoy should be on guard for indirect fire from small arms, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades.

After the convoy finally began moving again, and within a few hundred yards of the first IED find, the lead Husky again reported a heavy “ping.”

Once more, Dufek’s Buffalo crew moved forward and began investigating Dufek unearthed another IED – this one a homemade explosive.

### SUSPECT SPOTTED

It didn’t take long to find the next IED Boom!

Two trucks up from Albers, perhaps 150 yards, a cloud of smoke and dust shot out from the front of Dornbusch’s vehicle.

Immediately all trucks in the convoy hit their brakes and training and experience took over as camera operators and gunners began scanning for signs the IED might have been “command-detonated” – or detonated by an insurgent with a device rather than by a pressure plate.

For a few seconds, the radio was eerily silent. Then came Dornbusch’s voice: “We’re all okay. Our (mine) rollers took most of the blast.”

A mine roller is a device that is attached to the front of a truck to keep the explosion away from vehicles. A few moments later, an Apache pilot – one of two who had been orbiting above the convoy – said that he had witnessed the explosion and that someone on a motorcycle was racing away from the convoy at high speed.

“We’re tracking him – it looks like he went into a village where there are a lot of other people,” the pilot said. “We’ll see if we can pick him out.”

Meanwhile, Dornbusch’s driver had begun backing away from the detonation area, weaving towards the middle of the convoy as members of the platoon’s wrecker vehicle moved forward to meet him. Once in position, Dornbusch and his crew dismounted and assessed the vehicle’s damage.

“Not a very big one,” Dornbusch observed. “Thank goodness.” The Apache pilot had no luck in locating the suspect he was trying to track.

Mindful that a stopped convoy is a target for IDF, the wrecker crew and other members of the convoy, nonetheless, continued to move quickly to recover the damaged rollers from Dornbusch’s vick, lifting and then securing them with heavy chains. With no suspect in custody and little else to do at the scene, Dornbusch – whose truck was still mission-capable – resumed his position in the convoy and ordered it forward, as gunners and camera operators in all vehicles continuously scanned the area for any sign of insurgent activity.

### READY, ACTION

For the next several hours both Husky vehicles in the convoy reported several more “pings,” each of which took awhile to properly investigate.

With the day’s events thus far, the convoy was more than willing to spend as much time as needed to make sure the coast was clear.

Eventually, though, the pings became fewer and further apart. That allowed the convoy to make up some lost time, though it still wasn’t able to travel quickly because of the poor quality of the road.

Every so often Dornbusch would call for a halt, allowing tired, frazzled and dusty crews a few minutes rest and a chance to get out of their cramped vehicles to stretch their legs and limber up. The breaks were always welcomed, but never long enough. But with the luxury of being everywhere and nowhere at the same time, the enemy is relentless.

As the convoy plodded along, Spc. Jared Franka, of Garrettsen, suddenly broke over the intercom. “Hey – that kid at our 9 o’clock – he’s shooting video!”

The crew quickly looked to their left and saw three young Afghan boys, one of whom was holding up what looked like a small cell phone, pointing it in the direction of the truck.

“Stop the truck!” said Albers, as Thomas planted his boot on the brakes.

From the gunner’s turret, Franka yelled to the boys: “Stop!”

As Albers grabbed his weapon and began to exit the MRAP, the boys turned and ran, the one with the phone device tossing it to the ground as he made his escape.

As Franka covered him with his .50 caliber machine gun, Albers checked his immediate surroundings for signs of roadside bombs. He gingerly made his way over to where the phone lay on the ground, checking the area as he walked.

The boys had run a short distance to a nearby qalat. The boy with the phone stood and watched the crew intently. With the phone in hand, Albers made his way back to his truck and instructed Thomas to move out.

“Is it a phone?” Franka asked.

“Yeah,” Albers answered.

“Are there any pictures on it?”

“I don’t know,” said Albers. “We’ll turn it over (to military intelligence) and let them look through it.”

### PERSPECTIVE

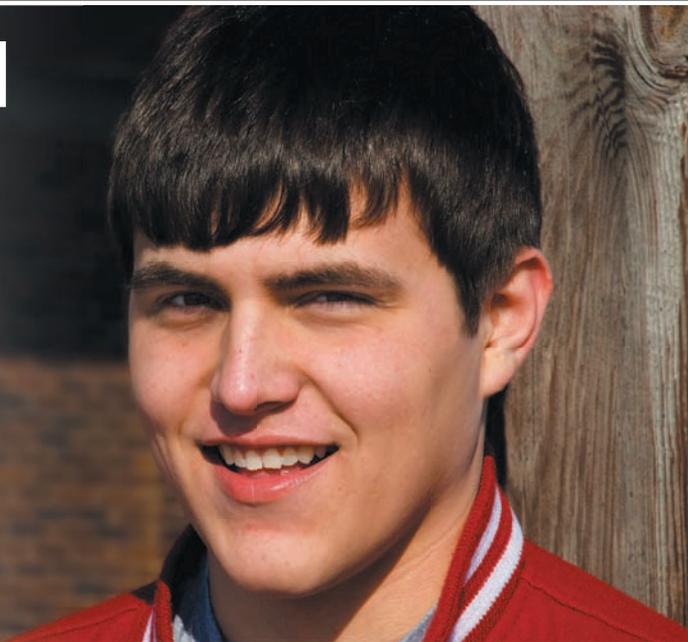
As the day faded into evening and the hot sun overhead sank lower into the horizon, exhausted crews shifted uncomfortably in their seats and continued their journey in darkness. But with Sharana just a few hours away, the encroaching darkness gave way to the light at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

It had been an eventful day, and while nothing happened that the Big Dogs hadn’t experienced before or expected, their mission through “The Wilderness” had not been without loss. Nevertheless, Second Platoon at least managed to keep its sense of humor.

“Well, we almost found all of them,” said Dornbusch over the radio, referring to the IED blast that struck his vehicle earlier in the day. The nervous laughter aside, it was evident that crews were glad to be back.



# Soldier remembered for act of heroism



Story by DC Chad Carlson  
Public Affairs Office

South Dakota Army National Guard's Pvt. Dylan Nelson was recognized for sacrificing his own life while saving two others in Lake Madison, August 8, 2009.

Nelson's family was presented the Soldier's Medal from Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, the assistant adjutant general for the SDARNG, Saturday, June 26, at the Brookings Readiness Center.

Eighteen-year-old Dylan Nelson of Madison was a graduate from Chester High School in 2008 and attended the University of South Dakota. He was also a member of the 115th Network Support Company in the SDARNG out of Brookings.

Dylan was swimming with his younger brother, Andrew, 15, and cousin, Dan, 14, along a sandbar when a strong current pulled the three teenagers under water. After Nelson was able to swim out of the current, he saw that his brother and cousin were still trapped.

He entered the current, saving his cousin, bringing him closer to shore. Danyel McFarlan and Wes Geier, who were nearby on a jet ski, grabbed Dan and brought him the rest of the way to shore. Dylan then went back for his brother.

"By the time the jet skier came back for Andrew, Dylan was gone," said Tim Wallburg, Lake County deputy sheriff, indicating that Nelson most likely succumbed to exhaustion.

The two teens were taken to a nearby hospital and later released. Nelson's body was recovered later that evening.

Gov. Michael Rounds wrote a letter to Chad

**"As parents, there is little we fear more than losing a child; however, I hope you find some comfort knowing Dylan's last actions that day were to do what he could to help save the lives of his brother and cousin, Dylan is truly a South Dakota hero."**

**-Gov. M. Michael Rounds**

Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch presented the Soldier's Medal to Dylan's parents, Chad and Kristi Nelson, June, 26, at the Brookings Readiness Center.

and Kristi Nelson of Madison, parents of Dylan and Andrew, extending his sympathies on the loss of their older son.

Dylan's act of extraordinary selflessness and bravery continues to be an inspiration and a credit to the state of South Dakota and to his fellow Americans.

Dylan was recognized for sacrificing his own life while saving two others in Lake Madison on August 8, 2009.

The Soldier's Medal is awarded to any person of the Armed Forces of the United States, or of a friendly foreign nation who while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, distinguished him/herself by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy. The same degree of heroism is required as for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. The performance must have involved personal hazard or danger and the voluntary risk of life under conditions not involving conflict with an armed enemy.

The Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation hosted its third annual Citizen Service Above Self Honors on Thursday, March 25, 2010, at Arlington National Cemetery. From among the 20 finalists, a second panel of Medal of Honor recipients selected three individuals to receive one of the highest civilian honors, Citizen Service Above Self Honors.

Nelson was one of those three finalists and was nationally recognized as an ordinary citizen and South Dakota National Guard servicemember, who became extraordinary through his acts of courage and selflessness.



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Photo by Sgt. Matthew Nedved

Gov. Michael Rounds talks to Brig. Gen. Theodore Johnson, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade commander, South Dakota Army National Guard, July 23, 2010, about the unit's mission of providing service and support for more than 9,000 U.S. servicemembers stationed throughout the Regional Command-Capital area of operations.



Photo by Sgt. Rebecca Linder

Gov. Rounds presents Staff Sgt. Justin Pederson, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, a coin July 23, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. The governor presented Pederson and Soldiers from the 196th coins during his visit to show his support and appreciation for their service and sacrifices while fighting in the war.

# Gov. Rounds visits troops in Afghanistan

Story by Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs Staff

Gov. Michael Rounds visited South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers in Kabul July 23. He and several governors visited the Middle East as part of a United States Department of Defense delegation.

Rounds met with Soldiers from the Sioux Falls based 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade who have been providing installation management for 11 military bases in the capital of Afghanistan. The purpose of the delegation's visit was to receive an overview of military operations and reconstruction efforts in the region.

The Governor visited with Soldiers on Camp Phoenix and thanked them for their service.

"It's our privilege to be here with you today," Rounds said of the delegation. "Being the commander in chief of the National Guard for our home state comes with the realization that nothing gets done unless the Guard is involved, and we are proud of what you're doing."

This is Rounds' second trip to Afghanistan to visit South Dakota troops. The Governor also made



Gov. Rounds, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan, July 23, 2010, with Soldiers from Pierre, serving in the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. From left to right: Master Sgt. Travis Vallery, Spc. Samuel Morse, Staff Sgt. Dallas Vallery, Spc. Brandon Deffenbaugh, Staff Sgt. Justin Pederson, Staff Sgt. Quintin Steely, Gov. Michael Rounds, Capt. Nathan Lukkes, Spc. Chase Blair, 1st Lt. Cody Byrum and Lt. Col. Andy Gerlach.

Photo by Sgt. Rebecca Linder

a stop in Iraq where he met with servicemembers stationed in Baghdad.

"The mission is getting accomplished and you are the reason why," Rounds said. "The men and women of the 196th and the rest of the armed services that are here are doing a great job. God-speed, stay safe and thank

you for your service."

Rounds also presented four 196th Soldiers with the United States Army Combat Action Badge during a brief ceremony. Spc. Brittany A. Ketcham, Spc. Jacob T. Nelson, Staff Sgt. Robert J. Schmidt and Staff Sgt. Jason S. Sussner were awarded the badge for having received direct enemy

fire while on a mission in Kabul in early July.

Rounds has been traveling throughout the Middle East with Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Craig McKinley.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shannon Crane

# FIREFIGHTERS

## Receive real world training

Story by Staff Sgt. Shannon Crane  
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In order to train as you fight in today's armed services, it is important for training exercises to be as close to the real thing as possible...but how do you train effectively if your chosen military profession is to fight fires?

The answer is simple. All it takes is a slightly overcast day, some mock ups of an airplane and a three-story building, a little jet fuel and a properly placed heating element to spark some realistic firefighting training.

Military firefighters from Illinois, Massachusetts and South Dakota experienced this volatile training cocktail first hand at Ellsworth Air Force Base Monday, June 14, as part of this year's Golden Coyote training exercise.

The teams worked to perfect their firefighting skills by extinguishing fires in two different training scenarios: an aircraft crash site fire and a structural fire.

"The aircraft burn operation is a fire and rescue simulation," said Warrant Officer Wade Lein, commander of the 216th Engineer Detachment (Firefighter Headquarters) and the 451st Firefighting Team, both of which are National Guard units located in Sturgis, S.D.

"It simulates an aircraft that has crashed, and you have to put the fire out and rescue the aircraft personnel," he added.

Military firefighters from Illinois, Massachusetts and South Dakota participate in a firefighting simulation June 14, 2010, at Ellsworth Air Force Base. The servicemembers are receiving real-world firefighting training as part of this year's Golden Coyote training exercise.

Given the hazards of moving around in a freshly-burned structure and exposure to high concentrations of jet fuel, Lein said the firefighters typically practice rescue techniques during other training events.

In the structural fire and rescue scenario, Lein explained the trainers start a fire inside the building and the firefighters are responsible for going into the dark and smoky environment to search for survivors.

"They don't extinguish the fires in this scenario," Lein added, "as it is more about becoming familiar with how a fire will spread through a building."

Air Force Master Sgt. Steven O'Connell, incident commander for the training event who is currently stationed at Ellsworth, said both scenarios use the jet fuel JP-8 as the primary combustible, and as a result, both scenarios are dangerously real.

"Using jet fuel allows the fire teams to actually put out a real full-on fire," O'Connell said. "There is real danger involved here. We have key positions manned to make sure everything is done safely, and that everyone is wearing their protective gear properly, because the fires get extremely hot."

O'Connell also said Ellsworth is only one of five sites in the United States that uses jet fuel in its training scenarios, and that the majority of Air Force bases use propane, which is run on a switch that can be more easily controlled.

"The propane scenarios are run by individuals working valves or switches," he said, "and when firefighters are showing proper technique, the valve operator will turn down the propane, which extinguishes the fire."

Though the propane method is safer and seemingly more controllable, Soldiers like Sgt. 1st Class Austin Hagen, fire chief for the 216th and 10-year veteran of the South Dakota National Guard, say you can't get the same experience as putting out a fire fueled by JP-8.

"Basically, the jet fuel fires are contained, but not controlled," Hagen said, "so these guys get an idea of what will happen when they use the wrong hose pattern or push the fire the wrong way. They're making sure they're watching what they're doing."

James Carpenter, shift battalion chief for the 28th Civil Engineering Squadron at Ellsworth, who has over 30 years of firefighting experience in the Air Force, said he feels this training is probably the most realistic he's seen.

"I don't think you can get any closer to the real world," said Carpenter. "With this kind of fire, there is no control. What's burning is actually burning, and when the firefighters put out the fire, they are actually doing it on their own."

But no training event is perfect. Even the best training scenarios have the occasional challenge to overcome...and it is no different at this training site.

O'Connell said one of the biggest challenges involves the frequent air traffic, which is a given at any Air Force base. When planes are landing or taking off, the fires cannot be lit due to the plumes that rise into the air.

"One of the things we wish we had control over is the delays we get from air traffic," said O'Connell.

"While this training is being conducted, we still have Ellsworth's real-world mission going on, so delays are inevitable. So as much as we want to keep it rolling out here, we get put in these delays."

The Ellsworth staff members who assist with the training are composed of both active duty military and full-time civilian firefighters (distinguishable by their silver proximity suits) and can be called away at any moment during training to respond to real-world incidents, which causes more delays in training.

"I'm sure the guys enjoy the break every now and then," O'Connell said, "but it can make for a long day when we get a lot of these kinds of disruptions."

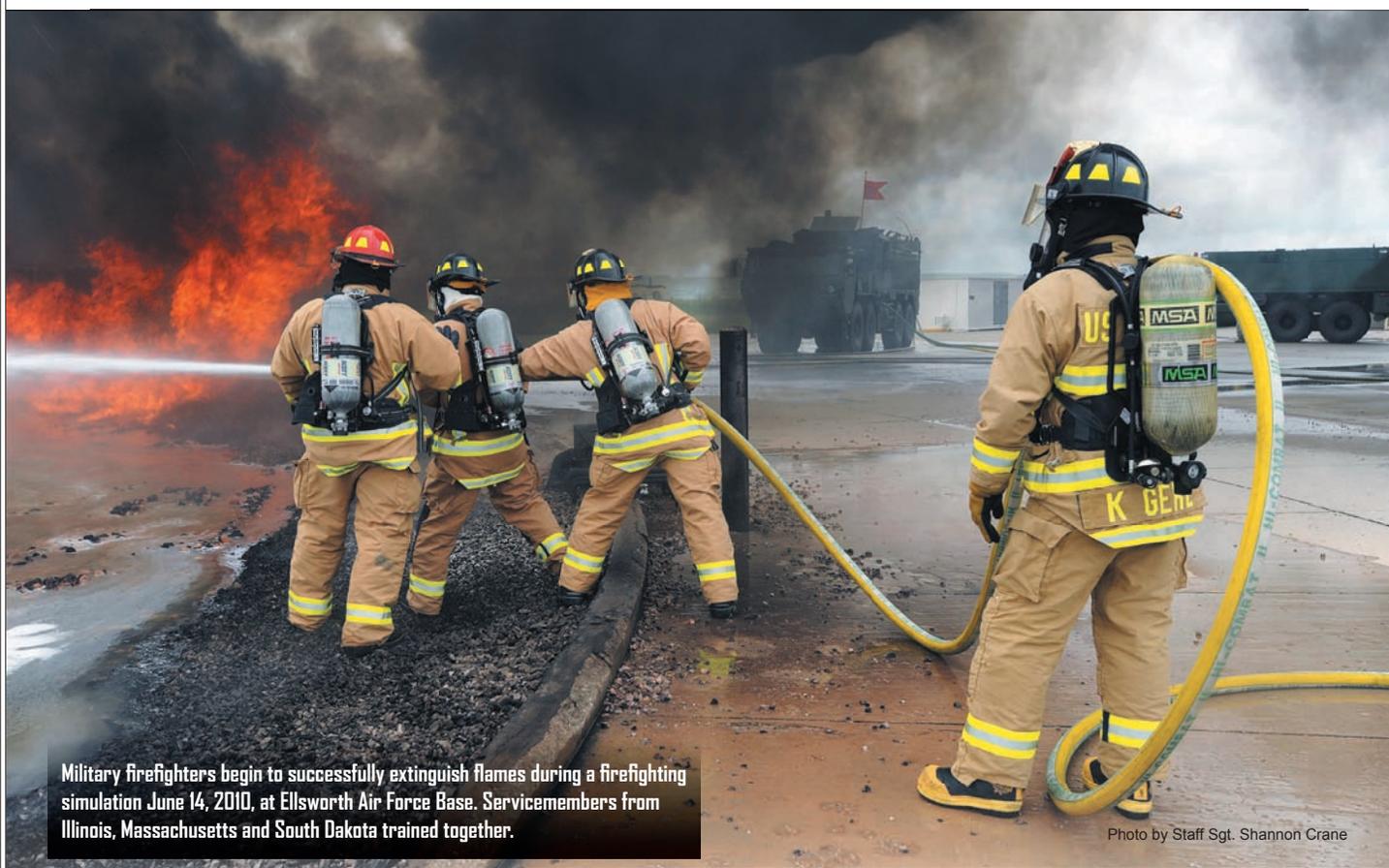
The delays that occurred on this day didn't seem to dampen anyone's spirits, nor their desire to train. The fire teams began running scenarios at 8 a.m. and continued throughout the day until the sun went down.

Spc. Sean Fischer, a mechanic with the 216th who was cross-trained as a firefighter, said he was impressed with the realism and intensity of the training scenarios.

"I thought the training was really good," said Fischer. "We don't get a lot of opportunities to do live fire training, so it was good to get out and practice our skills."

Hagen agreed, but said he was just as pleased with the opportunity to work with the teams from different states as he was with the quality of training.

"One of the benefits of training with teams from other states is it allows you to get to know the people on each team," Hagen said. "It's good to have that rapport and good working relationship already established, as you may see them again when you're deployed."



Military firefighters begin to successfully extinguish flames during a firefighting simulation June 14, 2010, at Ellsworth Air Force Base. Servicemembers from Illinois, Massachusetts and South Dakota trained together.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Shannon Crane

# Interviewing Tips for Military Spouses



In your quest for a new or a better career, you will ultimately find yourself scheduled for a job interview. The prospect can be a little scary. But keep in mind that the real purpose behind the interview is for you and your potential employer to learn more about each other. You both want to find a good fit and the interview is how that determination is made.

In today's highly competitive job market, you can be sure that you won't be the only one trying to land the job. These tips will help you stand out over the other candidates:

## Before the interview

- Learn what you can about the company and the position. Do your research online and off. If you know others who work there and can speak with them discreetly about the organization, do so.
- Review your resume and mentally prepare answers to the most common interview questions.
- Think about questions that you will want to ask the employer. Your questions will help you determine if the company and the position are right for you.
- Decide what you are going to wear at the interview.
- Gather together your reference letters, your portfolio, and any other items you will need for the interview.
- Make sure you know how soon in advance to leave your house to get there on time. Drive the route ahead of time, taking into consideration potential traffic. Build in time for "friction," like road construction.
- Make arrangements for child care, if necessary. Plan to go to the interview alone.

## At the interview

- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Be pleasant and professional to everyone you meet, even if they keep you waiting.
- Breathe. Breathing is good way to get rid of interview jitters. Use positive body language throughout the interview. Offer a firm handshake, sit up straight, and maintain eye contact. Take a look at CareerBuilder's Body Language Do's and Don'ts.
- Answer the employer's questions thoughtfully, thoroughly, and in a way that highlights your own unique strengths.
- Avoid saying anything negative about past employers, co-workers, and situations.
- At the end of the interview, thank the interviewer; ask when a decision will be made and if you may follow up.

## After the interview

- Analyze the interview, making a mental note of what went well and what you could have done better.
  - Start thinking about how you would answer a job offer, taking into consideration what you have learned about the position to this point.
  - Send a thank you note the same day or the day after. Whether you use regular mail or e-mail, be sure to remind the employer of your interest in the position.
  - Follow up if you haven't heard anything in a week or by the time the interviewer said you would be notified of a hiring decision.
  - Continue your job search while you wait to hear whether or not you landed the job.
  - If you didn't get the job, try not to be discouraged. Think of the interview as a learning experience and move on.
- Remember, Military OneSource is available 24/7 to help you with a whole range of work and personal issues, including education and careers. Call 1-800-342-9647 or check the website at [www.MilitaryOneSource.com](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com) to learn more.



## Spend less on fuel

Use the recommended kind of fuel for your car. For most cars, the recommended gasoline is regular octane.

Use the right kind of oil for your car. You may be able to increase fuel economy by 1 to 2 percent by using the proper kind of motor oil.

Make sure your tires are properly inflated. Properly inflated tires can increase fuel economy by 3 percent or more.

Avoid frequent speeding up and braking. These lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and 5 percent at lower speeds. You can improve your fuel economy by maintaining a steady speed. Try using cruise control to set a consistent speed.

Avoid idling. Idling wastes fuel. Experts recommend that if you're going to be stopped for longer than 10 seconds, unless you're in traffic, turn off your engine.

Observe the speed limit. Gas mileage decreases sharply at higher speeds. Every 5 mph that you drive over 60 mph is equivalent to paying an extra 15 cents per gallon for gas, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

Get regular tune-ups. A poorly tuned engine uses more gas.

Don't run the air conditioner unless absolutely necessary. Air conditioning uses up gas. To stay cool at highway speeds, use your car's flow-through ventilation. If you still need air conditioning, keep the windows closed and turn on the air conditioner only as needed.

Travel light. Remove unnecessary items from your trunk and roof rack, especially heavy ones. A loaded roof rack can reduce your fuel economy by 5 percent. Remove ski racks and bike racks when not in use.

Combine short trips and errands. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as one trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.

# Demobilizing? Keep TRICARE with TAMP

Story by Tyler Patterson

TriWest Healthcare Alliance

What happens to your health benefits when you return from activation and rejoin civilian life?

TAMP, the Transitional Assistance Management Program, can extend TRICARE coverage for you and your eligible family members by 180 days.

TAMP coverage begins after a National Guard member separates from a period of active duty that was more than 30 consecutive days in support of a contingency operation.

When your transitional period is up, you may be eligible to purchase TRICARE Reserve Select coverage, to use your Veterans Affairs benefits or to enroll in an employer-sponsored healthcare plan, depending on your circumstances.

## TAMP Eligibility

Your service branch will update your TAMP status in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Verify your eligibility and ensure your DEERS information is correct through your unit's DEERS contact or at [www.triwest.com/deers](http://www.triwest.com/deers).

## TRICARE Standard

Once TAMP begins, you and your family will be covered by TRICARE Standard and Extra. With Standard and Extra, you and your family can see any provider who is TRICARE-authorized or in the TRICARE network. When you see a civilian doctor using Standard and Extra, you will have to pay a cost-share and may have a fiscal year deductible. You can also be treated at any U.S. military clinic on a space-available basis. If you seek care this way, you have no out-of-pocket costs.

## TRICARE Prime

You may choose to enroll in TRICARE Prime during your TAMP period if you live in an area where Prime is available (please note, however, that TRICARE Prime Remote is not an option during the TAMP period). Enroll into Prime by submitting a TRICARE Prime enrollment form (click "Find a Form" at [www.triwest.com/beneficiary](http://www.triwest.com/beneficiary)) or through the

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Beneficiary Web Enrollment website ([www.triwest.com/bwe](http://www.triwest.com/bwe)). As long as you enroll into Prime within the 180 day TAMP coverage period, Prime starts on the first day of your transitional period. If you or your family were covered by TRICARE Prime while you were activated, you will need to re-enroll. If you do not re-enroll, you and your family members will instead be covered by TRICARE Standard and Extra.

With the Prime option, you will be assigned a primary care manager. Your primary care manager will be responsible for routine care and making referrals to specialty providers.

For more information, visit TriWest's Guard and Reserve Resource Center at [www.triwest.com/ngr](http://www.triwest.com/ngr) or call 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378).



The South Dakota National Guard is on Facebook! Come and join the SDNG's official social

media and networking site and receive the latest in news and information on issues that concern both its Army and Air National Guard members, their families, employers and retirees.

The SDNG's Facebook fan page has more than 2,500 fans and contains everything from press releases and photos to videos and messages. You'll also find links to other National Guard-related Facebook pages and websites.

**CHECK IT OUT:**  
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# SNAPSHOTS

A look at South Dakota's Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen on the go...



CAMP PHOENIX, Afghanistan -- Spc. Tracy Pigors, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, looks over paintings created by Fahima Fehmand, art student at the Marefat School, during the student's visit to Camp Phoenix, June 26, 2010.

Photo by Sgt. Matthew Nedved



PIERRE, S.D.--South Dakota National Guard held its 30th Annual Walleye Tournament July 30-Aug 1, 2010. Roger Pollreizs and Todd Hohn won the tournament with a two-day weight of just over 37 pounds; 2nd place: Bob Stahl and Jason Stahl, 3rd place; Doug Mitchell and Ken Edel. Charles Marsh caught the largest walleye weighing in at 5.2 pounds. Left to right: Todd Hohn, Roger Pollreizs, Ken Edel, Donald Massa, Charles Marsh, Doug Mitchell, Gary Kafka, Jason Stahl, Gordon Kotab and Bob Stahl.

Courtesy photo



SIoux FALLS, S.D. -- Col. Michael A. Meyers and Tech. Sgt. Ryan W. Stoll, both members of the 114 Fighter Wing, stand next to F-16 85-1466 after its 7,000 hour breaking flight. Tech. Sgt. Stoll has been with this jet since the summer of 2004 and says that approximately 2,000 of those hours were with him as its crew chief.

Photo by Staff Quinton Young



CAMP EGGERS, Afghanistan -- Spc. Bradley Poncelet, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, wrestles with a member of the Mongolian armed forces during the Mongolian national holiday, Naadam. Naadam is the Mongolian holiday which commemorates the 1921 revolution when Mongolia declared itself a free country. The festival is filled with sporting events and an array of performances.

Photo by Sgt. Matthew Nedved

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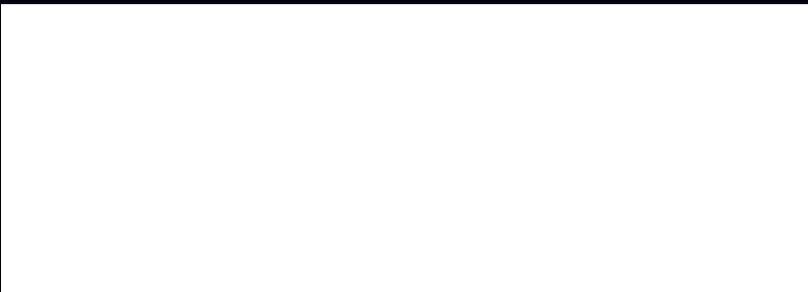
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