

WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

EVERGREEN

MAGAZINE

SPRING 16

FEMALE BEST WARRIOR

HEADED TO REGIONALS

PG. 10

DEFENSE SECRETARY
TALKS CYBER

PG. 14

STANDOUT
NATIONAL HONORS
FOR WYA

PG. 4

FOLLOW US



mil.wa.gov

CONTENT

10 BEST WARRIOR

Only one female competed- How she hopes the experience will propel her career forward



Cover Story

Cover photo:
Spc. Taylor Whitaker



4 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

WYA teacher wins National Teacher of the Year honors

28 FROZEN FACEOFF

Cannuck vs. USA Hockey game ends in nail-biting finish





STANDOUT

Washington Youth Academy teacher wins
National Teacher of the Year honors

Story by Steven Friederich

"IF YOU SQUEEZE A GRAPEFRUIT, YOU GET GRAPEFRUIT JUICE.
IF YOU SQUEEZE AN APPLE, YOU GET APPLE JUICE.
IF YOU SQUEEZE A HUMAN BEING, YOU GET CHARACTER."

- TOD HALL

Tod Hall has a way with words.

"If you squeeze a grapefruit, you get grapefruit juice. If you squeeze an apple, you get apple juice. If you squeeze a human being, you get character. And that's what we do," said Hall, an English teacher at the Washington Youth Academy in Bremerton. "We squeeze them. We don't fix them."

Hall also believes in the concept of "firm forgiveness," which inspires these cadets to strive for and reach their goals, while providing a sturdy foundation to build upon.

Hall was honored as the national teacher of the year at the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Foundation's annual ChalleNGe Champions Recognition Event along with a national program director of the year and national leader of the year who have been instrumental in helping youth turn their lives around. Congressional and military leaders, the business community, alumni, and graduating cadets attended the event on Tuesday, Feb. 23, in Washington, D.C.

The National Guard Youth Foundation, a 501(c)(3), supports the National Guard Youth

ChalleNGe Program's efforts to address the nation's high school dropout crisis by giving troubled youth a second chance, helping them graduate and continue their education or join the skilled workforce in America.

As a teacher of the WYA ChalleNGe program, a state-run residential and post-residential intervention for youth who have dropped out of high school or are at risk of dropping out, he developed the English curriculum after joining the program at its inception in 2008. But his blackboard isn't limited to the classroom as at-

risk youth who voluntarily enroll in the program discover. The Poulsbo resident is known to bring out his guitar and start singing, sparking student engagement in the structure of poetry and how words in song can have even more impact than words on paper.

Beyond English class, he helped launch a choir at the academy and works with National Anthem singers, many who perform at state legislative session openings. Hall also reviews potential legislation that could impact the academy and coordinates with the local library district to send a bookmobile to campus. Hall is also a student, working toward his Ph.D. in educational leadership at City University of Seattle.

“He doesn’t just teach. He inspires,” said WYA Director Larry Pierce, who submitted the nomination letter in January. “I’ve seen cadets go from

failing English at their old high school to becoming stellar speech writers.”

WYA cadets have consistently won top awards at the Veterans of Foreign Wars’ Voice of Democracy speech competition and this year swept all three awards categories with a cadet advancing to state-level competition.

Hall is the only teacher to receive cadre training and holds the rank of captain. He is also a veteran, having served in the U.S. Marine Corps as an infantry squad leader. He was part of the attempt to rescue the Iran hostages in 1980 and after that became a police officer. For the past 24 years, the 57-year-old father of two has dedicated himself to teaching and has taught at the elementary and middle school levels.

“I try to make learning fun and instructional at the same time,” said Hall. “I like to spend more time instructing than testing,



Teacher Tod Hall speaks in February at a celebration in Washington D.C. as he receives national teacher of the year honors.

Beyond English class,
he helped launch a
choir
at the academy.



Hall plays a song for a cadet during his English class. (Courtesy photo)



Teacher Tod Hall and his wife at a celebration in Washington D.C. as he receives national teacher of the year honors.

HE DOESN'T
JUST
TEACH.
HE

inspires

-LARRY PIERCE
WYA DIRECTOR



Teacher Tod Hall stands in his uniform in front of a yellow brick, representing a cadet that has left the program. He created the brick program as a means of retention for the academy.

as I believe students are more engaged when they are actively participating in the classroom.”

Hall also points to a program he helped implement last year where a brick is placed at a flag pole to remember a student who has left the voluntary program. That made members of each of the Academy’s three platoons work harder to keep their fellow cadets in check and prevent drop outs. It’s a program Hall got support to put in place as he was taking classes to get his Master’s Degree.

“Where others see failure, outstanding, inspiring WYA teachers like Tod Hall see hope and potential among some of our nation’s most downtrodden teens,” said Brig. Gen. Ally-

son Solomon, USAF (Ret.), president of the National Guard Youth Foundation.

In addition to the event in Washington, D.C., Hall was recognized by the Bremerton School District on March 3 and was recognized by Gov. Jay Inslee on March 4, accompanied by Pierce and Principal Kristen Morga.

“This has been an exhilarating couple of months,” Hall said after meeting the governor. “Never in my wildest dreams did I think something like this would happen. I’m energized and feel that this award is not just for me but a recognition for the entire Academy.”

Read Gen. McKinley’s [letter to Mr. Hall](#). Read Director Pierce’s [nomination letter](#). ■

BE PREPARED. *NOT SCARED.*



#CASCADIARISING IS COMING

JUNE 2016



BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

By Spc. Taylor Whitaker

“Her focus and strength is an inspiration to her fellow soldiers.”



Spc. Julie E. Kepner competes in a long distance shooting event. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Taylor Whitaker)



Spc. Julie E. Keppner of the 1041st Transportation Company traverses the log roller during the obstacle course challenge at the Washington National Guard Best Warrior Competition. The Best Warrior Competition is designed to test competitors in a variety of events such as urban warfare simulations, board interviews, physical fitness tests, written exams, and warrior tasks and battle drills relevant to today's operating environment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Taylor Whitaker)

LONE FEMALE COMPETITOR SET TO REPRESENT WASHINGTON AT REGIONALS

Spc. Julie E. Keppner was a standout competitor in the Washington National Guard's Best Warrior Competition this year. Not only for her exceptional performance in all events, but because Keppner — a truck driver with the 1041st Transportation Company — was the only female to compete.

During the four-day competition, held March 3-6 at Camp

Murray, Wash., the elite contenders tested their Army aptitude by conquering urban warfare simulations, board interviews, physical fitness tests, written exams, and warrior tasks and battle drills relevant to today's operating environment. Keppner was selected by her unit to compete because of her ambition for success and physical perseverance.

“Spc. Keppner is a driven sol-

dier,” said Staff Sgt. Virginia L. Adolfson, Keppner’s sponsor/mentor throughout the competition. “Her focus and strength is an inspiration to her fellow soldiers, and the best warrior is a perfect way to show that.”

Standout from the start

This was not the first time Keppner had been selected to compete among the best. Last year she voluntarily withdrew from Officer Candidate School (OCS) after being recommended for Ranger School—considered the most physically and

mentally demanding leadership school the Army has to offer. She wasn’t able to attend the class due to space limitations, but that hasn’t dampened her competitive spirit and desire to lead.

Keppner hopes to take the lessons she learned from the best warrior to help understand and inspire other soldiers as she prepares to begin OCS again in the spring.

“I wanted to compete in the Best Warrior Competition prior to going back to OCS [so] I

would be able to relate better to all my future soldiers,” Keppner said.

Keppner finished the competition with the highest physical fitness score, the highest oral board score and placed second overall in the competition. She finished with many unforgettable memories as well.

“Even though we were **competitors**, I feel like we were all **comrades** in the competition.”

“Even though we were competitors, I feel like we were all comrades in the competition. It really brought us together and I’m happy that I could participate.”

Despite being the runner-up, Keppner will actually represent Washington in the Regional competition as the winner will be attending school. ■



Best Warrior competitors line the bleachers after finishing the obstacle course challenge. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Taylor Whitaker)



Staff Sgt. Cory A. Anderson, Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, and Spc. Colin S. Shaw, Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 303rd Cavalry Regiment, prepare for an urban combat simulation as part of the Washington National Guard Best Warrior Competition March 5, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Taylor Whitaker)



A blindfolded competitor jumps from the high diving board during Combat Water Survival Training. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Taylor Whitaker)



Defense Secretary visits cyber team

Story by 1st Lt. Hans Zeiger
Photos by Capt. Joseph Siemandel

Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter highlighted the importance of cybersecurity by spending part of the morning at the 262nd Network Warfare Squadron here during a visit March 4. Cyber operations experts from the 252nd Cyber Operations Group, which includes the 262nd, briefed Carter on their work to protect the nation's nuclear assets, and Carter held a press conference in the 262nd conference room. He praised airmen of the 252nd for their commitment to service, their talent, and their connections to the high-tech industry.

"This building where we're sitting, and the mission represented by these guys standing with me, is famous throughout the country because of what it stands for," said Carter.

Carter discussed the role of cyber operations in protecting military communications networks and critical public infrastructure. He noted the importance of Guard cyber operations teams as partners with the governor and state officials in securing Washington State from cyber threats. And cyber units like the units of the 252nd could take on offensive missions in

the future, particularly as the U.S. military seeks to "accelerate" its involvement in offensive cyber operations "to secure the prompt defeat of ISIL," said Carter.

"This building where we're sitting, and the mission represented by these guys standing with me, is famous throughout the country because of what it stands for."

- U.S. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter

It is valuable to have cyber operations teams made partly of service members who also work in civilian technology jobs, said Carter. "They bring to the mission of national security that tremendous talent from outside that we otherwise would have to try to recruit and retain within the full-time, active component, which would be very difficult," he said.

Guard cyber operations teams "give our country and our fighting forces access to amazing talent and, of course, amazing dedication and amazing patriotism and amazing service on their part," he said.

Carter's itinerary at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) included visits with several Army and Air Force units. Carter also spent time discussing cyber security with executives from Microsoft, Amazon, and Boeing during his stop in the Pacific Northwest, which followed meetings in Silicon Valley, California earlier in the week.

Carter's visit to JBLM was the first by a Secretary of Defense since Secretary Robert Gates visited in 2008.

"It was heartwarming to have his level of attention and awareness," said Lt. Col. Robert Siau, commander of the 262nd, following Carter's visit. "It meant a lot to our Airmen and squadron." ■



Secretary of Defense Carter shakes hands with airmen during his tour of the 262nd Cyber Operations Group March 4. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Joseph Siemandel)

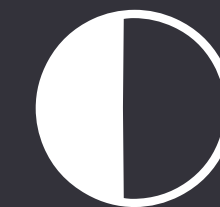


Photo by Sgt. Michael Tietjen

TRADITION OF SERVICE

A tradition of service
on display as the 1161st
Transportation Company
deactivates

By Sgt. Michael Tietjen
122nd Public Affairs Operations Center



n March 6 at the National Guard Armory in the small Eastern Washington town of Ephrata, a proud group of current and former soldiers, family and community members gathered on the drill floor for what would be the 1161st Transportation Company's final formation. A change that comes as a result of the Washington National Guard transformation.

An air of melancholy was evident among the hundreds of people in attendance who had been touched by the tight-knit unit over its 52 year history.

Established in 1964 as a medium-heavy truck transport unit, the 1161st Transportation Company performed numerous state and federal missions, including two deployments to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and Operation Enduring Freedom in 2009. Its company motto "Hook and Book" is a reflec-



Soldiers with the 1161st Transportation Company stand in formation during the 1161st's deactivation ceremony. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Michael Tietjen)



Capt. James Hopkins, 1161st Transportation Company commander, holds the unit guidon as company 1st Sgt. Stephanie Kettlewell and Lt. Col. Zara Walters, commander, 420th Chemical Battalion, case the unit colors. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Michael Tietjen)

**“WE ARE
LIKE A BIG
FAMILY
HERE”**



Current and former members of the 1161st Transportation Company stand in a final formation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Michael Tietjen)

tion of its mission—to “hook” up to a load, and move out. They performed more than 14,000 missions and drove more than one million miles over the two deployments.

“It melts your heart to see the unit going away. We are like a big family here,” said Staff Sgt. Keith Bond, a squad leader from Moses Lake with 15 years of service in the unit.

Staff Sgt. Kevin Carpen-

ter, a squad leader from Spokane with nine years in the unit agreed, “Guys in this unit have turned down promotions just to stay here.”

Both Bond and Carpenter said that soldiers had come from all over the state, even Idaho and Oregon, to work in the 1161st. Sgt. Randy Kagle (Ret.) of Moses Lake served in the unit from 1966 to 1994 and fondly remembers the unit as being “a close-knit family.”

Three generations of Brathovdes are a testament to that. The Brathovde family, originally from Ephrata, have a tradition of service in the 1161st. Spc. Greg Brathovde a truck driver from Olympia, is the third generation in his family to call the 1161st Transportation Company home. Before him, his father Master Sgt. Gary Brathovde (Ret.) served in the unit. So too did his uncles Rick and Barry Brathovde and his grandfather Chief Warrant Officer 4 Paul Brathovde (Ret.). Spc. Brathovde’s family tradition of service is interwoven with the proud history of the 1161st.

As the colors of the 1161st Transportation Company are displayed for the last time, the soldiers of this unit render a final salute. First Sgt. Stephanie Kettlewell, company first sergeant, Lt. Col. Zara Walters, 420th Chemical Battalion commander and Capt. James Hopkins, company commander, carefully furl the flag and case it in a protective sheath. The cased colors are then returned to the color bearer and marched off the floor according to military tradition.

The 1161st Transportation Company is now a piece of history, but the stories

of its soldiers will continue. Most of the members have prepared to transfer to other transportation units to continue their service in the Washington National Guard. Some have decided to change jobs and try new challenges. Some are still undecided about their future.

One thing is certain, the members of this historic unit, current and former, their families and the members of this community will remember with pride the honor, dedication and valor of the 1161st Transportation Company in service to their community, their state and their nation. ■

BY THE NUMBERS

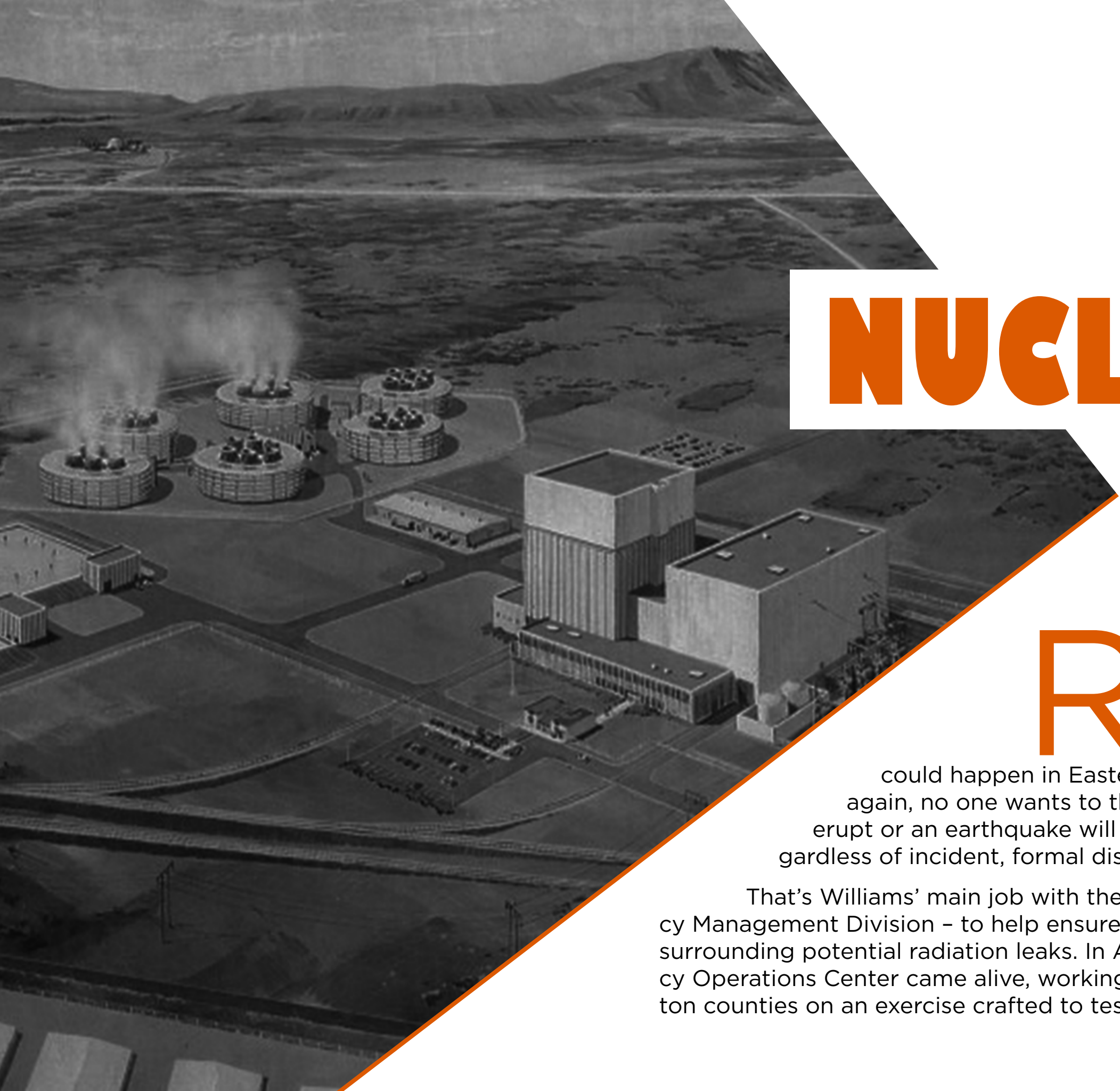
2
deployments

14,000
missions

1 million+
miles logged



1161ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY



A NUCLEAR

PLAN

Story by Steven Friederich

Radiological Preparedness Program Manager Steve Williams says no one wants to think that a radiation leak could happen in Eastern Washington. Then again, no one wants to think that a volcano will erupt or an earthquake will happen either. But, regardless of incident, formal disaster plans are in place.

That's Williams' main job with the Washington Emergency Management Division – to help ensure compliance of the plans surrounding potential radiation leaks. In April, the state Emergency Operations Center came alive, working with Eastern Washington counties on an exercise crafted to test the plans effectiveness.

The exercise was graded by evaluators with FEMA.

“The evaluator was just so tickled and wanted me to let everyone know just how well the state EOC did as well as the Joint Information Center,” Williams said. “It was just outstanding. They will have a draft report come out soon and

Commission requires that emergency preparedness plans be put in place. And, if the state Emergency Operations Center and the surrounding counties were to fall flat and not meet its obligations to the preparedness plan, then the nuclear plant would be forced to shut down, potentially impacting

had to shut down because of these issues.”

“There's lots of training from everyone involved -- from local firefighters to ambulance drivers and the Red Cross. Whoever has a piece of the pie within the state or local plan, they have to demonstrate that they can do what the plan tells them to do. One of the difficult aspects is getting all the players on board,” Williams said.

The Columbia Generating Station Exercise was divided up into two aspects. The first involves a radiation leak and how the “plume pathway exposure” would impact the community within 10 miles of the plant, which would be Benton and Franklin counties. It tests evacuation procedures, shelter in place recommendations and closure plans. This part of the exercise is graded every two years by FEMA, but tested annu-

“If we fail in our mission, there are impacts.”

- Steve Williams,

Radiological Preparedness Program Manager

then we'll have a final report due after that.”

The exercise involved part of the Columbia Generating Station near Richland failing and radiation being released into the air. Such an incident has not happened. And Energy Northwest, which runs the plant, has a stellar safety record, Williams says.

However, the federal Nuclear Regulatory

a portion of the state's power supply as well all of the jobs at the plant, Williams said.

“That's the extreme end of it,” Williams said. “If we fail in our mission, there are impacts. If we do not demonstrate to FEMA that they feel we have a reasonable assurance to protect the public safety and health, then that could happen. But I'm not aware of any power plant that has

Quick Facts

Columbia Generating Station

Type: Boiling water reactor (nuclear)

Generation: Approximately 1,190 megawatts (gross)

Location: 10 miles north of Richland, Washington

Site Size: ~1,089 acres

Projected Levelized Cost of Power (2014-2043):

4.7 - 5.2 cents/kWh



Public Information Officer Mark Stewart updates state EOC personnel of response activities during the Columbia Generating Station exercise March 29. (Courtesy photo)

“They’re learning valuable lessons... because 80 percent of how they respond to any incident is the same.”

ally by the state agency and the counties.

The second part of the exercise involved “ingestion pathway exposure.” Basically, if radiation was exposed to agricultural areas and drinking water, what would the state and locals do? How would the state react? The plan involves a potential 50-mile radius, which would impact Benton, Franklin, Adams, Grant, Walla Walla, Yakima and portions of Klickitat and Kittitas counties, and the creation of road closure areas, agriculture control areas and tons of questions from the public and media.

This part of the exercise involves heavy cooperation with the state Departments of Agriculture and Health, in particular, and is graded by FEMA every eight years. Williams believes it might get tested more often in the future so the memory of the plan stays fresher in participants’ minds.

The exercise involved a lot of coordination between local counties, and the state and although radiation exposure



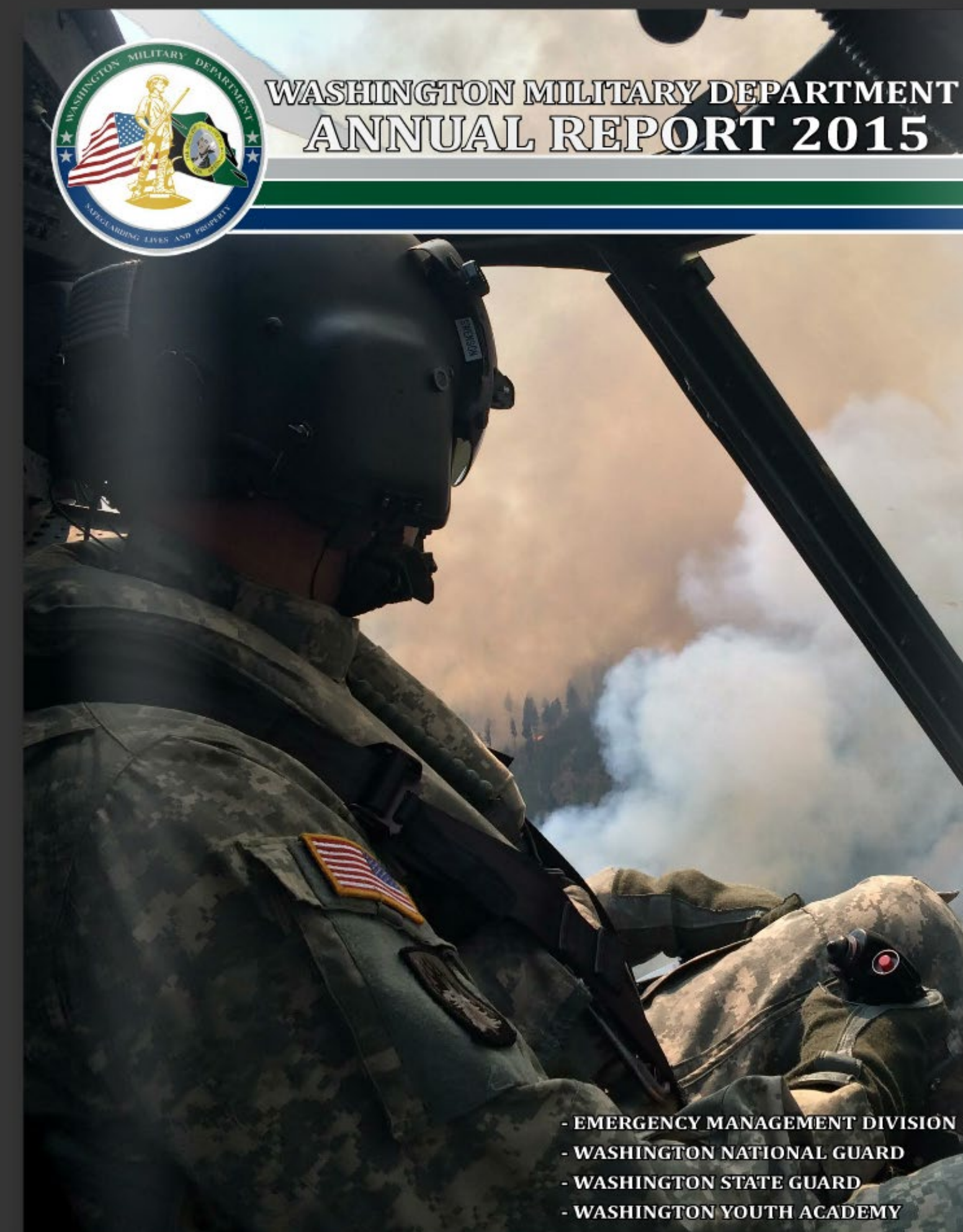
A birds eye view of the state EOC during the Columbia Generating Station exercise March 29. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens)

seems like a one-off kind of plan, Williams notes a lot of the lessons learned can be applied to other disasters, such as wild-fires.

“The communities that participate, they’re learning valuable lessons that can be applied to all of their hazard capabilities because 80 percent of how they respond to any incident is the

same,” Williams said. “There’s the same communication issues, news releases, operations questions, that’s all the same. There’s just for this one hazard specific aspects that are different. “

Williams has worked in the state EMD’s Pasco office since 2006. Before that, he worked for Franklin County for about eight years. ■



CHECK
OUT
OUR
ANNUAL
REPORT

Around the Department

Master chefs from Lakes, Vancouver, Steilacoom and South Kitsap High Schools competed in the Washington National Guard Culinary Arts Competition March 18, 2016.

The annual competition is hosted by food service specialists who enjoyed a weekend of hands-on training to further their food selection, preparation and serving skills.



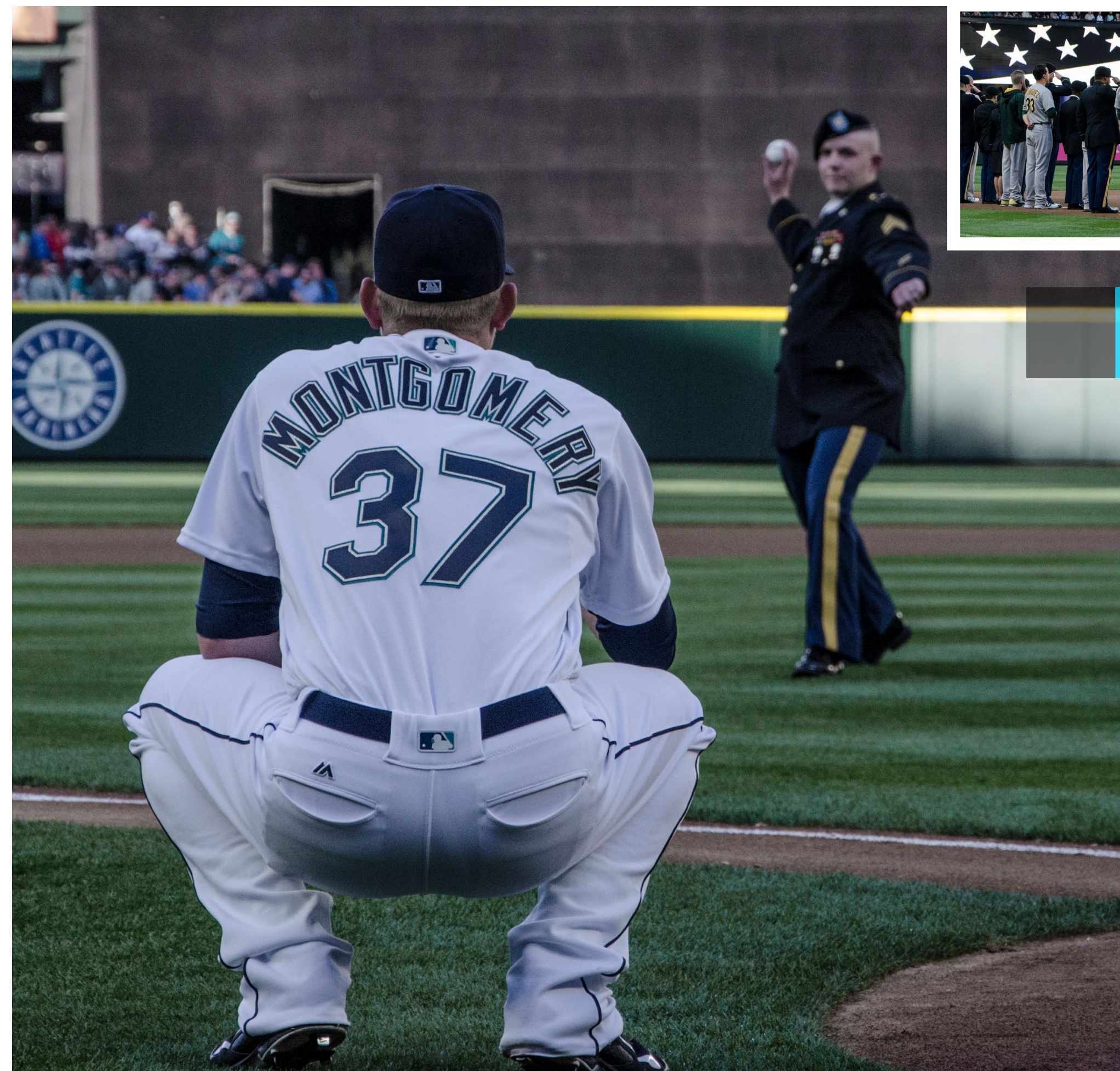
Photos by Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens

Around the Department

Washington Army National Guard Sgt. Matthew Lagergren, an Elma, Washington native and member of Headquarters Company, 66th Theater Aviation Command, throws out a ceremonial first pitch during the Seattle Mariners Salute to Armed Forces Night.

More than a dozen members of the Washington National Guard and State Guard were recognized on the field during pregame ceremonies Saturday, April 9.

Photos by Sgt. Matthew Sissel





Around the Department

In March, the human services staff of the Washington Emergency Management Division joined Governor Jay Inslee and his wife Trudi in Central Washington for a Hand in Hand outreach meeting to help the agency better connect with the Hispanic community. The goal is to improve communications between first responders, emergency managers, local officials and Limited English Proficient Communities.

Photos by El Mundo
(used with permission)



Around the Department

On March 31, Gov. Jay Inslee signed House Bill 1351, giving several types of recreational hunting licenses at no cost to members of the Washington National Guard, who are residents, as a benefit for being part of the Guard.

The legislation, introduced in January 2015 by the National Guard Association of Washington, grants the following: a small game hunting license, a supplemental migratory bird permit and a big game hunting license to local Guardsmen.

Photo courtesy of
Governor's Office

FROZEN FACEOFF

Team Canada edges out Team USA in nail-biting finish of WADS annual hockey game

Story by Capt. Kimberly D. Burke

Airmen from the Washington Air National Guard's Western Air Defense Sector (WADS) and the Canadian Detachment of WADS came together Feb. 19 for the 22nd Annual Canuck

USA Hockey Classic at the Sprinkler Rink in Spanaway, Washington. The Western Air Defense Sector, located at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, is responsible for continuously monitoring the skies of the western half of the U.S. year round.

The event has been a classic team building event for U.S. and Canada, whose airmen work side by side every day.

The vice commander of the Western Air Defense Sector, Col. William Krueger, and the Canadian



Western Air Defense Sector U.S. team members hold off the Canadian team from scoring with the help of skilled U.S. team goalie, Master Sgt. Ty Henrichsmeyer. (Courtesy photo by Conrad Neumann III)

Detachment commander, Lt. Col. Matthew Wappler, drop the ceremonial first puck after the playing of the U.S. and Canadian national anthems.

The U.S. team struck first when team member, Tech. Sgt. Chris Pavel, scored the first goal of the game putting the U.S. in unusual territory – leading the game, 1-0. The Canadian's quickly tied up the game 1-1 in the first period. U.S. team member, Tech. Sgt. Matt Berube, went on to score two more

goals tying up the game 3-3 in the final period. The Canadian's were able to score again in the final minutes of the game and held off the U.S. team in the final seconds. The final score was Canada 4, USA 3.

“Normally the U.S. team is the underdog since we are not born with skates on like the Canadians,” said Pavel, team coordinator. “But for the first time in 22 years, the U.S. proved that we are now a force to be reckoned with especially with the addition

“The U.S. proved that we are now a force to be reckoned with.”

of our goalie, Master Sgt. Ty Henrichsmeyer, who fended off countless attempts by the Canadian's to score.”

During the presentation of the winner's trophy, Krueger expressed that this was the most competitive and closest game in the history of this matchup and he looks

forward to the 23rd Annual Canuck USA Hockey Classic next February.

The outcome of the match had an added bonus for the local Tacoma Pierce County Habitat for Humanity where over \$400 was raised and an official presentation of a check was made by Wappler to the organization. ■



The head referee drops the opening puck for the 22nd annual Canuck USA Hockey Classic. (Courtesy photo by Conrad Neumann III)

WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

EVERGREEN

MAGAZINE

Communications Director

Karina Shagren

State Public Affairs Officer

Capt. Joseph F. Siemandel

Chief Editor

Staff Sgt. Virginia M. Owens

Copy Editor

Maj. Christina Martin

Contributors

Spc. Taylor Whitaker

Steven Friederich

Sgt. Michael Tietjen

1st Lt. Hans Zeiger

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Kriess

Sgt. Matthew Sissel

Capt. Kimberly Burke

