

THE BEACON

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

WINTER 2021/2022



MISSION READY-ALWAYS ON MISSION



FROM THE 124TH FIGHTER WING
WING COMMANDER
COL. CHAD KORNBERG

The Road To Readiness...

Welcome to 2022!! New Year, renewed focus, right? “We are done talking about COVID,” I know many of you have heard those words come out of my mouth recently, and yet here I am writing this while quarantined at home. It is unlikely that COVID will cease to exist over the next 11 months, so we need to adjust fire. We have to deal with COVID much like we have to address any situation that affects your health and welfare. My job as your wing commander is to provide the measures that protect you and allow you to stay focused on the mission. That mission is READINESS ... Ready to go do all that we train for and answer our nation or our state’s call to action.

The road to readiness, is not difficult to map out. However, travelling our charted course can be challenging, and at times tedious. Air force specialty code, total force awareness, individual medical readiness and location specific training events all require a chunk of the brief time we have allotted with our Airmen each month. As a command team, we will do our best to provide you the mission focus I know you appreciate and desire. What I am asking in return is a reinvigorated focus on the “details” of your readiness. I realize those things seem trivial, but they are a valid measuring stick for successfully getting you out the door. If we can’t get you downrange, then you can’t engage the enemy. You can help us by staying on top of your IMR, refreshing your chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives training, self aid buddy care (tactical combat casualty care) knowledge, keeping your AEF Online account active, and ensuring recall information is up to date with your unit.

The “Road to War” brief that was presented over January UTA was intended to reiterate the “Why” we are focusing so intently on “readiness.” February UTA will center on our Wing Focus Exercise that will measure many of the facets of our ability to operate in a contested, degraded, and operationally limited environment. We will continue to execute generation exercises at the unit level, and I encourage all Airmen to come up with creative and innovative ideas for the “How” we train and test our readiness. And as you do, I invite you to voice those ideas for future training events – I am listening.

The true threat to our nation is not a virus, but an external distraction that competes for our time and energy. As a team, we need to block out those distractions, and stay vigilant in our focus on mission readiness and execution. And as a team, we will respond to adversity and any call.

It is a great time to be in the Guard in the great state of Idaho.

Go Guard, Attack!
Col. Kornberg



FROM THE 124TH FIGHTER WING
COMMAND CHIEF
CMSGT. JAMES TRITLE

#2 is #1 Once Again

Happy New Year's 124th! I hope the year is off to a great start for each of you and for your families! Here in the wing we are excited to get a jump start back to what we do best; stand ready to answer the nation's call for superior firepower. To get down to the nitty gritty, it's taking the fight to the enemy and breaking their stuff beyond repair!

The 224th Cyber Operations Squadron is leading the charge as they have been actively on the frontlines of the cyber fight for months, taking on those who wish to do harm to our cyber systems and infrastructure. They've been able to execute their mission through constant exercise, practice, and practical application. In other words, they're ready to break the bad guy's stuff to ensure they can't detrimentally affect our systems.

In 2022 we're expecting the same from the entirety of the wing. One of our responsibilities as Airmen is to remain fit to fight. In any exercise routine muscle memory is created through continuous movement and strain. Athletes practice for hours to perfect the right throw, the perfect swing (always a baseball analogy), the quickest run. In 2022 my hope is to see the same from this wing. To get there we will have to regain the emphasis on Mission #1 that has been sitting at #2 throughout the COVID pandemic.

What is that mission? To get better at generating combat-ready aircraft. To get better at processing red-ball requisitions. To get better at facility management. To shoot our weapons with more lethal accuracy. To ensure the medical readiness of all Airmen. To develop our Airmen with the right training and education, at the right time in each of their careers. To ensure everyone has the ability to pursue opportunities to train, educate, and develop into a stronger and more effective force.

As this year unfolds everyone will see that we're laser focused on sharpening our ability to be a force to be reckoned with. Beginning with the Wing Focus Exercise, we will spend 2022 creating muscle memory that will need to be developed to make the 124th Fighter Wing a lethal force that is able and ready to meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy. The near-peer threat is as real as it has ever been, and we can't afford to suffer the consequences of not being prepared to deliver American firepower when called upon to do so.

Keep up the good work! Know that each of you make a difference in what you do to sustain the mission of the 124th Fighter Wing. We've been pressed the last 18 months to support the domestic mission, and we have done very well! In 2022, it's time to get back to what we do best; generate lethal combat airpower, hunt and destroy any and all cyber threats, and continue to take care of each other as Idahoans do so well.

Attack!
Chief Tritle



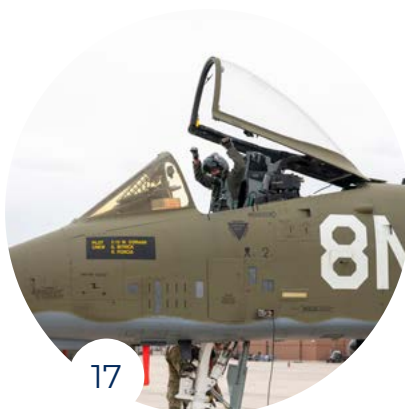
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HOLIDAY HAWG

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Capt. Bonnie Blakely

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Staff Sgt. Mercedee Wilds
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ON THE COVER:



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124th FW Change of Command

Col. Kornberg takes lead at wing's 20th change of command

By Capt. Rebecca Solosabal; Photos by Capt. Bonnie Blakely and Staff Sgt. Mercedee Wilds

The Idaho Air National Guard's 124th Fighter Wing welcomed a new commander Nov. 7, 2021, at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, at its 20th change of command ceremony since its founding 75 years ago.

Col. Chad Kornberg took lead of the wing from Col. Shannon Smith in front of Guardsmen, community leaders, family and friends.

Brig. Gen. Tim Donnellan, assistant adjutant general–air, Idaho Air National Guard, presided over the ceremony and recounted some of the wing's history.



"Today marks the 20th change of command that the 124th Fighter Wing has had since 1946," said Donnellan, as he highlighted events from the wing's World War II heritage, to the Guard's transition from a strategic to an operational reserve following Desert Storm, and finally to the unit's last two deployments being the largest in the organization's history.

"Despite all of that and all those leadership challenges we've seen over the years, I have seen nothing like the leadership challenges of the last two years, in particular with a global pandemic," said Donnellan. "I can tell you we had the right leadership team, with Col. Smith and his team, at the right place, at the right time."

Smith took charge in May 2019, and under his command, Airmen from the wing completed the second largest deployment in the unit's history and the first cyber squadron deployment, participated in a major warfighter exercise with the Idaho Army National Guard, and assisted civil authorities throughout multiple state missions to include support of Idaho's battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I want to express gratitude for the opportunity to command..." said Smith. "I want to express gratitude to this amazing fighter wing for the past two and half years. I've learned more about leading and serving, humility, grace, teamwork, connection, sorrow, joy, vulnerability, and courage than I ever thought possible. We truly have something special here, and it's each of you."

Smith relinquished command to accept a new position as the Director of Operations at Joint Force Headquarters.

As Col. Kornberg accepted accountability of the wing, he also touted the Airmen in the unit.

"To the men and women of the 124th Fighter Wing, simply put, I am in awe of what you have proven to be within the realm of possible. I could speak for hours on the accomplishments of individual deployments and large-scale movements...", said Kornberg, who has served in the Idaho Air National Guard since 1996.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to guide the wing, but even more so, I am committed to the well-being of our Airmen and their families."

"Col. Kornberg has extensive experience in leadership, starting at the flight, squadron, and group, and I know that experience is going to lead him to help you get over the challenges we've got in front of us," said Donnellan.

Kornberg earned his commission in 1997. Shortly after commissioning he completed undergraduate pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas. While in the IDANG, he flew the A-10 Warthog and held command positions in various squadrons. His most recent command was as the 124th Maintenance Group commander. He has deployed in support of Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to guide the wing, but even more so, I am committed to the well-being of our Airmen and their families," said Kornberg.

"You can count on the fact that I will do my best each and every day to keep the distractions outside the gate and provide you the tools and resources to keep your focus on what is most important – our people and the mission," he said. "I'm proud to be a Guardsmen of the great state of Idaho, and I'm proud to serve alongside each and every one of you. Go Guard. Attack."



Idaho Air National Guard Announces OAY 2021 Winners with Surprise Visits

By Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras



Airman 1st Class Paige Litke / Airman category

The Idaho Air National Guard announced the winners of the Outstanding Airmen of the Year, 2021, by visiting each winner's work center and surprising the Airmen at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, January 25, 2022.

The banquet, normally held in person, was canceled due to COVID-19 concerns, and leadership from the IDANG chose to visit each winner instead of hosting a virtual event.

"Due to COVID protocols and restrictions we had to cancel the banquet," said Brig. Gen. Tim Donnellan, the assistant adjutant general-air and commander of the Idaho Air National Guard. "One of the most important things we do is honor the best and brightest of us all."

Donnellan went on to say, "Chief Bongiovi and I would like to also congratulate our runners up and thank all the members of the OAY committee that make this program so successful."

The winners and their top three accomplishments are:

In the Airman category and from the 124th Maintenance Group, Airman 1st Class Paige Litke. She processed more than 11,000 rounds of 30mm ammo for a safety time compliance technical order that resulted in zero missed sorties. She also volunteered for two TDYs and a deployment, in addition to completing 324 core training



Tech. Sgt. Hannah Berry / NCO category

tasks in 12 months. Litke was key in resetting the hazardous material program, fixing 150 discrepancies.

In the non-commissioned officer category and from the 124th Maintenance Group, Tech. Sgt. Hannah Berry. She recouped \$4.5 million for the Air Force reserves by identifying an invalid transaction on the ledger. Berry also managed a more than \$830,000 budget, in addition to the flying hour program budget, enabling more than 2,200 sorties for the A-10 Thunderbolt II. She also was key in revamping the local Air Force Repair and Enhancement Program, improving returns from the program by more than 400%, a total value of \$106,000 being returned to maintenance.



Master Sgt. Daniel Keller / SNCO category

In the senior non-commissioned officer category and from the 124th Operations Group, Master Sgt. Daniel Keller. He built the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron's weapons and tactics program from the ground up in about four months—redesigning the unit's training and strategic focus. In addition to that, Keller organized a five-unit close air support training event with Airmen attached to air support operations squadrons and special tactics squadrons from Air Force Special Operations Command, Air Combat Command, and the Air National Guard at Nellis Air Force Base's weapons school. He was also recognized for heroism and awarded the Airman's Medal by the Kentucky National Guard's adjutant general for extracting two people from a burning vehicle.



In the company grade officer category and from the 124th Fighter Wing Staff, Capt. Andrew Freund. He volunteered for a six-month tour to fill a shortfall with a U.S. Air Forces Europe active duty unit, managing the \$918 million program budget for the European Deterrence Initiative for bedding down MQ-9 Reapers across the major command. Upon returning to Idaho, Freund managed the IDANG's more than \$83 million budget, including leading the fiscal year 2021 closeout operations that ensured a 99.9% obligation rate for the appropriated funds, in addition to funding more than \$1 million worth of unfunded requests. He also volunteered in the local community and on base with more than 250 hours to a church youth ministry, as a representative for the FWS combined federal campaign, and was a project officer for the IDANG for the Idaho TAG leadership day.

In the honor guard category and from the 124th Maintenance Group, Senior Master Sgt. Keely Lowe. She was instrumental in a national Flag Day event where she recited the pledge of allegiance and retired 60 American



flags with honor guard members and community civilian organizations. Lowe was the MXG protocol representative and facilitated 14 promotions and six retirement ceremonies in accordance with Air Force standards and traditions. She also coordinated the Operation Home Front Toy Drive, sorting through more than 12,000 toys, managing 14 volunteers and accumulating more than 105 hours of community service.

In the first sergeant category and from the 124th Operations Group, Master Sgt. Leamon Keeling. He revived the OG's first sergeant role by leading and mentoring more than 200 Airmen in professional development and career path options, aligning with the commander's vision. Keeling was also handpicked by the OG commander to establish and manage a resilience program, providing more than 515 training hours to qualify 23 members as resilience training assistants. He also helped 37 members through significant life events, which in turn ensured individual and unit mission readiness.

The next step for most of the winners is competing against other ANG Airmen in the western region.



Taking Training to a new generation for the first time in Idaho

By Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras; Photos by Staff Sgt. Mercedes Wilds



The Idaho Air National Guard welcomed U.S. Marines from the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 225, who fly the F-35B Lightning II, to Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, January 7-9, 2022.

The squadron brought four of the fifth-generation fighters to train with A-10 Thunderbolt IIs from the 124th Fighter Wing's 190th Fighter Squadron.

"The F-35B is a fifth-generation fighter and the Marine Corps version of the Joint Strike Fighter, which utilizes Short Take-Off Vertical Landing," said Lt. Col. Mike Hampton, the director of operations for the 190th

Fighter Squadron. "It can take off and land vertically on boats or short unconventional type airstrips, and is unparalleled in its ability to identify, locate, and destroy the most modern air defenses on the battlefield."

Integrating and training with different airframe generations provides a unique collaboration.

"This shows that one of the best attack aircraft in the inventory, the mighty A-10 Thunderbolt II, can lethally integrate with the newest, most advanced aircraft in the world, the F-35 Lightning II," said Hampton. "Additionally, it is an opportunity for two services to





train together in anticipation of fighting alongside each other in future conflicts.”

This anticipation and preparation are essential for combat readiness against a near peer enemy.

“Training with other units is a critical component to our wing maintaining combat readiness,” said Col. Chad Kornberg, the 124th Fighter Wing commander. “We typically operate in a joint combat environment, working hand-in-hand with other services, and this training is imperative to prepare our pilots for combat operations.”

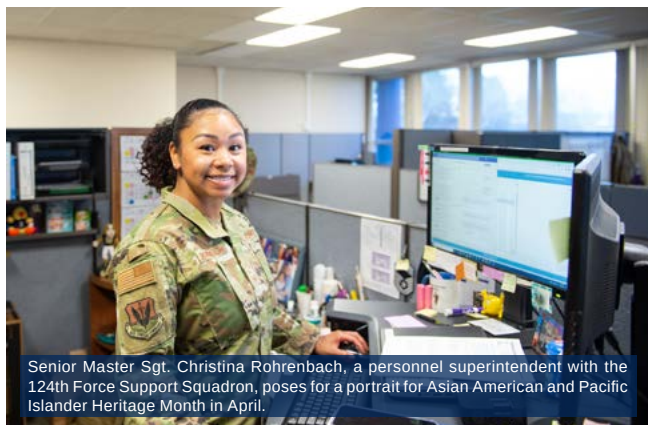
The training will focus on strengths that each airframe has.

“We’ll focus on Forward Air Control (Airborne) or FAC-A, which entails A-10 pilots finding targets on the battlefield and passing targeting information to the F-35s, so they can strike each target using the best munition available, ensuring friendly troops on the ground are safe and giving them the freedom of maneuver,” said Hampton.

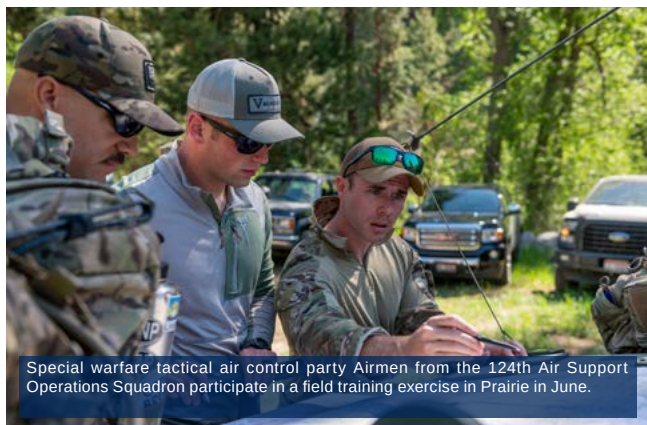
Having units visit and train is nothing new, but this trip was a first for Idaho.

“This is the first time we’ve worked with F-35s and we continue to build these types of relationships throughout all services and airframes,” said Hampton. “Other units outside of Idaho continue to come here because we have some of the best ranges in the world, thanks to the outstanding Airmen in the Idaho Air National Guard.”





Senior Master Sgt. Christina Rohrenbach, a personnel superintendent with the 124th Force Support Squadron, poses for a portrait for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in April.



Special warfare tactical air control party Airmen from the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron participate in a field training exercise in Prairie in June.

2021 Year in Review



Thirty Airmen from the 124th Civil Engineer Squadron's Gowen Field Fire Department trained in two specialized burn trailers for over 80 live interior fires in June.



A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, refuels A-10 Thunderbolt II's from the 124th Fighter Wing over Mountain Home, Idaho, in July.



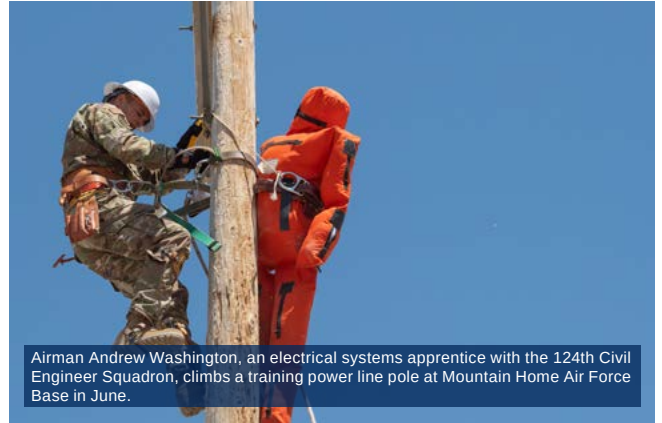
Munitions Systems Specialists from the 124th Maintenance Squadron assembled munitions at the annual 124th Fighter Wing Ammo Rodeo in July.



Senior Airman Gavin L. Laws, an aircraft armament systems specialist with the 124th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, tests weapon's stations on an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Mountain Home Air Force Base in June.



A UH-60 Blackhawk from the Idaho Army National Guard's 1-183rd Aviation Regiment provides transportation from the Saylor Creek Range for visiting U.S. Army Rangers with the 2nd Battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment in October.

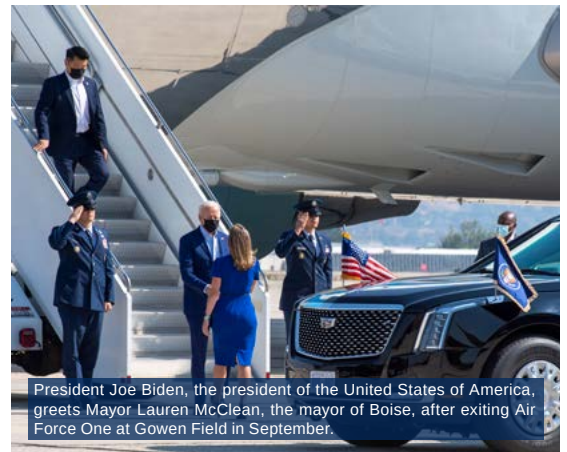


Airman Andrew Washington, an electrical systems apprentice with the 124th Civil Engineer Squadron, climbs a training power line pole at Mountain Home Air Force Base in June.

2021 Year in Review



Airmen from the 124th Fighter Wing Inspector General Office, 124th Security Forces Squadron, and Gowen Field Fire Department conduct an active shooter training exercise at Gowen Field in May.



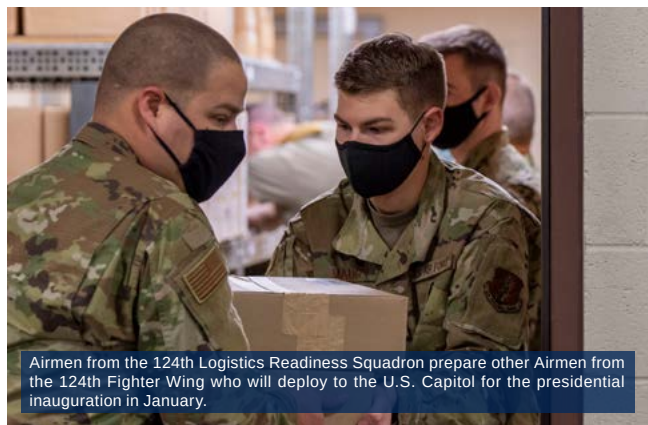
President Joe Biden, the president of the United States of America, greets Mayor Lauren McClean, the mayor of Boise, after exiting Air Force One at Gowen Field in September.



U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Maurice L. Williams, center, command chief, Air National Guard, meets with members of the 124th Maintenance Group during a visit to Gowen Field in September.



Airmen with the 118th Force Support Squadron, Tennessee Air National Guard, joined members of the 124th FSS for a joint training exercise at Gowen Field in June.



Airmen from the 124th Logistics Readiness Squadron prepare other Airmen from the 124th Fighter Wing who will deploy to the U.S. Capitol for the presidential inauguration in January.

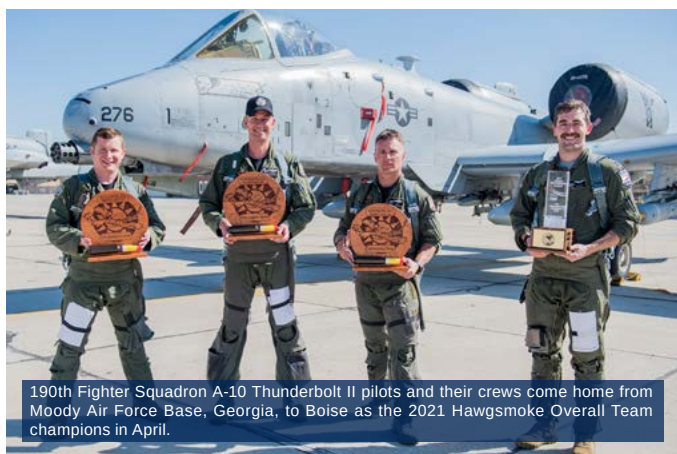


Airman 1st Class Raigan Wendt, an aerospace medical technician with the 124th Medical Group, wins the Idaho Air National Guard's 2020 Outstanding Airman of the Year Airman category during a virtual ceremony at Gowen Field in February.

2021 Year in Review



Staff Sgt. Paul R. Conti and Staff Sgt. Tyson J. Sather from the 124th Civil Engineer Squadron perform post-attack reconnaissance during a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear skills exercise at Gowen Field in August.



190th Fighter Squadron A-10 Thunderbolt II pilots and their crews come home from Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, to Boise as the 2021 Hawgsmoke Overall Team champions in April.



Members of the 124th Fighter Wing and their families observe A-10 Thunderbolt II's in action at the Saylor Creek Range in March.

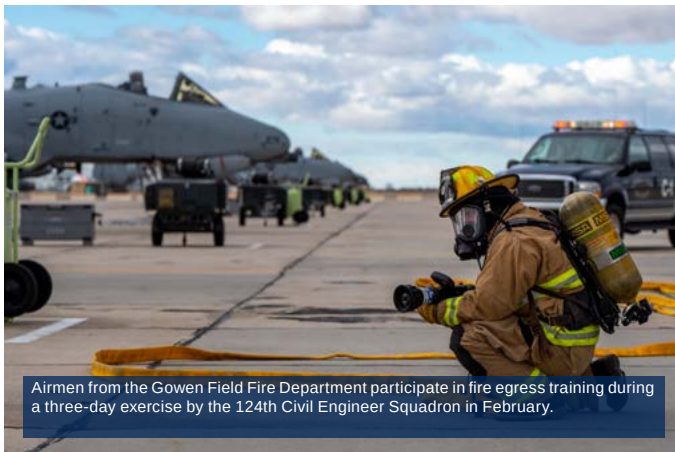


Idaho Air National Guard recruiters attended the Boise State Football tailgate with a booth called the Air Raid in Boise, in October.



A pilot with the 190th Fighter Squadron flies an A-10 Thunderbolt II with a newly painted World War II heritage paint scheme from the Air National Guard's paint facility in Sioux City, Iowa, to its new home at Gowen Field in May.

2021 Year in Review



Airmen from the Gowen Field Fire Department participate in fire egress training during a three-day exercise by the 124th Civil Engineer Squadron in February.



Special warfare tactical air control party Airmen from the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron participate in a field training exercise in Prairie, Idaho, in June.



Airmen from the 124th Security Forces Squadron snowshoe through fresh powder to break trail during cold weather training in February near Idaho City, Idaho.



Retirements

Congratulations Col. Chad Crocker from the 190th FS
and Chief Master Sgt. Shawn Roberts from the 266th RANS!





Finis Flight

Col. Shannon Smith celebrated with family and friends after completing his final flight on Nov. 6, 2021, at Gowen Field.





2020

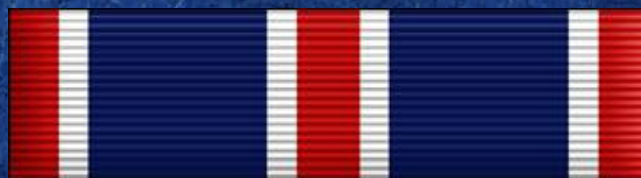
124th Fighter Wing

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

448 Airmen of the 124th FW and 156 increments of cargo deployed to 18 locations across the world during the height of the COVID pandemic. The 190th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron completed 3,356 flight hours and 890 sorties while in country.

Airmen of 124th Air Support Operations Squadron provided support to the Africa Command East African Response Force and Central Command's Syria and Iraq Special Operations Joint Task Force, providing immediate coverage to DoD assets within 36 hours of the terrorist attack in Manda Bay, Kenya.

Combat proven Critical Causality Airlift Teams with the 124th Medical Group crewed 10 missions and 23 combat hours, caring for 10 critically injured or ill patients with a 100% survival rate.





2020

124th Fighter Wing

Governor's Outstanding Unit Award

The 124th Civil Engineer Squadron executed eight construction projects worth \$2.5 million, \$850,000 in ramp block repairs and a \$25,000 update to the wing's 60-building alarm system.

The 124th Medical Group stood up the Idaho National Guard's first COVID hotline to create a central location for managing COVID cases and impacts.

Airmen from the 124th FW rapidly deployed to the Idaho Youth Challenge Academy during the COVID-19 outbreak and provided over 100 tests to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff.



