

# THE BEACON

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

FALL 2022



MISSION - PEOPLE - FUTURE

## COL. CHAD KORNBERG

It's hard to believe it's been a year since I took command of the fighter wing. This position has allowed me a vantage point that few get the opportunity to see, and it leaves me in awe of what we are able to accomplish every day.

Our wing recently hosted HAWGSMOKE — a biennial bombing, missile, and tactical gunnery competition for A-10 Thunderbolt II units from across the Combat Air Force. Not only did we host the competition, but the 190th Skullbangers won it for the fourth time — more than any other unit since its inception. However, this event is more than just a fun way to accomplish training. The camaraderie and connection among Hawg drivers coming together continues a shared legacy that could not happen any other way. It's a legacy that ties individuals to the mission, while remembering those connected to it from years past. I would like to thank all who had a hand in making this a successful continuation of A-10 unit culture and ATTACK pilot heritage.



We also took a small contingency from the Idaho Air National Guard to Washington, D.C. in October for the State-of-the-State update. The purpose is to keep our story — our capabilities and accomplishments — in the forefront of ANG senior leaders' minds. Equally important is the opportunity to work unit issues face-to-face with those at the ANG Readiness Center charged with helping us plan and execute solutions to those problems. I also want to ensure that we don't forget to share our story among ourselves and our families so that you and your loved ones know how essential you are to this team. Your commitment to the mission and each other means everything to the future of our force.



The support of your family means everything to you, that support is a driving reason for re-establishing the mailing of our Beacon publication. Please take the time to share your story with your loved ones, especially those from your units who built the foundation on which we stand.

As we continue to transition into another fiscal year and continue our focus on our enduring priorities of Mission, People, and Future, my desire is that each of you understand how essential you are to the mission we are called to execute. I know from one drill weekend to the next, it is sometimes hard to maintain the bigger picture — to see the importance of what you do to keep the 124th Fighter Wing a ready force. I also know there is some uncertainty about the future, and though I can't tell you for sure what's coming next, one thing will not change: The 124th Fighter Wing is a combat organization; it's who we are, deeply rooted in our legacy, and an entrenched part of our culture. Know every echelon of leadership within the IDNG is committed to keeping Idaho, Fighter Country!

As we move into the holiday season, please be hyper vigilant of those around you.



It is this time of year that can be exceedingly difficult for many in our wing family. Your words of encouragement can have a bigger impact than you may ever know. I also encourage you to enjoy time with your loved ones. I wish I could give you each the gift of the view I have of our wing accomplishments. You are an amazing force, together we make an unstoppable team, and I'm proud to serve alongside you each and every day.

It's always a great day to be a Guardsman in the Great State of Idaho.

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Go Guard, ATTACK!  
Col. Chad Kornberg





## It's been an honor - Chief Tritle's Farewell

As an ardent and long-time Cubs fan (baseball analogies are my thing), I'm reminded of the final game of the 2016 World Series when one of the cameramen caught first baseman Anthony Rizzo clutching his elder teammate David Ross's arm with a clearly emotional tension. The Cubs were within hours of winning their first World Series in 108 years, and summing up his emotions, Rizzo looks at Ross and says, "I'm in a glass case of emotions right now."

I can relate.

Twenty-five years after setting foot on Lackland Air Force Base I'm going to hang the uniform in the closet and head off to the other side of the runway in retirement. It's been a journey, a very worthwhile and fulfilling journey. The Air Force and the Alaska and Idaho Air National Guard have provided me with experiences I never imagined I could have. I knew the Air Force was my career path at a very early age, but that still didn't prepare me for what I can now see on this side of two and a half decades.

It's the people.

I've had jobs that weren't fun. But I'll never forget the people I worked those jobs with. I've been to places that weren't overly appealing, places I'll likely never care to go back to. But I'll never forget the people who experienced those places with me. I've worked for more commanders than I have fingers and toes. I'll never forget the leadership lessons learned from each of them.

I've been privileged to work with a ton of chiefs, most of whom were far better leaders than I. I'll never forget them and all of the accomplishments we were able to make together.

Thank you, Idaho Air National Guard. Thank you 124th Fighter Wing for taking a chance on an unknown character from the north. Thank you for making me and my family part of yours. It's been an honor and a privilege to serve alongside each of you!

I'm leaving the wing knowing it's in capable hands, but I'd still like to remind everyone that #1 is now #1 and that's it. Please continue to work every day with the mindset that what you do directly contributes to bad guys giving their lives to their bad-guy countries.

You're at the tip of the spear of one of the most lethal forms of Air Power the Air Force has ever had, but it's simply a static display without the ceaseless efforts of each of you. Teach our new Airmen what you know, show them what you do, and keep your focus on maintaining an America that remains the best hope for freedom in this crazy world.

Thank you, Idaho, for making these last days feel like a World Series victory!



Photos by: Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan



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# 124TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

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Col. Chad Kornberg

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Maj. Rebecca Solosabal

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Capt. Bonnie Blakely

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Staff Sgt. Mercedee Wilds

Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan

Senior Airman Jadyn Sanchez

Mr. Ryan White

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## WHERE TO FIND US



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To be America's premier fighter wing;  
developing and retaining warfighters for  
our nation and guardians for our state

## MISSION

Combat excellence

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An A-10 Thunderbolt II, from the Idaho National Guard's 124th Fighter Wing, Boise, Idaho, performs a strafing run during the Hawgsmoke 2022 gunnery competition at the Saylor Creek Bombing Range, south of Mountain Home, Idaho, Sept. 8, 2022. The competition traces its heritage back to 1949 and the Gunsmoke gunnery competition. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joshua C. Allmaras)

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# HAWGSMOKE

STORY BY: SENIOR MASTER SGT. JOSHUA ALLMARAS

PHOTOS BY: STAFF SGT. MERCEDEE WILDS & STAFF SGT. JOSEPH MORGAN

The Idaho National Guard's 124th Fighter Wing, 190th Fighter Squadron hosted and won Hawgsmoke 2022 at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, and at ranges south of Mountain Home, Sept. 6-8, 2022.

Airmen from active-duty U.S. Air Force, U.S. Air Force Reserve, and the U.S. Air National Guard from 15 different squadrons participated in the A-10 Thunderbolt II gunnery competition.

The event is special to the warthawg community.

"The overall competition is about tactical training," said Col. Ryan Richardson, the 124th Operations Group commander. "Yet it's more than that, it's about the community of pilots and maintainers, and about showing our local community who we are and what we do."

Hawgsmoke was born out of Gunsmoke, an air-to-surface gunnery competition that dates back to 1949. Gunsmoke was held until 1995, and Hawgsmoke was born in 2000. The biennial event tests the combat capabilities of hawg drivers in bombing, missile, and tactical gunnery tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Hawgsmoke is more than a tradition; it's about why hawg drivers fly the beloved A-10 Thunderbolt II.

"What this event is really about are the guys on the ground," said Maj. Elijah Culpepper, a pilot from the 190th Fighter Squadron and one of the key planners of Hawgsmoke 2022. "The mission is the people on the ground. That's what flying the hawg is about."

The camaraderie among hawg drivers was evident during the closing ceremonies as they yelled in unison without coordination, "Attack!" – a catch phrase of the hawg driver community.

The 190th Fighter Squadron won Hawgsmoke 2021, an event that was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 190th FS pilots have won the event three times since 2000, and, leading into the competition, they were tied for the most wins with the 47th Fighter Squadron from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. This year's competition broke the tie.



**"The mission is the people on the ground.  
That's what flying the hawg is about."**





# DOG TAGS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY:  
STAFF SGT. JOSEPH MORGAN

In the cold, early morning hours of September 24, 2022, members from the 124th Security Forces Squadron gathered in the shadow of a soldier's cross, silently assembling their rucksacks as Master Sgt. Nate Towers, SFS first sergeant, handed out dog tags, one by one. The dog tags weren't theirs, but those of security forces members who died during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Those dog tags provided the cadence for this year's memorial ruck march as they rattled and clanged against the members' chests.

"When we think we are completely depleted with nothing left to give, the body has approximately 40 percent more push remaining," said Staff Sgt. Adam Isla, a SFS flight chief. "If we get to the point where we're tired and can then remember that the person around our neck gave everything — sometimes that can help draw out that remaining push."

Every September, in an effort to never forget the lives lost on 9/11 and the lives given in the war that followed, memorial marches like this one take place across the military. During this march, members travel or ruck 9.11 kilometers. The soldier's cross and the dog tags are an added layer of remembrance at some memorial events. The dog tags and the sounds they make drive home the poignancy of this event.

"That's a daunting sound for me personally," said Isla. "I've worked in the honor guard and attended many military funerals and buried many of my friends. Hearing those dog tags when you feel tired or exhausted is kind of their way of saying, 'Hey, push through. I'm here. Do it for me.'"

The phrase that permeates this time of remembrance is a call: Never Forget. And while this phrase calls us to not forget the lives that were lost, it also asks us to not forget what America became in the wake of 9/11.

"When I think of the phrase 'never forget' it reminds me of how we became the nation we are today and of what it means to keep it alive and to remember the sacrifices that were made," said Staff Sgt. Bianca Barnes, a SFS assistant flight chief. "It wasn't just military — it was EMTs, firefighters, and everybody working together."

"When 9/11 happened, our nation was somewhat torn, but that brought us together," said Isla. "Race and religion didn't matter and we came together as a nation. Today we should look back and never forget that. We came together then and can come together again now."

During this 21st year of remembrance of the events that transpired on September 11, 2001, the 124th Fighter Wing, with the sounds of dog tags rattling and the call to never forget ringing in ears, compels all Airmen to remember who we lost and who we became.





# Out with the SABC In with the TCCC

Story and photos by: Staff Sgt. Joseph Morgan

As the Air Force seeks to capitalize on the whole Airman concept, Airmen across the world are pivoting their approach to fundamental medical care away from Self Aid Buddy Care methods towards the more combat-intensive tactical combat casualty care.

During October's drill, the 124th Medical Group conducted an All Service Member level TCCC course here on Gowen Field, inviting Airmen from around the base to become some of the wing's first certified TCCC instructors.

"Developed over the last 20 years by multiple doctors, special forces medics and paramedics, TCCC is more focused on combat medicine and the injuries one would most likely sustain in a trauma or combat environment," said Tech. Sgt. Annelise Bertleson, a TCCC instructor with the 124th MDG.



While TCCC has been practiced among medical personnel and security forces members for years, most Airmen still utilize the older medical techniques presented in SABC. All of this is changing as these cadet instructors complete the first phase of their certified instructor training. From here, they'll gain access to online resources where they can further their education. Once certified, instructors will be tasked with bringing their respective groups up to speed on TCCC concepts.

If you'd like to know more about TCCC or are interested in becoming an instructor, contact the 124th Medical Group by phone at (208) 422-5369 or by sending an email to [124.fw.mdg.org@us.af.mil](mailto:124.fw.mdg.org@us.af.mil).





# FREUTEL PROMOTES

Senior Master Sgt. Kyle Freutel promoted to Chief Master Sgt. during a ceremony at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, Sept. 23, 2022. Freutel is the 194th Chief in the Idaho Air National Guard and has been serving since June 10, 1987.





# BENFIELD ASSUMES COMMAND

## MXS ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND

Maj. Daniel Benfield  
assumed  
command of the  
124th Maintenance  
Squadron Sept. 25,  
2022, during a  
ceremony at  
Gowen Field, Boise,  
Idaho.



# ULTIMATE CHAMPIONS



Airmen, 13 to be exact, from around the wing assembled over September 25, 2022, to represent the fighter wing staff during the First Ultimate Frisbee Tournament. What started as a Cinderella Story quickly transformed into a vast array of warrior spirit, athletic prowess, and camaraderie. Each member brought a set of specialized skills, that when added with the rest of the group, created the perfect recipe of perseverance and domination. The team: "Staff Infection" would like to thank the DPHs and SARC for putting on the event as well as the fierce competitors that participated on the field. Team members are all looking forward toward keeping their reign alive and are excited to see what competition shows up next year.

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## Holiday Assistance





# Hartnoll Promotes

Senior Master Sgt. Mark A. Hartnoll, a quality assurance superintendent with the 124th Maintenance Group, was promoted to the rank of Chief Master Sgt. by Col. John R. Williams, III, commander of the 124th MXG, July 8, 2022, in a ceremony at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho. Hartnoll was also presented with a chief's coin and a plaque to celebrate his promotion.

Photos by: Mr. Ryan White





# OUTSTANDING AIRMAN

STORY BY: STAFF SGT. MERCEDEE WILDS

Master Sgt. Dan Keller, the chief of weapons and tactics with the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron, Idaho Air National Guard, was selected as the Air National Guard's 2021 Outstanding Airman of the Year Senior NCO.

Although Keller started his impressive 17-year-military career in the U.S. Navy, he has adopted the whole Airman concept and embraced the foundation for what it means to be an Airman by establishing three pillars for excellence: leadership and job performance, significant self-improvement and base or community involvement.

Keller joined the Navy in 2003 where he spent over 5 years on active duty. After a brief break in service to pursue educational opportunities he joined the Kentucky Air National Guard as a combat controller where he exceeded expectations and excelled in his career. After multiple combat deployments, Keller shifted focus and became a weapons officer for the weapons school at Nellis Air Force Base before bringing his knowledge and experience to the 124th Fighter Wing as the 124th ASOS chief of weapons and tactics.

Keller has focused on revamping and re-energizing the weapons and tactics program for the 124th Operations Group, creating systems and processes to help the fighter wing keep functioning at extremely high levels.

"I care about this career field, and I care about the Airmen getting qualified," said Keller. "If they find themselves overseas, they will have guys relying on them to have advanced training. That means a lot to me."

Guardsmen are unique in that they are able to bring their experiences from all walks of life, which lead to exceptional leadership skills.



Keller believes that his leadership skills stem from his time in the Navy.

"The Navy taught me a lot about the NCO Corps, like supervising people and how different people have different motivations," said Keller. "We're all motivated by something. Whether it be you get to leave work early if you finish early or you will get praise if you finish early. I think learning how to identify what motivates a person from an early age and understanding that some people have limits, with their ability to progress, whether it be technical proficiency, or their ability to supervise people and then acknowledging that not everybody is supposed to be in charge of everything."

For his commitment to embracing the whole Airman concept, Keller was awarded the title of the ANG's 2021 Senior NCO Outstanding Airmen of the Year.

"It's a very humbling acknowledgement. I appreciate the amount of effort from the senior enlisted leadership and the amount of work they put into pushing their enlisted people forward, and trying to acknowledge what people have been doing," said Keller. "Internal of the squadron, the group, the wing and the state, it helps remind the rest of the guard, we're doing the right thing."

# DANG VISIT

**U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, director, Air National Guard, spoke to Airmen with the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho National Guard at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, Aug. 20, 2022. While addressing the Airmen, he outlined priorities and took candid questions from the audience.**



**Photos by:**  
**Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur**  
**Staff Sgt. Mercedee Wilds**



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## JOIN ESSENTIAL SIX!

The Essential six is a unified group of ranks E-1 to E-6 with a goal to create change, exchange ideas and resolve issues that affect efficiency, morale and welfare

**ATTEND A  
MEETING:**

Bldg. 148 conference room  
Saturday of drill at 1400

For questions contact SSgt Thompson at 422-5651

