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GUARD POST

2024.11

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Air
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Edition

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RETIRES**

Hear His Story on Page 16

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PETER MOELLER

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Iowa continues to pursue the interests of you and your Families. New resolutions from our National and State Conference are an indicator that Soldiers and Airmen continue to struggle and home and work. EANGI is tirelessly working to close the gap on inequities between the National Guard and the Active Component. From immediate access to mental health to disability benefits, our association will not rest until your needs are met.

While our organization made huge strides in 2024, next year will be a big lift and fast paced. With the 2IBCT mobilizing next summer, our association is positioned to support them before, during, and after. We are providing a plethora of events consistently throughout the year to ensure we take care of our Soldiers and Airmen. The focus will be We Care For Iowa Foundation to support our service members in their greatest time of need.

I want to personally thank Command Sergeant Major Matthew Strasser, the Command Senior Enlisted Leader of the Iowa National Guard, Chief Master Sergeant Sarah Orwig, the State Command Chief of the Iowa Air National Guard and CSM Christopher Casey, the Command Sergeant Major of the Iowa Army National Guard. These individuals have brought a level of unmatched motivation, selfless service, and esprit de corps that benefit all Soldiers and Airmen. They see and know the value of what professional organizations do to support the guard. We are excited to work with them to meet the needs of the Iowa National Guard.

I would encourage all of you to register for state annual convention as soon as you are able. Save the date for March and ensure you get your hotel rooms because we anticipate selling out quickly. We hit a record number of attendees last year and think we will exceed this year. We are working to have some great entertainment, a professional development plan where our PDs can put tangible education on their resume, and even a new hospitality area that will allow for enlisted personnel to enjoy and build new relationships.

Stay tuned for the printed Guard Post in January. We will have the full conference agenda and some of the great legislative initiatives that we continue to defend.

Your liberties we prize and your rights we will maintain.



PETER MOELLER
EANGI President



FROM THE SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

CSM MATTHEW STRASSER

Good day Enlisted Teammates. It has certainly been a busy few months since the last publication so this will be an update on things going on in Guard-Nation!

On the Air National Guard side, recruiting and retention continue to be the priority. Over that last several months, the air numbers have increased to get the Iowa Air National Guard back to near 100% strength. This is great news and the Wings deserve a lot of credit for going after recruits to fill the gaps. This has been a significant change for the Wings that has paid off greatly. The Wings are also working together to assist in the announced closure of the 133 Test Squadron in Fort Dodge. Both Wings are assisting those Airmen in finding the best job for them at another location. Although it is never a good day to close down a portion of the Iowa Guard, it is great to see the Wings working together in the best interest of the individual Airmen that are affected by the closure.

In the Army National Guard, things have been no less busy. The 2/34 IBCT completed their XCTC rotation at Camp Ripley, Minnesota. As we all know though, when the BCT does a major exercise, the entire State is involved. Members from every Major Subordinate Command took part in what was a highly successful rotation. Recruiting has also been a focal point. The last few years have been tough sledding for the Army National Guard recruiting efforts. This year, however, we will finish the year with nearly 150 more accessions than last year. Still not where we need to be, but this year promises to be better. Another major accomplishment for the Army National Guard was with the Best Warrior Competitions. In April, we completed the 4 day State competition to identify the top enlisted and top NCO of the State. Uniquely this year, we also hosted the Regional Competition in May where we incorporated the City of Johnston into many of our tasks being conducted. In the end, SSG Lucas Peterson from the 334 BSB came out on top for the NCO's. He competed in the National Competition in August out in Vermont and was subsequently selected to be the Army National Guards Squad Leader for the All-Army Best Squad Competition. He will compete in late September and October. This is the first time Iowa has had a warrior compete at the All-Army competition.

For the total force, things are going very well. I am continually humbled by the excellence in our force. Our members are truly the best this State has to offer and are perfect examples of citizen-soldier. I am constantly asked by our retirees and members of the Associations what they can do to help. Well, the best thing you can do is "sell" the Guard in our communities. We are in a constant battle to educate the population on what we do and who we are. Get out and tell your own personal story about being an Iowa Guardsman. That alone will be the tipping point for our accessions numbers to continue to rise. You are the best possible ambassadors for the Iowa Team and we need you.

Thanks for all you do!

CSM Matthew T Strasser
Command Senior Enlisted Leader IANG



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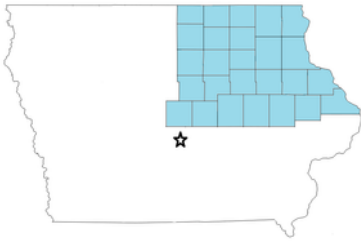
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District 5 represents the Airmen of the 132nd Air Wing and state headquarters.

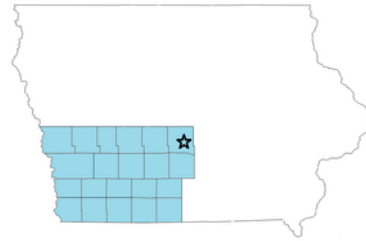
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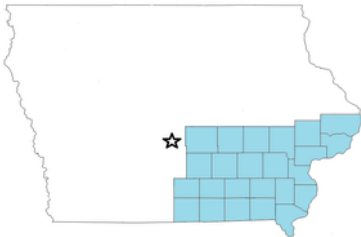


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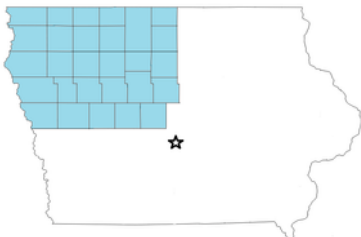


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SUPPORTING OTHERS

132D WING CONDUCTS HAWKI FURY EXERCISE WITH NDANG

Story by Master Sgt. Michael Kelly

The Iowa Air National Guard's 132d Wing conducted a Hawki Fury Exercise alongside the 119th Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard, September 13-14, 2024 in Des Moines, Iowa. The exercise marked the second occasion that an MQ-9 Reaper was launched, flown and recovered in Des Moines airspace.

The exercise team comprised of 124th Attack Squadron, IANG, and maintenance personnel and equipment from the 119th Wing demonstrated Agile Combat Employment (ACE) concepts by executing MQ-9 SATCOM launch and recovery (SLR) capabilities operating between Fargo, North Dakota and Des Moines, Iowa. The 132d Wing aircrew flew the entirety of the exercise via SATCOM from local cockpits; departing from the requirement to have 119th Wing aircrew takeoff and land the airplane via line-of-sight datalinks.

A key highlight of the event was the successful launch, flight, and recovery of the MQ-9 Reaper in Des Moines airspace. This marks only the second time the 132d Wing has flown and recovered

the MQ-9 Reaper over the city, demonstrating significant advancements in their operational ability and tactical precision. This milestone achievement demonstrated the ability for a Mission Command Element (MCE) to fly an aircraft from a dislocated wing and execute a multi-day exercise with only local aircraft maintenance support being outsourced from the 119th Wing.

"The Hawkeyes and Happy Hooligans have formed a sound working relationship over the years, through combat operations, CONUS continuation training (CT) flights and local exercises," said Maj. Joshua Rudolf, 124th ATKS director of operations. "The 119th Wing has served a vital role in providing local training sorties for our crews to maintain flying and weapons employment currencies, tactical proficiencies, SATCOM launch and recovery training, and opportunities to execute large force exercises at multiple air-to-ground ranges across the United States."

The MQ-9 Reaper, a remotely

piloted aircraft primarily used for intelligence gathering and strike missions, plays an increasingly crucial role in the Air National Guard's ability to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance missions. The successful execution of the Hawki Fury exercise emphasizes the Air National Guard's ability to adapt to modern warfare tactics and integrate emerging technologies.

"This year's exercise reenergized local exposure to the MQ-9 flying mission at the 132d Wing and demonstrated improvements to agile MQ-9 Reaper employment from Hawki Fury 2022," said Rudolf.



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132D WING MEMBER HELPS AIR FORCE PAINTBALL TEAM WIN COMMANDER'S CUP VICTORY

Story by Master Sgt. Michael Kelly

Master Sgt. Nicholas Dodge of the 168th Cyberspace Operations Squadron, Iowa Air National Guard, is no stranger to dedication, precision, and teamwork. As a skilled airman and an avid paintball enthusiast, he brought those qualities to the Major League Paintball World Cup in Kissimmee, Florida, November 6-10, 2024. There, Dodge and his team made history by leading the Air Force to victory in the annual Commander's Cup tournament, a prestigious competition for military service members within the paintball community.

"The Commander's Cup is more than just a paintball tournament, it's a celebration of camaraderie, resilience, and shared experiences among current service members, veterans, and retirees," said Dodge.

Dodge said the event was organized through the Veteran Militia, a Facebook group of over 2,800 veterans connected through their love of paintball, the Commander's Cup has

become a rallying point for military personnel seeking community and competition.

Since high school, Dodge has been an avid paintball enthusiast, playing both recreationally and in tournaments. For the past 3 years, Dodge has been involved with the veteran paintball club while this year marked his first time competing in the Commander's Cup.

Master Sgt. Dodge, representing the Air Force team, stepped onto the field with a clear mission: to unseat the reigning champions, the Navy, and help his team achieve victory. The team's first matchup saw the Air Force dominate the Navy with a decisive 7-3 victory, while the Marines narrowly edged out the Army, 6-5. These victories set the stage for a high-stakes final showdown between the Air Force and the Marines.

In the championship match, Dodge and his teammates showcased their tactical

expertise on the field, defeating the Marines and securing the Commander's Cup for the Air Force. Winning the coveted cup was a surreal feeling for Dodge.

"It's incredible to represent the Air Force and connect with fellow service members and veterans," said Dodge. "Paintball gives us a chance to channel our skills, build bonds, and support each other both on and off the field.

Dodge said the Commander's Cup is more than a competition; it's a testament to the resilience and unity of military veterans. Through events like these, veterans find not only a sense of

belonging but also a platform to support one another, whether they're seeking camaraderie, networking professionally, or offering help in times of need.

"There's something for everyone and I've found what works for me," said Dodge.

Thanks to the contributions of Master Sgt. Nicholas Dodge, the Air Force team exemplified the values of teamwork, determination, and excellence, bringing home the Commander's Cup and reminding everyone of the strength that comes from shared purpose and community.





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185TH WING PATCH MAKES A COMEBACK AFTER THIRTEEN-YEAR ABSENCE

Story by Senior Master Sgt. Vincent De Groot

After a thirteen-year absence, Airman from the Iowa Air National Guard's 185th Air Refueling Wing are once again wearing their official unit patch.

Unit members received the new Operational Camouflage Pattern-185th ARW Wing patch during the November 2024 training weekend.

While the allowance of long abandoned major command and unit patches was approved in 2018, bringing patches back proved to be a much more difficult task than taking them away.

Those who were part of the Air Force in the 2010s will remember that it was the advent of the grey, tiger striped Airman Battle Uniform that did away with unit patches on Halloween in 2011.

Before the ABU, both the major command and unit, or Wing patches were sewn on chest pockets and had been part of the Air Force utility uniform for decades.

The reason for the elimination of the patches was somewhat ambiguous but had to do with cost savings and lower uniform maintenance.

The adoption of the Army designed OCP in 2018 came with a bunch of easy to fill, fuzzy, blank hook-and-loop space yearning to be covered.

Prior to the OCP only aircrew had removable patch space on

their flight suits. After the OCP came online some official patches began to appear, along with plenty of non-official or "morale" patches.

The need to revamp official unit patches became more urgent as the April 2021 mandatory wear date of the OCP edged closer.

With the entire force transitioning to the OCP at the same time the event created a significant backlog in the patch approval process. Coupled with COVID in 2019 the OCP patch approval process ground to a halt.

New designs of old patches required the application of new rules like a reduction in numbers and kinds of colors used, as well as other criteria.

The new 185th patch arrived

with little fanfare almost 5 years after OCPs were widely distributed at the Iowa ANG unit in Sioux City.

The new patch is the same design as the patch worn with the Battle Dress Uniform prior to 2011. While the OCP patch is more subdued, the basic look of the new 185th patch is unchanged predominately featuring Native American symbols related to the wing's historical base in Sioux City. The color version of the patch shows the items against Ultramarine Blue and Air Force Yellow background.

Beyond the U.S. Air Force nametape on the front of the uniform, the Wing patch is more specific to the organization's esprit de core. The patch serves as a visual reminder of belonging and ties to the group's identity

and history.

The official information memo about the patch from the Institute of Heraldry describes the 185th patch as follows:

"Significance. Ultramarine Blue and Air Force Yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The Native American and the spear signify the Wing's historical base in Sioux City, Iowa. Furthermore, both symbols honor the unit's previous designation as the 185th Tactical Fighter Group. The feather emphasizes wisdom and honor. The six arrows and lightning flashes represent the unity of the supporting Groups."





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IOWA GOVERNOR KIM REYNOLDS VISITS 185TH ARW

Story by Staff Sgt. Tylon Chapman

Iowa's Gov. Kim Reynolds visited the 185th Air Refueling Wing and witnessed an aerial refueling mission Thursday.

Col. Sonya Morrison, 185th ARW Commander, said the unit invited Reynolds to show her the impact of the unit's future ramp and runway construction projects.

The 185th ARW was previously a fighter wing before its switch to the aerial refueling mission in 2003.

Morrison said that the unit's ramp was not updated for full-mission capability at the time.

"The current runway only allows for minimal fuel loads and the FAA allows us to fly on waivers currently," said Morrison.

Gov. Reynolds said that the unit consistently exceeds the goals set for it by the Air National Guard but would need additional funding to stay "always ready."

"The long-promised federal funding for critical ramp and runway improvements to this airport must be delivered," said Reynolds.

The event allowed the governor and her staff to have a first-hand view of the unit's flying and fueling capabilities.

They flew aboard an Iowa ANG KC-135 Stratotanker and met F-16s of the South Dakota ANG's 114th Fighter Wing to refuel over Nebraska.

After arriving back at the 185th,

the governor and her staff were able to try refueling virtual aircraft using the unit's boom operation simulator.

Reynolds said she would not forget the experience.

"Thank you for letting us see how important your mission is to the country and the world," said Reynolds.



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COMMAND CHIEF RON LORENZEN RETIRES

Story by Staff Sgt. Tylon Chapman

Family, friends and military members gathered to celebrate the retirement of Command Chief Master Sgt. Ron Lorenzen at the 185th Air Refueling Wing in Sioux City, Iowa, over the November training weekend.

Lorenzen retired during a formal ceremony after 31 years of service.

“For myself, this has been a wonderful and humbling experience,” said Lorenzen.

Col. Sonya Morrison, 185th ARW Commander, said that she could not express her appreciation and respect for Lorenzen in only the few moments of her speech.

“The friendship and admiration I have for him will be never ending as he moves into a new phase of his life with his family,” said Morrison.

Lorenzen was promoted to

Command Chief in October of 2021 after working most of his career in aircraft maintenance.

Lorenzen began his career in the Air Force in 1992 after graduating from North High School in Sioux City.

Following basic and technical training Lorenzen began working as a KC-10 crew chief with the 9th Air Refueling Squadron at March Air Force Base in California.

Lorenzen said a base closure at the time caused the KC-10s to be moved from March to Travis Air Force Base in Northern California, where he finished his time on active-duty in June of 2000.

Following a short break in service, Lorenzen returned to his home in Sioux City where he joined the Iowa Air National Guard’s 185th Fighter Wing, as a traditional Guard

member in May of 2001.

The timing of Lorenzen’s transition to the Iowa ANG unit was perfect as the unit was transitioning from an F-16 fighter wing to an air refueling wing in the early 2000s.

After working his way through the ranks as a KC-135 maintainer, Lorenzen was eventually selected as the maintenance group superintendent before becoming the 185th ARW Command Chief.

“I am very grateful to have served with so many amazing Airmen and it has been a privilege to serve at the 185th,” said Lorenzen, “I am proud of our unit and all that we have accomplished as a Wing.”

Lorenzen was succeeded by Command Chief Master Sgt. Justin Odell in September.



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GROWING INTO GROUPS, ANG UNITS GET NEW MISSIONS AND MANNING IN THE EARLY 1960S

Story by Senior Master Sgt. Vincent De Groot

Air National Guard Airmen in 2024 may be unaware of the connection their job has to a tumultuous time in U.S. history over 60 years ago.

At the time, small flying squadrons had been a part of the air reserve component from the founding of America's newest military branch in 1947.

By 1960, more than a decade of growing pains and real-world events exposed readiness issues that convinced the Air Force to better fund, train and equip their counterparts in the Air National Guard.

Fueled by events of the day, like the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis, the Air National Guard saw a significant period of modernization and growth by the early 1960s.

It was during that time when Iowa's 174th Fighter Squadron was added to a growing group of Air National Guard units who were growing, into Groups.

Change happened in Sioux City when the Iowa ANG unit was reorganized as a subordinate

unit under the newly created 185th Tactical Fighter Group.

When the 185th TFG reorganization was finalized on October 1st, 1962, the unit's new designation doubled the number of assigned airmen at the Western Iowa ANG facility.

Under the direction of Lt. Colonel Don Forney, the 185th TFG's federal recognition added 62 additional officers and 318 airmen to the squadron's 45 officers and 390 airmen who were already in place. The creation of the Group increased the unit's authorized manning to over 800 airmen.

The proliferation and availability of newer "century series" fighter jets, along with a more cost-effective ready reserve, were other factors contributing to the Air National Guard's expansion of units like Iowa's 174th FS.

Finding additional airmen to fill National Guard ranks at the time was not difficult, as few young men from the class of 1962 had a choice about military service because of the draft.

Just prior to the 1962 reorganization in Iowa, the

174th converted from flying aging RF-84F reconnaissance aircraft. The unit was initially rerolled as a Tactical Fighter Squadron when they received their first F-100 Super Sabre in 1961.

The first F-100 was received in Sioux City from the United States Air Force Europe's 36th Fighter Wing in Bitburg, Germany as F-105's were being sent to the active duty unit.

With the new mission and airframe, Iowa's 185th TFG was allocated to the 140th Tactical Fighter Wing, headquartered in Colorado. The Iowa Group continued to be a part of the

140th through both the 174th and Colorado's 120th Fighter Squadron's deployments to Vietnam in 1968.

Commanders who've been part of conversions during their careers can sympathize with the 174th's massive to-do list at the time.

In anticipation of a pending airframe conversion, construction on a new fire station and engine shop were already underway at the Sioux City airport 1961. At that same time the unit had begun receiving their first F-100 Super Sabers from overseas bases as they abandoned their aerial



reconnaissance mission.

During the conversion in Sioux City, the unit was not excused from inclusion in a massive ANG alert at the time. Because of extreme tensions in Berlin the unit was placed on alert for a short time in August of 1961.

The adage, "history does not repeat itself, but it does rhyme," applied the next spring, as airport runway construction caused air operations to move to a nearby ANG unit in Lincoln, Neb.

Determining aircraft distribution, missions, and manning had ANG units around the nation jostling for position in the late 1950s and early 1960s. When Sioux City began receiving their F-100s, their neighboring squadron at Lincoln, Neb. ANG were flying F-86D Sabre jets, while in nearby

Sioux Falls, S.D., the unit was flying F-102 Delta Daggers.

By the fall of 1962, when the Sioux City, Iowa Squadron became a Group, the newly created 185th Fighter Group saw one of their most significant changes since its founding in 1946.

The unit's 1962 Group designation continues to impact today's 185th that has since grown into the 185th Air Refueling Wing, adding additional full-time and part-time jobs.

Historians mark the expansion of America's ready reserve as an important salvo contributing to the end of the cold war. While contributing to a more robust total force, the events at that time also led to lasting impacts on ANG communities around the nation.



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