

BUCKEYE AIRLIFTER

HOMETOWN HEROES SALUTE

NOVEMBER 2009 WWW.179AW.ANG.AF.MIL

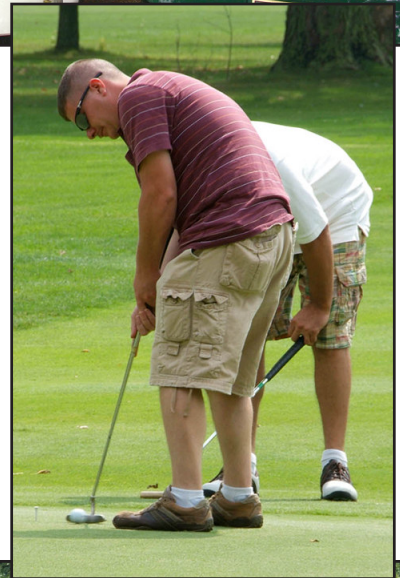
2009 AWARDS BANQUET NOMINEES AND DINNER DETAILS INSIDE



500 HONORED AT HOMETOWN HEROES CEREMONY



Many thanks to everyone who participated in and supported this years MLMF Scholarship Golf Outing! *Your help makes good things possible!*



179th held its first Hometown Heroes Salute Awards Ceremony

By Nicole L. Ashcroft
179th Chief of Public Affairs

The 179th Airlift Wing honored approximately 500 Airmen and their families in the first ever Hometown Heroes Salute Award Ceremony at Mansfield Senior High School on Saturday October 3, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

In August 2008, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, sanctioned the ANG Hometown Heroes Salute recognition program. The purpose of this program is to celebrate and honor Airmen, families, communities and those special supporters who have significantly contributed to supporting our Airmen and the ANG's mission.

Recognized in this ceremony were guardsmen that have deployed over 30 consecutive days in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle and other peacekeeping operations across the globe since 9/11 through December 31, 2008.

All recognized Airmen received a framed letter from the director that contains the Hometown Heroes Salute coin. Senior Airman Joseph D. Harwood, photographer at the 179th Airlift Wing, was instrumental in helping the National Guard Bureau in designing this nationally recognized coin.

The honored Airmen's spouse or significant other received an engraved pen/pencil set with the ANG Hometown Heroes Salute Logo. The Airman's children received unique Hometown Heroes Salute dog tags. Lastly, each honored Airman received one Hometown Heroes Salute Logo Medallion to recognize their Center of Influence (COI) for outstanding support during their deployment.



The Hometown Heroes Salute will now be an annual event hosted by the 179th Airlift Wing in honor of its deploying members.



Behind the scenes for Airman of the Year

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Q. Hill
179th Public Affairs Journalist

Each year leaders from squadrons across the 179th Airlift Wing gather to nominate their picks for Airman, NCO, SNCO, First Sergeant and Company Grade Officer of the Year. These high performers meet with respective review boards to determine the “best of the best” who will continue on, competing with others units throughout the state. These 179th winners will be announced at the annual awards banquet on Saturday, November 7, 2009.

The selection process from the initial squadron nominations to the final announcement of winners at the annual awards banquet is a lengthy process where numerous small details are reviewed to select “the best” candidates to represent the 179th Airlift Wing. This year there were 10 airmen were nominated by their squadrons for Airman of the Year; of these individuals, four will vie for the top spot.

Fourteen members were nominated as contender Outstanding Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. This field was narrowed to six who competed. The winner will be announced at the awards banquet.

In the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer category, the group of 13 nominees was whittled down to five who are going for the wing’s top spot.

The First Sergeant Category had one nominated individual. This means Master Sgt. Heidi M. Bishop will be representing the 179th at the state level.

Similarly, only two officers were nominated for the Company Grade Officer award. There will be a run-off between Capt. Janice L. Davis and 1st Lt. Aimee A. Plenge.

Sometimes the interview process for candidates can be an interesting experience. For Tech. Sgt. Jason M. Ault, his interview was in the middle of the night while he was de-

ployed. Ault felt the phone interview was both helpful and a worrisome at the same time. “I was sitting in my PT uniform during the interview. It was nice not to have to stress about my dress blues. I felt though that I might not have been able to come across as well as I could have, over the phone. It wasn’t as personable as a face-to-face interview,” Ault said.

One aspect of the interview that Ault enjoyed was being judged by his peers. He said it was nice to know the panel was comprised of Non-Commissioned Officers. He thought these people would be able to relate to him better than a group of commanders.

Ault said he is already preparing himself to be in a position for nomination again next year. “With my job I am always looking for ways to improve what I do,” he said. Some of the improvements he has made within his office in the Communications Flight over the last year included decreasing the time spent dealing with mail distribution by as much as one hour each day.

Other nominees for NCO of the Year who did not make it to the wing level are Tech. Sgt. Rebecca L. English, Tech. Sgt. Kane D. Wagner, Tech. Sgt. Sophie B. Kohler, Tech. Sgt. Steven R. Kochheiser, Tech. Sgt. David R. Murk, Staff Sgt. Robert R. Comer, and Master Sgt. Rachelle E. Newson. The six nominees who are vying for the NCO top stop are Tech. Sgt. Jacklyn A. Newbert, Tech. Sgt. Josh Blakley, Tech. Sgt. Nicole R. Wagoner, Tech. Sgt. Brian W. Owens, Tech. Sgt. Philip P. Watts and Tech. Sgt. Lucinda E. Duncan.

Staff Sgt. Joshua M. Chapman had a similar situation as Ault. He too conducted his Airman of the Year interview via telephone. He said the experience was interesting, noting that he

found it hard to gauge responses to his answers.

Chapman said it was nice to have his evaluation completed by a group of his peers. “It would have been different, maybe more awkward, if it had been done by a bunch of senior NCOs,” he said.

Like Ault, Chapman said the experience was good practice for future job interviews and even promotion boards. Chapman may soon want all the help he can get with active duty promotion boards, as he has transitioned to Tyndall AFB, Fla.

Also nominated for Airman of the Year by their squadrons but not making it to the Wing level are: Senior Airman Casey M. Benner, Senior Airman Jason C. Niedermier, Airman Kari A. Totman and Senior Airman Amanda L. Grubbs. Going up for Wing Airman of the Year are: Senior Airman Daniel J. Miller, Senior Airman Crystal L. Collingood, Staff Sgt. Theresa M. Tymoszczuk, Senior Airman Michael J. Hoptry, and Senior Airman Michael E. Bibb.

The Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year candidates who did not make the Wing level are: Master Sgt. Stephen T. Dotson, Senior Master Sgt. Debra E. Zentmyer, Master Sgt. Michael A. Meyer, Master Sgt. Scott A. Stoner, Master Sgt. Eric Stephens, Senior Master Sgt. Jonathan S. King, Master Sgt. April R. Gunnoe, and Senior Master Sgt. John A. Gibson. Those trying to become the Senior NCO of the Year are: Master Sgt. Jamie E. Stover, Master Sgt. Richard K. Brenly, Senior Master Sgt. Kevin M. Stovall, Senior Master Sgt. Mark A. Manbevers and Tech. Sgt. Shane F. Sterner.

To see who makes the cut as this year’s respective Airman of the Year category winners, attend the 2009 Awards Banquet of Saturday on November’s Unit Training Assembly.



Operation: Military Kids (OMK), Ohio National Guard and Ohio 4-H present a special evening for all Military Families at the Columbus Zoo



Wildlights at the Columbus Zoo 2009!



Saturday, December 12, 6-9 PM

Event Features!

6-9 p.m.

- *FREE refreshments & food provided by The USO
- *FREE Holiday Family Photo
- *Located in our Warming Station at the **Education Auditorium**, just inside the front entrance of the Zoo and to the right. (Military members will be at the front gate to assist you.)

Admission Cost:

- * \$6.00 per adult
- * \$3.50 per child(2-9yrs) & Senior(60 & up)
- * Children 2 & under are free

Tickets can be purchased at the Zoo ticket booths on the day of the event.

Parking \$5

You must bring your Military ID & tell them you are with Operation: Military Kids to receive discount!!

For More Information contact:
 Sue Ann Carroll, Ohio National Guard Youth Coordinator @ 877-460-2177
 or
 Erin Berry, Operation: Military Kids Youth Specialist @ 614-336-7314.
 For directions to the Columbus Zoo go to www.columbuszoo.org

Come and join us for our 5th Wildlights at the Columbus Zoo! This special event has entertained over 3,000 Military Families since 2005.



Native American Heritage Month

November 2009



The term “Indian” has taken hold in the American culture. As with other cultures, it is advised that when addressing a Native American that you know how they prefer to be addressed. The Navajo, for example, call themselves Dine’ Bike’yah (People of the Land) while the Cherokee call themselves Keetoowah, which means principal people or the chosen ones in their language. Being sensitive to the labels placed on Native Americans is important in understanding them as a people.

Native Americans consider all life as sacred. The earth was not an object to be exploited, but was considered as a life host, the Mother Earth. Native Americans believe that human beings, animals, plants, water, and stones shared the earth as partners. A Native American proverb sums up their respect for life “Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.”

Native Americans have been actively involved in serving in the military since the Revolutionary War. They desire to serve their country and community to protect the rights, lands, and dignity of their respective tribes. Indian communities have traditionally supported their men and women warriors regardless of the policy that sent them to fight. The Native American contribution to military service has been invaluable, particularly when looking at their language as a weapon.

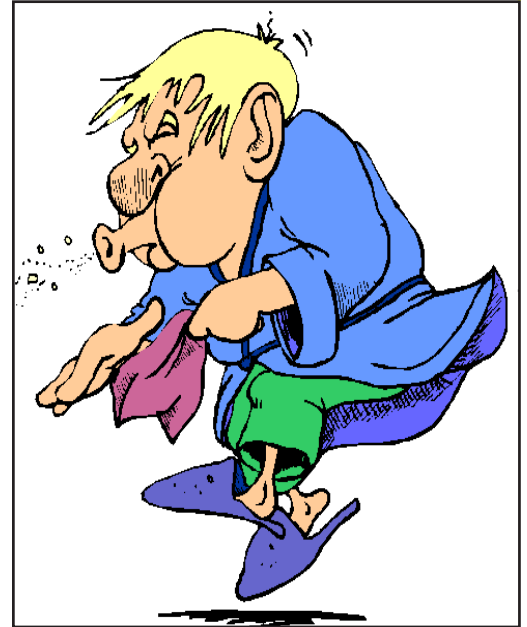
Code talkers, as they were called, were fluent in both Navajo and English and were tasked with sending messages that would be undecipherable during WWII. There were originally 29 code talkers sent through Marine boot camp that were tasked with constructing an alphabet to spell out words for which no code terms could be devised. Words were taken from nature and had logical connections with military terms and place names. For example, the code name for observation plane was ne-ahs-jah, or owl. Besh-lo, or iron fish meant submarine. By the end of World War II, the Navajos had developed 411 terms that the Japanese were unable to decipher even a single syllable from thousands of transmitted messages. Each code talker was assigned a bodyguard who was ordered to protect the code at all costs. The code was such a valuable asset that it was classified for 23 years after the end of World War II. Upon declassification in 1968, the nation finally realized the valor and contributions made by these brave Americans. On August 14, 1982, by House Joint Resolution 444, Congress designated this date as National Navajo Code Talkers Day.

Today, Native Americans continue to serve their country with pride. As a native people, they have given their life over to end terrorism. Native American Heritage Month provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the contributions of this proud people.

H1N1 News

By Chief Master Sgt. Kelly Ruff
179th Medical Group

As we kick off this year's flu season, the H1N1 virus continues to threaten our nation causing more hospitalizations and deaths than what is seen at the peak of many regular flu seasons. These numbers are only expected to rise as the flu season continues. The H1N1 vaccine is the best tool we have to prevent this deadly disease. We should be expecting our first shipment of the vaccine sometime after the 1st of November. As a reminder, the H1N1 and the seasonal influenza vaccines are both required for military members. We will be making a strong effort during November UTA to ensure that all members are vaccinated. **If you have received either your seasonal or H1N1 vaccine from a civilian provider you MUST bring in documentation by November UTA or you will be re-vaccinated.** Remember to continue influenza prevention techniques such as hand washing, covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze, and avoiding close contact with sick people. Any questions, regarding H1N1 can be directed to CMSgt Kelly Ruff at ext. 123 or TSgt Melanie Keller at ext. 275.



Welcome to the 179th family!



Wyatt Hayes Cornell

Born: November 3, 2009
Weight: 8.5 lbs
Length: 21.5 inches
Parents: Tim & Sadana Cornell



Nathan Charles Sofranko

Birthday: October 28, 2009
Weight: 8 lbs 6 oz
Length: 20 inches
Parents: Carl & Toni Sofranko

179th members in Columbus Marathon

41 members of the 179th Airlift Wing ran in the Columbus Marathon as part of the Ohio National Guard team on Saturday, October 17, 2009. Members representing the Wing included:

Brooke Anderson
 Nicole Ashcroft
 Benjamin Atkins
 Jason Brant
 Joseph Butcher
 William Clark
 Ryan Davis
 Kyleen Dennison
 Gary Divito
 Kerry Duff
 Doug Ffrank
 David Fulk
 Jodie Harvey

Garland Harvey
 Rachel Hendershott
 Thomas Jones
 Tyler Kempf
 Tim Korbas
 Brett Lamborn
 Nathan Lautzenhiser
 Miranda Lawrence
 Crockett Mantrako
 Trevor Mason
 Kenneth Mims
 Barbara Nihei
 Douglas Noblet

Kari Pfeifer
 Aimee Plenge
 Marc Pumala
 Michael Robison
 Christopher Stallkamp
 John Stephan
 Joe Stephens
 Eric Stephens
 Shane Sterner
 Crockett Vantrako
 Brandon Velemirov
 Kane Wagner
 Cameron Wagoner

Beau Weidinger
 Roger Williams



Photos by Spc. Sam Beavers

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Stories or story ideas may be submitted to the Public Affairs Office for publication consideration in the Buckeye Airlifter. Information should be emailed to nicole.ashcroft@ohmans.ang.af.mil. The Buckeye Airlifter is a monthly publication.

DECEMBER 09 DEADLINE: Sunday 8 Nov 09

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 Public Affairs Photographer.....Staff Sgt. Rob Koehler
 Public Affairs Photographer.....Senior Airman Joe Harwood

Public Affairs Broadcaster.....Master Sgt. Bob Jones
 Public Affairs Broadcaster.....Tech. Sgt. Joe Stepp
 Public Affairs KM.....Senior Airman Dustin Edgell
 Family Readiness Manager.....Ms. Faline Rowland
 Reporters.....Unit Public Affairs Representatives