

# THE BEACON

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

June 2020



COMBAT EXCELLENCE-ALWAYS ON MISSION

# From the WING COMMANDER

124th Fighter Wing Commander Col. Shannon Smith

## Uncomfortable

*"This (civil unrest) mission is an uncomfortable mission. Our Guard members are from these communities."*

-Gen. Joseph Lengyel,  
chief of the National Guard  
Bureau

I've heard it said that if you're comfortable then you're not being challenged enough. These days, comfortable seems to be a thing of the past. Over the last few months, our nation has endured the realities of a pandemic that has reached into every aspect of our lives, and has taken lives. Over the past few weeks, our nation has witnessed and expressed an upheaval of unrest in response to continued senseless violence, racism, and discrimination. This racial division has also reached into every aspect of our lives, and has taken lives. These are not unprecedented times but they surely feel like them when you're living through it real time.

So how are you doing with all of this?

An Airman in our fighter wing wrote to me last week. His words continue to resonate with me. His message was courageously asking the leadership of this fighter wing to speak out

and to reach out in these uncomfortable times.

As your wing commander, I have focused the efforts of senior leadership on mitigating the effects of the pandemic on our organization. You probably heard our objectives- "ensure mission success, protect the force, and preserve capability." We certainly have seen successes from that perspective. On a deeper level, I believe our efforts were also focused on keeping the pandemic out of our lives.

As your wing commander, I believe that every Airman counts. That despite our differences, we should treat each other with dignity and respect. We are "brothers and sisters in arms" committed to a mission of service to our nation and state. As I witness the unrest across our nation, I want to believe that we (124th) are keeping racism and discrimination out of our lives.

*"Good leaders who solve problems evolve into great leaders who prevent them."*

-Maj. Gen. Michael Garshak,  
adjutant general of Idaho  
and commander of the  
Idaho National Guard



I believe the same could be said about our organization. To be great, we must lean into these uncomfortable experiences and draw lessons that can be applied to the future. We must address these challenges as opportunity. As an organization, we cannot prevent a resurgence of this pandemic but we can be actively responsible in our social behavior. We can be vigilant and agile in our response to early indications of a renewed threat. To be a great organization, we must do more than hope the pandemic doesn't adversely impact us.

We must do more than want to believe that racism and discrimination do not find refuge in our midst. To be a great organization, we need to have certainty. We need to have difficult conversations. We need to check in on each other. I am committed to the greatness of this fighter wing. I am committed to prevention and conversation. To the Airman that reached out to me last week - I am listening.

*Col Smith*



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### WING COMMANDER

Col. Shannon Smith

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Capt. Rebecca Solosabal

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Senior Airman Joseph Morgan

Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker

Mr. Ryan White\*

\*June Beacon editor

## ON THE COVER



Idaho Air National Guard Airmen of the 124th Fighter Wing deploy from Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, on a C-17 Globemaster III to various locations throughout Southwest Asia, May 14, 2020. More than 400 Airmen and A-10 Thunderbolt IIs assigned to the 124th FW will continue to deploy throughout the spring and summer of 2020 in support of operations Freedom's Sentinel and Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Ryan White)

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## WHERE TO FIND US



[usaf.id.124-fw.mbx.pa-public-affairs@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.id.124-fw.mbx.pa-public-affairs@mail.mil)



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THE BEACON is the official magazine of the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard. It is published monthly by the wing public affairs office. Views expressed may not be those of the U.S. Air Force, Air National Guard, Department of Defense or U.S. Government.

# Schedule

**Saturday - Jun. 6, 2020**

**Sunday - Jun. 7, 2020**

**0600 - First Sergeant Council Meeting**

*Bldg. 400, Conference Room*

**0800 - Enlisted Promotion Board**

*Bldg. 600, Room 102*

**1000 - R2WG**

*Bldg. 503, LRS Breakroom*

**1400 - Article 137 Brief**

*Bldg. 400, Conference Room*

**1500 - Essential Six Council Meeting**

*Bldg. 400, Conference Room*

**1000 - Resiliency Briefing**

*Bldg. 146, Main Briefing Room*

**1430 - 3FOX1 In-House Training**

*Bldg. 400, DFAC*

**JUNE UTA LUNCH MENU**

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>Box Lunch</b>	<b>Box Lunch</b>
Sandwich-Roast Beef, Turkey, Ham, cheese Cookies Assorted Chips Assorted Soda Assorted Granola Bars Bananas, Oranges, Apples Carrots and Celery	Sandwich-Roast Beef, Turkey, Ham, cheese Cookies Assorted Chips Assorted Soda Assorted Granola Bars Bananas, Oranges, Apples Carrots and Celery

# 4-H—Idaho Air National Guard

## Summer Day Camp

**J**oin us for 3 days of fun-filled learning! Activities and classes will include

- **ART, STEM,** and
- **HEALTHY LIVING** topics.

**July 8-10, 2020**

**8:00am-3:00pm**

**Gowen Field Bldg 710**

**Ages 8-12**

### REGISTRATION INFO:

**Dates: May 13-June 15, 2020**

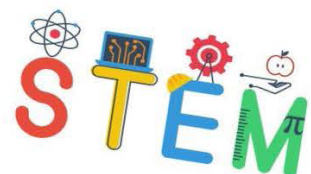
To register, please call or email no later than

**June 15, 2020:**

**Heather Echols**

**208-422-5470**

**heather.l.echols.mil@mail.mil**



**University of Idaho  
Extension**



The 4-H/Air Force Youth Camping Program is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 4-H National Headquarters; U.S. Air Force Child and Youth Programs; and University of Idaho Cooperative Extension 4-H Program through grant funding at Kansas State University under special project number 2013-48696-21184.





# Packing Resiliency

124th FW Airmen Deploy Amidst COVID-19

Story by Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker

Photos by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur and Mr. Ryan White

More than 400 members of the 124th Fighter Wing deployed May 11 to various locations in support of operations Freedom's Sentinel, Inherent Resolve and New Normal.

The deployment is the wing's second largest movement and includes multiple aircraft, pilots, security forces, maintenance and medical personnel, special warfare tactical air control party Airmen and various other support staff. Although the size of this deployment is historical, it is particularly unique due to its crossover with COVID-19.

"The pandemic had a severe impact on how we normally do things," said Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Hupp, 124th FW installation deployment office logistics and plans superintendent. "Stop orders put in place to prevent the spread of the virus disrupted our schedules, so we had a lot of last-minute adjustments. Unit deployment

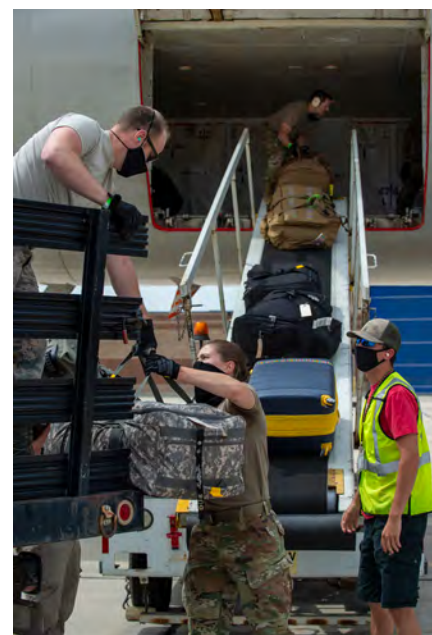
managers and commanders had to remain flexible and understand that our direction could change in a matter of minutes."

The top priority of the IDO is ensuring Airmen are ready for departure and qualified upon their arrival in country, regardless of the hurdles that come their way. To help alleviate the majority of last-minute scrambles, Airmen begin processing through medical and personnel functions, as well as completing chemical warfare and combat arms training nearly a year prior to their deployment date. However, maintaining a mental state of readiness can be difficult when deployment dates are postponed and members are under quarantine.

"They reach the apex of being prepared to go and then we have to tell them to wait," Hupp said. "It's tricky when they're stuck at home and worried about their families. The units have to work extra hard to keep their Airmen

motivated and ready to move in this ever-changing environment."

Although they experienced delays due to global circumstances, the majority of Airmen in the deployment package have now left Idaho, followed closely by 254 short tons





of cargo.

"My team is tasked with getting all the home station cargo to the deployed locations at the same time our people arrive," said Chief Master Sgt. Leroy Armbruster, chief enlisted manager in the 124th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "There are a lot of steps in that process and we've faced challenges as plans change."

Transportation of cargo, including personal goods and mission-essential equipment, is no small feat, especially for a deployment of this magnitude. Members of the 124th LRS must divide and stage cargo according to the capacity of each aircraft involved in transport.

"We start by checking the cargo to make sure it's airworthy," said Armbruster. "It has to be clean so that we don't bring dirt into another country. We open bins to make sure they're packed securely, and items aren't damaged in flight. We look for hazards, including leaks, and we weigh the cargo. We've appreciated the help from other units."

Although training, inspecting, palletizing, processing, scheduling and rescheduling are daunting tasks, Hupp and Armbruster agree that this deployment has already proven to be a success, as Airmen have shown resiliency and high morale under unpredictable circumstances.

"We've been training for this for years, we just didn't know that it would come all at once where we're called to a scheduled deployment and then faced with overcoming a pandemic," said Col. Shannon Smith, commander of the 124th FW. "I'm incredibly proud of this organization, and I'm proud of this state."





















## Air Force Salutes

The 124th FW and Mountain Home AFB's 366th FW teamed up, May 15, to salute all of the medical staff, first responders and other essential workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic. The joint flyover of Southern Idaho was part of the Air Force Salutes campaign.

Photos by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur and Mr. Ryan White









# Thank You

A special thanks goes out to all the men and women who kept our installation and facilities working, safe and clean throughout the ongoing pandemic.

Behind the scenes, the 124th Civil Engineer Squadron persevered in a vital role. From custodians and emergency managers to engineering, facility operations and the 24/7 fire department, the full spectrum of Airmen, craftsmen and Idaho state employees kept our base open for essential missions.

This enduring installation sustainment and support enabled a historic mobilization of combat aviation and maintenance forces, and backed the continuous efforts put forth by defenders, medics, logistics, communications, force support and contracting.

Thank you for your never ending team effort across base to project airpower.



MEET YOUR NEWEST CHIEF...

A photograph of a woman in a military camouflage uniform. She has short, light-colored hair and is looking towards a man on the right. The man is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt and is pinning a badge onto her uniform. The woman's uniform features a patch on the right sleeve that says "AIR GUARD" and "SAFETY" around an eagle emblem. There is also an American flag patch on her left sleeve. In the background, there is a statue of a soldier.

CONGRATS,  
CHIEF HAWK!



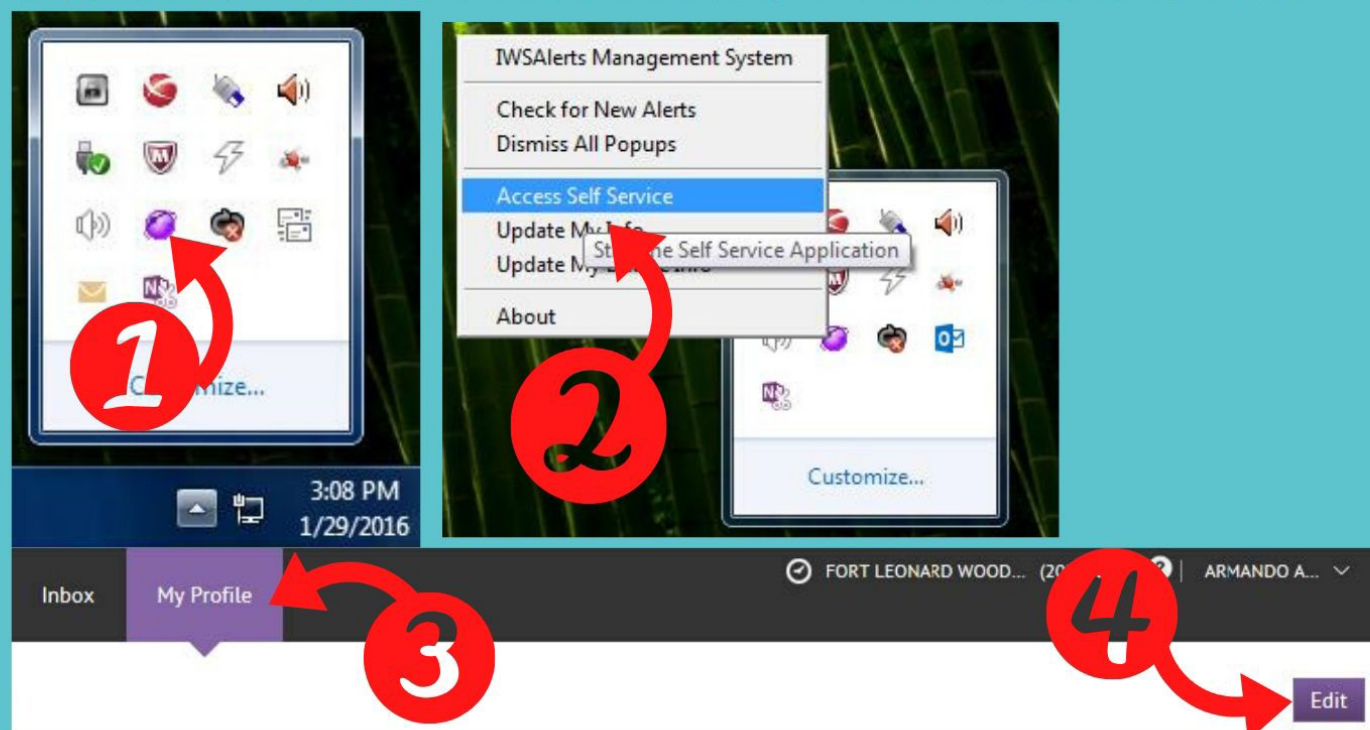
# AtHoc

KEEP A PULSE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING

AtHoc is an interactive warning and messaging system that allows senior leaders to alert you. It allows you to stay informed of both emergency notifications of on-base incidents, base warnings, and critical command messages via desktop alert, text, and email.

**IF YOU ARE NOT RECEIVING NOTIFICATIONS  
REGISTER TODAY**

ON-BASE AND FROM A DOT MIL COMPUTER



IF YOU AREN'T ON-BASE, CONTACT YOUR  
CSS AND THEY WILL REGISTER YOU.