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FROM THE COMMANDER



WELCOME TO THE ONLINE ON FIVE

Bulldogs-

It is with excitement that we welcome readers of the 148th Fighter Wing's OnFive magazine, to the new and improved 'Online On Five'. After 65 years of printing the On Five, we have joined the modern forces of communication and are excited to continue telling the 148th story.

It is known by every weathered service member that your career is a cycle of new and changing chapters. The On Five is indeed one of those chapters for our Wing, and specifically for our Public Affairs (PA) team. The preceding printed publication was part of our Wing history, a chapter of time, and a capsule of memories for us.

However, the cost of printing the publication weighed heavily on our already stretched budget and time constraints.

With the changing times of a digital nation we are embracing the new Online On Five with inspiration and enthusiasm.

Telling the story of our members both past and present is important to us. Your PA team prepares and publishes articles and imagery with great pride and honor in knowing history is being shared with the Wing and community. We aspire for this pride to be shared as you read and view your part in history.

Colonel Jon S. Safstrom
148th Fighter Wing
Commander

THE ONLINE ON FIVE

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AIRMEN OF THE YEAR

BY MASTER. SGT. RALPH J. KAPUSTKA, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Two Bulldogs earned state Airmen of the Year honors for their many accomplishments in 2016. Master Sgt. Josh Fish won in the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer category (SrNCO) and Staff Sgt. Joel Waters took home the honors in the Non-Commissioned Officer category.

Besides military work accomplishments, self-improvement and community involvement are strong considerations when selecting an Airman for this recognition.

Fish and Waters had to compete with other deserving Airmen in the Wing, interviewing with multiple boards and were selected from an extremely talented pool of candidates. "The process itself can be a bit daunting until I realized the hardest part was already done," said Waters. "I already displayed my leadership skills on the job, I continuously strive for self-improvement and try to be an active member in my community...now, it was just a matter of conveying these things to the board."

"This is honestly the biggest honor I have received in my career up to this point," said Fish. "It is very humbling to be recognized by your peers. Any one of the SrNCO's that interviewed at Wing level could have won. The caliber of talent and dedication we have at the 148th is unmatched by anywhere else in the Air Force and it was evident throughout the board process."

"Receiving an honor like this just goes to show that hard work truly pays off, it is definitely one of the greatest achievements of my life thus far," Waters said. "I want to leave our Wing and the Air National Guard in better shape than when I first joined. Being recognized with this honor shows that I'm on the right path to achieve that and validates a lot of the hard work and effort I've put into my military career."

Even though selection of the State Outstanding Airman of the Year was an individual honor both Fish and Waters agreed that it was a group effort. "I couldn't have gotten to where I am today without the help of other firefighters as well as my supervisor's on this base," said Waters. "As a new Airman, I was lucky enough to have some great mentors that pointed me in the right direction. They told me to get involved and stay involved if I want to make this great Fighter Wing even better. I heeded their advice and did exactly that, our Wing is what we make it."

Getting involved is another important way to set yourself apart and can be very rewarding. "Get active in our Wing functions as well as the other organizations the base has to offer," Fish said. "Don't be afraid to work outside of your comfort zone, look for volunteer opportunities outside of our Wing. Our surrounding community looks up to us and more is expected of us since we are in the military. Every single person on this Wing is a leader, from the youngest airman basic all the way up to the wing commander, so don't sell yourself short."



MASTER SGT. JOSH FISH



STAFF SGT. JOEL WATERS



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CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE YEAR

BY TECH. SGT. SCOTT G. HERRINGTON, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

148th Fighter Wing (148FW) Members, Staff Sgt. Jessalyn Schmaedeke and Tech. Sgt. Tyler Stodola, received Federal Civil Servants of the Year, Excellence/Beyond Expectations Awards in 2016.

Staff Sgt. Jessalyn Schmaedeke, an F-16 crew chief and Bulldog of five years, was recognized for her commitment to her country and unit, deploying for more than three months to the South Korean Peninsula (following the death of a close family member) where she was integral in boosting unit morale while conducting the deployed mission. Her dedication and selfless volunteerism saw her taking on another mission immediately upon returning from South Korea--a support mission to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada to enhance mission readiness and cohesion between the technician and active duty forces.

For Duluth, Minnesota native Schmaedeke, she felt that deploying was the right thing to do, especially in the company of her Bulldog family.

“My decision to make, was to carry on or to turn around and go back,” said Schmaedeke. “With my family behind me, they really all supported me. And I had my 148th Family supporting me on the trip. There’s my blood relatives, and there’s my chosen family, the Bulldogs.”

Schmaedeke maintains that she isn’t alone in her dedication to the Wing.

“I feel like I deserve this just as much as my coworkers that also deployed straight from Korea to Nellis,” said Schmaedeke. “I share it with them, I was just nominated for it--there are others on the flight line that I would nominate for the award.”

Tech. Sgt. Tyler Stodola, a Radio Frequency (RF) transmission systems technician with 11 years of service with the 148FW, was recognized for spearheading a project that resulted in the implementation of the first ever Radio Over Internet Protocol (RoIP) network in the Minnesota Air National Guard. Stodola took it upon himself to research, become knowledgeable and proficient to the point of installing, configuring and optimizing 82 RoIP assets. He then integrated these assets throughout the 148th’s base network, and allowed for future growth of the RoIP network. The result of Stodola’s efforts increased mission capability and reliability and ultimately saved the 148th Fighter Wing \$125,000 in equipment configuration and installation costs.

Stodola was surprised when informed he was a recipient of the award, and claims his efforts did not seem out of the ordinary.

“It was just a part of my job, and its not like is was just me,” said Stodola of his accomplishments. “The people I work with--I just think everyone is awesome. It’s a great place to work, and there’s a lot of camaraderie.”

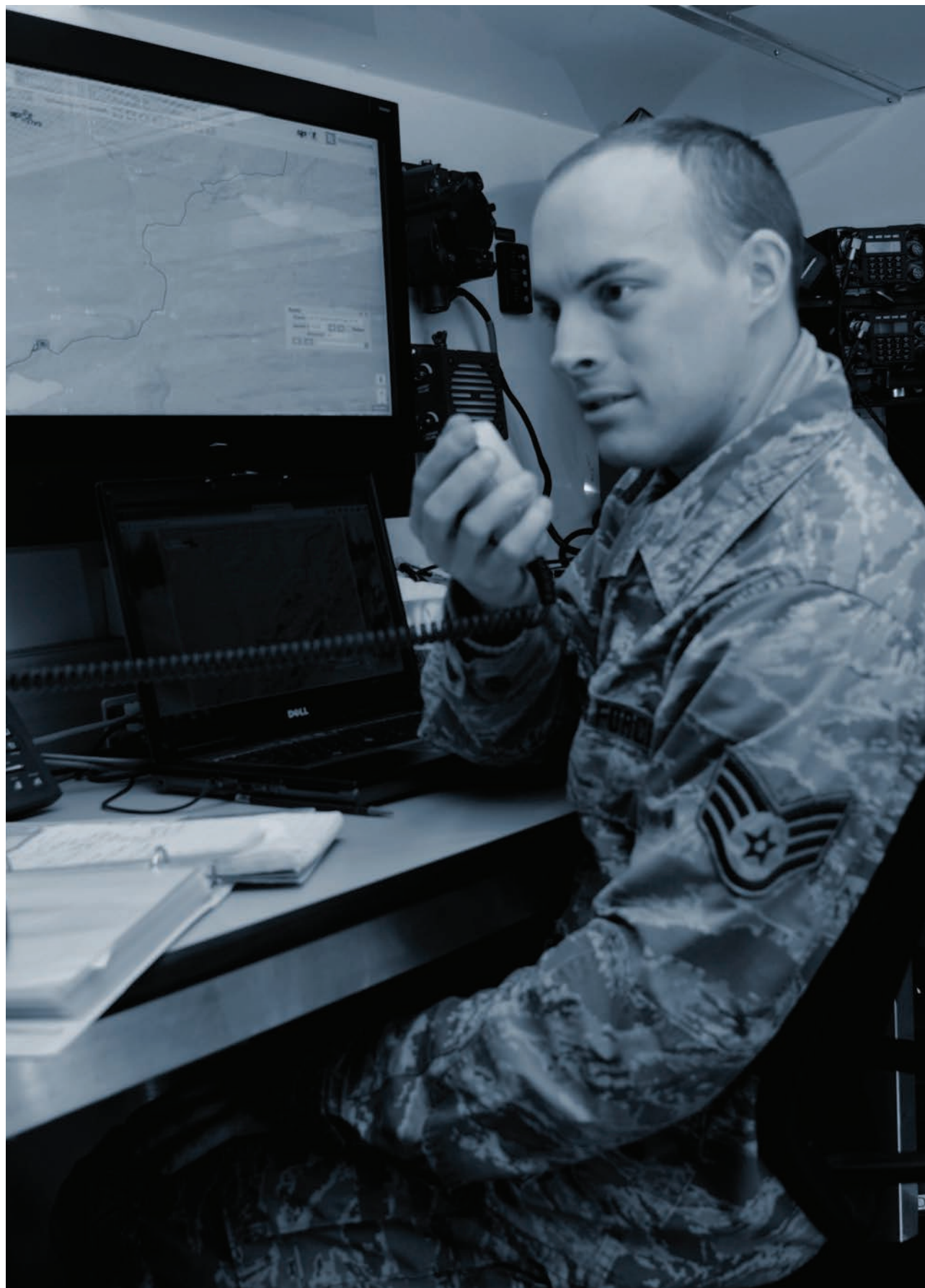
Stodola, originally from Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin, claims his work ethic and sense of duty is a product of his environment.

“To be a Bulldog is to be a hard worker and to volunteer,” said Stodola. “The people here on base do a lot of volunteer work.”

The Federal Civil Servant of the Year Awards were presented May 4, 2017 at the DoubleTree in Bloomington, Minnesota.



STAFF SGT. JESSALYN SCHMAEDEKE



TECH. SGT. TYLER STODOLA



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PRESIDENT, LAWYER, LEADER

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BY TECH. SGT. LYNETTE R. OLIVARES, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Lt. Col. Connie Armstrong, the deputy commander of the 148th Mission Support Group, is a vibrant energy as she walks into any room. Standing just over five feet tall, her straight, short blonde hair, manicured nails and dainty, small frame cloaks how much of a strong, professional and empowering leader she is.

“Lt. Col. Armstrong is an invaluable asset to our unit,” said Col. Mark Vavra, 148th Fighter Wing Mission Support Group Commander. “She has a pulse on the people and needs of the environment here.”

This intuitive ability comes from a long career of helping women in the world of civilian law and in the military. Her most recent success was this past summer when she was elected by her peers as president of Minnesota Women Lawyers as their 45th president. She is actively involved with four chapters statewide, networking, listening and assisting women lawyers of all backgrounds and expertise.

“Sometimes you don’t know what you don’t know,” said Armstrong. “By connecting and networking with other women who have been there before you, you may be able to get candid feedback to help you in the future.”

Armstrong has an impressive resume and list of civilian and military accomplishments that could span nearly a mile long - which includes time as the 148th Fighter Wing Inspector General and most recently an associate general counsel at the McGough Construction Company in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Her mentorship would be simple as she’s keen to always give precious nuggets like, ‘toot your own horn’ to anyone who asks for how they can be as successful in their career and is willing to listen. She recommends for anyone to set clear goals and then work hard towards achieving them.

“For those of us who have not quite mastered the art of tactful self-promotion, these concerns should not prevent us from recognizing the talent of those members of our teams that continually go above and beyond to provide support on our behalf,” said Armstrong.

Becoming connected and actively networking is one of the more valuable tools Lt. Col. Armstrong suggested one could do early on in their career. Being active with groups and other organizations she believes, is a big contributor to her success.

Her career path hasn’t been a yellow brick road. A few years ago, Armstrong had an experience with stage one breast cancer. Ac-



LT. COL. CONNIE ARMSTRONG

cording to the national cancer center for statistic review, it is estimated that approximately 1 in 8 women in U.S. currently could develop breast cancer during their lifetime. Instead of being crippled by the unknown, this became another way to reach out to not only women, but to educate men and let them know they are not alone.

“It is a scary and sensitive topic, but I was juggling treatment, work and surgeries all at once,” said Armstrong. “The men I did open up to at my law firm were understanding and finding other women who have walked this path before me gave me reassurance I wasn’t alone.”

The interview came to an end with the selfless introduction of a co-worker passing by. Armstrong ended with a smile. Her contagious energy, charming charisma and confidence makes it apparent how she handles not one but two male dominated positions with such grace.

This woman warrior wants to help others know the battleground, and not think they have to lose their feminine aura in the process. Who says you cannot stand out for all the right reasons. Beauty and grace can also go with brains and that’s what Lt. Col. Armstrong exemplifies.

EXERCISE FLORAL AXE

APRIL 23, 2017 // 148TH FIGHTER WING, DULUTH, MN // PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. BRETT R. EWALD

April 23, 2017, the 148th Fighter Wing conducted a weapons of mass destruction exercise called "Floral Axe" on base which involved a response from Security Forces, Fire and Emergency Services, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, and Emergency Management. The scenario involved a chemical device brought on base by an off base contractor. The Crisis Action Team, Emergency Operations Center and Unit Control Centers (C2) were stood up for command and control during the exercise. The entire base participated and shelter in place procedures were implemented. This exercise tested the capabilities of the Wings day to day response capability along with Command and Controls ability to effectively communicate the hazard with the base populace.



EXERCISE STONE FISH

APRIL 22, 2017 // 148TH FIGHTER WING, DULUTH, MN // PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. BRETT R. EWALD

April 22, 2017, the 148th Fighter Wing conducted a Wartime Ability to Survive and Operate (ATSO) exercise called Exercise “Stone Fish” with a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) defense scenario. The exercise conducted was at a simulated deployed location and tested each person’s ability to conduct their wartime mission in a CBRNE environment. Personnel were required to wear personal protective equipment and respond to various scenarios given throughout the exercise which helps strengthen their knowledge and education on CBRN defense hazards and protective actions.



TRAINING DEPLOYMENT SENTRY ALOHA

JANUARY 25, 2017 // HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, HAWAII

Sentry Aloha is an ongoing series of fighter combat exercises, hosted by the Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Wing and involves multiple types of aircraft and services. Visiting aircraft took part in simulated combat exercises in the airspaces in and around Hawaii with F-22 Raptors flown by the HI ANG's 199th Fighter Squadron.

Visiting units included tanker support from Utah and Tennessee, F-16 Fighting Falcons from Minnesota, and F-18 Hornets from California and for the first time an E-3 Sentry (AWACS) from Oklahoma were folded into the scenarios.

U.S. Air National Guard Photos by:

Right Top, Right Middle: Master Sgt. Steve J. Regas

Left: Tech. Sgt. Alexis J. Johnson

Bottom Row: Master Sgt. Ralph J. Kapustka

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BULLDOGS TEAM UP

BY TECH. SGT. SCOTT G. HERRINGTON, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

On June 6, 2017 members of the 148th Fighter Wing Mortuary Affairs Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT), a component of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Conventional Weapons Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), participated in a two-day exercise in two locations in Duluth, Minnesota.

Local and regional organizations converged on Duluth to practice casualty location and recovery in a simulated disaster environment.

Described as the best training they've had to date, the FSRT members were able to utilize five years of training and hard work, and see it put together through realistic scenarios.

On the second day of scenarios, the Wisconsin FSRT joined the 148th's FSRT for joint exercises.

"We were able to utilize what we've been training for in the past five years--all the training and hard work and we finally got to see it put together," said Staff Sgt. Jessica N. Smart, 148th FSRT member. "We got to train as if something actually happened."

Whether it was finding casualties in a dark room with nonfunctional lighting and an unknown layout, the FSRT was trained on how to handle each situation as they encountered them, and they were put into different roles.

"It was really neat--everybody taught our team everywhere we went," said Smart. "Everybody (on the FSRT) had different opportunities, which is not normal."

Despite high heat and wind, the teams were able to maintain high morale and efficiency while wearing the protective suits required.

"Heat always presents a little difficulty just because the suits that we wear are hot enough to begin with, and then you add in heat and it's not fun," said 148th FSRT member Tech. Sgt. Sarah E. Davidson.

The FSRT members are not only responsible for their own safety while engaged in casualty recovery, but for those of their Wingmen as well.

"It's very physically demanding because you're working off of your own body heat--so all of us really do come together when we're in our suits, because we have to be able to look at each other's eyes, as that is all we are able to have a visual on," said Smart. "Everybody is at risk for heat exhaustion."

In the end, the FSRT members were tasked with duties and responsibilities above and beyond their norm.

"I got to actually go in the TOC, tactical operations center, which is something different and beneficial to me as it gave me a more well-rounded picture of what goes on, as I'm usually just a (FSRT) team member," said 148th FSRT member Senior Airman Brianna H. Westendorf.

"Being in the TOC normally, I just manage my two teams of four people," said Davidson. "For that other exercise that we did, where it was the mass fatality, wide area search, I learned how to multitask more. Because it wasn't just two teams, there were 10 total teams. I had five of those teams on my radio, and yet, I also had to be the liaison to all 10 of those teams with my officer in charge and to be able to know where all of my teams were at all times."



Members of the 148th Fighter Wing, Duluth, Minnesota participate in a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Conventional Weapons Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) Exercise, June 6, 2017. The Airmen were part of the Fatality Search and Recovery Team (FSRT) which is a component of the CERFP. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Ralph Kapustka)

COLLABORATION IN AVIATION

PHOTOS & ARTICLE BY TECH. SGT. LYNETTE R. OLIVARES, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Many commonalities can bring people together, such as for the love of food, sports and all things that fly. The 2017 Duluth Air Show is no exception. Aviation enthusiasts merged on the Duluth International Airport for a two-day mash up of some of the most sought after aircraft to get their selfie or very own (cellphone) photo or video of these amazing aircraft.

Duluth's airport neighbor is the 148th Fighter Wing, and was enthusiastic for the opportunity to be involved with hosting this community event. As well as other National Guard units around the state have opted to be involved in the spectacle.

"We are so happy to be apart of this event that involves so many different aspects of the community," said Jodi Grayson, media coordinator for the Duluth Airshow, and is also the Wing Executive Officer at the 148th Fighter Wing. "I think having the Army Guard and the Air Guard side-by-side in an event like this is an easy way to educate the public on the important, but very different, roles our Airmen and Soldiers have here in the state."

'Citizen Soldiers' take on a very literal role at the event. Security volunteers are made up of almost entirely Minnesota National Guard and Reservists, as well as some members from Wisconsin. The large cast is needed with nearly 30 static aircraft displays available, and almost a dozen more tentatively expected to perform for an estimated 45 thousand spectators over the two-day event.

"Duluth has been a great community for the Air Guard and our people," said Staff Sgt. Casy UnderDahl, 148th Fighter Wing Production Recruiter and Retainer and native of Duluth, Minnesota. "I think it is especially important for those in the community who support us to have an opportunity to see the aircraft they hear all the time up close and personal."

Anyone in the crowd was in for a treat, with the Blue Angels performing for a second year in a row. The coveted Blue Angels could be seen from most parts of town, but not to over shadow a unique first time ever guest in Duluth, the F-35 Lighting.

The Minnesota Army National Guard St. Cloud, Minnesota based Charlie Company 2-211 Medical Evacuation Company, the Minnesota Air National Guard Duluth, Minnesota based 148th Fighter Wing, the Minnesota Air Reserve St. Paul, Minnesota based 934th Airlift Wing and troops from various services and branches throughout the state volunteered their time and services to be involved in this two-day event showcasing aircraft from around the nation.

Young or old, the tens of thousands of crowd goers enjoyed nearly a dozen air performers and experienced the high flying and thunder rumbling sounds of more than a dozen aircraft designed for war in the past or present. A universal commonality that brings most people together, just like the perfect hotdog at a Sunday afternoon sports game.



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