

MEDIA UPDATE: October 30

If links are broken in the body of the email, please see the attached pdf for links.

--Alaska National Guard in the News--

1. Angels in the Arctic: Alaska Air National Guardsmen Rescue Bear-mauling Victim

pacom.mil by David Bedard/Oct. 30

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska -- Blood buys time and spans the vast distances of the Alaska landscape when someone is critically injured in the remote wilderness.

The moment a hunter was mauled by a grizzly bear shortly after midnight June 10 near Galena, there already wasn't much sand left in the hourglass counting down the hours and minutes he had to get to a hospital.

Grizzly bears possess super-human strength and are armed with a brace of piercing claws and a jaw full of bone-crushing teeth. The hunter's encounter with the bear dealt him life-threatening injuries and wounds.

More at: <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/2003651/angels-in-the-arctic-alaska-air-national-guardsmen-rescue-bear-mauling-victim/>

Also at: <https://www.pacaf.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2002325/angels-in-the-arctic-alaska-air-national-guardsmen-rescue-bear-mauling-victim/>

2. State's adjutant general promoted to major general

Daily News-Miner by Kris Capps/Oct. 25

A few years ago, Torrence Saxe attended Track-N-Field Day at Anderson School in Interior Alaska. His six children were all enrolled in the Denali Borough School District over the years. "A little girl came up to me, I'd never seen her before, about 7 years old," he recalled. She said hello and asked for a high-five, which he gave her. Then, she said, "Thanks for protecting us," and happily ran off, carefree.

"And that is exactly the way it should be," said Saxe, who was speaking Tuesday at his promotion ceremony from brigadier general to major general. He is the adjutant general for Alaska and the commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; the senior military adviser to the governor of Alaska; and commander of the Alaska National Guard.

In that role, he is responsible for nearly 4,400 Guard members and state personnel assigned to units in the Alaska Air National Guard, Army National Guard and four state divisions. He ensures the team is equipped, trained and ready to respond to state and federal missions.

More at: http://www.newsminer.com/news/kris_capps/state-s-adjutant-general-promoted-to-major-general/article_8fe2cfbe-f6ef-11e9-a4c0-a3a3445a165f.html

Also at: <https://www.ktuu.com/content/news/Alaska-Adjutant-General-promoted-to-the-rank-of-Major-General-563639011.html>

<https://www.ktva.com/story/41218569/inside-the-gates-alaskas-twostar-promotion>

http://www.youralaskalink.com/news/commander-of-alaska-national-guard-gets-big-promotion/article_d2793c64-f5dc-11e9-ac71-2bb1e5d88242.html

3. Alaska Warriors hockey team founder Chris Block receives special honor

KTVA by KTVA Staff/Oct. 24

The founder of an organization that helps veterans cope with emotional issues resulting from combat is getting state recognition.

“The members of the Thirty-First Alaska State Legislature are proud to honor Chris Block for his tremendous contributions to the disabled, veterans, and Anchorage communities,” a citation from the Legislature reads.

Block founded the Alaska Warriors hockey team in 2017 as a way to help him cope with PTSD after 16 years in the Air Force and Alaska Air National Guard. The team, made up of disabled veterans, has now grown to have more than 70 names on its roster.

More at: <https://www.ktva.com/story/41212241/alaska-warriors-hockey-team-founder-chris-block-receives-special-honor>

4. As the ice melts, military ambitions in Alaska heat up

Juneau Empire by Michael Lockett/Oct. 23

The U.S. military has a long history in Alaska, ever since the Army took possession of the territory from Imperial Russia in 1867. But in those days, the Army used more to enforce regulations on Alaska Natives and less to protect them and improve their communities.

So what’s changed in 150 years?

“As an ethnic group, Alaska Natives and Native Americans served in the United States military at a higher percentage than any other ethnic group to be found across the United States of America,” said retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Randy “Church” Kee, executive director of Arctic Domain Awareness Center as part of a panel at the Alaska Federation of Natives annual conference last week. “The Alaska Native community and the uniformed services have extremely common values and extremely common interests.”

More at: https://www.juneauempire.com/news/as-the-ice-melts-military-ambitions-in-alaska-heat-up/?fbclid=IwAR1n5f3m2_1lbY-xoTur66u2nSiiwiYxAjpNHE0ZCwmU5z0O4Ii2HLYGzGY

5. Eagle River Girl Scout packs cookies and more for Alaska troops abroad

KTVA by Lauren Maxwell/Oct. 14

Thirteen-year-old Alaina Vik has a lot to be proud of. This past season, the Eagle River Girl Scout sold more cookies than anyone else in the state — 5,500 boxes to be exact. Alaina’s newest project also involves cookies, but this time she is putting them in care packages to be shipped to Alaska military members serving overseas.

“They are fighting for our freedom and they are just doing a lot of stuff for us and they deserved to be honored,” she said.

Alaina calls her project “Operation Sweet Support.” On a recent weekday morning she was sorting through dozens of boxes of donated goods on her living room floor. She’s branched out to include more than just cookies. Snacks, games, personal items and always a handwritten note are placed inside every box.

More at: <https://www.ktva.com/story/41180306/eagle-river-girl-scout-packs-cookies-and-more-for-alaska-troops-abroad>

Also at: <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/anchorage/2019/09/29/alaskas-top-girl-scout-cookie-salesgirl-on-a-mission-to-support-the-troops/>

6. Alaska National Guard commander eyes regional hub concept

nationalguard.mil by Maj. John Callahan/Oct. 8

GALENA, Alaska — Brig. Gen. Torrence Saxe, commander of the Alaska National Guard and commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, visited the remote Yukon village of Galena Oct. 4 as part of an initiative to strengthen ties with Alaska’s rural communities.

“For more than a half-century, the Alaska National Guard has played a critical role in responding to natural disasters,” Saxe said. “My goal here is to take our readiness to the next level, and find ways to ensure that our support to rural Alaska remains strong.”

To that end, Saxe has been reaching out to communities with large airfields that can be used as regional hubs to move personnel and supplies in a natural disaster. Until 1994, Galena was the site of a small U.S. Air Force base, and its airfield is still in good shape.

More at: <https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/1983333/alaska-national-guard-commander-eyes-regional-hub-concept/>

Also at: <https://www.ktuu.com/content/news/Alaska-National-Guard-commander-eyes-Galena-other-remote-locations-for-regional-hub-concept-562494681.html>

7. Local and National Leaders Build Relations in Interior Alaska

Alaska Native News by SMSgt. Paul Mann/Oct. 8

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska — Alaska’s interior is home to more than 17,000 military personnel and their families, and this week the Fairbanks North Star Borough hosted its inaugural Alaska Defense Forum. Playing a role in the event was Brig. Gen. Torrence Saxe, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard.

Saxe was the moderator during the forum’s mission resiliency discussion, which centered on the role of defense communities.

Members of the panel included Col. Christopher Ruga, garrison commander, U.S. Army Garrison Alaska, Bruce Ward, mayor of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and Keith Klaehn, chairman of the Colorado Springs, Colo., Association of Defense Communities board of directors.

More at: <https://alaska-native-news.com/local-and-national-leaders-build-relations-in-interior-alaska/45075/>

**If you find Alaska National Guard news that was not included, please forward the link so it may be added to the next update.*

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