

Table with SAT and SUN columns showing temperatures: SAT 86°/68°, SUN 86°/68°

High Roller News

Four gentlemen and a lady: Nevada Air Guard promotes five to chief master sergeant

By Senior Master Sgt. Paula Macomber 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Nevada Air National Guard held promotion boards for five separate chief positions in July—all five resulted in selections of brand new chief master sergeants.

Meet your new chiefs:

Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Linton

Linton is the material management superintendent in the 152nd Logistics Readiness Squadron. He has been in the Nevada Air National Guard for 19 years, serving in various sections in six positions in the material management section and also cross-trained into traffic management where he was the distribution shop chief for five years managing the traffic management office and ground transportation all in the Logistics Readiness Squadron. Also a local, he grew up in Reno. He graduated from Reed High School in 1999.

Linton is married and has two daughters. He and his family love to get out and go camping. "I have no real strange hobbies, but I love fishing and tinkering in the garage," he said. He met his wife through a mutual friend but has known her since high school. "He puts everything into his work, which is his passion. Not a lot of people find a job at such a young age that they love like he does and put their 'all' into it. Not to say that he doesn't support me at home, he supports his family fully and he is so dedicated to his work," Kim Linton said.

"If I could have a super power, it would be time-travel so I could go back and help Uncle Rico win the state championship game back in 1982."

"The girls and I are so impressed with everything he has accomplished," Kim said.

OPERATIONS GROUP CHIEF PROMOTIONS:

"The three newly promoted chiefs in Operations Group represents a complete renewal of the chiefs in that group. With these promotions, it can lead to nine other promotions within the group," State Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Drisdale said.

He added: "This is an example of the importance of having your promotion requirements completed at the earliest convenience. You never know when the opportunity to promote will present itself."

Chief Master Sgt. Cameron Pieters

Pieters is in his 28th year of military service. He served six years active duty as an F-15 crew chief. He then served as a drill status guardsman for seven years and then fifteen years as a flight engineer. He has been a scheduler, the noncommissioned officer of aircrew training, standards and evaluation flight examiner, functional check flight engineer, instructor, evaluator, MAFFS instructor flight engineer and now serves as the operations group superintendent.

Pieters grew up in Reno and graduated from

Wooster High School in 1989. He once owned his own business, a pizza place in Washoe Valley. He has five children—aging from 10 to 21 years old.

Pieters is known for his humor.

"If I had a million dollars, I would buy an RV park as an investment—which would serve as a place to live in retirement years," he said.

He jokingly added, "My dad claims to have invented the breakfast burrito in Southern California prior to 1975, while working as a mechanic at a Volkswagen dealership, even though 'The Google' doesn't reflect that."

Chief Master Sgt. Todd Houchens

Houchens will become the 192nd Airlift Squadron's Loadmaster Superintendent. He was born in Burbank, Calif. Has lived in Washington, New Mexico, Alaska, Oklahoma and Japan. He started off in the United States Air Force active duty as both a Ground Radio Communications Technician and Airborne Warning and Control Radar technician. He joined the Air National Guard in Cheney, Washington, and ended up in the Nevada Air National Guard, despite never living in Reno.

"All of the different positions I have served in have had something special about them and all the jobs were equally important, which helped build my career while enhancing my abilities, opportunities with my civilian career. Absent any of these jobs, I don't think I would have had the ability to be where I am today."

His wife, Leann, says that he takes his leadership duties serious.

"I always hear him mentoring junior members on the phone, telling them to get their professional military education requirements out of the way and to always set goals and keep pushing," she said.

He has two children and, although he drills in Reno, he lives in Spokane, Wash. and telecommutes for his civilian job in Albuquerque, N.M.

"My civilian job is sort of interesting," he said. "In my current position since 2014, I work on unique weather radars in Prudhoe Bay and in Barrow Alaska for the Department of Energy Atmospheric Radiation Measurement program. The level of travel is high as I average ten trips to the Alaska sites per year and another 4 to 6 trips to Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Washington and a facility in the Southern Great Plains of Oklahoma. Two trips last year were in support for a field campaign in Argentina and another this fall to Norway. The program was established about 20 years ago and the sites—both fixed and mobile—host a wide array of instruments to collect weather and cloud data cetera for climate modeling and research."

With such an interesting civilian career, he still has had higher aspirations.

"If I could have a special talent it would be to have had the resolve to become an astronaut," he said. "As corny as that sounds I grew up a Trekkie and Sci-Fi fan and I grew up after NASA reached the moon and always admired those real heroes who put it all on the line to get into space and beyond. Because of that, the prospect of being able to fly on an airplane was one of the big things that drew me into the Air Force."

His wife added: "Even though he travels over 30 weeks per year, he still likes to surprise me with quick

trips to random fun places. I love to travel and so does he and that works for us."

Chief Master Sgt. Shawn Plunket

Plunket will take over the Chief Flight Engineer position in the 152nd Operations Group. Plunket was born in Altoona, Penn., but moved to the local area four years later when his parents hit a Keno ticket on their anniversary here.

He has been in the Nevada Air National Guard for 23 years. He started off as a crew chief and transitioned to flight engineer in 2005. His degree from University of Nevada, Reno is in math, physics and geology. He has owned several small businesses in town.

He won the "Reno's Top 20 under 40" award in 2013.

"Not too many people know this about me, but I am President of the Nevada Chapter of the Mars Society and helped with construction of a Mars Desert Research Station in the Utah desert. I am also a huge Star Wars nerd."

He is a private pilot and is working on his commercial rating.

Plunket is married with two children, and has another on the way. If he won a million dollars? "I would pay off my house, buy a 1977 Trans Am (Bandit Car) and give away the rest to friends and family—after throwing a raging party at SANGA, of course!"

Chief Master Sgt. Angela Ash

Ash was selected from the ANG Stripes for Exceptional Performers Promotion Program (STEP II). This program was developed to provide promotion opportunity to SMSgt and CMSgt for truly exceptional traditional guard enlisted leaders where vacant unit manning document authorizations do not exist.

Ash began her military career in active duty Air Force and has 25 years total military time. She has worked in several positions around the base to include: administrative assistant, personnel assistant, plans and programs specialist, plans and programs chief, first sergeant and her current position of human resource advisor for the 152nd Airlift Wing.

She grew up in Gary, Indiana and is the oldest of five children, and according to her father, Earl Ash, was the easiest child to raise.

"My daughter was a real nice kid growing up," he said. "She always tried to be good. She was the oldest and seemed to get along with everyone around here. She was a very easy child to raise."

Her sister Rosalind Anderson agreed.

"She was always such a hard worker, when we walked to school—up this hill, she would be wearing heels, but still outwalking me—and pushing me. She always set the example and I kind of tried to follow in her footsteps. She was the manager for the football and wrestling team and she ran track. She also did some modeling, too!"

Ash also is very passionate about running, she runs at least three miles before drill days.

"It helps set my mental tone and focus before drill." She has run several marathons and half-marathons and recently scored 100% on her annual physical fitness test.

"Most people might think it's weird, but working out is my hobby."

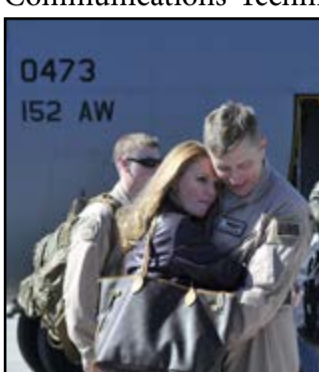
Family is also important to Ash.

"My family is like most, we love each other. My daughters are amazing women, who are very influential in my life. We are friends, confidants and we kick each other in the rear when needed. I have the best grandson ever—even when I don't want to be around anyone else, I want to be around him!"

"If I had a million dollars, I would move to an island, invest half of the money, buy my parents, siblings and daughters a house wherever they wanted to live."

Ash will be the first African American woman promoted to Chief Master Sgt. in the Nevada Air National Guard, and will be holding her promotion ceremony in September.

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Leadership News

Developing leaders in the Nevada Air National Guard is a priority

By Senior Master Sgt. Paula Macomber 152nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Nevada Air National Guardsmen participated in the second annual "Battle Born Professional Development Fly Away" at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base from July 29 to August 2.

There was a need to professionally develop the junior leaders of the Nevada Air National Guard, State Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Michael Drisdale said.

"We began offering this to noncommissioned officers (NCOs) last year and every year we are going to refine it," Drisdale said. "Although the first year went great, there are always lessons to be learned. We are going to continue refine this."

"The future is not going to be any less challenging than the present," he said. "It only ramps up. We need more out of the NCO Corps. There is no limits to effort or the resources that we should expend ensuring that we have a solid future. We will not stop."

The training this year was slightly different from last year.

"We started off with some team building exercises, which we felt were lacking last year," Drisdale said, "I think adding this, gives the teams a chance to begin bonding much earlier than they did last year—making for a better overall experience."

The entire Nevada group began the training with

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USAf Connect app advertisement for free childcare through Boys & Girls Club, including download instructions and QR codes.

State News

Nevada National Guard Brig. Gen. Burks says timing right to retire

By Steve Ranson Lahontan Valley News Editor Emeritus

The timing feels right for Brig. Gen. William R. Burks to leave after 10 years of serving at the helm of the Nevada National Guard.

From seeing action in the Persian Gulf as a weapons system officer during Desert Storm in 1990-1991 to crunching numbers at the Pentagon to being the leader of more than 3,000 men and women who serve both their state and nation, Burks will step down later this summer as Nevada's 29th adjutant general.

The Reno native, who assumed his final command in June 2009, is completing his 42nd year of service, but for the 64-year-old Burks, though, his memories of time spent in the military — and especially his accomplishments as adjutant general — are as varied as the wild blue yonder in which he flew.

From combat to being a witness to one of the most horrific acts in United States history on Sept. 11, 2001, Burks also took pride in attending deployments or special events to shepherd a new state partnership program with Tonga and later Fiji. One of his most defining moments that occurred almost nine years ago still weighs on Burks after a gunman committed a heinous act at the Carson City International House of Pancakes.

TEST OF LEADERSHIP "Everything up to that point had been smooth," Burks recalled of his short time as adjutant general.

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