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Wyoming National Guard armory reopens

The armory, in Wheatland, is home to the 67th Army Band

By Spc. Emily Pearson
197th Public Affairs Detachment, Wyoming Army National Guard

WHEATLAND, Wyo. – A Wyoming armory reopened its doors during a grand opening ceremony, June 6 in Wheatland, Wyo.

After a year long wait and renovations costing nearly \$2.2 million, the Wyoming Army National Guard's 67th Army Band moved into their remodeled home.

Sgt. 1st Class Diane T. Smith, first sergeant for the band, said the new renovations fulfill the unit's particular musical needs and give the band more space for storage, people and some much needed practice areas.

"The old armory was not adequate for musicians and did not meet our needs to rehearse so we could meet our musical mission," said Smith.

Smith expanded on the unique changes to the armory made specifically for the band, including individual practice rooms, separate practice rooms for the concert band and the rock band and sound proof walls for rehearsal areas.

A parade field was added to the rear of the armory for marching and drilling exercises. The field is open for public use when the band is not utilizing it.

“Before we were playing in a basketball court,” said Sgt. Todd A. Crawford, recruiting and retention liaison. “It was basically a gym.”

“This is a really state-of-the-art building,” added Crawford, a tuba and euphonium player for the band. “So all we really need to do now is focus a little bit more on getting our band back up to 100 percent strength and going out, playing our music and doing our mission.”

The band’s mission has always been to establish good community relations between the Guard and the residents of Wyoming. In addition, the band is a tradition that boosts moral for Wyoming’s National Guard Soldiers.

During the year while renovations were underway, the 67th Band drilled in the Casper armory. While there, they had to practice in a garage during the winter and outside when it was warm.

“The Casper armory did a lot for us to try and accommodate our needs the best they could,” said Crawford. “It’s just great to be back. We’ve all got our own spaces here, there’s plenty of places to practice, everything is pretty much soundproof and acoustically correct, so it’s amazing now.”

“Finally we have an armory that is fitting for my musicians,” said Smith. “I have obviously the state’s best musicians and now I have a facility for them.”

“It’s phenomenal,” she added. “It’s home.”

100606-A-2921P-001: Sgt. John M. Savery, a member of the pipe and drum corps, performed a series of patriotic music during the grand opening celebration of the 67th Army Band's Wyoming Army National Guard armory, June 6, in Wheatland, Wyo. (Photo by Spc. Emily Pearson, 197th Public Affairs Detachment, Wyoming Army National Guard)

100606-A-2921P-002: Pfc. Stewart A. Dyer plays the snare drum alongside Sgt. John M. Savery on the bagpipes during the 67th Army Band's Wyoming Army National Guard armory's grand opening, June 6, in Wheatland, Wyo. (Photo by Spc. Emily Pearson, 197th Public Affairs Detachment, Wyoming Army National Guard)

100606-A-2921P-003: Pfc. Stewart A. Dyer plays the drums during the 67th Wyoming Army National Guard Band's armory's grand opening, June 6, in Wheatland, Wyo. (Photo by Spc. Emily Pearson, 197th Public Affairs Detachment, Wyoming Army National Guard)