

CITIZEN AIRMAN

Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

JUNE 2004



PREDATOR

Unmanned aerial vehicle program
blends Reservists with
active-duty members, National Guardsmen





By Brig. Gen. Leon Johnson
Chairman, Human Resources Development Council

Command Council Addresses, Resolves Personnel Issues

In 1991, the senior leadership of our command determined that our people issues needed focused attention. The result was the creation of the Air Force Reserve Command Human Resources Development Council. Since that time, the HRDC concept has expanded to local councils at the wing level and the recent formation of the first individual mobilization augmentee HRDC at Scott AFB, Ill., at the Air Mobility Command Tanker Airlift Control Center.

The command HRDC is comprised of volunteers from all AFRC career programs, to include air reserve technicians, people serving in active Guard and Reserve positions, civilians, IMAs and traditional reservists. They are supplemented by key members of the AFRC and Air Reserve Personnel Center staffs. The command HRDC operates under a charter signed by the chief of Air Force Reserve, which tasks the council as his principal adviser on human resource issues.

Since its inception, the command HRDC has been involved in a variety of activities, including:

- Gathering command-level demographic data on promotions, service school selection rates, and the presentation of awards and decorations.
- Producing guidelines for establishing and running a base-level HRDC.
- Hosting bi-annual workshops.
- Establishing the first Department of Defense partnerships with key civilian minority and female organizations.

Following the lead by your command HRDC, the Air Force has signed memorandums of understanding in the last year with the League of United Latin American Citizens and Women in Aviation International, which serve to expand the service's involvement with these organizations and their awareness of the career opportunities in the Total Force.

So where does all this fit into the many things that we in AFRC do every day? Our people, regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin or sex, are

the key factor in everything we do, and HRDC strives to ensure mission readiness and improve mission accomplishment by addressing and resolving personnel issues. Whether the issues are the result of policy changes, operations tempo or base realignment and closure actions, they still need to be addressed.

What has your HRDC done for you lately? It has developed a series of tools to assist commanders and HRDCs at all levels. They include a demographic study tool to look at the composition of the command at the unit and numbered air force level. This tool will be expanded in phases to include all aspects of the command. In addition, a series of guides has been created, including one on the development of relationships with national organizations at the local level.

The diversity of our population is our strength in the ongoing war on terrorism. Our enemies do not understand how we can blend the variety of races and ethnic backgrounds into a cohesive fighting force. Issues of gender equality and religion are the source of much discord within the ranks of those who oppose us. They judge us by their standards of behavior and are amazed at our unity of purpose despite the diversity of our people.

Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James Roche emphasized this point in his address at the Women in Aviation conference in March. "We value diversity for the wealth of insight, perspective and skills it provides the Air Force while enabling us to remain a unified force that achieves common goals and objectives," he said. "Fundamentally, our focus on diversity is about achieving mission excellence and sustaining the air and space dominance we enjoy today."

Your HRDC is a key part of our command's ability to meet mission taskings because we put people first. That is why HRDC should be important to everyone in AFRC.

For more information about the HRDC, visit the organization's Web site at <https://wwwmil.afrc.af.mil/special/hrdc>. ★

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Citizen Airman magazine (AFRP 35-2) is published bi-monthly by Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command Office of Public Affairs for the commander of Air Force Reserve Command. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to the homes of all Reservists. Content is normally news articles and features developed for release to commercial media as part of the Air Force Reserve's continuing public affairs program. Opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of the Air Force Reserve. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated. Readers-per-copy ratio: 4-1. Send inquiries and submissions to HQ AFRC/PAP, 255 Richard Ray Blvd. Suite 137, Robins AFB, GA 31098-1661. Or, fax them to DSN 497-0878 or commercial (478) 327-0878. Our e-mail address is afrc.pap@afrc.af.mil.

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POSTMASTER: Please send all Forms 3579 to *Citizen Airman*, HQ AFRC/PAP, 255 Richard Ray Blvd. Suite 137, Robins AFB, GA 31098-1661.

Front cover: A Predator unmanned aerial vehicle comes in for a landing at Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field, Nev. Air Force officials are building a Predator community that seamlessly combines active-duty members, Reservists and Air National Guardsmen. For the story, see page 14.

Back cover: Staff Sgt. Robert L. Stewart, 717th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., along with other members of his ground crew, prepare an A-10 for the Hawgsmoke '04 competition. Despite bad weather, competitors considered the event a success. See story, page 8. (Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin)

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Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

VOLUME 56, NUMBER 3
ISSN No. 0887-9680

June 2004



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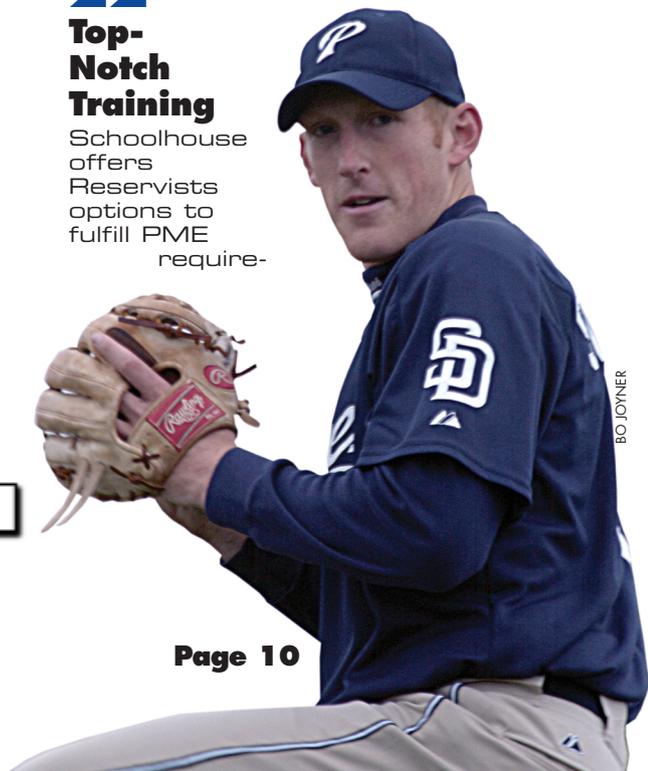
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Extra Hands

Citizen airmen answer the call for air mobility help at Ramstein

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin

When a group of people is carrying a load and the weight increases, a few extra hands can help relieve some of the burden of the additional weight.

Moving loads — in the form of cargo or people — is the mission of an air mobility operation. When the loads increase, during wartime, for example, the extra work puts a heavy burden on the people responsible for the operation. To relieve some of the pressure, the Air Force often calls upon extra hands to

help shoulder the burden.

Such is the case with the 723rd Air Mobility Squadron at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom dramatically increased the squadron's operations tempo, and it hasn't slowed down since. It quickly became apparent that the unit needed some extra help to handle the increased work load. Much of that help is being provided by members of the Air Force Reserve.

"Prior to 9/11, we were operating at a

steady state," said Chief Master Sgt. David Eisenhuth, 723th AMS air transportation manager. "After 9/11, our work load increased 100 percent. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, it went up another 40 to 50 percent."

In recent months, Chief Eisenhuth said the pace has slowed somewhat, but the squadron is still operating at its post-9/11 level. He said the unit couldn't survive without Reservists' support.

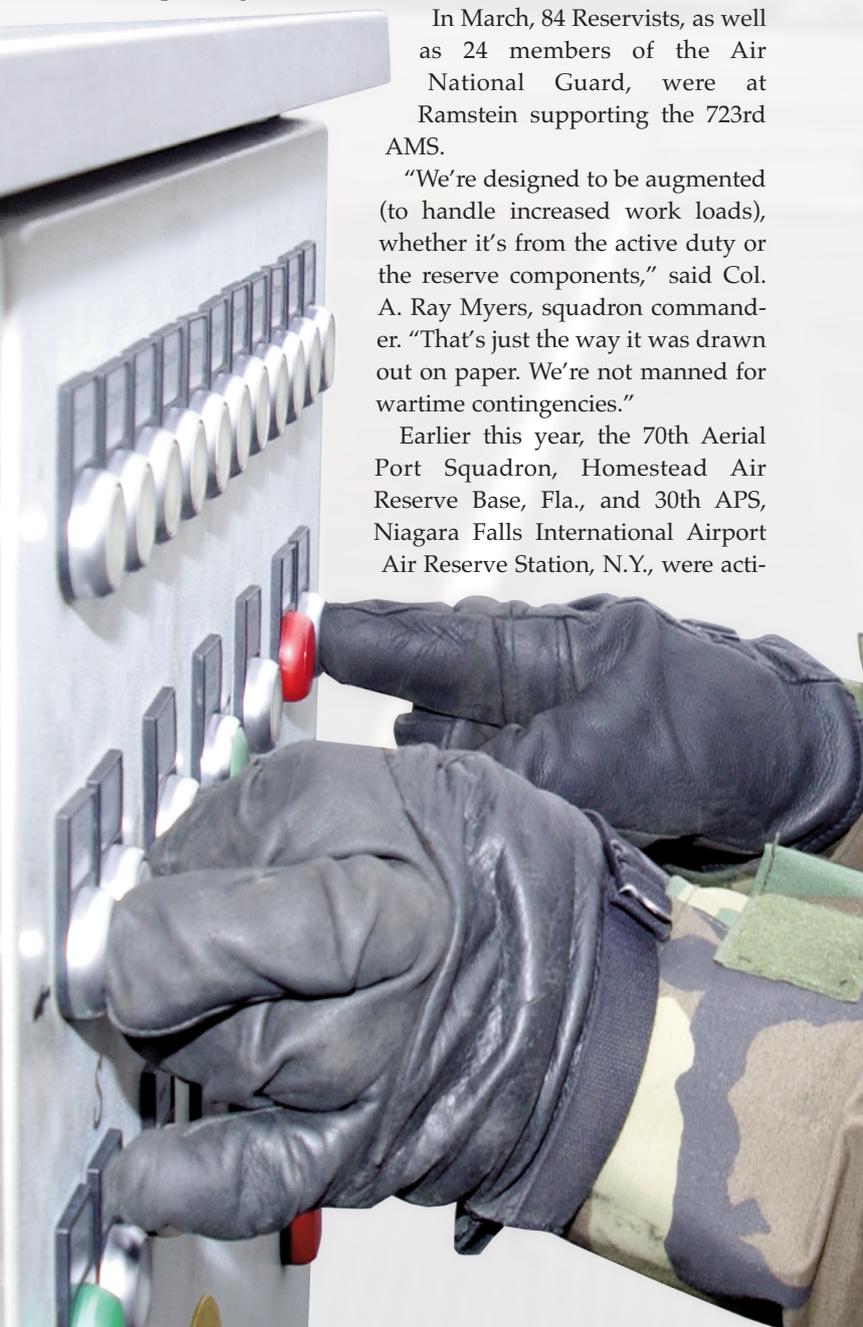
"They are a vital asset to this mission and this team," the chief said.

In March, 84 Reservists, as well as 24 members of the Air National Guard, were at Ramstein supporting the 723rd AMS.

"We're designed to be augmented (to handle increased work loads), whether it's from the active duty or the reserve components," said Col. A. Ray Myers, squadron commander. "That's just the way it was drawn out on paper. We're not manned for wartime contingencies."

Earlier this year, the 70th Aerial Port Squadron, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., and 30th APS, Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y., were acti-

Tech. Sgt. Tom McKee, a Reservist from the 70th Aerial Port Squadron, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., operates a K loader at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in March. At the time, he was one of 84 Reservists deployed to help support the 723rd Air Mobility Squadron. The K loader is used to deliver pallets to the cargo ramp.



vated for one year and sent people to Ramstein for a minimum of 90 days.

"It's a good feeling," said Tech. Sgt. Fred Becking, 70th APS special handling supervisor. "We are giving the active-duty guys a break to slow down and not burn out, and we're helping the troops downrange and the people back home."

Sergeant Becking said being deployed stirs up mixed emotions. The Reservists don't like the idea of leaving their families and friends.

"However, it's a good feeling finally being able to do our job," he said. "Look at the contributions we are making."

One of the most gratifying parts of Sergeant Becking's job is dealing with the mail.

"I know I like to get my mail," he said. "For those downrange sleeping in tents, it's nice to get a package from a family member. I enjoy knowing we're getting their items to them."

A less enjoyable part of working in the special handling section, a department that deals with items that are being shipped that require special attention such as registered mail, rations and money, involves transporting human remains.

"It's part of the job," Sergeant Becking said. "It's a respect issue, and it's an honor to be in this position. We work hard to make the task as pleasant a moment as possible."

T h e

squadron's involvement requires people to transfer caskets from one aircraft to another. During the transfer, the crews conduct a brief ceremony as a show of respect to the deceased.

"It does hit home as far as what's really happening in Iraq," Sergeant Becking said. "It's different watching it on TV. We actually touch it and read their names. It brings the war closer to the heart."

"Working at Ramstein, you feel closer to the mission," said Tech. Sgt. Delores Hall, 70th APS air cargo specialist. "If I had to do it again, I would. By being involved now, perhaps my son won't have to do this in the future."

Making sure Reservists are ready when they arrive at Ramstein and taking





care of their needs while they're deployed is the job of Tech. Sgt. Jim Orpen, 723rd AMS reserve coordinator.

"I send them welcome packages and let them know what training is required before they arrive," Sergeant Orpen said. "I coordinate billeting, transportation and line badges for the flight line and make sure they get everything they need. Since we send them the information before they arrive, they come well trained and ready to hit the ground running."

Sergeant Orpen conducts a "hot wash" in the middle and at the end of the Reservists' tour to evaluate their overall experience. So far, despite a few

Reservists ensure Dover's airlift motor keeps firing on all cylinders

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Marc Barnes

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the Department of Defense has relied heavily on Air Force expeditionary airlift capabilities to keep America's war machine running smoothly. While the airlift "motor" has many moving parts, much of its power comes from Airmen assigned to the 436th Aerial Port Squadron at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

The unit's work load more than doubled in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., as it was tasked with routing thousands of passengers and tons of cargo through the "super port" at Dover to locations throughout Europe and the Persian Gulf region for Operation Enduring Freedom. For more than a year, the unit's active-duty Airmen kept the airlift motor firing on all cylinders, but when their work load increased again at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the unit called in the reserves — 202 Reservists to be exact.

These Reservists were activated in March 2003 and joined the 436th APS to work at Dover and deployed locations supporting both Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. They came from Dover's 46th APS, the 88th APS at McGuire Air Force Base, N. J., and the 36th APS at McChord AFB, Wash. They served on active duty for a year and were replaced by a second wave of 269 Reservists and Guardsmen from 23 different units.

Maj. Greg Murray is a Reservist and was part of the group activated last year. For five months he served as commander of the 436th APS in the absence of the unit's active-duty commander, Lt. Col. Zyna Captain, who deployed in November for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The major said Reservists activated last year quickly integrated into the unit at Dover and at deployed locations and played a significant role in the organization's ability to complete its mission. He expects Reserve and Guard Airmen who recently arrived to do more of the same.

"The unit is totally integrated from the top down," he said. "We have more staffing to get the mission done, but we also have a much higher deployment tempo for the next year. The supervisory challenges are significant. ... but it is a huge



Airman 1st Class Mike Dunn, 436th Aerial Port Squadron fleet services, tightens a strap to secure a fire to a pallet in the "super port" at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Airman Dunn is an activated Reservist from the 76th APS at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio. He and 25 other members of the 76th will work in the 436th APS for the next year.

opportunity for personal and professional growth for everyone here."

Major Murray said Reserve and Guard Airmen working in the unit bring years of experience from military and civilian jobs, and he believes their knowledge is a huge benefit. Maj. Robert Hudson, officer in charge of the 436th APS Mobile Flight, agrees.

"I see the activated Guard and Reserve Airmen melding into the current structure to form a team that not only maintains but enhances the mission with their varying levels and types of experiences," said Major Hudson, who came to Dover from Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio.

In his civilian life, the major is a middle school teacher in Cleveland and works part time as a police officer in Perry,

little bumps in the road, he said, everyone has had an overall positive experience.

The relationship between the 723rd and Reservists isn't all one-sided. During their stay at Ramstein, the Reservists receive valuable training that will help with their career progression. In addition, they are exposed to various aspects of their job they may not get to see at their home unit.

"Our unit was activated a few months ago," said Senior Master Sgt. Steven Bennett, 76th APS, Youngstown ARS, Ohio. The 76th recently sent a group of Reservists to Ramstein for their annual training.

"The majority of our senior experienced people are downrange, so the people we have left are primarily in upgrade training," Sergeant Bennett said. "Some are here on their first annual tour, so they need a broad exposure to their career field. The 723rd AMS is willing to let us move people around to get experience.

"The broader the training we can get, the better prepared we'll be when and if we get activated."

One person sent to Ramstein for his annual tour was Senior Airman Anthony Volpe.

"We've gotten a chance to do some hands-on training that we don't get to do at home," he said. "It's neat to see some

of the equipment we don't have back home, like an electric forklift. They use that because it's pollution free."

One person who works side by side with Reservists on a daily basis is Staff Sgt. Gary Effatt, 723rd AMS truck dock specialist.

"I love it!" he said. "Their enthusiasm and the different ideas they bring to the mix make it a joy to come to work. A fresh influx of ideas is always a positive thing." ★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the 926th Fighter Wing public affairs office, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La. He wrote this story while deployed to Ramstein.)

Ohio. He's a newcomer to the unit and expects to be at Dover for a year. From his perspective, the changeover in personnel was nearly "seamless," thanks in part to the 436th APS Guard and Reserve liaison.

"The 436th APS has been excellent in welcoming and assimilating the Guard and Reserve units into its force structure from top to bottom," he said. "The 436th commander has been proactive in assigning a liaison for Guard and Reserve (issues) that need to be addressed through home units. The (incoming) people were able to get right into their assigned duty sections with very minimal downtime in assuming their roles and responsibilities."

The 436th APS Guard and Reserve liaison is Tech. Sgt. Donelle Osborn. She's an active-duty Airman responsible for working with incoming Reservists and Guardsmen as they become part of the unit. She said one of the biggest hurdles she had to overcome this year was coordinating the arrival of people from 23 different units from throughout the eastern United States, compared to only three units last year.

"This year it was a little harder, due to the fact that we have Guard and Reserve coming from all over trying to integrate into a system that has been in place for the last year," Sergeant Osborn said.

Major Murray said that despite various complications the unit has faced since America's war on terrorism began, its active-duty and reserve component Airmen have stepped up to complete the mission.

"The surge capability of the military is phenomenal," he said. "The active-duty Airmen stepped up and took on this huge burden for a year and a half, putting out up to 300 percent of their normal work load. For the last year, we've had help (from the Guard and Reserve), and that has been good for quality of life and work productivity issues."

No matter how you slice it, Reserve and Guard Airmen assigned to the 436th APS are making a significant impact on the unit's mission, and if past performance is any indication, the "total force" of the 436th APS will continue to be a powerful part of America's war machine. ★

(Sergeant Barnes is assigned to the 436th Airlift Wing Office of Public Affairs at Dover AFB.)



Master Sgt. John Amato, a ramp services air transportation specialist, slowly drives a 60,000-pound loader toward a loading dock at the super port.

Final Piece of the Puzzle

Communication experts complete aeromedical evacuation unit

Story by Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin, photos by Staff Sgt. Felicia R. Haecker

As casualties are taken from the front lines during battle and moved to a safer area in the rear for initial treatment before being aeromedically evacuated to a hospital, communication is vital for coordinating the most prompt medical attention.

The same principal that applies during wartime also applies to the scene of a natural disaster or civilian crisis. So when members of the active-duty 86th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, agreed to participate in a joint emergency response exercise in Munich, they turned to a group of Reservists to provide the one part of their team that was missing. ... communication.

Conducted in March, the exercise brought together more than 1,000 people and provided an opportunity for civilian emergency response teams to practice joint operations with the U.S. Air Force and members of the German armed forces.

For four Reservists from the 433rd AES, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, the exercise provided an opportunity to share their communication skills and expertise with a unit that lacks radio operators.

"When we found out we were going to be involved in the exercise, we knew we needed radio operators to be successful," said Capt. Kari Turkal-Barrett, 86th AES support flight commander.

Radio operators are part of the 86th AES's deployment requirements but are not included on the unit's manning document.

After meeting some other aeromedical folks from the 433rd AES who were deployed to Ramstein, Captain Turkal-Barrett found out the unit had radio operators back in San Antonio who could satisfy her squadron's needs.

"We called the 433rd AES and asked if they could send some radio operators to Ramstein to support the exercise," she said.

The 433rd sent four Reservists to Ramstein. Two were deployed to Munich March 24-29, while the others remained at Ramstein. The two who deployed to Munich were part of a 15-person mobile aeromedical staging facility that included nurses, medical technicians and medical administrators. This marked the first time elements of the 86th AES had deployed with radio operators.

"They needed those slots filled to be able to complete this exercise," said Staff Sgt. Lorrie Jansen, 433rd AES radio operator and part of the MASF team. "We had a real chance to share our knowledge with an AES and show them how the entire system works with communication involved."

After flying into Munich aboard a C-130 Hercules, members of the MASF team loaded their equipment onto some trucks and traveled about 30 minutes to Erding AB, where they set up shop. A MASF must be located near an airfield so planes can land to retrieve patients. When the team arrived at Erding, it took about one hour to set up a large tent as well as the radio

equipment, which included a high-frequency antenna and radio.

The next step was to test the equipment with a radio check back to Ramstein. Sergeant Jansen and Master Sgt. Jerry Martinez, who was the second radio operator who deployed as part of the MASF team, accomplished that task on their first attempt.

Once the MASF was set up, the team practiced its patient loading and unloading skills. Sergeants Martinez and Jansen both pitched in to help and also demonstrated to other members of the MASF team how to operate their radio.

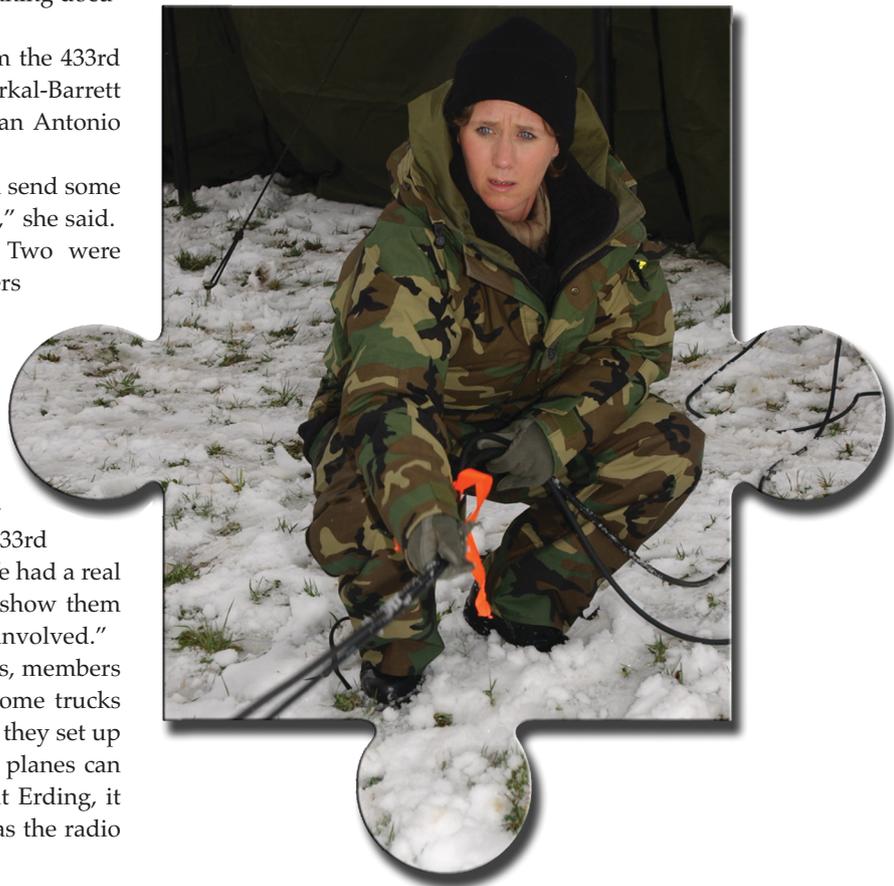
While all of this was going on, German civilian medical professionals came in and checked out the operation and were able to ask questions of the entire MASF team.

An important part of the exercise was a timed evacuation. The MASF team had to unload a C-130, with the engines running, and bring the patients into the MASF and evaluate them within a certain period of time.

"We radioed back to Ramstein to let them know we were going to be off the radio to help unload," Sergeant Jansen said.

After the patients were loaded back on the plane, the reservists jumped on board to play the role of casualties.

Staff Sgt. Lorrie Jansen, a radio operator with the 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, runs communication cables in support of a joint emergency response exercise in Munich, Germany, in March.



"We flew around for two hours and landed back at the Munich Airport where we were met by the Munich Fire Department, Red Cross and 100-plus ambulances of all shapes and sizes," Sergeant Martinez said.

At Munich, the patients were loaded on ambulances, buses and helicopters for transportation to a simulated hospital, which was actually back where they started at Erding.

"It was a great learning experience to help another unit achieve its goals and to demonstrate how a MASF would completely work with comm in it," Sergeant Martinez said. "Reservists got to complete the final piece of the puzzle."

From the standpoint of the MASF, radio operations were a success.

"Communication was good throughout the entire exercise," Sergeant Jansen said. "We had no problems, except we didn't get to use the entire communication capability due to shortfalls in equipment."

There was a piece of equipment missing that prevented them from having satellite communications.

For Master Sgt. James Garza and Tech. Sgt. Kaylene Busselman, the two radio operators who remained at Ramstein, overcoming equipment deficiencies was the name of the game.

"After doing an initial inventory, we had to take scrap equipment and make communication between the two locations work," Sergeant Garza said.

"Because of the shortage of equipment, we had to improvise," Sergeant Busselman said. "One of the things we had to do was put an antenna in a tree to elevate it. After the exercise, we did another complete inventory to give them shortfalls so they can complete their package."

Because of their efforts and expertise, the Reservists said they were invited back to help with inventory and to participate in future exercises.

"The 433rd radio operators identified missing communication items as well as inoperable equipment," Captain Turkal-Berrett said. "Their findings improved the overall readiness of the mobile aeromedical staging facility."

Another element the Reservists brought to the exercise was true wartime experience.



Master Sgt. Jerry Martinez assembles communications equipment during the exercise. He was one of four Reserve radio operators from the 433rd AES who provided communications support for the active-duty 86th AES.

"All four of us were deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom," Sergeant Jansen said, "so it gave us a chance to take real wartime experience and apply it to this exercise. We could say this is what really happens, because during wartime things don't always go the way you plan them in an exercise."

The fact that there were parts missing from the active-duty unit's inventory was not unusual. All four Reservists said the packages they received during OIF had pieces missing. Just like during the exercise, they had to adapt and find whatever it took to make things work.

"The most important aspect of the exercise was members of the 86th AES found out how essential comm is to complete their mission," Sergeant Busselman said. "The mission is real world, but this exercise was training on how to operate on the ground, and it showed how it

works with all the pieces. The 86th is a real good unit. The people are very knowledgeable. They're just missing that link of radio operations."

Captain Turkal-Berrett had nothing but nice things to say about the Reservists.

"Their knowledge was incredible, and their experience with equipment and deployment was remarkable," she said. "They asked all the right questions and gave all the right answers."

"It was great to have support from the 433rd AES," said Col. Jacqueline Murdock, 86th AES commander. "The Reservists were a major contributor to the success of the exercise." ★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the 926th Fighter Wing public affairs office at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La. He wrote this story while deployed to Ramstein AB.)



Wet Hawgs

A-10 gathering a big hit in spite of rainy weather

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin

A pack of more than 70 "Hawgs" gathered on the flight line in late April at the former England Air Force Base, La., ready to compete, show their skills and see who was most dominant. However, Mother Nature's roar was mightier than that of the A-10 Warthogs as the competition side of Hawgsmoke '04 had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

The rain might have ruined the competition, but it could not dampen the spirit of brotherhood and camaraderie among members of the A-10 community, and the event was still considered a major success.

Hawgsmoke is a biennial bombing and tactical gunnery competition that started in 2000. As the 2002 winner of the event, the 47th Fighter Squadron, Barksdale AFB, La., served as host for this year's competition.

"It's an outstanding opportunity to showcase our people and the Air Force Reserve by being at the forefront of Hawgsmoke," said Lt. Col. Greg Eckfeld, 47th FS commander.

The event, scheduled for April 29-May 2, included 18 four-man teams representing A-10 squadrons worldwide, including units from South Korea and Germany. The only unit that was unable to attend — the 355th FS from Eielson AFB, Alaska — missed the competition

because of a real-world deployment.

The host unit, as well as the 706th FS, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, New Orleans, La., and the 303rd FS, Whiteman AFB, Mo., represented Air Force Reserve Command.

Part of being the host unit includes providing all maintenance and support for the participants and even supplying aircraft for the two overseas squadrons. All stateside teams bring their own planes.

"We want everyone to participate. All they send is four jets and four pilots," said Lt. Col. Jim Macaulay, 47th FS project officer for Hawgsmoke '04. "It's a low-cost infrastructure. The reason Gunsmoke got cancelled was the cost to support for each unit. The host for Hawgsmoke does it all. We (the A-10 community) are able to pull something like this off because we all like each other. We train, work and fight together."

A total of about 180 maintenance and support people from Barksdale were involved in Hawgsmoke. The group made the two-hour drive to the England Airpark and Industrial Community (formerly England AFB) in Alexandria.

One of the reasons the 47th FS chose Alexandria as the location for Hawgsmoke '04 is its historic ties to the A-10. The first A-10s arrived at England AFB in 1980, where the 23rd Tactical

Fighter Wing "Flying Tigers" flew them.

Another reason for having the event in Alexandria is the excellent infrastructure. The base closed in 1992, but England Airpark remains a vital asset in close air support training held at nearby Fort Polk, La.

Lt. Col. Cliff Latta of the Air National Guard's 172nd FS, Battle Creek Mich., had a very simple concept in mind when he came up with the idea for Hawgsmoke.

"We wanted to create an opportunity to bring all the A-10 units together, along with retired A-10 pilots, and keep the emphasis on honoring the pilots and those who have been killed," he said. "And, oh, by the way, we'll have a competition. The key is keeping it simple. All you do is bring your ships."

Another important element of the competition is the A-10 community itself, Colonel Latta said.

"The A-10 community is a small family," he said. "Not so small that it doesn't make sense to have a competition, but just the right size. The pilots are a tight-knit group, and we have a great relationship between the Guard, Reserve and active duty. We share one vision of close air support."

Since the vast majority of the pilots at Hawgsmoke have been involved in combat in recent years, the competition offered a

good opportunity for them to get together and swap experiences.

"It's a good chance to share all your stories that no one has heard about," said Maj. Terry Gostomski, 303rd FS pilot. "It's a great learning environment to hone your skills even more. With all that's been going on, this is the one time we can get together and act like fighter pilots."

"The great thing about Hawgsmoke is it involves the entire A-10 community," said Maj. Mickey Moore, 706th FS. "Old and new guys get together for some fun and to compete and see who's better. It's like the Ryder Cup (a competition pitting the best golfers from the United States against Europe's best). You want to do well to get your squadron some recognition. Not only for the pilots, but for the maintainers."

The 717th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron from Barksdale provided the bulk of the maintainers at Hawgsmoke.

"The biggest challenge is the logistical aspect," said Colonel Macaulay. "The competition and flying aspect are easy, but taking care of 76 jets is hard."

The mammoth task of arranging the logistics to take care of 76 Hawgs fell squarely on the shoulders of Senior Master Sgt. Richard Anderson, 717th AMXS flight chief.

"We started working on this about a year ago," Sergeant Anderson said. "The first thing we needed to know was how many aircraft were going to be there and how much ramp space was available. Then we had to figure out the minimum number of people it would take to turn and fly this many aircraft. This is a whole lot bigger than anything we usually do, but we were up for it."

Sergeant Anderson ended up with more than 100 maintainers from his unit. Four-man Reserve crews from New Orleans and Whiteman and four active-duty crew chiefs from Pope AFB, N.C., augmented the 717th.

"I feel honored being invited to come participate and help out a fellow Reserve unit," said Tech Sgt. Randy Bowen of the 926th Maintenance Squadron.

"It's impressive to see 76 A-10s on the ramp. With the A-10 recently celebrating its 30th anniversary, it's a good reunion,



Tech. Sgt. Randy Bowen of the 926th Maintenance Squadron changes a taillight on one of the 76 A-10s at Hawgsmoke.

and it's good to see some old faces and catch up."

For the people from Pope, the competition provided a chance to see Reservists at their best.

"I've never seen a Reserve unit function," said Staff Sgt. Eric Bluhm, 74th FS. "It was impressive to see how the whole thing was orchestrated. They have a bunch of guys with a lot of experience and knowledge. It's cool to see master sergeants and tech sergeants turning wrenches."

A Hawgsmoke tradition is for the previous event's winner to host the next competition. However, because there was no winner this year, it wasn't decided who will host the next event, in 2006. Colonel Macaulay said both the 926th Fighter Wing at New Orleans and the 442nd FW at Whiteman are strong possibilities. He said everyone involved with Hawgsmoke '04 will get together in the near future to review this year's event and determine the next host site. ★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the 926th Fighter Wing public affairs office at NAS JRB New Orleans, La.)



A ground crew from the 47th Fighter Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., loads bombs on an A-10.

Meet Jason Szuminski:
Rocket scientist,
big league pitcher and
Air Force Reservist

Story and
photos by
Bo Joyner





Jason Szuminski's San Diego Padres teammates call him "Zoom," a fitting nickname for a hard-throwing pitcher who also happens to be an aerospace engineer with a degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Like most Major League baseball players, Jason Szuminski has worn a lot of different uniforms in his day. But what makes him different from all of his fellow big leaguers is the uniform he wears during the off-season.

During the summer, Mr. Szuminski wears the blue and gray as a pitcher for the San Diego Padres. When the season ends, he quickly switches to Air Force blue. As a first lieutenant in the Air Force Reserve, he serves as an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the Air Force Research Laboratory's Propulsion Directorate, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

Not only is the 6'4", 220-pound right-hander the only Air Force Reservist pitching in the Major Leagues, he is probably the only aerospace engineer in the world who can throw a 95-mile-per-hour fastball and a wicked, knee-buckling sinker ball.

Lieutenant Szuminski's road to the Major Leagues was an unusual one. Growing up in San Antonio, he started playing baseball at an early age and competed every year through his senior year at Douglas MacArthur High School in 1996. Like most youngsters who put on a glove, he dreamed of someday playing in the big leagues, but when no professional scouts or colleges came calling with baseball offers after high school, he put his baseball dreams on hold.

Having grown up in a military family (his father was a Navy fighter pilot, and both of his grandfathers served), Lieutenant Szuminski decided to accept an Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Despite a heavy course load at one of the country's most prestigious and demanding institutions of higher learning, he wasn't ready to give up baseball, so he tried out for MIT's varsity as a walk-on.

"MIT plays Division III baseball, and the level of play wasn't much better than I had seen in high school," the lieutenant said during an interview at the Padres' spring training complex in Peoria, Ariz., in March. "My freshman year, I was the big, hard-thrower in the conference. I found I could go out and throw fastballs by people as a brand-new freshman.

"My first couple of years at MIT, I pretty much looked at baseball as a way to blow off some steam. The courses were so demanding and there was so much stress that going out there and throwing fastballs as hard as I possibly could was just a release for me."

While he had all but given up on his dream of playing pro-

fessional baseball, Lieutenant Szuminski's fortunes turned during his junior year at MIT.

"I wasn't playing much because my class schedule was so heavy in the afternoons that I couldn't make it to many practices or games," he said. "About halfway through the season, I made it a point to be there for a game against Brandeis, the best team we would play all year. I knew the Brandeis shortstop had some scouts looking at him. I went out there throwing 90-mile-per-hour fastballs and blew him away. After the game, a scout for the Cincinnati Reds told me I had something special and that if I worked at it I had a chance to play pro ball."

Amazingly, Lieutenant Szuminski's encounter with the Reds' scout almost didn't happen. He had an exam in fluid dynamics

scheduled that same day, and teachers at MIT don't let students reschedule tests to take part in sports. They will, however, let students reschedule an exam if they have a job interview.

"I told the teacher I had a job interview: Baseball scouts are coming, and I intend to be a Major League player."

The teacher agreed, and the lieutenant took off for the field.

Since that day, Lieutenant Szuminski has labored tirelessly to make his childhood dream come true. He worked to get into one of the competitive New England summer leagues where he held his own against some of the better players from Division I college

programs and made a name for himself among the scouts who search the leagues looking for potential Major League talent.

"I was a big kid with a strong arm, so I guess they saw some potential there," he said. "My senior year at MIT, there would be more scouts than fans at the game every time I pitched."

Even so, his dream of playing Major League baseball seemed like a long shot.

Just before graduating from MIT with a degree in aerospace engineering in 2000, the Chicago Cubs selected him in the 27th round with the 793rd pick in the amateur draft. He would have been taken much earlier in the draft, but his Air Force commitment scared most professional teams away.

He pitched well in his pro debut with Chicago's rookie league team in Arizona, then returned to Cambridge to complete his degree. After graduation, the Cubs wanted Lieutenant Szuminski



Lieutenant Szuminski signs autographs following a Padres spring training game.

to report to their Class A team in Michigan. The Air Force, on the other hand, assigned him to Los Angeles AFB, Calif., to work in the acquisitions office for the advanced extremely high-frequency satellite program.

Owing the Air Force at least four years in return for his \$100,000 ROTC scholarship, it again looked like Lieutenant Szuminski's baseball career might be over. He and the Cubs looked at the possibility of repaying his scholarship, but the Air Force desperately needed engineers and wasn't interested in losing an MIT grad with a 3.60 grade-point average.

Luckily, the lieutenant discovered the Air Force's World Class Athlete Program, which allows elite athletes to train with the goal of making a U.S. Olympic team. The program gave him the opportunity to develop his skills in the Cubs' minor league system and shoot for making the U.S. Olympic baseball team in 2004.

"The Cubs taught me how to pitch and not just throw," Lieutenant Szuminski said. "When I came out of college, I was throwing a 95-mile-per-hour fastball, but it was leaving the bat faster than it was coming in."

As he worked his way up in the Cubs' organization, he traded his hard, straight fastball for a two-seam fastball that sinks and developed his slider and change-up.

Just when it looked like everything was falling into place, the baseball gods threw Jason another curve. On Nov. 7, 2003, Mexico stunned Team USA 2-1 in the quarterfinals of the Olympic qualifying tournament in Panama, knocking the U.S. team out of the Olympics and effectively knocking Lieutenant Szuminski out of the World Class Athlete Program.

By that time, he was turning a lot of heads in the baseball world. During the 2003 season in the Cubs organization, the lieutenant made the move from Class A to AAA. In 97 innings, his combined ERA was 2.78. He struck out 73 while walking 29 and allowing only one homerun.

Pitching against the best minor league players in the prestigious Arizona Fall League, he struck out 19 hitters in 19 innings. His performance was so impressive that the Kansas City Royals took Lieutenant Szuminski from the Cubs in the December 2003 Rule 5 draft and quickly traded him to the Padres.



Padres First Base Coach Davey Lopes looks on as Lieutenant Szuminski pitches during spring training.

Rule 5 is a supplemental draft designed to prevent teams from stockpiling talent. It stipulates that a player taken can't be sent to the minors that year without clearing waivers and then being offered back to the original team for half of the \$50,000 selection price. It looked like Lieutenant Szuminski's dream of making the big leagues was going to happen. But there was just one problem: How could he pitch full time for the Padres and simultaneously work full-time for the Air Force? That's where the Air Force Reserve stepped in.

The lieutenant offered to trade in the one year he had remaining on his active-duty commitment for a three-year commitment in the Reserve. Former Dallas Cowboys defensive tackle Chad Hennings and current Rams defensive end Bryce Fisher made similar deals when they made the National Football League.

"I think this is a win-win situation for both the Air Force and me," the lieutenant said. "I'm extending my commitment, I'll have plenty of time in the off-season to perform my IMA duties, plus I'm really looking forward to doing some stuff for (Air Force and Reserve) recruiting in the off-season. I have nothing but great things to say about the Air Force."

Jason's coaches have had some great things to say about him.

"I've been very impressed with him," Padres Manager Bruce Bochy said during spring training. "Not just the way he pitches, but with the way he handles his business. He's very intelligent, and he's done everything we've asked him to do. We like his competitiveness."

Lieutenant Szuminski believes the four years he spent at MIT definitely helped him in his quest to be a Major League pitcher.

"The world of baseball and MIT could not be more different, but making it through MIT gave me the confidence to think I can jump into anything and be successful," he said.

Back on campus, Lieutenant Szuminski is something of a celebrity. That's not surprising when you consider that the school has produced 57 Nobel Prize winners but only one big league ball player. In fact, he is only the second Engineer player ever to be drafted by a Major League team. The first was another pitcher, Alan Dopfel, who was taken in the third round by the Angels in 1972 but never made it to "the Show."

Jason made his Major League debut April 11 during a nationally televised Sunday night game against the San Francisco Giants and future Hall-of-Famer Barry Bonds. He gave up one unearned run in one inning and got Mr. Bonds out on a fly ball to left field.

"I knew I was going to pitch to him," Lieutenant Szuminski said. "I was trying to go with my strengths and get him out. I got a front-row seat at how strong he is. I thought he popped that ball up, and it wound up going pretty deep." ★

(Editor's note: Lieutenant Szuminski was offered back to the Chicago Cubs on May 11. The Cubs accepted the big righthander and, as of press time, Lieutenant Szuminski was pitching for the Cubs' Triple A team in Des Moines, Iowa. He is currently trying to work his way back up to the Major Leagues.)

PRED

Reserve Command manning up in unmanned aerial vehicle program

By Bo Joyner

Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field, Nev., is the home of the RQ/MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle program and the site for a groundbreaking integration of active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard forces.

While the Predator has made national headlines over the past couple of years for the vital role it has played in the global war on terrorism, Air Force planners at the Pentagon, Indian Springs and nearby Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas have been working behind the scenes to create a Predator community that seamlessly combines active-duty Airmen, Reservists and Guardsmen.

Lt. Col. John Breeden has been the point man for Reserve integration into the Predator program for the past 2 1/2 years. A seasoned A-10 pilot, he was working in the Air Force Combat Support Office at the Pentagon when he was tasked to report to Nellis and help in the effort to arm Predator UAVs with Hellfire missiles soon after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Not long after that, Colonel Breeden signed up to attend Predator pilot training and became the first Reservist to fly the remotely piloted vehicle. He has flown numerous Predator combat missions over Iraq and Afghanistan and currently serves as both the deputy commander for Predator for the 57th Operations Group and commander of Detachment 3 of the 307th Fighter Squadron. Until March, he also wore a third hat as chief of Predator support for the Combat Support Office at the Pentagon.

The 57th owns all three Predator squadrons in the Air Force: the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron, which trains Predator pilots and sensor operators, and the operational 15th and 17th Predator

Squadrons, which are supporting the global war on terrorism. Det. 3 stood up in February and is home to Reservists assigned to the Predator program as well as a handful of Reservists working in other programs at Nellis.

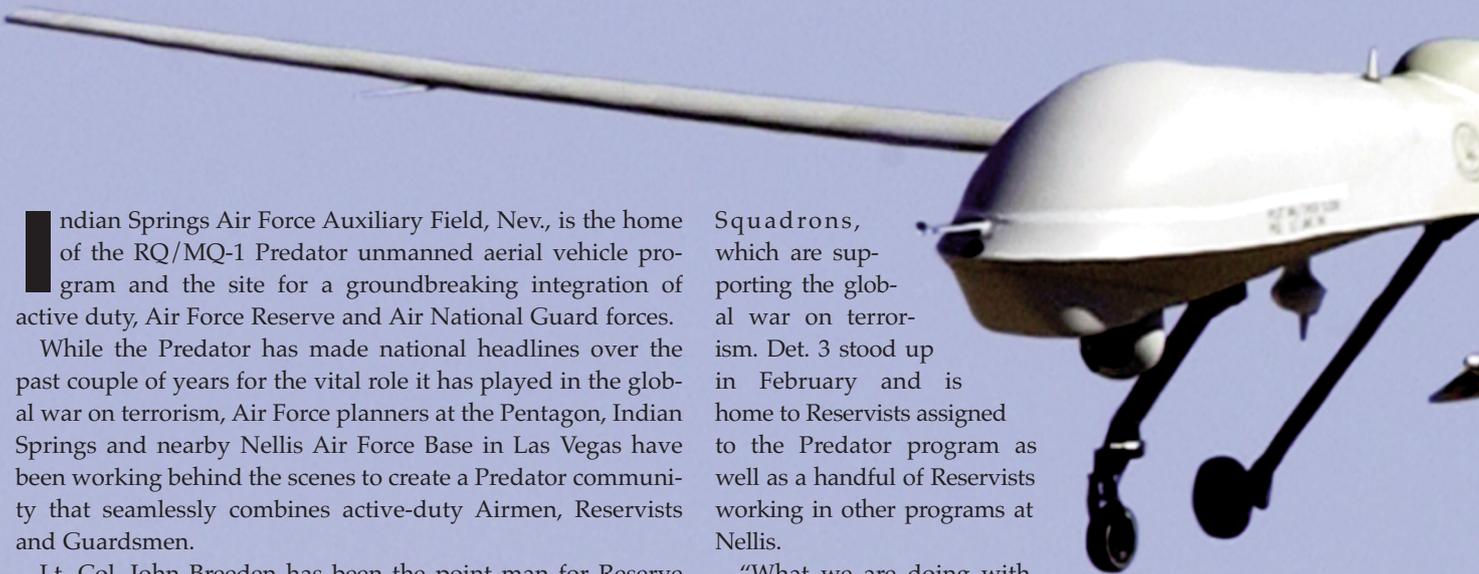
“What we are doing with Predator is totally unique,” Colonel Breeden said. “We are taking air reserve component integration with an active-duty unit to a new level.”

He said the vision for the future is to create a Predator community where it is impossible to tell Reservists and Guardsmen from their active-duty co-workers and where members of the Reserve component compete for leadership positions at all levels.

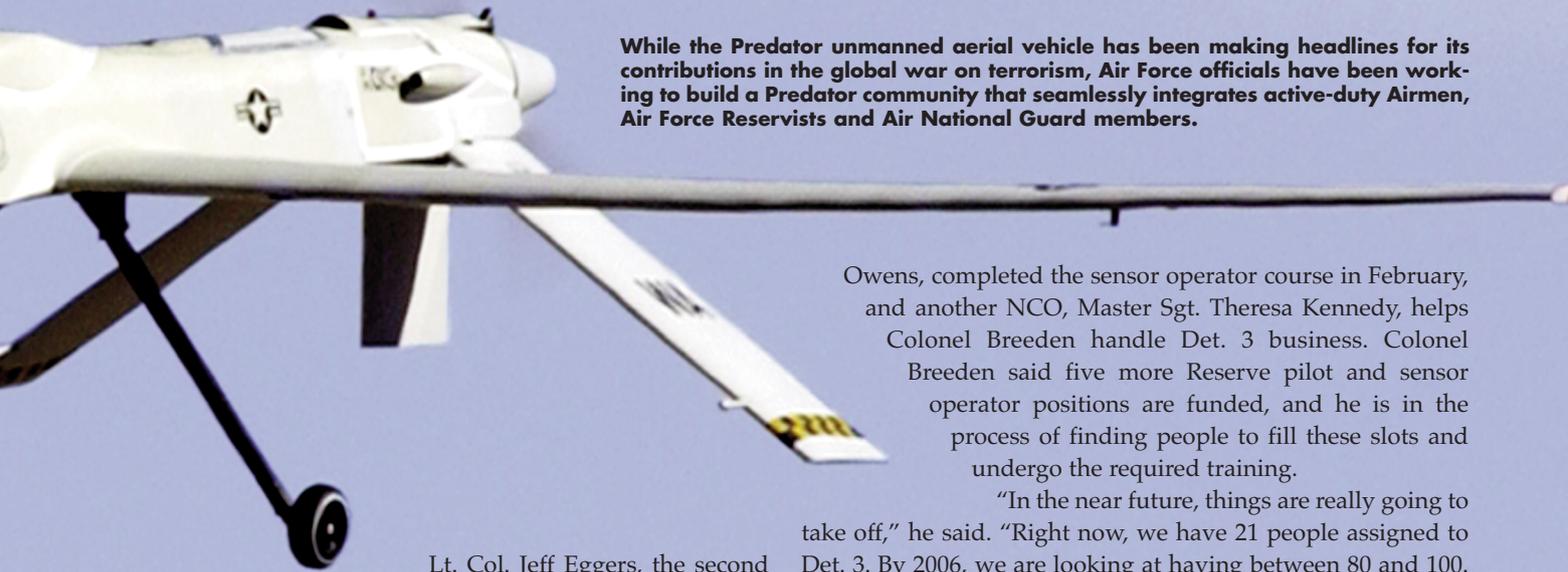
“The goal is to put the right people in the right job, regardless of whether they are active duty, Reserve or National Guard.”

Colonel Breeden said the push for ARC integration within the Predator program is being directed by leaders of not only Air Force Reserve Command and the National Guard Bureau, but by top active-duty Air Force leaders as well.

“I think that’s what makes our situation here a little different,” he said. “All three sides are committed to making this happen.”



PREDATOR



While the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle has been making headlines for its contributions in the global war on terrorism, Air Force officials have been working to build a Predator community that seamlessly integrates active-duty Airmen, Air Force Reservists and Air National Guard members.

Lt. Col. Jeff Eggers, the second Reservist to complete Predator pilot training and current chief of Predator support for the Combat Support Office, agreed.

"Some folks in the active duty have a little bit of a cautious attitude when it comes to the Reserve," he said. "They wonder if they are going to get full work out of the Reserve or if dealing with Reservists is going to be more trouble than it's worth. I haven't seen that here. General Wood (Maj. Gen. Stephen G. Wood, commander of the Air Warfare Center at Nellis) said he is going to treat Reservists on par with the active-duty personnel throughout his organization, and he's done that. He is committed to ARC integration in the Predator program."

Currently, the Reserve's presence within the Predator program is not that large. In addition to Colonels Breeden and Eggers, there are two other officers: Lt. Col. John Bullock and Maj. Dave Corra, who were scheduled to complete Predator pilot training in May. One enlisted Reservist, Master Sgt. John

Owens, completed the sensor operator course in February, and another NCO, Master Sgt. Theresa Kennedy, helps Colonel Breeden handle Det. 3 business. Colonel Breeden said five more Reserve pilot and sensor operator positions are funded, and he is in the process of finding people to fill these slots and undergo the required training.

"In the near future, things are really going to take off," he said. "Right now, we have 21 people assigned to Det. 3. By 2006, we are looking at having between 80 and 100. Some will be AGRs (people serving on an active Guard and Reserve tour), some will be traditional Reservists, and some might even be air reserve technicians," he said.

Colonel Breeden said the Predator program is a perfect fit for the Reserve.

"We're hoping to capture pilots and sensor operators as they get off active duty and bring them into the Reserve to fly the Predator," he said. "In 2002, we lost 33 sensor operators who left active duty. If we can keep even three or four of those flying part time, it would help cut down our ops tempo. For people who still want to serve their country and live in the Las Vegas area, the Predator program is a natural fit."

Major Corra was on active duty for 11 years, flying F-16s and T-38s. He left military service completely for about three years and took a job flying with the airlines. He was living in nearby Henderson, Nev., when he heard there might be an opening to fly the Predator as a Reservist.



STAFF SGT. CHRIS FLAHEVE

The Predator UAV can be easily packed and shipped anywhere in the world. Here, Tech. Sgt. Stan Harper (left) and Senior Airman Don Hoff read packing checklists before strapping a Predator down inside a shipping container so it can be deployed to an undisclosed location.

“This seemed like a great opportunity to get back in and do something that was important for our country,” he said.

“Along the same lines as Major Corra, I wanted to contribute to the global war on terrorism, and I felt this would be a great way to do that,” Colonel Bullock said.

He had 10 years active-duty experience flying F-4s and F-15s and nine years flying F-16s for the California Air National Guard. Like the major, the Ventura, Calif., resident was flying for the airlines when he called Colonel Breeden about possibly becoming a Predator pilot.

“On Dec. 3, I got a call saying I had two slots for pilots in the next Predator class,” Colonel Breeden said. “I called both of these individuals, and they said they were interested. We had their orders in hand Dec. 29, and they started class Jan. 4.

“When they graduate, within seven to 10 days they will be flying Predator combat missions,” the colonel said, adding that their flying schedule will be heavy for the first year to build up their experience level. “After that, they will transition into a more traditional Reservist pilot role of flying between five and seven times a month.”

One benefit of flying the Predator is most missions are operated out of Nellis, meaning fewer deployments are required for pilots and sensor operators.

“Currently, on most Predator missions, a launch and recovery team that is forward-deployed gets the Predator airborne before turning it over to a crew at Nellis,” Colonel Breeden said.

“Today I flew in Afghanistan and yesterday I flew in Iraq,” Colonel Eggers explained during a March interview. “And I never left Nellis.”

Colonel Breeden was quick to explain that Reserve pilots and sensor operators won’t spend all of their time at Nellis.

“When we hire pilots and sensor operators, we tell them they will probably be deployed sometime in the next two years,” he said. “We are committed to serving right there with the active duty and pulling our fair share of deployments. For ARC integration to work like we envision it, it’s vital that we’re not treated differently from anybody else.”

While pilots and sensor operators will be able to fly most of their missions from the Nevada desert, the Airmen who make sure the Predator is fit to fly may spend a lot of time overseas for the foreseeable future.

“We don’t have any Reservists involved in the maintenance side of Predator right now, but I believe we will in the future,” Colonel Breeden said. “The California and Nevada Air National Guard are working together on a joint Predator integration program, and their plan is to be heavy on the maintenance side.”

In March, Air Force officials unveiled a plan to integrate specific California and Nevada ANG assets into the 11th and 15th Reconnaissance Squadrons.

“The Air Force is creating integrated Predator teams that will increase combat capability and make Air Force history,” Maj. Gen. Roland J. Bath, director of Air

Force strategic planning, said in a March news release. “This is the first case of Guard personnel from two states working with their active-duty and Air Force Reserve counterparts within a single state. The crossing of state lines while keeping individual state identity makes this transformational.”

“We believe this represents a significant milestone where, once again, the Air Force has identified new ways to organizationally transform itself to meet our battlefield challenges and provide joint force commanders the tools they need,” added Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force vice chief of staff. “This attempt could be the first step in implementing new and innovative ideas that will ease the demands placed on our deploying forces and ensure the maximum utility of our Airmen who perform their valuable missions at home station.”

The Predator program is the Air Force’s second so-called “blended” organization. The first, the 116th Air Control Wing, was created at Robins AFB, Ga., in Sept. 2002 to fly the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft. That wing was formed by merging the Guard’s 116th Bomb Wing and the active-duty 93rd ACW. The 116th had flown B-1s, which were retired as part of an Air Force consolidation plan.

Air Force Secretary James Roche said the 116th ACW has performed “just beautifully” during Operation Iraqi Freedom and it makes sense to expand the blended concept to other areas.

“It doesn’t work in every case, but



Predator pilot Maj. Dave Corra checks out one of the unmanned aerial vehicles on the flight line at Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field, Nev. An Air Force Reservist, Major Corra completed Predator pilot school in May.

BO JOYNER

we're finding more and more places where it is in the interests of both the Guard and active force to bring the experienced folks from the Guard together with the full-time people in active duty, and you get a much higher crew ratio," he said. "And if you have to go to war, the active people take it, but then, coming behind them, are the Guard folks who supplement the original active group."

Secretary Roche said other blended units could be created in the future.

"We are looking at other areas," he said. "We have some in space, some for helping out Strategic Command, and we expect to do this with the F/A-22. It appears to be something that where it makes sense to do, it really, really pays off."

The Predator has certainly been a star in the war on terrorism. In recent months, the UAV has made headlines for helping capture Saddam Hussein and helping rescue Army Pvt. Jessica Lynch. While U.S. forces closed in on Mr. Hussein's hideout near Tikrit in December, a Predator UAV flying overhead sent video images to military leaders at command posts at Nellis and in

Qatar. The amazing thing is that the crew operating the unmanned plane during that historic mission was 7,500 miles away. ... safe and sound at Nellis.

"The fact that a Predator crew could operate the aircraft safely from the ground has always been one of its biggest selling points," Colonel Breeden said. "Now that we can keep our pilots and sensor operators at Nellis and fly missions all over the world from here, it's an even bigger advantage."

That being the case, the colonel said the main advantage Predator brings to the fight is persistence.

"We can stay airborne for more than 20 hours and can swap out pilots and sensor operators so we are always fresh," he said. "During Operation Iraqi Freedom, I was over downtown Baghdad for more than 10 hours hitting targets. By comparison, F-16s would have 20 minutes of station time once they got to Baghdad. A-10s would have 40 to 50 minutes of station time. Even our F-15Es would only have 90 minutes of station time. We can use our persistence to rack and stack targets to get these other aircraft on their targets more quickly."

And if the situation arises, the Predator is quite capable of taking out a target on its own.

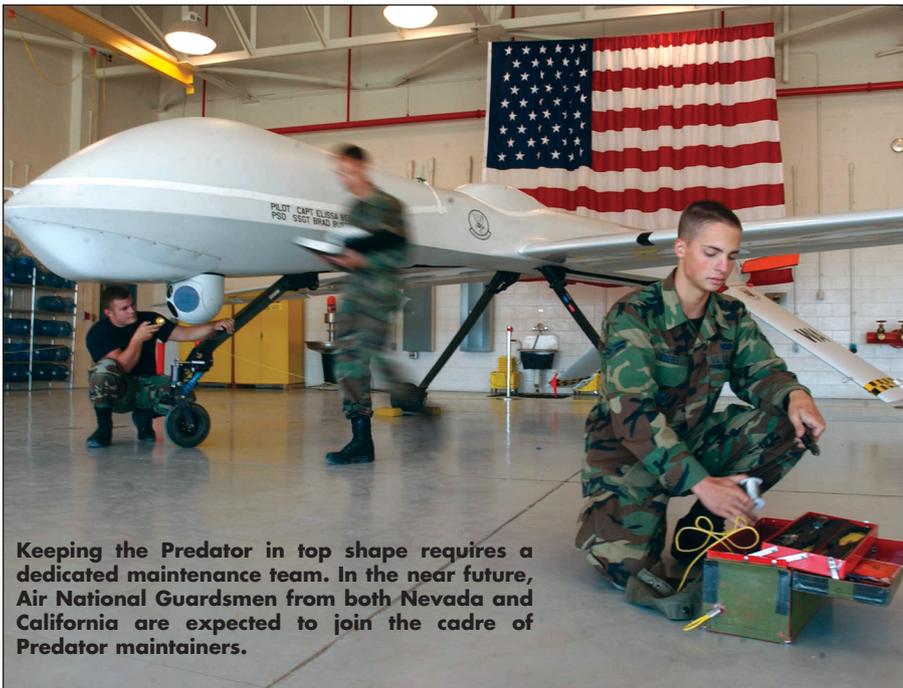
"We talk about 'find, fix, track, target, engage and access' as being the entire kill chain from start to finish. When we added Hellfire, Predator became a weapon system capable of performing the whole chain from beginning to end," Colonel Breeden said.

Built by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems of San Diego, the Predator is a marvel of modern technology. At 27 feet long, 7 feet tall and with a wingspan of 48.7 feet, the UAV weighs in at just over 1,100 pounds and is powered by what some people have called a glorified snowmobile engine. It cruises at around 90 mph at a height of up to 25,000 feet gathering information with an impressive cluster of cameras and radar.

A color nose camera is generally used by the vehicle operator for flight control. There is also a day variable aperture TV camera, a variable aperture infrared camera for low light and night use, and a synthetic aperture radar for looking through smoke, clouds or haze. The cameras pro-



Lt. Col. John Breeden (left) looks on as Lt. Col. John Bullock operates a Predator from the pilot seat. Colonel Breeden is a seasoned Predator pilot who was the first Air Force Reservist to fly the UAV in combat. Colonel Bullock, also a Reservist, completed Predator pilot training in May.



SENIOR AIRMAN ASHLEY CENTER

Keeping the Predator in top shape requires a dedicated maintenance team. In the near future, Air National Guardsmen from both Nevada and California are expected to join the cadre of Predator maintainers.

Forces commander and 9th Air Force commander, said.

“We continue to look for better ways to use the Predator in support of the ground force and coalition soldiers. We are using enhanced video receivers in theater to truly exploit overhead sensors by streaming Predator and other sensor video directly to supported ground units,” he said.

As the capabilities of UAVs continue to grow, some members of Congress have questioned the need for manned aircraft in the future.

“I don’t think it’s an answer of either (unmanned) or (manned),” General Buchanan said. “It truly is an integration of the right place to put the mission capability. There are some missions where you need a (pilot) in the aircraft. At the same time, I think we’re going to see more and more integration.”

The Defense Department’s Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Roadmap predicts that by 2012, DOD “will probably be operating F-16-size UAVs capable of supporting a variety of combat and combat support missions, including suppression of enemy air defenses, electronic attack and possibly deep strike interdiction.”

By 2027, the roadmap says “UAVs may exist with morphing airframes, able to optimize their shape for various missions and flight conditions with stretching skins and shape memory alloys and performing aerodynamic maneuvers impossible for manned aircraft. Control stations could evolve from a crew inside a multi-ton van to an individual wearing a suit tied into his own neuro-muscular system, seeing what the UAV’s sensors see through a head-mounted visor.”

Regardless of what futuristic innovations lie ahead for unmanned aerial vehicles, Air Force Reserve Command is committed to being a part of this cutting-edge area of flight.

“There are some amazing things going on with the Predator program right now,” Colonel Breeden said. “And Air Force Reserve Command is right in the middle of it. Our leaders, from the top on down, have seen the vital role UAVs will play in the future, and they are determined to make sure Reservists are involved. The Predator program is really taking off now, and Air Force Reservists are taking off with it.” ★

duce full motion video, and the synthetic aperture radar produces still frame radar images.

When not armed with Hellfire missiles, the Predator UAV is designated RQ-1. “R” is the Department of Defense designation for reconnaissance and “Q” means unmanned aircraft system. The “1” refers to the aircraft being the first of a series of unmanned reconnaissance aircraft systems. When armed, the Predator is designated MQ-1, with “M” being the DOD’s designation for multi-role aircraft.

Originally designed to primarily perform aerial reconnaissance, Air Force officials have quickly learned that the Predator is just as effective directing close air support missions, acting as a killer scout on the battlefield and helping protect friendly troops. A ultra-high-frequency radio allows a Predator crew to talk to other aircraft.

“We are constantly experimenting with the Predator and trying out things to make it better,” Colonel Breeden said. “Working with the Air Force Combat Support Office, we have been able to cut through some of the red tape and get things to the warfighters they need right now. We were able to get Hellfire on the Predator in about 90 days. ... that’s unheard of. We still have some follow-on testing that needs to be done, but the important thing is we got it out in the field in record time.”

Colonel Breeden said Air Force offi-

cialists are hoping to do the same thing with Rover, a laptop computer with a line of sight antenna that gives users on the ground Predator pictures in real time.

“It gets the picture to the guys on the ground who are having to shoot,” he said. “In the past, they were getting orders from people back at headquarters who have studied the video. Rover allows us to push the video down to the joint combat air controller in real time, and that saves lives and allows us to kill more bad guys.”

Officials throughout the Air Force agree that the role of UAVs will continue to grow in the near future. The Air Force already owns two MQ-9 Predators, a larger, more capable turboprop-engined version of the MQ-1 Predator. Able to fly at up to 45,000 feet and carry up to 10 Hellfire missiles, the MQ-9 could serve as the killer portion of a MQ-1/MQ-9 hunter/killer UAV team.

Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee subcommittee on tactical air and land forces in March, Lt. Gen. Walter Buchanan III said DOD will definitely see “more and more integration” of UAVs in the years to come.

“I have seen our UAV force evolve from one that was principally an intelligence-collection platform in Bosnia to one that today has a very potent air-to-ground capability and represents a truly flexible combat platform,” General Buchanan, U.S. Central Command Air

Farewell, Faye

First female senior enlisted advisor loses battle with cancer

By Bo Joyner

Chief Master Sgt. Faye Whitehead will go down in history as the Air Force Reserve's first female senior enlisted advisor, but to the countless people she touched during her more than 40 years of total Air Force service, she was much more. She was a trusted consultant, a compassionate mentor, a tireless worker and a true friend.

Chief Whitehead, 67, passed away Feb. 28 after an eight-month battle with cancer. She made headlines in 1991 when she assumed the top enlisted position with the 94th Tactical Airlift Wing, now known as the 94th Airlift Wing, at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., becoming the first woman to serve as a senior enlisted advisor in the Air Force Reserve. But for most of her long career, she worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make the Air Force a better organization.

"Faye was always uplifting other people," said close friend and former co-worker Ann Barnes. "Just being around her always made you want to do your absolute best. As she did for countless other people, she took me under her wing and encouraged me to be a better employee and a better person. She was my mentor long before we talked about mentoring in the Air Force."

Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl Adams, AFRC's current command chief master sergeant, was the senior enlisted advisor for the 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., when she first met Chief Whitehead at an SEA conference in July 1995.

"I was a brand-new chief and a brand-new senior enlisted advisor, and she made an effort to encourage me and tell me I could do this job," Chief Adams said. "I knew she was the first female SEA, but I don't think being the first really mattered to her. What was important was that she had a job to do, and she did that job with passion and enthusiasm. She was truly an inspiration to me."

Born and raised in Shreveport, La., Chief Whitehead joined the Air Force Reserve team as an air reserve technician



Chief Master Sgt. Faye Whitehead

in 1973 after working as an Air Force civilian employee for 10 years. Her first assignment was with the 705th Tactical Airlift Squadron, Ellington Air Force Base, Texas. In 1990, she was assigned as the operations system management superintendent for the 94th TAW at Dobbins. She served as the wing's senior enlisted advisor from August 1991 to November 1996, when she retired from the military after 23 years.

"Her untimely loss is felt from those who worked with her to those she nurtured and counseled," said Chief Master Sgt. David Curtis, superintendent of the 94th AW's public affairs office. "Her greatest accomplishment, however, may have been the enthusiasm she brought to the job and her ability to inspire and encourage those around her to do their best."

The Dobbins community paid tribute to Chief Whitehead in October 2003 when the base named a billeting suite in her honor.

"When we decided to dedicate a suite to Chief Whitehead, we had no idea about her medical condition," said Chief Master Sgt. John Cowman, superintendent of the 700th Airlift Squadron Field Training Unit at Dobbins. "After making the decision, we found out she had been diagnosed with cancer. It took all she had to come back to be with us for the dedication ceremony. That, in itself, proved

we had made the right decision to name one of the five suites in her honor."

Chief Adams attended the dedication ceremony at Dobbins and said she again drew inspiration from Chief Whitehead.

"She was having a real tough time with her illness, but she spoke at the dedication and at a huge enlisted call in the hangar. As sick as she was, she was still sharing the kind of leadership and encouragement she did throughout her career," Chief Adams said.

As a civilian, Chief Whitehead worked at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., from 1989 to 2000. She worked at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center's inspector general's office from 2000 to 2003, when she retired with more than 40 years of total service with the Department of the Air Force.

Throughout her military and civilian career, Chief Whitehead was considered one of the command's most knowledgeable people on measuring readiness. In fact, she earned the nickname "Ma SORTS" because of her expertise with the Status of Resources and Training System.

"Faye literally wrote the book on SORTS training," Ms. Barnes said. "She was the command's go-to person on all issues dealing with SORTS or readiness reporting in general."

"In the mid-1970s, I was a captain and she was a technical sergeant, and she taught me about readiness reports," Maj. Gen. John J. Batbie Jr., AFRC vice commander, said. "Even back then, she was an enthusiastic, outgoing, caring person, and it was obvious she loved her job. And she was like that throughout her career. I can't think of a person who better represented Air Force Reserve Command. She was truly an outstanding individual."

"I like positive people — people who really enjoy their job, are completely professional and who make it a point to know everything about the work they are doing, and that was Faye Whitehead," the general said. "She will be missed by this command and by everybody who knew her." ★

Reservists assigned to the 313th Flight Test Flight, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, make sure KC-135 Stratotankers are airworthy after they go through programmed depot maintenance and a new avionics upgrade.



Final Exam

Small unit at Lackland has big tanker-testing responsibility

By James Coburn

The big responsibility for testing the airworthiness of modified KC-135 Stratotankers rests with a small Air Force Reserve unit at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

The 23-person 313th Flight Test Flight certifies Stratotankers after they go through either programmed depot maintenance or a new avionics upgrade.

"We accomplish an elevated-risk mission, which is unlike any other mission in the Air Force," said Lt. Col. Tim Kinnaird, 313th FLTF commander. "Our basic mission is to verify the airworthiness of the airplanes (after work performed by a civilian contractor) before they go back to the operational Air Force."

The test flight has offices at the Boeing Aerospace Support Center at nearby Kelly USA, where Boeing workers overhaul or modify the aircraft. About 70 percent of the flight's people are full-time reservists, while the rest are traditional part-time reservists.

Workers spend about eight months on each KC-135 to completely overhaul the aircraft under a Department of Defense contract. Avionics upgrades take about two months.

The Reserve unit's work load more than doubled in 2003 when it began certifying KC-135s after avionics upgrades, said Lt. Col. Matt Tyykila, the flight's operations officer. He said the flight

expects to certify about 45 avionics-upgraded aircraft each year, as well as about 20 aircraft after depot maintenance.

Colonel Tyykila said the flight receives about one KC-135 each week from the avionics upgrade program, and it takes "two days at the most" to certify the aircraft for return to the operational Air Force.

It takes two to five days to certify aircraft after they undergo the more extensive depot maintenance program, because they have not been flown for eight months, the colonel said. Like a car that has been in storage, aircraft systems, especially seals in the fuel system, tend to malfunction after months of inactivity.

Colonel Tyykila, one of the flight's three navigators, said flight members do a lot of pre-checks on the ground before flying a plane. If they find something amiss, they tell Boeing workers.

"We don't turn the wrenches," he said. "We check as it goes through the air that everything is performing as it was designed to."

Colonel Kinnaird, one of the 313th's nine pilots, said that while flying a newly overhauled aircraft is a bit risky, flight crews do not face many emergencies.

"We deal with a lot that's not quite right," he said, "and what we try to do is give back to the operational community the best product we can."

During an airworthiness flight, which takes about 2 1/2 hours, crewmembers check the engines, check controllability and generally take the aircraft through its paces, Colonel Tyykila said.

He said the pilots even shut down the engines, one by one, and start them back up again.

"It's an emergency procedure, but we do it all the time," the colonel said.

He said the KC-135E can fly on two of its four jet engines, while the R model can fly on just one engine.

The boom operator ensures the refueling arm functions properly.

When the crew returns to Lackland, it performs several approaches and checks different systems during touch-and-go landings, Colonel Tyykila said.

Colonel Kinnaird said the flight's test pilots are not Chuck Yeager types who venture into a flight envelope that has never been done before.

"We're testing a known quantity," he said. "We know very specifically the operational limits of the aircraft, systems and flight envelope. If the aircraft is not capable of achieving or attempts to exceed a known limit, we make sure it's fixed properly, giving the warfighter a fully mission-capable aircraft." ★

(Mr. Coburn is assigned to the 37th Training Wing Office of Public Affairs at Lackland AFB.)

Top-Notch Training

Schoolhouse offers Reservists options to fulfill PME requirements

By Tech. Sgt. Sean P. Houlihan

Professional military education is an important part of preparing enlisted people for promotion. Within the Air Force Reserve, one of the challenges has always been making PME opportunities accessible to NCOs who have a full-time civilian job so they can progress in their military career.

The Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch of the Air National Guard Training and Education Center at McGhee-Tyson ANG Base, Tenn., is taking steps to address this problem and expand training opportunities for reservists.

"In the 21st century Air Force, the reserve component members are more valuable than ever to the Total Force," said Master Sgt. Wendell A. Bandy, Air Force Reserve liaison to the EPME Branch. "We have shown that we are trained, motivated and fully capable as equal partners. That's why we need to work together to ensure our enlisted members are professionally developed to the same levels (as the active duty)."

The education center is making improvements in three different areas: increasing the number of in-residence seats for its Airman Leadership School and NCO Academy; adding a new satellite ALS program; and developing a field-level ALS program.

Seats for ALS and NCO Academy classes have been increased from a maximum of 140 to 195 per session. The education center accomplished this by qualifying its instructors to teach both classes instead of focusing on just one. Having more instructors available allows the center to increase the number of students.

Sergeant Bandy said the education center is also doing a better job of looking at which class has the bigger backlog of people waiting to get in and focusing its efforts on reducing this backlog. Right now, he said, ALS has the bigger backlog of students, and this situation is projected to continue



The Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch of the Air National Guard Training and Education Center at McGhee-Tyson ANG Base, Tenn., is expanding its training opportunities for Air Force Reservists.

TECH. SGT. PAUL HOICOMB

through fiscal year 2005. So, for the rest of this fiscal year and next, the education center will be focusing its efforts on expanding seats for this class.

In addition to increasing the capacity for each class, the center is initiating a new satellite ALS course. The first class will begin in July and is expected to be completed in October.

The satellite ALS course is set up the same way as the center's satellite NCOA course, which has been in existence since 1994. Students will attend classes, which are broadcast from a central location via satellite, two nights a week, at their home location,

for three months. Then, they will travel to McGhee-Tyson for a two-week block of instruction on lessons not able to be taught via the satellite

The third thing the education center is doing to improve PME opportunities is develop field-level ALS classes at Reserve and Guard bases. Such classes are already available at active-duty bases. Sergeant Bandy said the field-level ALS can be established at any base where there are high concentrations of senior airmen who require PME or at co-located or adjacent reserve component bases where travel time is manageable.

For information about the education center at McGhee-Tyson, visit the facility's Web site at www.angtec.ang.af.mil. Or, Reservists may contact Sergeant Bandy at DSN 266-3833 or via e-mail at wendell.bandy@angtec.ang.af.mil.

Reservists who are interested in attending either ALS or NCOA should contact their base education and training office. All class allocations go through Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Jennings, program director for enlisted PME programs at the Professional Development Center, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. His telephone number is DSN 497-0259. ★

(Sergeant Houlihan was formerly a staff writer for Citizen Airman.)



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Bosslifts Help Get Employers on Reserve Team

Does your boss understand why you serve in the Air Force Reserve — attending unit training assemblies, going on annual training and deploying when called or asked?

If not, your boss might need a bosslift on a military aircraft. The Air Force Reserve Command program is designed to cultivate and maintain support for military service by educating employers about AFRC units, the Air Force and the command.

“Bosslifts are a by-product of training,” said Charles D. Jones, public affairs airlift and environmental coordinator at Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. “AFRC has a significant presence in 39 states, and all of the passenger-capable airplanes at our various units are able to support bosslifts.”

The bosslift program is designed for all employers who hire reservists. It seeks to educate and familiarize these employers by enabling them to see military training exercises, tour installations, and learn about the military and its mission. Bosslifts vary in length but usually are three-day events involving visits to two or more installations.

“At the local level, units are encouraged to sponsor employer support programs that may or may not include an orientation flight,” Mr. Jones said. “Bosslifts and orientation flights are often confused with each other. During orientation flights, employers see only military activities at a single location, and the flight is completed in a single day.”

“Saluting America’s employers is the right thing to do, and this is the right time to do it,” said Bob Hollingsworth, executive director of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Defense Department agency. “During this time of unprecedented mobilizations of the brave men and women who serve in the National Guard and Reserve, the mission of ESGR has evolved from an emphasis on individual reservists to their employers.”

The ESGR National Employer Outreach Program for 2004 will include a new five-star employer support program in about 100 cities. A projected 10,000 employers in all 48 contiguous states will



A civilian employer gets a jump-seat view of a KC-135E Stratotanker cockpit during an Employer Appreciation Day flight in November. A total of 56 employers participated in the orientation flight sponsored by the 927th Air Refueling Wing, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich. Such events are an important part of the Air Force Reserve’s overall employer support program, which is designed to cultivate and maintain support for military service.

be asked to sign a statement of support for the Guard and Reserve.

Additionally, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve will conduct symposiums to help employers ensure their companies are in compliance with laws providing job protections for Guardsmen and Reservists. The seminars will also provide suggestions for managing employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

One feature of the program will be a five-race NASCAR Busch Series salute to Guard and Reserve employers. ESGR and Richard Childress Racing are putting together a “dream team” of NASCAR’s biggest stars for the series.

The ESGR No. 29 car will be painted in a different paint scheme for each race to represent all reserve components, and a NASCAR show car, known as “America’s Car,” will be displayed at chamber of commerce functions to commend Guard and Reserve employers. Members of the public will get the opportunity to be photographed with the car and to sign large “Support our Troops” banners.

Officials said the goal is to collect 1.2 million signatures, one for every member of the National Guard and Reserve, and to display the banners in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the United States and overseas.

To sign your boss up for a bosslift or to

learn more about ESGR employer outreach programs, call toll free 1-800-336-4590 or visit the organization’s Web site (www.esgr.com). (2nd Lt. Lance Patterson, HQ AFRC public affairs, Robins AFB.)

Civilian Job Database Key for Understanding Needs

Reservists from throughout the armed forces began registering their civilian places of employment for the first time with the Department of Defense March 31.

Called the Civilian Employment Information Program, the registration is the first mandatory disclosure by members of the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve of their civilian employers into a common database.

“This information will be used to meet three different requirements defined by federal law,” said Maj. Gen. John J. Batbie Jr., vice commander of Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. “During activations or presidential mobilizations, the Department of Defense needs to consider the impact on our civilian communities and ensure that reservists fulfilling critical civilian occupations are not kept in service longer than absolutely necessary. Also, we have an obligation to inform those civilians

who employ reservists of their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act.”

The Civilian Employment Information Program culminates a yearlong effort to establish a DOD-wide system to collect information and understand who employs the 1.2 million members of the

reserve components.

Air Force Reservists can enter their employer data by going to the new Defense Manpower Data Center Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/guard-reserveportal>.

“Our citizen airmen balance the demands of their military service with those of their families and civilian

employers,” General Batbie said. “To make the Air Force mission a success, our Reservists go above and beyond the commitments of civilian life. We want to make sure their rights are protected and they can return to their important civilian roles in our communities.”

About 75,800 Air Force Reservists train on full- and part-time duty — ready for

Fitness center employee comes to aid of heart attack victim

By Maj. Rich Curry

An ordinary day working at the fitness center turned into a life-and-death test of first-aid skills for a Reservist with the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

Tech. Sgt. Marvin Lewis was working active-duty mandays at the fitness center March 17, just as he had been doing on and off for the past three years. Everything was quiet until late that afternoon when a patron rushed up to the front desk and reported that someone was having a heart attack.

“A 50-year-old civil service employee from the base was playing racquetball with two friends from the 552nd Air Control Wing when he collapsed on the court,” Sergeant Lewis said.

After calling 911, the sergeant dashed back to the racquetball court to see what he could do to help. He found Tech Sgts. Alan George and Doug Keller, who had been playing racquetball with the civilian, along with another patron, Senior Master Sgt. Dana Williamson, also of the 552nd ACW, administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation to the victim.

“I was stunned,” Sergeant Lewis said. “I’ve been working at the center off and on for the past three years. I knew this guy for a couple of years.”

Sergeant Lewis ran back to the front desk area to grab an automated external defibrillator from the wall and then dashed back to the court. AEDs are a fairly recent addition to major work centers at Tinker AFB. They are small, lightweight devices that can rapidly diagnose a person’s heart rhythm through special pads placed on the torso.

An AED can detect ventricular fibrillation, also known as “sudden cardiac arrest.” If SCA is present, the device will advise and actually talk the responder through some very simple steps to defibrillate the victim. AEDs are designed to be used by lay rescuers or “first responders.”

Ironically, Sergeant Lewis said, he had received training on how to use the device just two days earlier.

“I remember during the course thinking to myself, ‘I’ll never need to use this thing,’” he said. “That was the best 30 minutes of training I’ve ever received from the military!”

While the others kept performing CPR, Sergeant Lewis applied the pads to the victim’s chest and turned on the AED.

“The great thing about these units is they do it all,” he said. “They try to detect a heartbeat, and a voice tells you if you need to administer a shock.”

For a moment, it seemed like the man was not going to need



Tech. Sgt. Marvin Lewis shows the portable automated external defibrillator he used to assist a man who suffered a heart attack while playing racquetball.

a shock from the defibrillator, Sergeant Lewis said.

“He was fading in and out. The CPR looked like it was working, and he seemed to come out of it. But then he went back to unconsciousness.”

That’s when the AED said to “stand clear” and gave the instructions to “administer shock,” Sergeant Lewis said.

Only one shock was needed to get the patient’s heart beating normally again.

A few moments later, base firefighters and security police arrived on the scene and took over to provide oxygen to the victim until an ambulance arrived to transport him to a local hospital.

The next day a friend of the victim came to the fitness center to tell Sergeant Lewis that the man was doing a lot better. A little more than a week after the incident, Sergeant Lewis and the rest of the rescuers attended an awards presentation ceremony, sponsored by the American Heart Association, at the hospital. ★

(Major Curry is chief of public affairs for the 507th ARW at Tinker AFB.)

immediate tasking from higher headquarters. Since Sept. 11, 2001, about one in four Air Force Reservists has been called up at some point. About 6,000 Air Force Reservists are currently mobilized, which means they are on full-time, active-duty status by order of the president. Many other Reservists volunteer to deploy worldwide for missions lasting three months or longer.

According to DOD officials, the Civilian Employment Information database may be used to determine which units or peo-

ple should be mobilized or demobilized first. Unlike previous military service efforts to voluntarily gather employer data, this new program is mandatory. Reservists and guardsmen who knowingly fail or refuse to provide their employment-related information, or who provide false information, may be subject to administrative action or punishment.

"The Civilian Employment Information Program is an extension of our Reservists' personnel data records," said Col. Michael A. Cleveland, director of

personnel, Headquarters AFRC. "This means the information is covered under previous privacy act systems and is closely protected for official use only."

The new database is expected to be used by the DOD staff, the joint staff, the military services staffs, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve organization, and the Defense Manpower Data Center.

All services will provide unit commanders with compliance reports that will allow commanders to ensure subor-

Services commander uses food, drink to make friends in Iraq

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Amanda C. Glenn

During a three-month deployment to Babylon, a services squadron commander did his part to win the hearts and minds of Iraqis one bottle of Gatorade and one pack of crackers at a time.

When Maj. John Pace, commander of the 913th Services Squadron at Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Pa., arrived in Iraq in late January to serve as an Army and Air Force Exchange Service military liaison, he noticed that AAFES workers were regularly throwing away food and drink. The only thing wrong with the items was they had exceeded the expiration date on the packages.

Knowing there was a need for such items in many of the poorer villages around Babylon, Major Pace decided there had to be a better way of getting rid of the food and drink than throwing them away.

It took a little research, but Pace, with the support of Deb Jantek, AAFES' general manager in the Babylon area, came up with a proposal to donate the items to the coalition civil affairs units for distribution to the Iraqis.

"I knew that in the states we can sometimes donate food to chaplains and other groups, but I didn't know if it could be done here in Iraq," Ms. Jantek said.

She forwarded Major Pace's idea up the AAFES chain of command to Roger Perez, AAFES Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom vice president. Mr. Perez advised Ms. Jantek and the major on the proper procedures and gave the project his OK.

First, the food and drink had to be



During a three-month deployment to Iraq, Maj. John Pace, commander of the 913th Services Squadron, Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Pa., came up with a plan for distributing to Iraqis food and drink that the Army and Air Force Exchange Service was throwing away because it had exceeded the expiration date on the packages.

certified fit for human consumption. Ms. Jantek and Major Pace coordinated with the installation veterinary office to inspect the items and give them the approval for distribution. Secondly, the chaplain had to sign for the items and agree that they would not be resold but rather donated to individuals in need.

Medical troops from the Philippines, along with Major Pace and members of the AAFES staff, took the items with them on their visits into nearby villages. After providing people with necessary medical care, the troops gave away the

food and drinks.

Lt. Col. Fernando Felix said the items went a long way toward making a positive impact on the Iraqi people.

On one particular mission, Major Pace, whose deployment ended in late April, negotiated with villagers to trade weapons for food. At the end of the day, the group left with a rocket-propelled grenade launcher and 60mm mortar tube. ★

(Sergeant Glenn is assigned to AAFES public affairs in Okinawa, Japan. She wrote this story while deployed to Iraq.)

dinates have entered employer information to the database and that the information is being maintained on at least an annual basis.

"Each branch of the service is setting its own timeline to ensure their reserve component members are entering their information," Colonel Cleveland said. "The final program goal is to have 95 percent of the Selected Reserve and 75 percent of the Individual Ready Reserve registered by the end of 2005."

Once on the Web site, Reservists enter their employment status, employer names, mailing addresses, civilian job titles and total number of years in their current civilian occupations.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve staff will not directly contact any employer about a specific individual unless the person asks for assistance with an employer issue. However, ESGR will send general information to employers, including surveys to determine employer attitudes. (AFRC News Service)

Base, High School Form Maintenance Academy

With 75 unfilled maintenance air reserve technician positions and real-world requirements to meet, the 439th Airlift Wing at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., is turning to an unconventional method to fill the void.

The wing joined forces with Chicopee Comprehensive High School to create the Aerospace Maintenance Academy, a pilot program designed to fill ART positions while teaching students valuable aircraft maintenance skills.

ARTs are full-time civil service employees who are also Air Force Reservists. More than 450 ARTs are assigned to the 439th.

"The students at Chicopee Comprehensive High School are eager to learn new skills related to aerospace maintenance and to prove themselves to the ARTs at Westover," said retired Chief Master Sgt. Ronald J. Tyson, a former senior recruiter who spearheaded the academy's creation with Kenneth R. Widelo, Chicopee public schools director of career and technical education. Mr. Tyson is serving an internship in educational administration at the school.

"They (the high school students) are

Combined test center uses off-the-shelf technology to put bombs on target

By 2nd Lt. John Fage

The Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Test Center works to save taxpayers' hard-earned money while putting better weapon systems in the air to protect them.

Located in Tucson, Ariz., the test center strives to improve existing weapons systems used by the Guard and Air Force Reserve Command with low-cost, "off-the-shelf" technology.

"We're always taking advantage of leading-edge technologies that are off the shelf," said Col. Thomas Donaldson, test center vice commander. "Because of that, our forces now in the Guard and Reserve have capabilities that in fact are unique and not even fielded in active-duty jets."

Originally known as the Fighter Weapons Office, the test center is a joint-component effort combining elements of the Guard, Reserve and active-duty Air Force. Formed in 1981 to find innovative improvements to older equipment, the test center is the leader in the testing and fielding of fighter-compatible night-vision goggles and lighting.

"Our charter specifically is to ensure that our aviators out there have the most capable weapons systems they can possibly have to do the mission," Colonel Donaldson said.

The test center has made several key improvements to weapons systems, including mounting Litening II pods on the B-52 Stratofortress and A-10 Thunderbolt II, giving these aircraft the ability to deploy their weapons with lethal precision.

Litening II pods use laser designators that allow for the precise targeting and delivery of laser-guided munitions. The pods also have laser rangefinders.

The first Litening II pods were put into action in February 2000. The 301st Fighter Wing from Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, and other Air Force Reserve Command F-16 units used the pods to destroy Iraqi threats on the ground in the no-fly zones prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 303rd Fighter Squadron, located at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., was



AIRMAN FIRST CLASS STACIA M. WILLIS

Tech. Sgt. Ken Williams (left), Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and Tech. Sgt. Noel Peters, Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., clean the lenses on a Litening II pod mounted on a B-52 Stratofortress. Thanks to work done at the Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Test Center, B-52 crews were able to use the pod during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

one AFRC unit whose A-10s put those same capabilities to use during OIF.

"Although we flew many missions during the initial phase of OIF, we employed several different types of conventional weapons, using the Litening II targeting pod for target identification and battle-damage assessment," said Lt. Col. John Marks, chief of weapons and tactics for the 303rd FS.

The Test Center is currently testing a Situational Awareness Data Link, which integrates Air Force aircraft with Army and Marine ground troops by using an Enhanced Position Location and Reporting System data-link network. The SADL allows pilots to share information such as friendly ground positions and air traffic with each other while keeping track of enemy forces. ★

(Lieutenant Fage is assigned to the Headquarters AFRC Office of Public Affairs at Robins AFB, Ga.)

Pope's Puns



the wave of the future, and we need to tap into that," said Col. Wade Farris, wing commander. "We need to help them get started in their careers."

"It's a win-win for the base and the school system," Mr. Tyson said.

The academy's agenda this year is to have maintenance technicians work with school teachers to develop and finalize courses on aerospace maintenance. By next year, a full-time program should be in place. *(Tech. Sgt. Andrew Biscoe and Senior Airman Tom Ouellette, 439th AW public affairs)*

Five Cash in on Innovative Ideas

Five Reservists have a little more jingle in their pockets thanks to their suggestions that will save the Air Force millions of dollars each year.

Master Sgt. Andrew Calvello of Dover Air Force Base, Del., received \$10,000 for his idea for repairing auxiliary power units, or small engines, that are standard on every Air Force aircraft. And a group of four Reservists shared \$10,000 for an idea to design a handheld monocular that helps downed pilots find their way through the dark.

All five Reservists received their cash

awards through the Innovative Development through Employee Awareness program.

Calvello, an aircraft engine mechanic supervisor with the 512th Component Maintenance Squadron, said a common repair on an APU is the tailpipe. Maintenance guidance stipulates the entire APU, at a cost of \$127,000, be replaced if a tailpipe is broken.

"I designed a way for only the tailpipe, which costs \$3,000, to have to be replaced," Sergeant Calvello said.

The air reserve technician said that in addition to saving money, his suggestion is convenient because it does not require repairs to be done in the shop. Maintenance workers can take a new tailpipe right to the plane and replace it, he said.

Sergeant Calvello said he doesn't plan on spending the money anytime soon.

"I have a 16-year-old daughter, Madison, and I've put the money in her college fund," he said.

Master Sgts. Joel Womack, Tommy Reeves and Michael Baril, and Tech. Sgt. Phil Thomas came up with the idea for the handheld monocular.

The monocular is made by disassembling the tubes from old, unserviceable

night-vision goggle assemblies and mounting a plate, a AA battery box and an on/off switch.

The NVG assemblies cannot be disposed of because of the sensitive technology involved and would otherwise sit in storage or be destroyed.

"Crewmembers now have at their disposal a handheld night-vision goggle for use in post-ejection/bailout escape and evasion scenarios," Sergeant Womack said.

One monocular costs about \$50 to build, including labor, whereas a commercially procured monocular costs approximately \$2,500, Sergeant Thomas said.

Sergeants Thomas and Womack are assigned to the 917th Wing, Barksdale AFB, La. Sergeant Baril was formerly with the 917th and is now assigned to the 926th Fighter Wing, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La. Sergeant Reeves is a member of the 711th Special Operations Squadron, Duke Field, Fla.

The IDEA program provides cash awards to Air Force military and civilian employees for sharing their ideas on how to save the Air Force money. *(2nd Lt. Cathy Milhoan, 512th Airlift Wing public affairs, Dover AFB; and Tech. Sgt. Sherri Savant, 917th WG public affairs, Barksdale AFB)* ★

A MATTER OF OPINION

Photograph of Open Casket in Poor Taste

I'm writing to give you a little feedback on an article ("Training Ensures Fallen Comrades Receive Honor," page 24) you published in your April issue.

My husband is a pilot stationed at Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa., and is currently activated overseas. Pregnant and growing every day, I anxiously await his return with many other wives and spouses.

First, please let me tell you that my husband and I enjoy your publication a great deal. My husband enjoys the articles, and I enjoy the pictures, especially when you print a picture of a big C-130. It makes my heart swell with pride each time I see that grand Hercules. What can I say? It's an amazing and powerful machine!

Being one of those wives waiting for their spouses to come home, I found it extremely distasteful of your magazine to publish a picture of an open casket. I was with many of these wives the day our husbands left us. I'm sure you've attended a day where a crew left to defend our country, not knowing if they'd ever return. You must have seen the anguish and heartbreak in their eyes. So why would you choose to print a picture of what our husbands could come home in when you could be printing stories and pictures of husbands and wives coming home walking tall, with smiles on their faces and arms open wide?

I understand that news isn't always "smiles and open arms," and I also understand that you print fair and unbiased articles. I understand that the trainees in this program deserve as much recognition as my husband and his crew, but I believe the picture went too far. My issue with your decision to print that picture may seem trivial to some, but I don't feel I am the only spouse at home who was disturbed by it. Maybe you didn't print pictures of charred remains of Americans hanging from a bridge or lifeless American soldiers hanging out of the remains of a Humvee, but this was just as disturbing to me.

I will be saving your magazines for my husband to read when he comes home, but I will not be opening them. I am disappointed in the taste that your staff displayed and hope that in the future you will be more empathetic to the ones left behind.

Cher Lyn Bear

Wife of 1st Lt. Steven B. Bear, 911th Airlift Wing

Fitness Standards Require Altitude, as Well as Attitude, Adjustment

I am an individual mobilization augmentee recently assigned to Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. I have been following the progress of the implementation of the new physical fitness standards. One thing that needs to be addressed is how working out where you live can affect your Air Force fitness standards score.

I live in Harlingen, Texas, which is at the southern-most tip of the state. The weather is nice practically year round, so there's no excuse not to do some type of exercise on a regular basis. I ride a

mountain bike, kayak and hike and thought I was in good physical condition. However, I overlooked one minor factor.

My unit is very proactive in regards to getting and keeping people in shape for the new fitness standards. We have group physical training three times a week and do a timed 1 1/2-mile run on the third day of PT. Once I reported in, I attended each PT session while on annual tour. I was a little winded after the calisthenics but attributed it to the variety of exercises we were performing. Some I hadn't done since basic training.

On the day of the timed run, after performing some calisthenics and stretching, we headed for the track. After all my biking, hiking and what-not, I was looking forward to seeing how I would do.

I hadn't run in a while, so I started off at an easy pace. For the first three-quarters of a mile, I did alright. The next thing I knew, I just couldn't seem to get enough air. I couldn't even keep up with the "old guys" in the unit and steadily fell behind. I didn't finish last but was disappointed by my 18:20 finish time.

The next day I was talking to some of the other squadron members and mentioned my poor performance. The first question I was asked was, "Where are you from?" When I told them, they just laughed and said, "The thin air up here really kicks your butt, doesn't it?" I then asked what the elevation was at Cannon. When they told me 4,295 feet, I felt stupid. Harlingen is only 36 feet above sea level.

For those of you who live near where you are assigned, this may not matter. However, for a person who has lived most of his or her life at a lower altitude and then travels to "higher ground," this can be quite a shock to the system in more ways than one. We've heard about people suffering from fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath and nose bleeds while visiting the Denver area. You don't have to be up in the Rocky Mountains to experience the same symptoms.

All of my prior bases of assignment have been right around 100 feet above sea level or less. Altitude has never been an issue until now. What this experience has taught me is I will have to work out a little harder and run a little farther at home to be able to meet the new fitness standards in the higher altitude at Cannon. I've never been a fan of running and had made an attitude adjustment to get used to the idea of adding running to my physical regimen. I had no idea I'd have to do an altitude adjustment as well.

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Let Us Know What You Think

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Going Hawg Wild

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put a damper on A-10
gathering
See story on page 8

