

A Citizen AIRMAN



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Good Knights

**Reserve pilots step up
to mentor kids who lost
their dads during war**

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By Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson
Commander,
Air Force Reserve Command

Diligently Taking Care of Our People Remains a Top Priority

When I began this job more than a year ago, I never foresaw the budget challenges we would face, from sequestration to furloughing our civilians and air reserve technicians. Few, if any, could have predicted this. As we continue to deal with budget challenges and keeping a tight watch on our programs, we must not lose sight of what matters most. ... our people. Diligently taking care of our people needs to remain a top priority.

I think this is an important reminder, because as things change, we need to remember much of what we do remains the same. First, each of us has a role in taking care of our people. From senior leaders to front-line supervisors, spending time with your Airmen is always important. Get to know them. Step away from the desk and walk around. Set the good example with face-to-face leadership. Spend time in your work areas. Ask about the job. Establish rapport. Know a person's good days, so you know when he or she is having a bad one. Do a "roll call" with your people regularly to get the conversation started.

Setting expectations should be a given. Set them early on. Let people know what the bar is, and find ways to empower people to raise the bar themselves. Reward them when they soar over it. Recognizing Airmen for their accomplishments is the best way to say "thank you."

Taking care of our Airmen also includes giving people the tools they need to succeed. Take time to mentor your people. Find out where they are in their career, so you can help them see their path to success. Challenge your people. Push them, so they achieve beyond their boundaries. Look out for opportunities to give people a chance to thrive and excel. ... they will not disappoint you.

Several of these things are simple, and you've likely heard them before. Yet, in complicated times, returning to the basics can help us better deal with the complex. Our Air Force Reserve members want the leadership you provide, especially now.

I appreciate the professionalism and dedication you have demonstrated during these tough budget times. Our Citizen Airmen have consistently demonstrated the Air Force core value of "service before self," and I sincerely thank you. There is one constant that will not change: If we remain dedicated to taking care of our people, they will take care of the mission.

Thanks for all you do!



By Chief Master Sgt. Cameron B. Kirksey
Command Chief Master Sergeant,
Air Force Reserve Command

Servant Leadership and You

After several months on the job, my greatest satisfaction comes from traveling throughout the command meeting our amazing Citizen Airmen. I am continuously motivated and energized by the outstanding work you do each and every day. The best way to ensure our success in the future is to continue developing our Airmen. Creating successful leaders requires an investment of our time, energy and resources.

It is paramount that senior noncommissioned officers make a conscious effort to deliberately develop junior enlisted Airmen, NCOs and fellow senior NCOs into better followers, leaders and supervisors. I've had great mentors along the way who shared their knowledge with me. Their wisdom of yesterday prepared me to serve as a leader today. I'm now privileged to do the same with all of you.

In the August issue, I talked about five leadership principles to foster individual growth: humility, loyalty, trust, respect and being a team player. Now, I'd like to focus your attention on servant leadership and how it can benefit you and your organization. In simple terms, servant leadership is about putting the needs of others first and helping people develop and perform. Therefore, personal growth is a significant part of leadership development.

As Airmen, we should look for opportunities to improve through personal growth as well as to share the knowledge we've acquired. Whether you're an NCO leading Airmen for the first time or a senior NCO showing a new lieutenant the ropes, we all have experiences that can help our teammates perform better. By sharing and applying what we've learned, we build stronger leaders and realize immediate impacts in the work center. As Walter J. Lippmann so unequivocally noted, "The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in others the conviction and will to carry on."

As I reminisce on my early years as a fuels specialist, I am reminded of something that my superintendent once told me: "Take care of your people, and they will take care of you." That simple but powerful phrase resonated within me and has been a guiding leadership principle for me throughout my career. It should be the impetus for leaders at every level to take positive action. Bottom line: servant leaders take care of their people, both up and down the chain of command.

As we embark upon a new fiscal year, one that could be just as challenging as the previous year, I echo General Jackson's message of "taking care of people" with sincerity; it's quite befitting. Thank you for the sacrifices you continue to make in support of our nation's defense. I am looking forward to meeting each of you as I travel to your units to witness first-hand the positive impacts you make on the Air Force Reserve, the Total Force and our nation.

I'm here for you!



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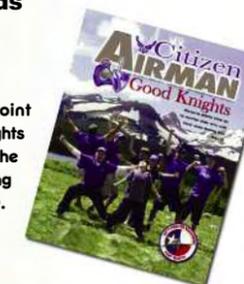
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Reserve pilots step up to mentor kids who lost their dads during war

On the cover: Members of the 457th Fighter Squadron, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, volunteer their time as mentors for the Knights of Heroes Foundation, an organization that brings together children between the ages of 11 and 17 who have lost their fathers during military service for a week-long wilderness adventure camp. See the story on Page 30.



Gen. Mark A. Welsh III *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

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Setting her Sights

Senior Airman Alisha Culbertson, 302nd Security Forces Squadron, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., looks down her rifle sights during a tactical movement exercise. The training provided an opportunity for Reservists to brush up on foot patrol formations, while team leaders used hand signals to move the Airmen. (Senior Airman Crystal Charriere)

In Focus

Photos from around the Air Force Reserve



Senior Airman Peter Alicea-Correa, 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, ties down the 439th Airlift Control Flight's hard-sided expandable lightweight air mobility shelter in a C-17 aircraft at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., for an exercise in August. (Senior Airman Kelly Galloway)



Senior Airman Alex Barone, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron pavements and construction equipment apprentice, uses a trowel to smooth freshly poured cement at Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind. Members of the 434th CES received training while expanding a patio area between the 434th Maintenance Group command section and the base exchange. (Tech. Sgt. Doug Hays)

Staff Sgt. Joel Sterniak, 911th Maintenance Squadron aerospace propulsion technician, installs a propeller onto a C-130 engine test cell at Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa. Prior to being marked serviceable, engines and propellers are tested after all repairs to ensure they meet operational standards. (Senior Airman Joshua J. Seybert)



Lt. Col. Valerie Hendry, 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron aerial reconnaissance weather officer, instructs 2nd Lt. Leesa Froelich during the lieutenant's first storm mission with the Hurricane Hunters. The Hurricane Hunters flew a low-level investigation into a tropical wave to gather storm data used by the National Hurricane Center to determine whether the system was breaking up or reforming into a more intensified storm. (Tech. Sgt. Ryan Labadens)



Airmen from the 442nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron load an AGM-65 Maverick air-to-ground missile onto an A-10 Thunderbolt II during an exercise at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. (Senior Airman Wesley Wright)

ROUND THE RESERVE

Doctor Travels Country Teaching Proper Running Technique

An Air Force doctor visited Pope Field, N.C., in August to spread his message that traditional running shoes are a major source of injury.

Dr. (Lt. Col.) Antonio Eppolito, chief of Air Force telehealth, presented his ideas during a two-hour efficient running workshop for 80 members of the 440th Airlift Wing.

"Our hypothesis is that the high-heeled, big bulky cushioned shoe, the traditional running shoe that we have known for the last 30 to 40 years in this country, is causing running injuries," Eppolito said.

The natural barefoot runner strikes the ground with the ball or middle of the foot, the doctor said, which allows the natural mechanics of the foot to spring a runner along. "High-heeled" running shoes force the heel to impact the ground first, which sends three to four times the runner's weight concussion through the foot, knee and hip.

"Big shoes change the gait of a runner,"

Eppolito said. "The heel strike causes injuries. Big-heeled shoes are causative of injuries, not preventative."

The doctor said returning the body to its natural physiology and allowing the foot to function as designed has reduced running injuries in thousands of his classroom participants. Although the evidence is anecdotal, the results have encouraged him to take the efficient running workshop on the road to Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force bases across the country.

Master Sgt. Jason Bigart, a quality assurance technician, said the information presented in the workshop made a lot of sense.

"I knew before this class that I was supposed to run on the balls of my feet, but it's tough to do in my athletic shoes," Bigart said.

During the workshop, the Reservists performed a variety of exercises and stretches, all designed to strengthen the musculature of the foot and help them transition to more minimalist running shoes.

"Research shows that every year approximately 30 percent of runners in the United States

suffer an injury," said Eppolito, a practicing family physician. "That number goes up to 80 percent in competitive athletes."

In contrast, the doctor said, the number of running injuries suffered by barefoot runners in New Zealand and Kenya is close to zero.

"We want to prevent running injuries in military members," Eppolito said. "If we can impart a little bit of prevention and a little bit of education on how to transition to the more minimalist shoes, and do so safely and effectively without getting hurt, we hope that in the long term we will have fewer injuries and get a handle on this epidemic of running injuries that is just flooding our primary care clinics."

Airmen need to be cautious about how fast they make the change to minimalist shoes. Col. Mary Nachreiner, chief nurse of the 36th Aeromedical Evacuation at Pope, said she found that out the hard way during a deployment to Iraq. She donned her new specially ordered minimalist shoes and headed to the gym for a punishing workout.

"I was trying to run short distances to transi-

tion into them, but this day I decided to go on the treadmill," Nachreiner said. "Of course, I didn't want to go flat because that would be no challenge, so I put the treadmill up, way up like I was going up a hill, and I felt a pop on the top of my foot. I know it was the heel striking that hurt me."

It took her roughly six weeks to overcome the setback. She has since transitioned, this time much more slowly, to the barefoot style of running.

"I usually learn by doing things, but that can be painful," Nachreiner said. (Tech. Sgt. Peter R. Miller, 440th AW public affairs)

Westover Receives New Aircraft Fuel System

The process of gassing up planes at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., is about to undergo a big improvement, thanks to a \$24.5 million project to build a new fuel hydrant system. The project was funded by the Defense Logistics Agency.

The military construction contract was awarded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District. The Corps of Engineers will manage and supervise the project, which will be accomplished by Structural Associates Inc. of East Syracuse, N.Y.

"We've been working with the same fueling infrastructure that has been here since the days of the Strategic Air Command when B-52s were flying out of Westover" said Col. Steven Vautrain, 439th Airlift Wing commander. "A C-5 can hold 323,000 pounds of fuel. This new system is going to greatly increase our ability to deliver that fuel to aircraft as quickly and safely as possible, which is absolutely mission essential."

"This project is going to totally replace the C-5 fuel hydrant system and support infrastructure on the ramp," said Capt. Brett Bailey, 439th Civil Engineer Squadron. He also serves as a civilian with base civil engineering as chief of design.

"The project will construct a pressurized hydrant fuel system with 14 hydrant outlets and two 210,000-pound above-ground fuel storage tanks," Bailey said. "Work will include modifying the existing pump house; constructing new truck fill stands, a hydrant hose truck checkout and a product recovery system; and modifying the existing transfer pipeline. Upgrading this system will be a huge benefit to the 439th AW in continuing to meet its mission."

Upgrading the existing fueling infrastructure on the aircraft parking ramp is no small feat and comes with a huge coordination effort involving many Westover organizations.

"With the project scheduled to start in September and take about two years to complete, that impacts a lot of operations and requires close coordination with many agencies here on base," Bailey said. "CE, Corps of Engineers, aircraft maintenance, airfield management, security forces and fuels are all tirelessly working to ensure the project goes smoothly. We're going to be conducting an elephant ballet out there for two years, and we have a world-class team doing it." (Tech. Sgt. George Cloutier, 439th AW public affairs)

Upgrades Significantly Increase F-16 Capabilities

F-16 Fighting Falcons assigned to the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., are undergoing another round of avionics tweaking that will significantly change the way the wing flies and fights.

The project to upgrade F-16 avionics software began in March. The new software integrates with newer avionics hardware such as the helmet-mounted

Pope's Pun



New tuition assistance process eliminates up-front fees

By Master Sgt. J. LaVoie

Effective Oct. 1, Air Force Reserve Command implemented a new tuition assistance payment process that eliminates up-front fees. Reservists pay for classes by enabling tuition payments to go directly to a university or college.

"This new TA process will be a huge relief for our members," said Col. Heather Connahey, chief of the Headquarters AFRC Personnel Division at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Prior to the change, Reservists had to wait up to 120 days after submitting their grades to be reimbursed for classes. Under the new process, they still apply for tuition assistance through the Air Force Virtual Education Center. However, payment issues are taken out of their hands and handled by the Air Force, which pays the school directly through an automated system.

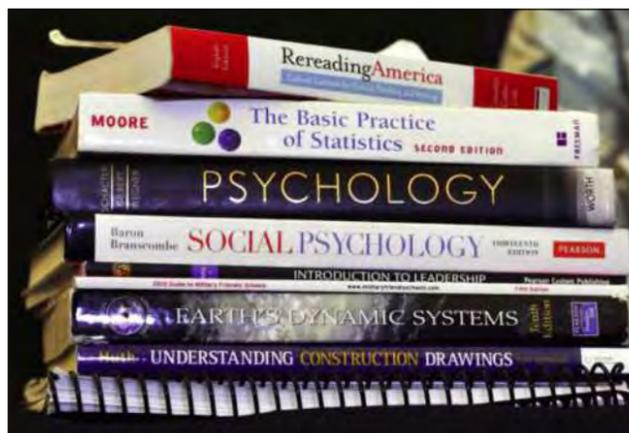
Airmen were to begin applying under the new process in mid-September for classes that began on or after Oct. 1. Once the administrative drop/add period ends for a course, the college or university bills AFRC. Additionally, the college or university loads the grade in the system, although students are still responsible for ensuring the grade is loaded.

This new automated process is a welcomed relief not just for students but also for program administrators, according to Tech Sgt. Ed Wilchinski, AFRC tuition assistance program manager.

Wilchinski explained that the old process involved printing and scanning several documents.

"It quickly became tedious and time-consuming as applications rolled in," he said.

As many as 80 applications are submitted on any given day, and



Reservists had to wait up to 120 days from the time they submitted their final grades to the time they received payments.

"(The old way) was a huge burden on members," Wilchinski said. "We want them to be able to continue their education, not be held up by a process."

Most colleges are familiar with the process and system. However, if an institution has trouble, the approving education and training office can provide instructions. If additional assistance is needed, AFRC will connect the institution with a system expert. ★

(LaVoie is assigned to the AFRC public affairs office at Robins AFB.)

format that will markedly increase pilot situational awareness while drastically reducing the time to complete the kill chain."

For maintainers, the upgrade process can be challenging because, according to Senior Master Sgt. Jason Pruitt, 482nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron shift supervisor, technical data may not cover all of the nuances of the new software.

"There's also the issue of having to use multiple sources for gaining all the required software and items to accomplish the upgrade," Pruitt said. "But an upgrade this important, with the latest in technology standards, makes it worth the extra trouble."

"The F-16 and its avionics are getting more and more complex," Meyers said. "The fact that our aircraft maintainers are able to do what they do and the fact that the jets are more combat-capable now than when first built 25 years ago speaks volumes about the amount of work that they put into the jet." (Ross Tweten, 482nd FW public affairs)

Grissom Site for Ground-Breaking Airman Leadership School Class

For the first time ever, Air Force Reserve Command deployed instructors for five weeks in July and early August to conduct an Airman Leadership School class outside one of the command's permanent ALS schoolhouses.

Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., was the site of the ground-breaking course. ALS prepares Airmen to join the ranks of noncommissioned officers.

Because the in-residence program is five weeks long, traditional Reservists usually gravitate toward a correspondence option for the course, said Tech. Sgt. Debra Wilson-Strong, 434th Air Refueling Wing education and training assistant chief. Hosting the class at Grissom and opening it up to Reservists from other locations provided the opportunity for people to get the training in a classroom environment.

"This is the first time AFRC has sent instructors to facilitate a class where 100 percent of the students are traditional Reservists," Wilson-Strong said. "We requested that AFRC provide the course to help Grissom Airmen better prepare for the ALS test."

AFRC accepted Grissom's request and took it a step further by offering the class to Reservists from other bases.

"In order for the class to be held, we needed a minimum of 32 senior airmen, so AFRC offered the course to other Reserve units," Wilson-Strong said.

In addition to Grissom, Reservists participating in the course came from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; Pope AFB, N.C.; Joint Base Andrews, Md.; Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio; and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn.



Lt. Col. Roger Zander with his sons Vernon (left) and Zach after completing an Ironman Triathlon at Lake Stevens, Wash., in 2011. The Zanders are a fitness-focused family who enjoy a lot of outdoor activities such as biking, hiking, skiing, hunting, and competing in marathons and triathlons.

Family strengthens bond through fitness

By Senior Airman Madelyn McCullough

What motivates someone to swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles and then run an entire marathon all in one day? For one 446th Airlift Wing Reservist, the answer is easy: his kids.

After signing up a year in advance, Lt. Col. Roger Zander, an instructor pilot at McChord Field, Wash., dedicated at least six months of preparation before participating in his fourth triathlon competition, Ironman Canada, Aug. 25.

"What motivated me was I wanted to keep up with my kids," said the father of three. "I wanted to be able to ski with them when they were teenagers and run and bike with them, so since then I started running, and I've bounced from hobby to hobby. The latest is completing Ironmans."

Zander's brother and son were actually the ones who inspired him to participate in the triathlons.

"My brother did Ironmans 30 years ago," Zander said. "Right after college he did two and went to Moscow for one. I said, 'I'd like to do that,' so I made it a goal of mine, and my son, when he was 17, he said, 'Let's do this.' When he turned 18, we did Ironman Canada in 2010."

As a pilot who flies for both Hawaiian Airlines and the Air Force Reserve, staying committed to training is no easy task.

"The hardest thing about training for these events is that in the peak of your training plans, you're normally training somewhere in the area of 17 to 18 hours a week," he said. "That's just about

six days a week where you're training two to three hours a day, and it gets hard."

Even with the challenges he faces, he still makes living a healthy, fit lifestyle a top priority. In fact, his whole family shares this priority.

His wife, Janice, is also a fitness enthusiast as she was once a bodybuilding fitness competitor and owned a gym. Now, she is a personal trainer and has a black belt in karate. Zander's oldest son has a second-degree black belt and has done a half Ironman. His middle son has also competed in triathlon competitions and is now involved in Navy SEAL training. The youngest son is following in their footsteps but has not yet competed. All three wrestled from the time they were little throughout high school.

"I've never seen anybody as fit as an entire family as the Roger Zander family," said Lt. Col. Kevin Welin, 446th Operations Support Flight director of operations.

According to Welin, Zander has always taught his kids discipline and that no matter what, if they put their minds to it, they can accomplish anything they want in life.

With three sons who love fitness, Zander's hard work to keep up with them and spend time with them has paid off.

"You get one try at life," he said. "If you're not fit, you miss out on so many opportunities." ★

(McCullough is assigned to the 446th AW public affairs office at McChord Field.)

AFRC will evaluate the possibility of conducting a deployed ALS class, at different locations, at least once a year, Wilson-Strong said. (Staff Sgt. Carl Berry, 434th ARW public affairs)

Air Force Implements Fitness Assessment Enhancements

Enhancements to the Air Force's Physical Fitness Assessment program, announced in August, went into effect Oct. 1.

In a letter to Airmen Aug. 20, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III explained the results of the comprehensive review, highlighting the strength of the program and the need for slight improvements.

"We have a tremendous program that has fundamentally changed the Air Force's overall fitness level over the past few years," Welsh said. "The PFT itself is not going to change. But even the best program can be improved upon, so we are making changes in four different areas to enhance the overall program."

Of the changes that took effect, the most significant is to the abdominal circumference portion of the test. The AC assesses an Airman's body composition.

Since the Air Force implemented the newest fitness program guidelines in October 2010, only .03 percent of Airmen have failed the AC portion of the test and passed the other three components with a composite score of 75 or higher.

"In the future, if an Airman fails the AC portion of the test and passes each of the other three components, we'll measure that Airman using the Body Mass Index taping guidance in DOD instructions," Welsh said. "If the Airman meets the DOD BMI standard, he passes the PFT."

Because AC measurement is integrated into the testing procedure, the Air Force is currently the only branch of the Department of Defense not required to have a separate weight management program.

The other program modifications include realigning the fitness appeal process back to wing commanders, adjusting passing standards for Airmen who can only test on one component of assessment, and changing and simplifying the walk test. (Staff Sgt. David Salinitri, secretary of the Air Force public affairs)

ROA Votes to Open Organization to Enlisted Members

Members of the Reserve Officers Association have expanded the organization's membership eligibility to include noncommissioned officers.

Delegates to the association's annual convention overwhelmingly approved the measure in August. The move opens the organization's doors to NCO ranks from all uniformed services.

With the expansion, ROA, historically known as the nation's leading advocate for Reservists and their families, adds a level of strength to its voice in Washington.

Speaking to members after the vote, ROA's newly installed national president, retired Brig. Gen. Michael Silva, praised the rationale behind the decision to expand.

"This is about more than strengthening our voice on the Hill; it's about doing what's right for the total reserve force."

Underscoring the exemplary service of today's NCOs, Silva went on to call the expansion "both strategically necessary and morally right. The unique burdens of reserve duty extend beyond rank, and with this vote we're sending a message to the total force: if you're a Citizen Warrior, in or out of uniform, you belong with ROA."

Echoing the sentiment was the organization's executive director, retired Maj. Gen. Andrew Davis. "Today's NCO corps is widely considered the most capable in the history of our military," Davis said. "They have performed and sacrificed on equal footing with our commissioned officers for more than a decade, and they deserve a strong advocate working on their behalf."

In a statement to its membership of roughly 60,000 officers, the organization outlined the new eligibility standards: "Any active, retired or former commissioned officer, warrant officer, noncommissioned officer or petty officer, who at any time upon entering the federal uniformed services took an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and, if no longer serving, whose separation occurred under honorable circumstances, is eligible for an active membership."

The Reserve Officers Association is the 60,000-member professional association for all uniformed services of the United States. Chartered by Congress and in existence since 1922, ROA advises and educates congress, the president and the American people on national security, with unique expertise on issues that affect the 1.5 million men and women now serving in America's reserve components. (ROA news release) ★

It's Your Money

Look at All the Options

By Ralph Lunt

I had a very nice gentleman stop by my office a few weeks ago. He had a \$100,000 certificate of deposit coming due, and he was intrigued by a sign I had encouraging people not to settle for a 1 percent CD.



As soon as I started to explain some of the opportunities available to him, it was over. Quite frankly, he was not familiar with the type of investments I offered him. I was frustrated for him.

As a navigator, I know things change and that you can't expect new and improved to mean status quo. Given the current investment climate, one in which fixed income does not keep pace with inflation, there are more options available than just CDs.

In this case, the gentleman I spoke to is not experienced in alternative investments and, as such, was not comfortable with anything new. As a result, he will settle for 1 percent a year on \$100,000, and that frustrates me!

The take-away I'd like you to get is that there is risk in investing, but if you take a little time and do some research, you'll find options. As Airmen, we know we have to adapt to changing situations. As investors, the same holds true.

There are options out there, and I'd suggest that everyone take a look at the numerous investments available, to include stocks, bonds, annuities, real estate investment trusts, business development companies and mutual funds.

My net worth has changed a lot over the years. I've never sold when the market tanked. And in times like these, I'm happy to look at investments that offer returns that beat inflation. Never take on more risk than you want, but don't settle for returns that don't make your life better!

Fly safe. ★

(Editor's note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice and information of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Lunt is a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm. He is also a colonel in the Air Force Reserve, serving as the reserve forces director of the Great Lakes Region of the Civil Air Patrol adviser's program.)

BEST OF THE BEST

Master Sgt. Shawn Jones's trophy case is already pretty full, but he's gonna have to clear off a place front and center for one of the most prestigious awards available to Airmen.

Jones, who currently serves as the public affairs craftsman for Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., was selected as one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year in July. He received his award in Washington, D.C., in September.

Jones has been in his current position with the Recruiting Service for only about three months. Before accepting the full-time active Guard and Reserve PA job, he was a traditional Reservist and full-time civilian employee in the 514th Air Mobility Wing's public affairs office at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.

He was selected the top NCO in the wing and the command while assigned to the 514th AMW.

His accomplishments at the joint base included winning numerous command, Air Force and Department of Defense print journalism awards. Jones was named DOD's

Print Journalist of the Year for 2011 and wrote the best sports article in the Air Force in 2012.

He represented the wing when distinguished visitors came to the area after Hurricane Sandy and was personally "coined" by Vice President Joe Biden. Jones wrote for Air Force Print News and was selected as the lead writer for the Air Force chief of staff transition. He devoted more than 40 hours per season as a youth soccer head coach and basketball assistant coach.

Jones entered the active-duty Air Force in July 2000 as an F-16 avionics specialist and was assigned to the aircraft maintenance squadrons at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, and Holloman AFB, N.M. He retrained into public affairs in April 2005 and served at Kirtland AFB, N.M., and Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

He left active duty in October 2009 and joined the Air Force Reserve in the 514th AMW.

We asked Jones if he had any advice for his fellow Airmen when it comes award time. Here's what he had to say:

No one earns an award by himself

I was fortunate to have a wing commander, a supervisor and co-workers who supported my good ideas and steered me away from my not-so-good ideas. In addition, they created a work environment that was mostly free of negative stress. Furthermore, as a public affairs specialist, I depend on the cooperation of so many others just to accomplish my most routine primary duties.

Innovation: grandeur not required

Airmen who want to ensure favorable performance reports and improve their chances of earning awards must seek "little" innovations. Innovation isn't the responsibility of only scientists and engineers, and innovation doesn't need to be jaw-dropping or monumental. If you identify a simple change in a routine process that results in increased efficiency, you have achieved innovation (now document it and pass it on to others who might benefit from it!).

Focus on performance in primary duties

Airmen are encouraged to become well-rounded through education, volunteerism, membership in professional associations and many other means. However, they must first be proficient in the job the Air Force counts on them to perform. It's OK to pursue "well-rounding" activities but not at the expense of primary duties. Airmen who spend an inappropriate time away from their primary duties not only risk upsetting their work center, but they risk losing the skills and abilities the Air Force counts on most.

Keep your bullets loaded

Most award submissions call for a list of individual accomplishments, commonly known as bullets. When the end of the quarter or year arrives, many Airmen are forced to scramble when their supervisors request bullets for an award submission. The same thing happens when performance reports are due. I recommend Airmen operate as if they are going to submit for every quarterly award. This way, polished bullets will be ready to go upon supervisor request. I also recommend that Airman match their bullets to appropriate sections on their performance report, so they can identify areas that need more attention. Bullet statements on performance reports follow the same convention as those for most awards submissions, so keeping track of accomplishments pulls double duty. ★

Master Sgt. Shawn Jones, the public affairs craftsman for Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., is one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. (Photo illustration by Bo Joyner)



ISR Airmen Make the Difference



Air Force Reserve Command's intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance analysts work side by side with their active-duty counterparts to turn complex, diverse and incomprehensible data into tailored, user-friendly knowledge that enables mission success.

People, not superior technology and equipment, the key to mission success for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance enterprise

It's 0216 hours in Afghanistan, and a particularly ruthless high-value terrorist known to target U.S. and coalition forces is on the move. He is, however, completely unaware of an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operation under way to track his every move and support an executed lethal joint operation to take him out. In a matter of seconds, he will be neutralized.

Behind the scenes, an ISR enterprise with Air Force Reserve Command intelligence squadron members on duty is tirelessly working to execute the operation. Air and ground operations forces are also in position and ready for final execution. A robust synergy between Air Force ISR and joint force assets is in play.

Pre-mission ISR collection analysis indicated the target is housed within a well-fortified compound, further insulated by around-the-clock foot patrols and a myriad of improvised explosive devices that are concealed all around the perimeter.

Suddenly, the target hurriedly moves from one building to another within the compound. It's time for action. ISR assets from the unit focus. The air and ground teams engage the enemy as ISR resources continue to provide critical oversight of the entire mission in order to

relay real-time situation and threat updates, interconnected to a high-tech ISR operations floor where crews of savvy intelligence operators are busy monitoring and analyzing data from multiple feeds and displays. Their monitors alight with intricate feeds as well as a daunting volume of complex intelligence datasets received from various sources and methods.

Additionally, these ISR operators are connected via voice communications to theater forces executing the mission. So as the air and

ground team captures its target and prepares to exit, ISR operators maintain oversight and scan the egress route for threats.

Alarming, three people are observed planting IEDs along the route. Like clockwork, a Distributed Ground System crew quickly passes this intelligence to theater operators, and within seconds, forces are re-routed to neutralize the threat and ensure safe passage and mission success.

Final tally: ISR 4, terrorists 0.

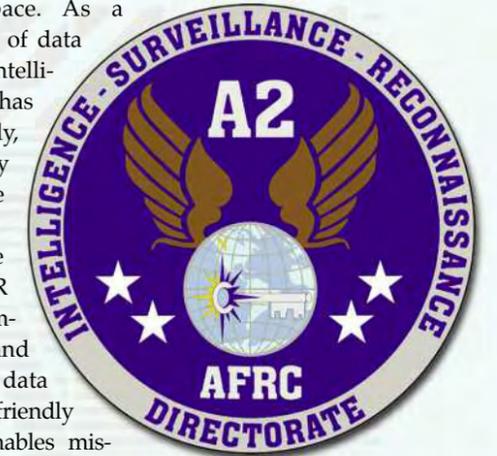
This scenario represents the everyday life of an Air Force Reserve ISR analyst who, with specialized knowledge and superior skill, brings to the battle the capability to interweave a seemingly disconnected patchwork of various feeds and datasets into a tailored, easily understood product of actionable intelligence — in real time — in order to provide direct support to war fighters in a theater of operations. And so the story of ISR is really the story of its people and the capability added to operating in the battlespace.

To be sure, the Air Force has seen a revolution in ISR since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Initially, the focus was on platforms that collected intelligence. These platforms flowed into Iraq and Afghanistan at an accelerated pace, and what began as one continuous air patrol in the early days of OIF grew to a staggering 40 around-the-clock orbits in an

evolving battlespace. As a result, the amount of data flowing into the intelligence community has grown exponentially, requiring very capable intelligence professionals.

Without the world's best ISR Airmen to turn complex, diverse and incomprehensible data into tailored, user-friendly knowledge that enables mission success, world-class sensors are useless. The ability to understand enemies' intentions, find and fix targets, and mitigate threats to Air Force and joint war fighters is critical to achieving Air Force ISR operational objectives that enable mission success across the spectrum of air, space and cyberspace.

Prior to 2008, AFRC's traditional Reserve intelligence mission focused on support to flying and space operations. Since



Reserve ISR analysts are on the job around the clock to provide direct support to war fighters in a theater of operations.

Sept. 11, 2001, thousands of Reserve analysts supporting combat and mobility air forces missions in the Central Command area of responsibility have provided key analytical support to thousands of combat sorties. Reserve analysts, working with their active component counterparts in the flying community, helped shape tactics, techniques and procedures development and provided critical support to mission planning.

In addition to the traditional Reserve community, more than 1,000 individual mobilization augmentees are fully integrated at every level of the Air Force, joint and combatant command organizational structures. These IMAs provide critical intelligence support and augmentation to the active component in a variety of disciplines including aircrew intelligence and training; intelligence operations, analysis, doctrine, strategy and policy; requirements; and acquisition and technology development.

Moreover, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan progressed, leadership within AFRC's Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate partnered with the Air Force ISR Agency, Air Combat Command, Air Force Special Operations Command and Air Force Materiel Command to energize the command's ISR initiatives. Working with these key active-duty partners, the directorate championed the development of several ISR associate units that would provide all-source integrated, predictive and specialized intelligence, thereby improving Air Force and joint operations, planning and decision-making.

"Increased demand for intelligence capabilities required the shift in the Total Force to include additional capacity and capabilities from the Reserve," said Col. Mark Montee, director of the ISR Directorate. He said these efforts offer an "exciting opportunity for Reservists to be at the forefront of these critical intelligence capabilities that are key to the protection of our nation."

Incidentally, the first AFRC intelligence squadrons to be created were associate Distributed Ground System units at Beale Air Force Base, Calif., in 2008 and Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va., in 2010. These squadrons represented a decisive evolution in AFRC intelligence support by providing a ready and trained augmentation force capable of processing, analyzing and fusing full-motion video derived from Air Force ISR platforms with other all-source intelligence data and then disseminating this critical intelligence to the war fighter in "real time."

"We've seen amazing growth in the AFRC ISR enterprise," Montee said. "Five years ago, we had two intelligence flights with corresponding flight commanders. Now we've grown to an independent ISR group, 11 intelligence squadrons, 37 intelligence flights and corresponding leadership positions with commanders and superintendents at squadron and group level. Additionally, we've recruited more intelligence professionals in the last year than in the previous 10 years."

The most recent ISR initiative came in 2012 with the stand-up of an independent 655th ISR Group located at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

"The group provides effective and efficient administrative control and ensures the training and readiness of AFRC intelligence squadrons engaged in emerging, highly technical, diverse and complicated ISR mission sets critical to our nation's security," said Col. Doug Drakeley, 655th ISRG commander.

Core functions of the ISR group include oversight and execution of planning, training, readiness, standardization/evalua-

"WE'VE SEEN AMAZING GROWTH IN THE AFRC ISR ENTERPRISE.

FIVE YEARS AGO, WE HAD TWO INTELLIGENCE FLIGHTS WITH CORRESPONDING FLIGHT COMMANDERS. NOW WE'VE GROWN TO AN INDEPENDENT ISR GROUP, 11 INTELLIGENCE SQUADRONS, 37 INTELLIGENCE FLIGHTS AND CORRESPONDING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS WITH COMMANDERS AND SUPERINTENDENTS AT SQUADRON AND GROUP LEVEL."

Col. Mark Montee
AFRC intelligence, surveillance and
reconnaissance director

tion, integration, special security, mission support and operations in collaboration with its active-duty partners. Currently, the 655th ISRG has command of seven Reserve intelligence squadrons whose missions include multi-intelligence analysis and exploitation, signals intelligence analysis, targeting, human intelligence, and geospatial and technical intelligence analysis. In the near future, the group will grow to include several new Reserve squadrons supporting airborne linguistics, national/tactical integration, cryptologic support and intelligence support to the acquisitions.

According to Drakeley, all of these intelligence squadrons "work closely with their active-duty counterparts to provide critical, specialized intelligence to Air Force, Department of Defense and senior civilian leaders as well as operators and planners."

"This is an exciting time for the Reserve," the colonel said. "We are quickly building additional intelligence capacity and capability for our nation and exciting new career prospects for our Airmen."

"Our Reserve intelligence professionals now have knowledge and opportunities to serve in ISR mission sets as group commanders, squadron commanders and superintendents," Montee said. "We could not have dreamed of that 10 years ago. These Reservists are making a huge impact on the collection, processing and dissemination of intelligence on all of our adversaries."

"Our ISR enterprise continues to rely on intelligence professionals who are being developed in AFRC force development programs to become senior IMAs and Air Force Reserve mobilization assistants with future goals of someday becoming a MAJCOM ISR director, wing commander or, ultimately, a future Headquarters Air Force assistant chief of staff of ISR," the colonel said. "As our ISR enterprise continues to expand to other fronts, these core missions will play an even greater role in protecting our nation. Our emerging mission sets, such as targeting, DGS, signals intelligence and human intelligence, offer an exciting opportunity for the Air Force Reserve to be at the forefront of an ever-changing adversarial environment." ★

A Heart Worth Waiting For

By Tech. Sgt. Anna-Marie Wyant

During a deployment to Iraq in 2005, Tech. Sgt. Kellen Grogan, a member of the 920th Security Forces Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., was part of a patrol when the Humvee he was riding in (far left) drove over an improvised explosive device that detonated. He was knocked unconscious and eventually diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury. Earlier this year, almost eight years after the incident, Grogan received a Purple Heart.



"Just don't tell my mom; she's going to kill me," Tech. Sgt. Kellen Grogan recalled saying to a fellow Airman shortly after their Humvee rolled over an improvised explosive device in Iraq. As the pressure-plated device detonated, it sent the vehicle and its passengers flying 10 feet into the air and hurled them 15 feet forward. Their vehicle was wrecked, their driver suffered painful injuries and needed surgery, and Grogan was completely knocked out.

Grogan, now a squad trainer with the 920th Security Forces Squadron, vividly remembers that day — except for the few minutes he was unconscious. March 19, 2005, started out as a normal day on patrol, said Grogan, who at the time served as the turret gunner on an armored Humvee as part of a quick reaction force.

While on patrol at approximately 6 p.m., Grogan's team apprehended a suspicious man and brought him back to the base. Shortly after their return, while still on standby, Grogan heard an explosion less than three miles from the base and received a call from the operations center directing the team to check it out. The patrol team included a convoy of three Humvees. Grogan was in the middle vehicle, pointing his tur-

ret to the left toward the hills. This was the sergeant's third deployment to Iraq in less than three years, and he had been doing the same patrol duty for several weeks. However, he was a little uneasy as they left the base that night.

"At the time, the No. 1 thing that was killing people was vehicle rollovers, and a few days earlier we had driven into a ditch," Grogan said. "I was a bit worried that instead of driving into a ditch, we'd drive off the hill. I kept peeking out the front to see what was going on, then looking back to my left where the gun was pointing in case of any threats."

The vehicles were traveling in blackout mode, meaning no headlights, and team members had to rely on night-vision goggles to see. This was somewhat dangerous, as NVGs left everyone, including the drivers, with limited depth perception. They drove slowly and carefully. Then, as Grogan glanced back and forth through his NVGs, the unexpected happened.

A violent force

"All of a sudden, the earth shook; everything was black," Grogan said.

He said he remembered a violent force, then nothing. He

was knocked unconscious for at least three minutes.

"When I woke up, I had an ammunition belt around my neck that was choking me, and everything was still really dark and smoky," he said. "I heard people yelling, and I remember one of them saying, 'He's dead!' They were talking about me."

As soon as Grogan regained consciousness, he shouted, "I'm OK! I'm OK!" Thinking they were under attack and in shock from the explosion, Grogan fumbled around in the darkness to retrieve his weapon.

"I didn't know what was going on; I have to admit I was pretty scared," the sergeant said. "I was scared because my machine gun was inoperable, all the ammo had been blown off, and it was locked in place. I couldn't find my M4 rifle, and I was freaking out because I didn't know if it was an IED or RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) attack."

When he finally found his rifle, he heard the people on patrol talking and realized they were not under attack. As he crawled out of the Humvee on his hands and knees, he noticed the driver was badly wounded from shrapnel. When a teammate asked whether Grogan was OK, the first thing that came to mind wasn't his own health, safety and well-being, but rather his parents. When he deployed, Grogan said he did not tell his parents about the hazards associated with his job because he didn't want them to worry about him. Hence, he told his teammate not to tell his mother what had happened.

"That was the first thought that popped through my head; I thought my mom was going to be so mad if she found out I did this," Grogan said. "To be honest, it's probably because I was in shock."

Luck

Even though he had suffered a concussion, his vehicle was inoperable and the driver desperately needed medical attention, Grogan said he considered the team lucky. The physician assistant who was assigned to the team did not typically go on patrol with them. But as luck would have it, he happened to be there that night and was able to administer the necessary first-aid to the driver, who sustained the worst injuries in the group.

In addition, Grogan said the effects of the IED — which he later found out was planted by the man they had apprehended earlier that evening — could have been far worse, but due to its



Col. Jeffrey Macrander, 920th Rescue Wing commander, presented the Purple Heart to Grogan during a commander's call.

placement, injuries were less severe.

"The pressure plate was in one spot, and the bomb was directly next to it, so when we rolled over it, it blew up the engine instead of detonating underneath the cabin and killing everyone inside," Grogan said. "We were super lucky."

Grogan said their vehicle's construction also helped them survive. Their vehicle happened to be the only factory-built armored Humvee in the convoy; the other two had bolt-on armor kits.

"If anyone else had hit (the IED), regardless of where, the end result probably would have been fatal," Grogan said.

A trip to the hospital

Since they had to leave their Humvee behind, Grogan's team piled into the other vehicles and headed to the hospital. Along the way, with eight Airmen crammed into one Humvee, including one on a stretcher, Grogan helped the physician assistant tend to his teammates' wounds.

When the team arrived at the hospital around midnight, Grogan said he was still in shock. He wandered around for half an hour, unsure where to go or what to do, still wearing his body armor and helmet. When he finally saw a doctor, he was told he had suffered a concussion but was fine overall. At the time, Grogan didn't think twice about the diagnosis. He was more concerned about the team driver, who was undergoing surgery to save his badly wounded leg.

Grogan said he finally got to bed just before 4 a.m., but his slumber was short lived; a teammate woke him up to visit their driver, who was going to be evacuated to Germany for additional medical care. After saying goodbye, Grogan, who was running on less than two hours of sleep, had to prepare for something he was not yet ready to do: going back on patrol duty.

Fear

"In hindsight, it was the right decision," Grogan said of his supervisor sending him back on patrol just one day after his traumatic experience. "The mentality was if we don't send them out, they're going to get scared and not want to do it again."

Grogan, who was 20 years old at the time, was definitely scared. This time he wasn't even operating the turret; he was just along for the ride.

"That was the scariest time of my entire life; I've never ever been that scared before or since," the sergeant said of going on patrol the day after the explosion. "I was 100 percent convinced that as soon as we got on the dirt road we were going to blow up. ... I was absolutely terrified. I didn't want to go, but I didn't say anything because I didn't want to look scared. I was scared out of my mind."

However, nothing unusual happened that day. Grogan and the rest of the team made it back to base safely, and he continued performing his duties for the remaining three months of his deployment. As his deployment came to an end, Grogan said he was looking forward to going home and being with his family. Little did he know that the effects of his deployment would follow him back home — and for the rest of his life.

Coming home

Upon returning home from his deployment, Grogan didn't

know what to tell his parents. He had survived an IED detonating underneath his Humvee, and besides suffering a concussion, he was pretty much left unscathed — or so he thought.

Grogan was excited to visit his family, but he had been keeping a secret. Months earlier he was knocked unconscious during the potentially fatal IED incident, and he had not yet told his parents. He told his sister while he was still deployed, but she promised not to tell their mom and dad. He knew he should tell them, but he didn't know when or how to do it. After a couple of days, he couldn't keep the secret any longer and decided to share his secret.

"I got blown up," Grogan recalled blurting out to his parents. "I said it just like that." Little did Grogan know, his sister had already spilled the beans.

"My dad said mom cried a lot; she wasn't happy about it," Grogan said. "But they didn't want to stress me out letting me know that they were worried about me."

More than a concussion

Grogan felt relieved after finally telling his parents about the dangerous incident. However, he hadn't felt "normal" since suffering his concussion.

"I had a few after-effects: trouble sleeping, sensitivity to light. ... I would stutter when I talked sometimes. Initially the doctors said those were just symptoms of a concussion," he said.

Yet Grogan and his parents thought it might be something more. While home, the sergeant visited his family's physician, who scheduled him for a computerized axial tomography scan and magnetic resonance imaging, better known as a CAT scan and MRI. The results indicated more damage to Grogan's brain than was initially diagnosed; he had suffered a traumatic brain injury.

During Grogan's deployment in 2005, TBI was rarely diagnosed. TBI refers to any complex brain injury with a broad spectrum of symptoms that occurs from an external force. It became clear to Grogan and his physician that the explosion that caused his concussion had left a lasting impact invisible to the naked eye.

Going Reserve

Despite his injury, Grogan went on to follow his dreams. He got off active duty, went to college and completed a bachelor's degree in international relations and Middle Eastern studies from the University of Central Florida in Orlando. After a three-year break from the military, Grogan realized he missed the camaraderie he had experienced in the Air Force. In 2009, he decided to enlist in the 920th Rescue Wing as a Reserve security forces noncommissioned officer.

After joining his new military family, Grogan became friends with some co-workers who had also deployed numerous times. As they swapped deployment stories, Grogan told his fellow Airmen about the fateful night when his team's Humvee detonated an IED, causing his concussion and subsequent TBI.

Upon hearing the story, Grogan's wingmen believed he was eligible to receive a Purple Heart for his injuries, and they encouraged him to do the paperwork to request one. Initially, Grogan wasn't sure whether he should follow their advice.

"I felt kind of bad just asking for it, because I thought it's one

of those things they'll just give to you if you deserve it," the sergeant said of the Purple Heart.

To help him make a decision, Grogan spoke to the man who inspired him to join the Air Force, his grandfather, who himself had suffered injuries as a service member during World War II.

"When I asked him about applying for the Purple Heart, he was very supportive," Grogan said of his grandfather. "He said if I qualify for it, I should get it."

With the help of his fellow Reservists, Grogan began the process of filling out all of the necessary Purple Heart paperwork in 2009.

Patience pays off

The process for applying for a Purple Heart was far from simple. Grogan's military records had been lost, so there was no documentation of the concussion he had suffered four years earlier. He still had the civilian documentation from his CAT scan and MRI, but that wasn't enough. He needed some military verification linking it to his deployment. Remembering the physician assistant who was part of his team that fateful day in Iraq, Grogan contacted him to see if he could help.

The physician assistant wrote the necessary memorandum for record stating that Grogan had in fact suffered a concussion on his deployment, and his symptoms were consistent with TBI. With that letter, Grogan had the last piece of documentation he needed. Filing the paperwork was the next hurdle.

There was confusion on how to update his records because he was active duty when the incident occurred but a Reservist when he applied. After hunting down the correct offices and points of contact, Grogan found out he needed to contact the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records. Finally, the ball was rolling.

"It took about a year and a half to go through the process, and then it just showed up one day," Grogan said of his Purple Heart.

On March 3, almost eight years after Grogan's concussion, Col. Jeffrey Macrander, 920th RQW commander, pinned the Purple Heart on the left side of Grogan's service dress jacket at a wing commander's call. Grogan's fellow Reserve Airmen, especially his security forces wingmen, gave him a heartfelt round of applause.

"I was personally very proud when Colonel Macrander presented the award," Grogan said. "But having to wait so long really made it feel like it was also recognition of the hard work and sacrifice that my teammates and I made all those years ago, and it wasn't forgotten."

Moving forward

Grogan's TBI has not stopped him from achieving his goals. In March 2012, he began working his dream job as a special agent for the FBI in Washington, D.C. With more than eight years of military service, Grogan said he plans to stay in the Reserve and continue training security forces personnel.

Despite the constant reminders not to do anything dangerous, Grogan said his mother has been very supportive of his career choices and is proud of his Purple Heart award. ★

(Wyant is assigned to the 920th RQW public affairs office at Patrick AFB.)

Resilience Grows Stronger With Every Crisis Faced

(Editor's note: This is the third installment in a four-part series of articles defining and outlining the importance of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, resilience, and the wingman initiative, written from the personal perspective of a rape victim. This installment focuses on the importance resilience plays in a victim's ability to cope in the aftermath of a sexual assault. In addition to serving as a victim's advocate and being a civilian employee in the 301st Fighter Wing public affairs office at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, Dermarderosiansmith is also a member of the Air Force Reserve.)

Resilience, the ability to recover quickly from setbacks, is at the heart of the Comprehensive Airman Fitness concept. Its foundation is rooted in being physically, spiritually, socially and mentally able to handle life's challenges and daily stressors.

Like the Department of Defense's Total Force Fitness Program, the intent of this Air Force concept is to prevent Airmen from spiraling into a sense of hopelessness or depression to the point they feel like suicide may be a solution to their problems.

Service members who are not equipped and prepared to manage stressors can fall prey to other destructive behaviors such as alcohol or drug abuse, verbal or physical abuse, and detachment from others. These behaviors foster discord and destroy relationships with family, friends and co-workers.

Comprehensive Airman Fitness proposes that if service members are fit in each of the four areas, they may be able to not only handle challenging situations but also thrive under those conditions.

Life is unpredictable. We can plan to be happy, prosperous and healthy, but we rarely take into account that people, nature and other factors can affect those plans. Some people seem more able to handle what life throws at them than others. In addition to the normal obstacles and stressors of daily life, military families must also accommodate challenges brought on by frequent and lengthy deployments.



Laura Dermarderosiansmith

Comprehensive Airman Fitness is designed to help military members and their families, along with civilian employees, better develop the skills to make not only their military but also their personal life manageable and fulfilling.

I am blessed to have grown up around people, including my family, who faced hardships, failures, loss and serious illness, yet still managed to go through their lives with positive attitudes.

Their examples taught me that life happens, and I sometimes simply need to accept it and deal with it the best way I can. I may not always have control over what happens to me, but I do have control over my attitude and my ability to deal with whatever obstacle I encounter.

Many of my role models came from adversity. My father's family, along with other Armenians, escaped massacres and ethnic persecution before coming to America. Europeans like my mother lived through World War II — coping with bombings, enemy invasions and the uncertainties of daily life brought on by the fighting.

If I had the opportunity to ask how they remained resilient, I doubt they would have known what to say. It was as if they didn't see any other option to dealing with their obstacles than to overcome them and move forward.

How they lived through hardship was as basic as breathing and eating; they just did it!

Looking back on the lives of those people, I firmly believe their physical, spiritual and social foundation gave them the mental fortitude to overcome adversity. They had strong work ethics and were physically active. They believed in family and fostered a community that helped each other in bad times and celebrated with each other in good times. They all had strong spiritual beliefs and practiced their faith through actions.

I believe each of the comprehensive fitness components is important and can't function without the others. I may not have balanced the physical, spiritual, social and mental aspects of my life as well as I could have, but I did develop a

foundation in each of those areas.

One perspective I try to focus on is realizing I'm not the only person in the world to experience setbacks, disappointments, trauma, physical illness or personal loss. There are people out there who have experienced things worse than me. I try to be thankful that what I am going through isn't as bad as it could be.

That perspective was reinforced the night after my attack. The detective arrived to discuss my case but was suddenly called away to investigate the abduction of an 18-year-old girl. The girl was coming home from a night class when a gang of four or five men took her into their van. I heard some of the details of what happened to her and the condition in which they found her. I cried for her that night. When I considered what happened to her, I realized feeling sorry for myself was selfish.

People sometimes ask how I got past the rape. I really don't believe I had much choice at the time. I had one concern back then — my mother. She was bedridden, in the final stages of cancer, and my family and I knew it wouldn't be long before we lost her. During my attack, all I thought about was how the news of my rape would affect her. Would any physical or emotional scars be reminders to my family that something bad happened, and they were helpless to protect me?

I was grateful that my family lived 1,500 miles away, and I was able to keep them from learning about my attack. My family was going through so much with my mother that I couldn't imagine giving them any more worries. I eventually told my older brother, but it was for reasons that now seem trivial.

Overall, it wasn't just the rape I had to get past. I also had to deal with my mother's cancer and the events during the subsequent two years.

I had a demanding job with long and unpredictable hours. I also had my Air Force Reserve commitment with its unique demands. My mother died 10 months after the rape, but I had been on an emotional roller coaster during the last two years of her life. I flew home an average of once a month because I would get a phone call saying she was not going to survive the night.

A few months after her death, my car was stolen from a parking lot while I was on jury duty. Six months later, Hurricane Andrew left me homeless, shoeless (that's another story) and without transportation. ... a hangar roof was laying on top of my car. I moved around with the unit to locations in different states, living in temporary housing for more than a year while the fate of our base and unit was being determined.

While I was in stand-still traffic on a bridge, an 18-wheeler repeatedly side-swiped my car inching into the spot I occupied. Then there was the man who ran a stop sign and crashed into the passenger door of my car: He had no insurance. Eventually my insurance company dropped me, and another company never finalized my policy. I didn't find out until three months later when they sent me a letter denying me coverage.

Those problems seem minor, but they just kept coming. Each one of them brought new issues to deal with. I kept asking myself, "Why is this happening to me?" I was tired of getting knocked down and didn't think I had the energy to get back up after every hit. But I did.

I was fortunate to have friends who gave me emotional sup-

port and encouragement, making me feel I had the strength to get back on my feet again. And, I had my faith in God. As many times as I tried to give up on him, he drew me back.

Like anyone else, I constantly struggle to keep a positive attitude as I work through my problems. I may get a little emotional, irrational or irate at first. But now I stop, think and try to figure out what is really happening and what I need to do to get beyond it. That mentality is largely due to my husband's love and gentle guidance.

It took a long time to realize that no matter how bad things seem, somewhere along the way it would all work out.

When I look back on the night of my attack, I am proud of how I handled myself. What reinforced my taking control of my situation came down to one decision — not having a cigarette. I had been a heavy smoker for a few years, but I had quit three months prior. That night, my friend and her husband came to be with me while I waited for the police. She smoked and had her cigarettes on the coffee table. I remember staring at them every second I could until she finally told me to have one. I thought about it and said no. I wasn't about to let that man destroy what I had achieved during those three months. I haven't had a cigarette since September 1990!

That was the catalyst that kept me motivated — I had control. I had good and bad examples of how people dealt with hardships, and I knew I didn't want to spiral into that vortex of self-destruction. With everything I've been through, I never contemplated suicide. I had no desire to do drugs. I drank alcohol, but never at home alone. And, I didn't engage in any negative or reckless behavior.

I debated whether I should go to counseling. I didn't because I assumed that no matter what my problems, fears or issues were, or could be, I would ultimately have to take action. I would have to face those fears. Me and no one else. So I thought about what some of my problems were or could be, and I dealt with them.

I don't advocate people handling their problems the way I do. Everyone is different, and there is no shame in seeking help. If I, my family or friends feel I need help, I would seek that help.

My resilience grows stronger every time I face another crisis. I'm inspired by other peoples' strength and examples. I'm sustained from their words of encouragement; back then, the more people told me how well I was doing, the more I believed it.

I was always open about the attack, because my mind processed it as a crime, not something to feel ashamed or embarrassed about. I also felt it would encourage others in my situation to share their story with me because I needed to hear how they coped.

When I think back to that time in my life, I don't think I would have fared as well as I did if I wasn't physically, spiritually, mentally/emotionally and socially fit.

I can't help but repeat the slogan from the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response campaign: Hurts One, Hurts All. What affects one person ultimately affects those around them — family, friends, co-workers, society in general — in one way or another. It definitely affects our mission. Some people would say that's all the military cares about — the mission. But, I can't see anything wrong in the military giving us tools to make us resilient, regardless of the reason. Can you? ★

Tech. Sgt. Mary Johanson, a broadcast journalist with the 4th Combat Camera Squadron, takes a buccal swab from role player Tech. Sgt. Erica Knight, a photojournalist with the 4th CTCS, during battlefield forensics training at March Air Reserve Base, Calif. Seven Six3 Systems instructors who are part of a mobile training team came to teach 38 Airmen, two Sailors, and a Marine to collect and process biometric evidence. Only 2 percent of the entire U.S. military has ever received this one-of-a-kind training.



Battlefield Forensics

Training helps service members process crime scenes, combat terrorism

Story by Tech. Sgt. Christine Jones, photos by Staff Sgt. Carolyn Herrick

Blood spatters cover the walls, and bloody hand prints can be seen on the door. The room is a gruesome aftermath of a horrific crime. Someone must collect evidence to determine what happened and to bring the person or persons responsible to justice.

Dealing with these and similar kinds of scenes, as well as discovering improvised explosive device labs, has become all too familiar to military members serving on the frontlines in Afghanistan, and identifying those responsible is a top priority.

To help equip service members to fulfill this important role, the Air Force Reserve's 4th Combat Camera Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., served as host for a mobile training team consisting of seven instructors that taught 38 Airmen, two Sailors and a Marine how to collect and process biometric evidence July 22-26.

Battlefield forensics is a material collection process designed specifically for the troops in the field who are fighting terrorism on the front lines. Students learn basic skills for lifting latent fingerprints and collecting DNA, as well as special photogra-

phy techniques and proper documentation practices.

Students come from a broad range of backgrounds, including combat camera personnel, mechanics, law enforcement professionals, cooks, riflemen, route clearance members and explosive ordnance disposal technicians.

"The nature of the course is the integration of forensics and biometric skill sets for students of different military occupational specialties," said Mark Fields, forensic technician and senior instructor. This course turns conventional service members into crime scene investigators for the military.

One Airman from the 4th CTCS who previously had been through the course unexpectedly found himself in a situation where using his newly acquired skills was necessary.

"I took battlefield forensics in 2010 thinking I would never use the skills," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Garcia, a broadcast journalist. "In 2012, when I deployed to the Horn of Africa, I was tasked to assist an accident investigation board. The skills I learned from battlefield forensics helped me be more comfortable when I was thrust into the role. Materials like the collec-

tion bags and scales from the forensics kit I brought proved to be an invaluable asset to the board as we documented the site."

Service members who attended the training in July agreed that learning battlefield forensics skills will be a helpful and valuable tool to have overseas.

"Now I have another area of expertise," said Marine Corps Sgt. Jose Castellon, a Los Angeles native and photographer at Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

"It's teaching me a lot more of the investigative side of things, whereas with combat camera we are doing more documentation of personnel and exercises — this is more equipment and getting information from material versus people," said Castellon, a 10-year military veteran who has deployed to Iraq, Thailand, Mongolia, Australia and the Philippines. "It's a very, very good training exercise. I'm having a blast."

Marvin Whitfield, forensics expert and team leader for the Six3 Systems Battlefield Forensics Mobile Training Course, said the training makes military members more valuable assets while downrange.

"Personnel are on target doing their primary function and they come across an improvised explosive device. That individual can switch hats and effectively accomplish site biometrics and forensics exploitation," he said.

Six3 Systems instructors have been teaching the course for the past five years. Combined, members of the training cadre have more than 200 years of experience. Many of the instructors come from law enforcement and forensics backgrounds, in addition to having graduate degrees, and they understand the importance of continuing training.

This training was required to help service members identify insurgents who are creating problems in a theater of opera-

tions. Whether stateside or deployed overseas, service members can use the battlefield forensics training to process — either individually or as a team — quality site exploitation evidence, forensics and biometrics material from any scene they come across, Fields said.

"I'm really learning a lot," said Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonah Stepanik, a Riverside, Calif., native and mass communications specialist at Fleet Combat Camera Pacific, Coronado, Calif., who has deployed to the Philippines in his two years in the Navy. "Battlefield forensics has taught me to be more analytical (when) I approach sites or scenes. It seems like I'm moving more efficiently and saving time, even though I'm more analytical and have the 'forensic eye,' as they call it. I'm looking for things you wouldn't normally look for and seeing things you wouldn't normally see. It's a great opportunity to get training we can't get elsewhere."

Fields said another reason this training is so necessary is U.S. service members are not fighting a uniformed army.

"We are fighting people who blend easily into their environment: local nationals," he said. "What we needed was a way to help identify those people — with fingerprints, DNA and photographs — so that we can identify people who are causing issues, like bomb makers, bomb placers and whoever is helping buy the material to make devices. They needed a way to not only identify them but use the information gathered for criminal prosecution."

By doing so, forensics technicians can take away the anonymity of not only insurgents in the battle space but also activists who are playing a secondary role in generating terrorist support and activity, Fields said. ★

(Jones and Herrick are photojournalists assigned to the 4th Combat Camera Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif.)



Johanson takes an identification photo of Knight during battlefield forensics training.



Staff Sgt. Randy Bowen, 452nd Security Forces Squadron, and Senior Airman Moises Gonzalez, 452nd Civil Engineer Squadron, breach a door and tactically scan an evidence room.

TRAINING TRACKER

New system for tracking deployment requirements saves time, money

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Anna-Marie Wyant

When Reservists deploy, they are often in a race against time. Traditional Reservists who work one weekend per month have to balance physicals, fitness testing, ancillary training, meetings, commander's calls and more — in addition to their operational jobs. It is difficult for them to fit everything they need to do for a whole month into two days, so efficient time management is a must. Realizing this, Master Sgt. Heidi White decided there was something she could do to help.

White, unit training manager for the 920th Maintenance Group at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., keeps track of training requirements for all 367 maintenance Airmen in the group. While about a quarter of those Airmen work at the wing full time, the rest are traditional Reservists who must maximize their two working days during unit training assemblies. This is especially important when it comes time to deploy. When she first arrived at the unit five years ago, White realized improvements in the way training is tracked could lead to streamlined processes, saving time and money.

"When I first got here, we had a very rudimentary setup for tracking pre-deployment training," White said. "We pretty much just had a list of names and some training on a spreadsheet."

That just wasn't enough information. White thought she could improve the system to include formulas that would calculate when members could begin training, when they needed to complete it and what percentage of their training — individually or as a unit — was complete. In addition, she added not only the basic deployment requirements but also information on weapons qualifications and fitness testing, as well as hyperlinks to online training modules.

White said combining all deployment requirements into one easy-to-navigate system saves time and money.

"I would say that at a minimum this system saves at least a day's worth of work per person that would otherwise be spent trying to track down information on where, when, who, what and how for all the various pre-deployment requirements," White said of her tracking system. "So if you have 40 people, you have a week of man-hours saved."

Having all the information with formulas on one color-coded spreadsheet also helps supervisors determine when to schedule block training and what percentage of the unit is deployment ready.

"It saves time for the commander in charge of the deployment and the senior noncommissioned officer in charge because they can look at the spreadsheet and project training requirements that need to be scheduled in advance, so we can make maximum use of our time," White said. "Members have to be on orders to do certain training, so it's not just about the training that we're scheduling ahead, but we're also allocating funds and time, man-days, annual tour, and UTA reschedules. It has to be right, or else we're wasting money."

White said her tracking system helps the unit plan training further in advance and more efficiently based on the members'



Master Sgt. Heidi White, the unit training manager for the 920th Maintenance Group, tracks pre-deployment training for group Airmen at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., using a tracking tool she designed. Her tracking tool has led to streamlined processes and increased efficiencies for deploying Airmen and their supervisors throughout the wing.

needs. It also helps make UTAs more productive for deployers.

"It's best to have a good plan of action well before the UTA," she said. "The personnel and supervisors can look at the spreadsheet and plan out six to 12 months in advance. This has been one of the most effective training tools we've had to prepare personnel for deployment-related training."

Senior Master Sgt. Dean Peterson, an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter flight chief with the 920th Rescue Wing, said he finds White's tracking system extremely helpful prior to deploying.

"Through the years, the training requirement for each deployment seems to have grown," said Peterson, who has deployed with the 920th RQW eight times since 2003. "In preparation for any deployment, it is important to know the training status of each member of the team, and Master Sergeant White has made a great tracking tool to accomplish that task."

Peterson will be the maintenance noncommissioned officer in charge of a deployment in 2014, and he is already using the tracking system to ensure his Airmen will be ready to go. He said the tracking tool could help any deploying unit to better help meet its members' training requirements, thus streamlining the pre-deployment process for each Airman.

"I would recommend this tracking tool for other units; it's a very helpful tool to ensure all the training requirements are completed prior to a deployment," he said. "This spreadsheet allows for a quick reference on the training status of each deploying member, reducing some of the pre-deployment stress and allowing members to take care of other items prior to deployment."

This innovative tracking system has spread throughout the 920th RQW and its geographically separated unit, the 943rd Rescue Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Multiple organizations used it for the wing's operational readiness exercise and inspection in February 2012 and April 2013. ★

(Wyant is assigned to the 920th RQW public affairs office at Patrick AFB.)

Staff Sgt. Joey Taylor, 920th Maintenance Group, works inside an HC-130 King aircraft on the flight line at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., July 24. Taylor and fellow maintenance Airmen in the group use an innovative tracking system for all training, including preparation for deployment.

The COCKPIT is where I was meant to be

**Airman reflects on long journey
from load toad to fighter pilot**

Maj. Robin Lytle, an F-16 pilot with the 482nd Fighter Wing, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., began his career as a weapons loader at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, in 1989.

Story and photo By Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove

“I remember the first time I climbed into an F-16 and the canopy closed. I had my mask on, and it was so quiet. I was amazed at how quiet and peaceful it was. At that moment, I knew the cockpit was where I was meant to be.”

To get into that cockpit, Maj. Robin Lytle had to navigate a long path.

Lytle, an F-16 pilot with the 93rd Fighter Squadron at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., was born in Laredo, Texas. He spent the better part of his youth moving around with his family in true military fashion. His father was a pilot, but Lytle had no intentions of following in his footsteps.

But he did have a calling to follow in his family’s long line of military service, going back three generations to his great-grandfather. Lytle joined the Air Force Reserve as a weapons loader at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, after he graduated high school in 1989.

“I spent a day shadowing the weapons loaders at Bergstrom, and I knew it was the job for me,” Lytle said. “I just liked watching them load the bombs and move the missiles around. I knew it was a vital job in the Air Force, and I wanted to be a part of it.”

Lytle worked on the flight line at Bergstrom while attending college. For four years he developed his skills.

“I loved taking something that needed repair, fixing it and being able to deliver a finished product to serve the mission,” Lytle said. “I received a great amount of satisfaction from the job.”

In college, Lytle majored in aeronautics, and, in his Reserve career, he ultimately aspired to become a maintenance officer. He earned a name for himself as a dedicated Airman.

“I learned early on to let my work ethic speak for me,” he said. “The most important thing I learned from my time on the line is that a good work ethic is essential to earning the respect of others.”

Lytle graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 1995 from the University of Oklahoma.

One day his director of operations came to him and asked what he intended to do with the degree he was pursuing. Lytle told him he wanted to become a maintenance officer. However, his career path would soon veer off into a different direction.

“One morning I was sitting on an F-16 fixing a gun issue that had been giving us trouble for a few days,” Lytle said. “I watched the pilots walk out, get into their jets and take off. As I sat there, knee deep in a gun belt, I thought to myself that I wanted to do that.”

Lytle went back to his director of operations and let him know he wanted to apply for pilot training. He started building his package to submit to the board while maintaining maximum performance levels as a weapons loader.

“I was sweating, waiting for an answer,” Lytle said. “There was a lot on the line. I really wanted it.”

While waiting to hear from the board, Lytle was offered

a weapons loader position as an air reserve technician at Homestead ARB. It was an opportunity that, at the time, he couldn’t pass up. He accepted and moved to Florida.

Shortly after arriving at Homestead, Lytle received word he’d been accepted into pilot training.

“I was so excited when I found out I had been accepted into pilot training,” he said. “Then the gravity of it all hit me, and I knew I couldn’t mess up.”

But before beginning pilot training, Lytle had to first find a base that needed a new fighter pilot. He was planning on filling a pilot slot back at Bergstrom, but the base was on the verge of closing, so he had to search for a new place to begin his life in the skies.

“I remember calling around to every fighter base, but I couldn’t find a base that would take me,” Lytle said. “The director of operations at my base spoke with the commander about my situation.”

As luck would have it, the commander at his previous base at Bergstrom was about to become the new wing commander at Homestead. Because of Lytle’s reputation for his dedication and work ethic, the commander said he’d make sure Lytle would have a spot.

“I was meant to be at Homestead,” he said.

“I kid you not, pilot training was the most intense thing I have ever been through because they’re throwing so much information at you all at once,” Lytle said. “All my free time went to studying. Being a pilot is hard work, but it’s highly rewarding knowing you’re keeping the guys on the ground safe.”

According to Lt. Col. Timothy Rusch, 93rd FS director of operations, due to his diverse experience, Lytle truly understands what the maintainers go through, which gives him a unique perspective as a pilot.

“My heart is on the line,” Lytle said. “I really enjoy the chief of scheduling role because I get to interact with the maintainers, and it brings me one step closer to the line.”

During a recent operational readiness inspection, Lytle was key in the squadron’s communications with maintenance, Rusch said.

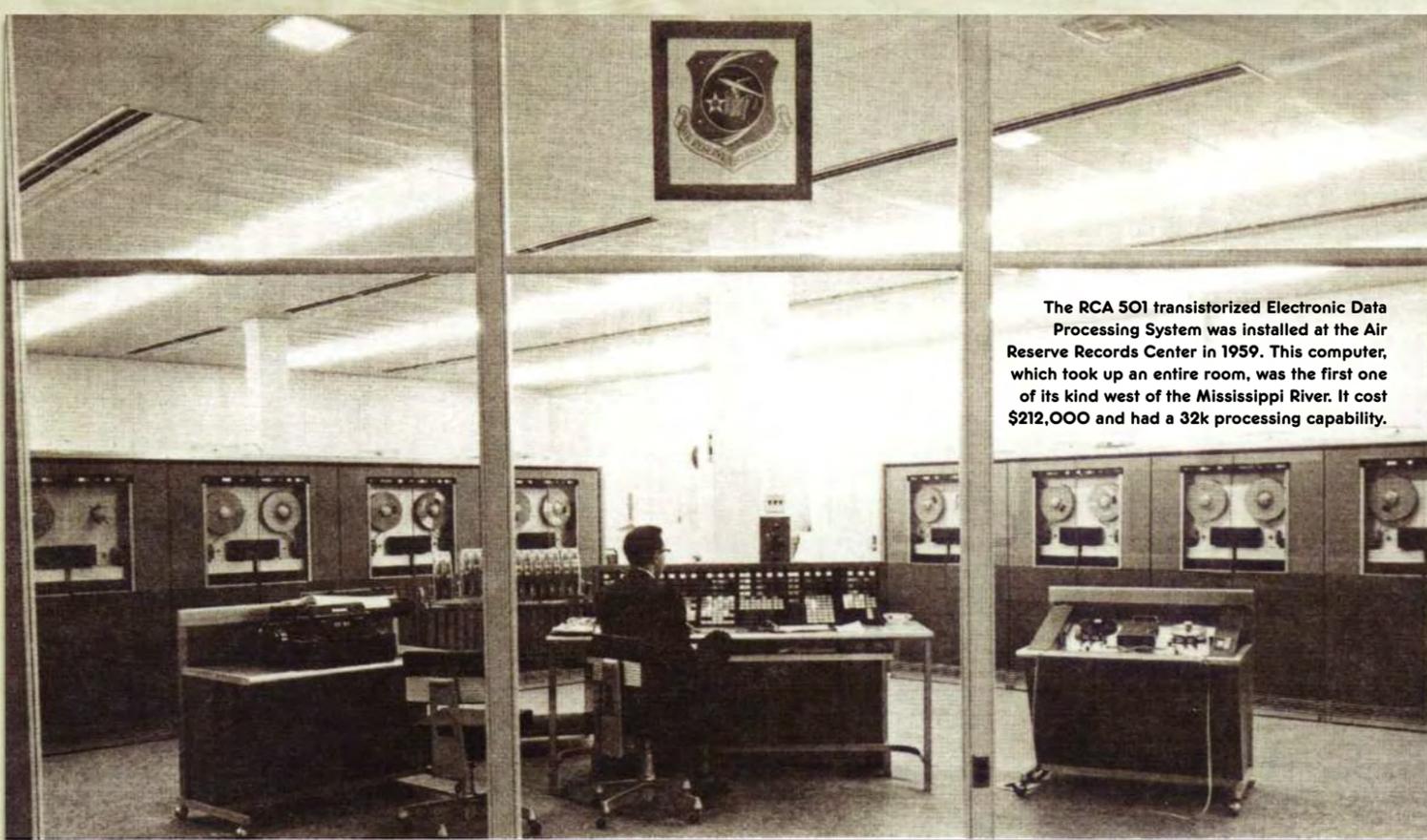
“He efficiently and effectively gets the job done and considers his people while he does it,” he said.

Lytle still loves being out on the flight line and finds every possible opportunity to get out there. He still looks back on his time as a weapons loader as a vital asset in his career experience.

“I know about the long hours that are involved in keeping this jet armed and mission ready,” he said. “This experience helps me be a better pilot because, when there’s an issue, I have unique insight as to what might have gone wrong. I’ve definitely been involved in situations where I drew from knowledge I acquired as a weapons loader.”

Lytle’s career to date consists of five years as a weapons loader and 16 as a pilot. He has no exit strategy at this point and looks forward to many more rewarding years in the sky. ★

(Upthegrove is assigned to the 482nd Fighter Wing public affairs office at Homestead.)



The RCA 501 transistorized Electronic Data Processing System was installed at the Air Reserve Records Center in 1959. This computer, which took up an entire room, was the first one of its kind west of the Mississippi River. It cost \$212,000 and had a 32k processing capability.

Going Strong at 60

Air Reserve Personnel Center celebrates 60 years of historic service

By Mark Nelson

(Editor's note: Brig. Gen. Jay Flournoy, commander of the Air Reserve Personnel Center at Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., will host a reunion Feb. 28 for all former and current ARPC employees. For information and to RSVP, contact Erlene Rohan at 720-847-3016.)

When World War II ended in the fall of 1945, President Harry S. Truman released many servicemen from their reserve obligation. Service members were anxious to get back to their lives. After all, the world had changed dramatically with the use of the atomic bomb, and many people believed the era of large-scale conventional war was over.

The U.S. Air Force, which became an independent service on Sept. 18, 1947, had a small Air Force Reserve known as Continental Air Command, the predecessor of the current Air Force Reserve Command.

CONAC comprised only 58,000 participating Reservists with an additional 315,000 non-participating members by 1950. Readiness was a concern for some members of Congress, so in 1948 the secretary of defense appointed a committee to review the status of reserve forces.

Known as the Committee on Civilian Components, officials found reserve forces were unable to carry out their missions due to a surplus of officers in higher grades, a shortage of enlisted men, too few armories, a shortage of instructors and a lack of funds. However, the prevailing wisdom of most politicians and even some military leaders was that the United States could depend on its nuclear forces and would not need a large

reserve force.

Unfortunately, these experts were wrong. The Soviet Union had its own plans for the post-war world. The Soviets and their proxies worked hard to expand communism's reach. In 1949, China fell to the communists under Mao Tse Tung. The American monopoly on atomic weapons came to an end that same year when the Soviets exploded their own nuclear weapon. On June 25, 1950, the communist North Korean army, trained and equipped by the Soviets and Chinese, launched an invasion of their American-supported but ill-equipped neighbor, South Korea. The Korean War was on.

From July 1950 through June 1953, CONAC mobilized nearly 147,000 Reservists in the Korean conflict, almost evenly divided between officers and enlisted members. In addition, about 46,000 Air National Guardsmen were mobilized.

Unfortunately, serious flaws in the structure and capabilities of the reserve forces quickly became apparent. Unit-level reports revealed poor record-keeping procedures and a general lack of preparedness. To confirm and correct these problems, CONAC launched an investigation in late 1950 under the direction of Brig. Gen. Clyde Mitchell. Mitchell's committee investigated the unit and individual recall programs and recommended corrective action in recall procedures as well as more effective command and control of reserve forces.

The committee concluded that the greatest problem involved deficiencies in Reservists' basic personnel records, which in most

cases lacked accurate personnel and career information. These deficiencies made successful mobilization nearly impossible because it was difficult to contact Reservists, determine their physical condition and assess the level of their skills. Most importantly, it illustrated the need to standardize all records administration and to review the data in the records periodically.

The experience of the Korean mobilization convinced Air Force leaders that Reservists' records needed more centralized administration. In November 1951, CONAC officials took the first step when it established a locator file at the headquarters. The file listed the locations of master and field records for all inactive Reservists, but the records themselves were maintained in eight separate locations.

Air Force leadership considered a centralized location for all personnel records as the ideal solution. Lt. Gen. Leon W. Johnson, CONAC commander and Medal of Honor recipient for valor in the Ploesti Raid, decided that the location of a records center should be in the interior of the country. Planners at CONAC eventually chose surplus facilities at the Air Force Finance Center in Denver, Colo., based entirely on availability and economics.

On Nov. 1, 1953, the command established Detachment 1, Continental Air Command and named it the Air Reserve Records Center. A cadre of experienced personnel technicians arrived at ARRC in October 1953 to set up a workable organization. They devised proper filing and handling procedures, hired and trained 800 new employees, and prepared for the arrival of more than 250,000 records from other locations. The facility contained 3,162 filing cabinets that occupied 30,000 square feet of floor space. ARRC opened its doors March 1, 1954.

Members of the new organization quickly moved to correct the records problems that had plagued the Air Force Reserve. In 1955, the center's staff launched the officer and warrant officer record reconciliation project. This process, which took several months to complete, involved address research, rank investigation and time-in-grade determinations for more than 152,000 people.

During the next year, a similar process was completed for enlisted records. On Jan. 1, 1957, the center was re-designated as Headquarters Air Reserve Records Center, a sub-command



Employees work at the Air Reserve Records Center mail section in 1954. The mail section handled more than 600,000 individual pieces of correspondence monthly.



An Air Reserve Records Center employee files records in the file cabinet bank at the York Street building in 1955.

within CONAC and the equivalent of a numbered air force.

Because the filing cabinets took up too much space, employees in the Records File Division did not have desks. Space was so limited that the chief of the division and his staff moved to an adjacent building. The number of records was growing quickly, and the filing cabinets were old and insulated with asbestos, causing health concerns.

For those reasons, in July 1956 Remington Rand Corp. officials conducted a study of ARRC's operations. The study recommended open-shelf filing of records by terminal digits of Air Force service numbers. The plan was approved, and by June 25, 1958, the filing rearrangement was completed. The center had custody of nearly 500,000 records.

That same year, ARRC leaders realized that the manual accounting system had reached its saturation point. The amount of data processed required more than 6 million punch cards, which had to be updated and maintained regularly. Routine file updates were taking so much time and effort that other critical processes were not getting done in a timely manner.

The only solution was an electronic data processing system. Air Force officials agreed with center leadership and authorized them to purchase a computer system.

On Oct. 31, 1959, a new RCA 501 transistorized electronic data processing system was installed at ARRC. The computer was the first one of its kind west of the Mississippi River, costing \$212,000 and sporting a 32K processing capability. The operation of the system required a dedicated computer room and a staff of technicians and programmers. It was the forerunner of many technological advances the center would employ in the years to come.

The Air Reserve Records Center was born out of adversity and matured at an early age, but as the 1950s ended, ARRC members were well prepared to serve their country should the need arise. The following decade would test ARRC and prove to be one of the most challenging in the center's history. ★

(Nelson is the ARPC historian.)



(Back row, left to right) Air Force Reservists Capt. Chris Bachelor, Maj. Charles Huber, Lt. Col. Jason Ausdemore, Maj Ryan Dekok, Lt. Col. John Oglesby and Maj Mike Barron all serve as Knights of Heroes mentors for children between the ages of 11 and 17 who have lost their fathers during military service during a week-long wilderness adventure camp.

Good Knights

Reserve pilots step up to mentor kids who lost their dads during war

By Bo Joyner

While attending the memorial ceremony for his friend and fellow Air Force pilot Maj. Troy Gilbert at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., in 2006, Lt. Col. Steve Harrold couldn't stop thinking about Gilbert's five young children, especially the two young sons who were close in age to Harrold's own boys.

Gilbert was killed during combat operations while flying his F-16 to protect ground troops being overrun by the enemy in the Al-Anbar Province of Iraq on Nov. 27. As Gilbert was honored, Harrold said he couldn't stop worrying about those five kids who had just had their father taken away from them. How would they grow up without their primary male role model? He knew he had to do something.

That "something" turned out to be creating the Knights of Heroes Foundation — an organization that brings together children between the ages of 11 and 17 who have lost their fathers dur-

ing military service for a week-long wilderness adventure camp.

The first camp was held in June 2007 when 16 boys from Texas, Florida, Arizona and Colorado attended. The program was extended to include girls in 2011, and this year, 51 boys and 27 girls attended separate camps in Colorado in early August. During the camps, 38 moms and 10 younger siblings spent the week visiting sites in and around Colorado Springs. The non-profit program, which is funded solely through private donations, is totally free to all attendees.

Needless to say, a program like Knights of Heroes requires many volunteers and a lot of financial support. And there's one Air Force Reserve organization that has gone above and beyond to answer the call for help put out by the KOH organization.

Five Air Force Reserve F-16 pilots assigned to the 301st Fighter Wing's 457th Fighter Squadron, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, volunteer their time every year to pro-

vide positive adult mentorship during the camp. They pay their own expenses to get to Colorado and take time off from work so they can bond with youngsters who are trying to navigate their way through their teenage years without their fathers around.

Maj. Charles Huber, an air reserve technician who currently serves as the chief of standards and evaluation for the 457th, has been involved with Knights of Heroes since the beginning.

"Colonel Harrold is a good friend of mine, and when he told me about what he was doing, I told him I wanted to help," Huber said.

"The reason I do this is simple," he said. "It's to honor the men and women who have lost their lives; and I can think of no better way of honoring them than by caring for their children."

Huber is a camp leader for young men in the first- through third-year program, which is designed to emphasize the camper/mentor relationship. Each camper is matched with his own mentor. The camper and mentor are challenged throughout the week with activities such as rock climbing, whitewater rafting, hiking, canoeing, shooting, archery and much more. The activities are designed to develop trust, confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

"The activities we do are amazing," Huber said, "and they teach these kids a lot of valuable lessons. But what might be more important is that we bring these kids together, and they get to know other kids just like them who are going through the same things they are going through. The friendships they develop can last a lifetime."

Over the years, a number of Huber's fellow Reservists have joined him in supporting Knights of Heroes. Lt. Col. John Oglesby has served as a mentor for five years, and he is currently the organization's fundraising committee chairman. Maj. Ryan Dekok and Capt. Chris Bachelor have volunteered for three years, and Maj. Mike Barron just finished his first camp as a mentor. Another of Huber's close friends, Lt. Col. Jason Ausdemore, a C-17 pilot assigned to Air Force Reserve Command's 452nd Air Mobility Wing, March Air Reserve Base, Calif., has been a mentor for three years.

Another Reservist who has supported the program as a mentor for the past two years is Maj. John Chester, an F-16 pilot assigned to the 93rd FS at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.

The 457th's support doesn't end with the five pilot volunteers.

"The entire squadron has contributed through fundraising over the years," Huber said. "In 2010, we held a fundraiser that



Bachelor has been a Knights of Heroes volunteer for three years.

allowed the foundation to purchase backpacks for all the kids."

The KOH website is full of testimonials from moms who have seen the positive effects the camp has had on their kids. The wife of one soldier killed in 2006 talked about the fear that set in when she was left alone to raise three young boys.

"When their father was alive, I had no doubt that they would become great men of honor — they had a wonderful role model to teach them," she wrote. "But now the responsibility fell solely on me. But I am a woman. I can do the mom part, but what about all the needs that can only be filled by a man? Boys need strong, faithful role models. They need that male guidance to ensure they become the best man they can be."

"Then our family received one of the greatest blessings to come our way following our tragedy. I was told of a camp being organized to help ease this burden. A camp where male mentors would take my boys under their wings and do 'guy' stuff with them, all the while teaching them essential character traits needed to become a man of honor."

She went on to say that what happened when her two sons went to camp was life changing, "not only for them but for me as well. They faced challenges, overcame obstacles and learned to work as a team. They took guidance from these strong mentors and learned that it was OK to talk about the tragic loss of their father in their time, in their way. But most of all they walked away realizing that there were men out there who loved them and wanted to share in their life as they grow. My boys walked away feeling that they just might be able to trust again and that there was hope for the future. And this mom left knowing that she wasn't going to have to do it alone."

That's what Knights of Heroes is all about, empowering children who have lost their fathers during military service by providing positive adult mentorship, character development and lasting friendships.

"It's important we ensure these families with losses are not forgotten," Huber said. "And it's an honor to be able to be there for their kids."

KOH is currently looking to buy its own property so it can offer programs for youngsters year-round. To find out more about the organization, check out the KOH website at <http://knightsofheroes.org/>. ★



Barron just finished his first camp as a mentor.



The final C-17 Globemaster III, P-223, rolled off the Boeing assembly line in Long Beach, Calif., for delivery to the U.S. Air Force Sept. 12. The aircraft was flown from California to Joint Base Charleston, S.C., by pilots to include Gen. Paul Selva, Air Mobility Command commander, Lt. Gen. James Jackson, Air Force Reserve Command commander, and Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke, Air National Guard director. This historic event came more than 20 years after the active-duty 437th Airlift Wing and Air Force Reserve 315th AW at Charleston took delivery of the very first C-17 to enter the Air Force inventory June 14, 1993, and marked the successful completion of C-17 production for the Air Force. (Senior Airman Dennis Sloan)