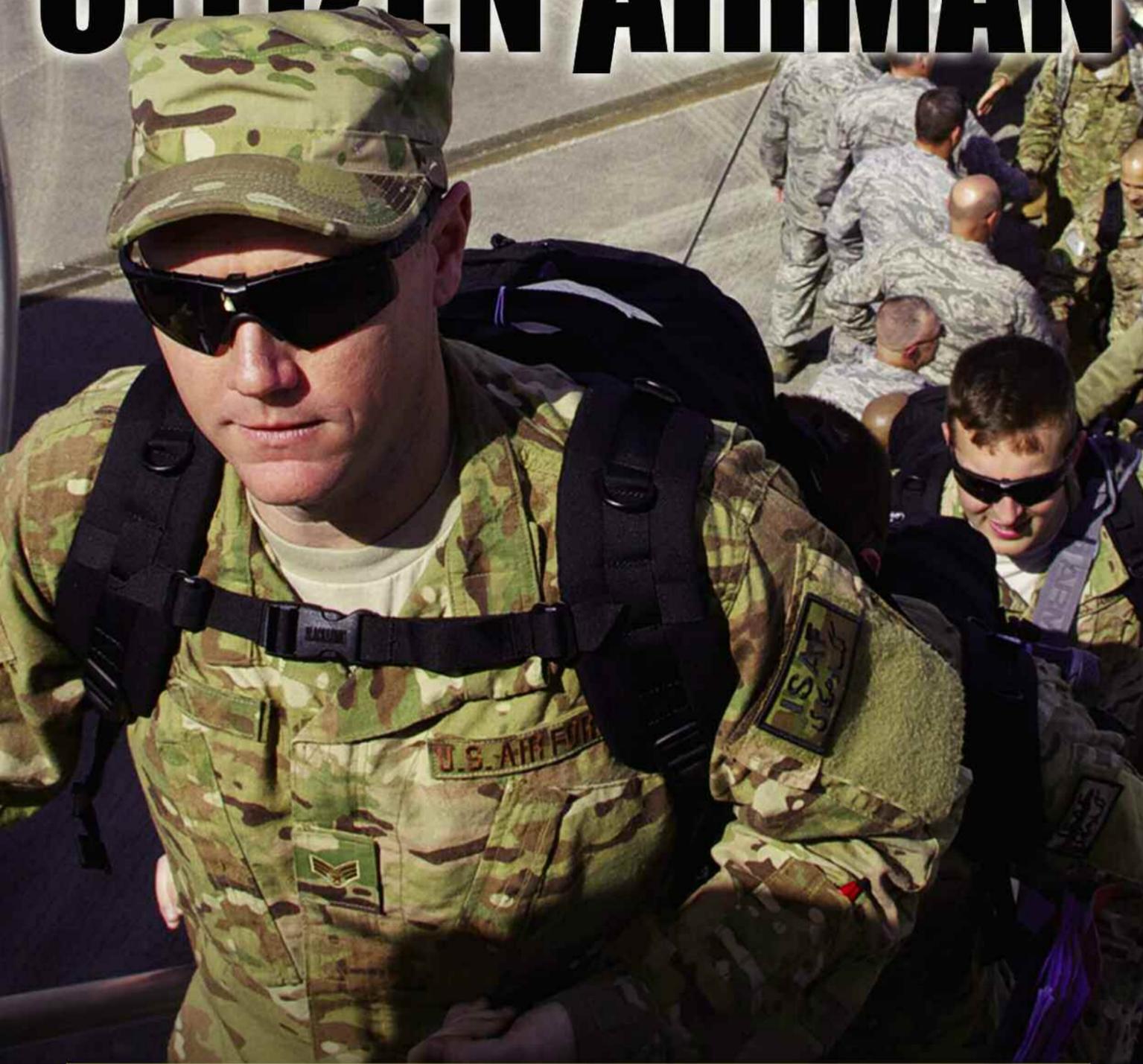


CITIZEN AIRMAN



NEW AEF CONSTRUCT

Changes designed to make deployments more predictable

LIEUTENANT GENERAL
James F. Jackson
 ★★★
 FROM THE TOP



The foundation to success will always lay with our Airmen.



THE STRATEGIC AGILITY OF THE AIR FORCE RESERVE

I'm often asked, "What is the future of the Air Force Reserve?" Part of the answer lies in having a strategy that provides the path to where we need to go.

The Air Force recently published a new 30-year strategy: "America's Air Force: A Call to the Future." This strategy states, "The Air Force must aggressively pursue a path toward institutional strategic agility," with "agility" capturing the attributes of flexibility, adaptability and responsiveness. Here is how I think these attributes apply to the future of the Air Force Reserve.

Flexibility. The Air Force Reserve's flexibility is derived from the operational capability, strategic depth and surge capacity we provide for our nation's defense. Citizen Airmen enhance this flexibility by serving as a majority part-time force, ready to flex to full-time support when the mission dictates. Combatant commanders depend on this flexibility to deliver war fighter effects in ever-changing environments. As we look to the future, the Air Force Reserve will leverage our inherent flexibility to evolve in rapidly changing mission areas, includ-

ing space, cyberspace, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Adaptability. This attribute is also a characteristic of Citizen Airmen. Education and training prepare our members to adapt to challenging situations. One area that is always challenging is the deployment process. The new air expeditionary force construct, scheduled to begin this month, was redesigned to increase predictability for the member. The goal is to deploy larger numbers of Airmen from the same unit versus deploying individuals. Additionally, the stabilized mobilization battle rhythm will allow for increased notice to employers and family. (For more information on the new AEF construct, see the story on Page 22.)

Another area for improved adaptability is through continuum of service. This concept refers to the ability of our Airmen to move between the three components (active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard) as well as between the different statuses. By addressing obstacles in legislation, policy, organization and education, the goal is to make it easier for

Airmen to serve, no matter the component. Efforts are under way now to improve continuum of service in the near future.

Responsiveness. Being responsive is a demonstration of readiness, always a focus of mine. The readiness of the Air Force Reserve is dependent upon the readiness of our Citizen Airmen. By being trained and inspected to the same standards as our active-duty partners, our members demonstrate they can respond effectively to any crisis. Readiness is foundational to the Air Force Reserve's ability to serve for our nation's defense, both today and tomorrow.

As the Air Force and Air Force Reserve look to the future, the foundation to success will always lay with our Airmen, which is why I say thanks for all you do!

(Editor's Note: To read more about strategic agility and to download "Call to the Future," go to <http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/486897/strategic-agility-is-the-future-of-the-air-force.aspx>.)

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT
Cameron B. Kirksey
 CHIEF'S VIEW

OUTLINING STRATEGIC PURSUITS WITHIN FOCUS AREAS

In General Jackson's commentary, he addresses the strategic agility of the force. I want to share how my team and I are pursuing strategic matters affecting our enlisted force, specifically within my three focus areas: team unity, team opportunities and team wellness. Building on our foundation of leadership and core values, these focus areas aim to improve our overall mission effectiveness.

My first focus area, team unity, is about integration and the mission. To promote this, the Chief's Advisory Council was created. The council is made up of the numbered air force

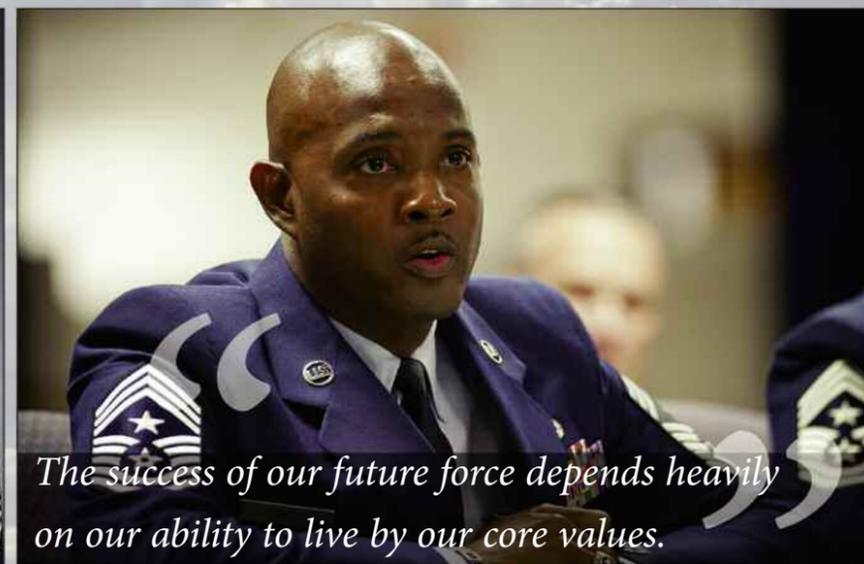
command chiefs and senior enlisted leaders in key and strategic positions throughout the command. We meet regularly to discuss issues that affect our enlisted Citizen Airmen. Topics we are currently working include codifying the enlisted promotion instruction and improving the structure of the development and training flights.

Initiatives in my second focus area, team opportunities, center on the force development of our enlisted members. The development team process has been revamped to ensure transparent and diversified representation on team panels. In addition, we are utilizing YouTube and Facebook to educate members on force development topics. These links are available on my Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CMSgtKirksey>). Adopting the philosophy of life-long learning and developing our Airmen improves the adaptability of the force.

Team wellness is my third focus area and embraces you, our Citizen Airmen. Improvements have been made to the Wingman Toolkit (afrc.wingmantoolkit.org) to capture available resources for our Airmen. Targeted promotion of the Yellow Ribbon program has yielded an increase in resource providers, as well as deployer and family attendance. Additionally, the Airman Comprehensive Assessment feedback process was introduced in July and facilitates greater morale, productivity and communication between supervisors and subordinates. Building these relationships that foster professionalism and respect for one another enhances team wellness and mission effectiveness.

Finally, the success of our future force depends heavily on our ability to live by our core values. Integrity, service before self and excellence in all we do are not just words to remember when in uniform but are fundamental values to guide our everyday lives. They are the foundation of who we are and are always a focus of mine and should be of yours, too.

Our enlisted team is 55,000 strong and the backbone of our great Air Force Reserve. I am truly honored to be on this team of talented, innovative Citizen Airmen. I'm proud of the Chief's Advisory Council because it gives your senior enlisted leadership an opportunity to say, "We're here for you!"



The success of our future force depends heavily on our ability to live by our core values.

Staff Sgt. Robert Abbey of the 507th Security Forces Squadron at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, guards an E-3 Sentry airborne warning and control system aircraft on the flight line at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Security forces Airmen from the 507th were supporting Reservists from the 513th Air Control Group at Tinker as they flew missions during the Rim of the Pacific 2014 exercise. (Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)

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On the cover: Members of the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, go through a farewell line as they board an aircraft for a recent deployment. The Air Force's redesigned air expeditionary force construct will modify how Reservists mobilize for contingencies and support combatant commanders. The new AEF construct is intended to make deployments more predictable for Reservists and improve opportunities for them to deploy with their units. For more on the new construct, see the story on Page 22. (Tech. Sgt. Lionel Castellano)

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

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

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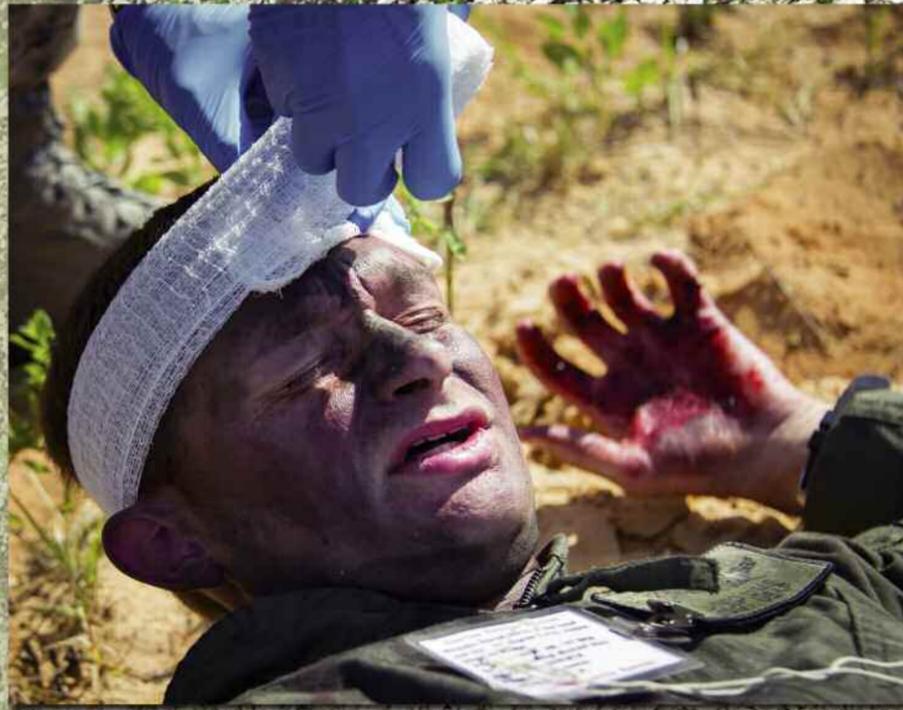
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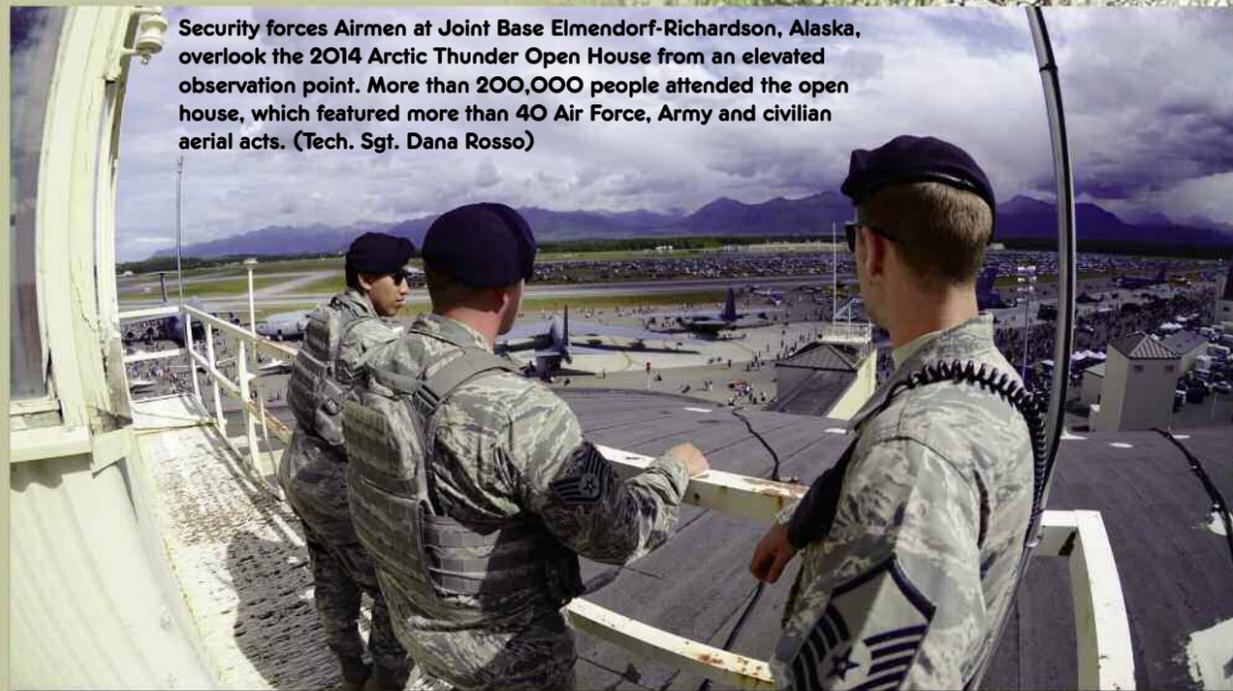
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Staff Sgt. Gary Martin of the 80th Aerial Port Squadron, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, demonstrates the operation of a remotely piloted aircraft equipped with a camera. The aircraft and camera are used to capture video and still photos in support of the Air Force Reserve Command Transportation Proficiency Center at Dobbins. (Don Peek)



Master Sgt. Michael Sims of the 5th Special Operations Squadron at Duke Field, Florida, receives treatment for a head wound during a major accident response exercise. The simulated accident involved a mid-air collision between an F-35 Lightning II from the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and a C-145 Skytruck belonging to the 919th Special Operations Wing at Duke Field. The exercise provided an opportunity for military and civilian emergency responders to train together. (Tech. Sgt. Jasmin Taylor)



Security forces Airmen at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, overlook the 2014 Arctic Thunder Open House from an elevated observation point. More than 200,000 people attended the open house, which featured more than 40 Air Force, Army and civilian aerial acts. (Tech. Sgt. Dana Rosso)

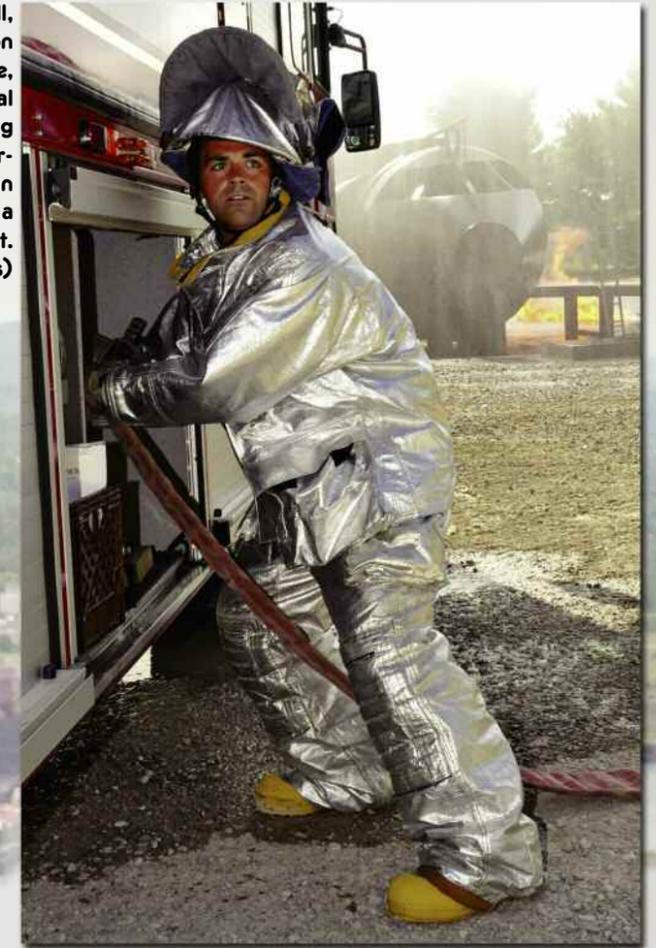
Tech. Sgt. Stephanie A. Closson, a combat arms instructor with the 710th Security Forces Squadron at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado, provides weapons training to Capt. April C. Harker of Buckley's 310th Force Support Squadron at Fort Carson's Airburst Range in Pueblo, Colorado. (Tech. Sgt. Nicholas B. Ontiveros)



Staff Sgt. Cody Schroeder, 96th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minnesota, looks out over Silver Bay from a C-130 aircraft during an Employers' Day flight in August. The annual event allows employers to see what their employees do during unit training assembly weekends, learn more about the Reserve mission and gain a greater understanding of what it means for their employee to be a member of the 934th Airlift Wing. (Staff Sgt. Cherish Chavez)



Senior Airman Chance Mitchell, 932nd Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, participates in an annual training exercise. The training involved several different scenarios, including a fuel spill, an engine fire, a wheel well fire and a fire inside an aircraft. (Staff Sgt. Amber Hodges)



Master Sgt. Chris Norris, an air refueling boom operator assigned to the 18th Air Refueling Squadron at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, walks off the flight line with his wife and daughter who were on hand to welcome him home from a 60-day deployment to Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, where he served as part of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing. (Capt. Zach Anderson)



ARPC Improves Virtual Personnel System Reliability

Online systems such as the virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve experience severe spikes in usage during the first weekend of every month as Citizen Airmen and Guardsmen perform required duty. As a result of these spikes, vPC-GR would crash almost without fail.

However, recent efforts by Air Reserve Personnel Center officials at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado, have improved system reliability to the point that the vPC-GR recently stayed up and running, without going down, for three unit training assembly weekends in a row.

"On the first full weekend of any month, (parts) of the system would overheat, and vPC-GR would go down for the rest of the weekend," said Brig. Gen. Samuel Mahaney, ARPC commander, during a meeting with members of the Senior Executive Service who visited the center Aug. 5.

During their visit, Daniel Sitterly, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and reserve affairs, and John Fedrigo, deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for reserve affairs and Airman readiness, received feedback from ARPC members and leaders that could potentially help improve policy or lead to new legislation.

"Our mission is for us to continue to improve our human capital programs and policies so that we can execute our mission today and for the future force," Sitterly said. "What I intend to get out of (these meetings) is the fourth tenet of your commander's leadership style and that is feedback. What we want from you is to hear all the wonderful things that you are doing for sure, but we want to hear what you think are some good ideas for the future as we go forward."

Ideas for the future and feedback are what they got.

"Our guys worked with the system program office to replace old parts (on vPC-GR), and, as a result, we've had three months in a row where that (the system going down) has not happened," Mahaney said. "Because of the infrastructure, not the software, we went from basically unsatisfactory to barely satisfactory, so we're at least at a level now where we are able to look wing commanders in the eye and say we're making

some progress."

ARPC relies heavily on a system of complex relationships with outside organizations that own the vPC-GR infrastructure. The majority of problems causing system degradation of virtualized personnel services do not occur within ARPC or its control.

Regardless of whether ARPC controls the system infrastructure or not, the organization is committed to providing Airmen with world-class customer service.

"We could say we don't own the infrastructure and stop right there, but it's our responsibility to take care of our customers," Mahaney said. "We have to go ahead and come up with solutions ourselves."

ARPC has not only generated solutions, but has begun an implementation plan that wastes no time in improving service for customers.

"We are doing a phased approach to come up with mid-term solutions, and we're expecting to have something in place by January of next year," the general said. "At that point, we will have gotten far above the satisfactory line in pursuit of excellence."

The first phase will virtualize ARPC's server at Buckley AFB. The next step will be to put that server on a cloud and connect to a mid-tier server at Robins AFB, Georgia, which will also be virtualized. The final phase will determine a hosting solution.

In the meantime, ARPC members have implemented a number of short-term solutions that have increased vPC-GR's reliability and speed.

The team started by expanding the bandwidth from 20 megabytes to 45 megabytes, resulting in faster service and fewer spinning "doughnuts of death," the familiar spinning icon on a computer screen that indicates a program is locked up and not responding. Next, it focused on increasing the thread count (the number of processes computers can fit through the network), which was set at 200.

"The 201st customer would get a message saying that service was unavailable. So we increased that to 750 (thread count), and we are working toward increasing that even more," Mahaney said. (Lt. Col. Belinda Petersen, ARPC public affairs)

507th ARW Gains New Squadron, Air Mobility Training Mission

The 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, gained a new squadron and a new training mission when it

assumed command over the 730th Air Mobility Training Squadron at Altus AFB, Oklahoma.

The 730th AMTS is an Air Force Reserve Command unit charged with training aircrew on the C-17 Globemaster III and KC-135 Stratotanker. In the future, it will add KC-46 Pegasus aircrew training to its mission. The Pegasus is intended to replace the Air Force's aging fleet of KC-135s. Members of the 730th work next to active-duty Airmen of the 97th Air Mobility Wing.

The transition just made sense due to the proximity of the 507th to the "off-site" squadron at Altus, according to wing leaders.

"We are so excited to be working with these outstanding Airmen and happy to be gaining a new mission," said Col. Brian Davis, 507th ARW commander. "This training is vital for the Air Force Reserve, and with the addition of the KC-46 mission in the coming years, I can't think of a better team of Reservists to train on the newest aerial refueling aircraft and the C-17 and KC-135."

The training squadron is made up of a mix of traditional Reservists and air reserve technicians who support more than 2,100 KC-135 and C-17 students a year in 22 formal training courses for active, Air National Guard, Reserve and international students. The 730th provides nearly 25 percent



of the instructor force at Altus. The squadron is split by weapon system as roughly half instruct in the C-17 and the rest in the KC-135. Initially, a handful of positions will transition to begin work with the new KC-46 training squadron when it comes online.

"This unit is another example of the Air Force commitment to total

Donated car helps Citizen Airman in her drive for excellence

By 1st Lt. Jeff Kelly

Sixty miles is a long way to walk. Senior Airman Thelma Smith had few other options to make the trip from her parents' home in Gandview, Missouri, to Whiteman Air Force Base for her weekend commitments with the Air Force Reserve. That changed on Aug. 8.

A recent divorce and a car with serious mechanical problems left Smith, a member of the 442nd Fighter Wing Services Squadron, without transportation for months. She was forced to rely on her family, friends and even a few rental cars to fulfill her Reserve commitment, get to her civilian job each day and accomplish the day-to-day tasks required of a single mother.

But fortune smiled on this Citizen Airman when she received a refurbished 2001 Ford Explorer from an organization called Cars 4 Heroes at an event at the Bi-Lo Country Mart in Warrensburg.

Smith was in tears as she received a hug and her new car keys from program founder Terry "Car Santa" Franz. A crowd of local citizens and members of Smith's Reserve unit applauded as she sat in her new vehicle for the first time.

"One drill weekend, she called me to ask if she could stay on base so she wouldn't have to spend as much money in gas for her rental car," said Senior Master Sgt. Travis Stickels, 442nd FW Services Squadron superintendent. "This caught my attention, and after talking with her I realized the desperate need



Senior Airman Thelma Smith sits in her 2001 Ford Explorer for the first time after receiving it from the Cars 4 Heroes organization at an event held at the Bi-Lo Country Mart in Warrensburg, Missouri.

she had for her own vehicle."

Stickels had received an email from the Cars 4 Heroes program only a few days before he learned of Smith's situation.

"Sergeant Stickels told me about this program," Smith said. "That's how I got here today. I'm so thankful."

Smith, who has served in the Air Force Reserve for six years, has a 3-year-old daughter and, when she received the vehicle,

was pregnant with another daughter. Her due date was Sept. 13.

"I'm going to be able to keep the civilian job that I love because of this," Smith said. "I'm going to be able to support my two girls because of this. My family has been there the whole time for me through all of this, but now having this car will help me so much."

(Kelly is chief of public affairs for the 442nd FW at Whiteman AFB.)

Pope's Pun



force integration. ... we are infusing TFI in our training every day, and it starts at the school-house," Davis said. "These Reservists work directly with active-duty training units augmenting the instructors."

Administrative control of the 730th AMTS now rests with the 507th Operations Group at Tinker, with operational direction coming from Air Education and Training Command and the 97th AMW due to the training mission. The 730th was previously assigned to the 452nd OG at March Air Reserve Base, California.

The 730th AMTS was formed in 1943 during World War II and since then has performed a variety of missions to include bombardment, night photo, tactical reconnaissance, troop carrier, and tactical and military airlift. (507th ARW public affairs)

New Medical Facility at McConnell Enhances Mission Effectiveness

The 931st Aeromedical Squadron has a new facility that greatly enhances its ability to

provide for the medical needs of all Reservists at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas.

Leaders from the 931st Air Refueling Group and the active-duty 22nd Air Refueling Wing celebrated the official opening of the new facility during a ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 1. Brig. Gen. John Flournoy, 4th Air Force commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Brian Wong, 4th Air Force command chief master sergeant, also attended.

The new facility triples the number of work stations available for the squadron, includes a conference room and offices, and provides ample space for medical records storage.

According to AMDS Commander Lt. Col. Michele Van Sickle, this greatly enhances the ability of the unit to provide for the medical needs of McConnell Reservists.

"This facility allows us to have the 931st Air Refueling Group members' medical records right here with us so we can get cases processed more effectively and quickly and sent to Air Force Reserve Command so a decision can be made as to whether the member

can return to duty or if they may need to go before a medical review board," Van Sickle said. "Our goal is to expedite the decision-making process so we can get our members back to doing their mission. This facility is going to help us work as a team to do that more efficiently."

Col. Jeffery Alder, 22nd Medical Group commander, said the new facility is a testament to the enduring partnership between the active and reserve components at McConnell and will contribute to the global capability of the Air Force.

"We have long enjoyed a partnership in working together to ensure Airmen are medically ready, and the importance of this cannot be overstated," Alder said. "We've shared space in the past, but there will be a day when the demand will make this new space critical. This gives us space to be able to support the war fighters and meet the needs of combatant commanders."

"This is a great day for Team McConnell," said Col. Mark S. Larson, 931st ARG com-

mander. "My thanks to the 22nd Air Refueling Wing for all it has done in helping and working in conjunction with us to make this happen. It is one thing to talk about total force integration; it's another to actually do it. This facility gives the 931st Aeromedical Squadron an identity while continuing to further our relationship with our active-duty counterparts."

Van Sickle said the new facility will enable the 931st AMDS to accomplish its mission of making sure Airmen are ready to do their jobs — anytime, anywhere. (Capt. Zach Anderson, 931st ARG public affairs)

Maintainers Share Responsibility for C-145 Maintenance with Active Duty

Active-duty and Reserve maintainers now have responsibility for the upkeep and repair of 16 C-145 Skytruck aircraft assigned to Duke Field, Florida.

Members of the 592nd Special Operations Maintenance Squadron and 919th Special Operations Aircraft Maintenance Squadron became accountable for the care of the C-145s July 1, taking over the responsibility from contractors. The Air Force maintainers were able to assume the new duties six months ahead of schedule.

"As a credit to the trainers, the folks who built the lesson plans and the mechanics learning, leadership was able to back the contract up six months and save the Air Force about \$11 million," said Chief Master Sgt. Brett Elledge, 592nd SOMXS superintendent.

The 592nd SOMXS stood up in June 2013 as an active-duty maintenance unit for the Air Force Special Operations Command's new aviation foreign internal defense mission with the C-145s.

Active-duty and Reserve Airmen work together on the mission through a practice known as total force integration. Both components share resources, including aircraft, maintenance and support, to get the job done.

Previously, the 919th owned its aircraft: MC-130E Combat Talons. However, with the retirement of the Combat Talons and the standup of the new AVFID mission, ownership of the C-145 aircraft switched to the active duty.

"Our leadership works well together. That's a big reason for us to be able to work well together, too," said Master Sgt. Dustin Hurlbut of the 592nd SOMXS.

Each C-145 has a dedicated crew chief and assistant crew chief assigned to it. One is an active-duty Airman, while the other is a Reservist, with equal numbers between the two components.

Leading up to the July 1 takeover, the biggest challenge the Airmen faced was becoming qualified to work on the C-145. There is no technical school or military guidance for the new aircraft. It is civilian-made with no U.S. military connection until being selected for the AFSOC mission.

"It's a daily learning curve," Hoelt said. "We are writing a new chapter for the Air Force."

The maintainers had to build the lesson plans and training requirements from scratch. They created a 60-day course, which includes classroom and hands-on training. In addition, they adapted a 15-day classroom course to meet the needs of the 919th's traditional Reservists.

The trainers and mechanics also had to convert the civilian manual to Air Force standard procedures and regulations.

"We've overcome so much (to get here)," said Chief Master Sgt. Pamela Duvall, 919th SOAMXS superintendent. "I think that comes from the Talon days and the gunships before that. It's just the mindset of the Airmen we have." (Tech. Sgt. Cheryl L. Foster, 919th Special Operations Wing public affairs, Duke Field)



Some Advice for New Military Members

By Ralph Lunt

During our region's last evaluation of the fiscal year, we said goodbye to several long-serving members. I want to give a tip of the cap to our region commander for his generosity and professionalism during these retirement ceremonies.

We are definitely undergoing a changing of the guard in our organization, and, as such, the newer members were picking my brain for financial and career advice. One of the first points I wanted to emphasize was that people need to manage and document their career. As the former deputy director for retired military pay, I can tell you that we received many calls from retirees looking for historical orders/travel vouchers that would prove they were in a combat zone or in a particular geographical area that would adjust their entitlements. I strongly encourage everyone to keep detailed records of their service, including where you go, when you go, awards, points, etc., and have your troops do the same. Military benefit amounts and taxation can change; it's up to you to justify your eligibility if they do.

Another key point I made to our young troops was to educate themselves about the Post-9/11 GI Bill. I am not a big supporter of student loan debt, depending on your service situation. The GI bill can be a great tool in helping you meet your and your family's education goals while minimizing debt. Information is available at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/>.

Make sure you confirm the accuracy of information in your virtual military personnel file. Make sure you either keep a hard copy on file or have easy access to it electronically so you can retrieve it. Understanding your pay and benefits is both in your best interest and, in my opinion, your responsibility and something you should share with those you care for. 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.)

Historian presents artwork depicting Reserve Airmen to chief of staff

Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, Air Force Reserve Command commander, and Maj. Warren Neary, the Air Force Space Command historian, presented two pieces of art depicting Reserve Airmen in operational roles to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III June 20.

Neary, also a Reservist, painted "Bandage 33" and "Showtime" after Welsh highlighted the stories behind each piece during his speech at the Air Force Association conference last year.

Jackson said the paintings depict the vital role Citizen Airmen play in every mission set given to the Air Force.

"The Air Force Reserve brings operational capability every single day," Jackson said. "We see that because we're in every mission set the Air Force has."

"Bandage 33" depicts a medical evacuation mission flown out of Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Two Reserve Airmen — Capt. Adriana Valadez and Senior Airman Amanda Pena — were deployed to the 651st Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Kandahar, and their flight picked up Tech. Sgt. Zach Rhyner, an Air Force combat controller, who was critically wounded in March 2013.

During the flight, Rhyner's condition worsened, prompting Valadez to call for immediate diversion into Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The aircraft encountered turbulence upon approach, making it difficult to apply pressure to Rhyner's wounds. Valadez and Pena strapped themselves to the side of the litter, making it possible for Valadez to apply pressure during the landing as well as transportation to the hospital.

"It is this moment that I worked to capture in the painting," Neary said. "They saved his life."

The second painting shows Reservist Lt. Col. Kevin "Showtime" Sutterfield, an F-22 Raptor pilot with the 477th Fighter Group at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. While on assignment in the Persian Gulf, Sutterfield was part of a two-ship formation that inter-



Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III (left) looks at the painting "Bandage 33" with the artist, Maj. Warren Neary, in the Pentagon. Neary, an Air Force Reserve historian, contributed "Bandage 33" and another work, titled "Showtime," through the Air Force Art Program.

cepted an Iranian F-4 Phantom II that was chasing an American remotely piloted aircraft. Both paintings are now in the Pentagon: "Bandage 33" is in Welsh's office, while "Showtime" is in Jackson's.

"With all the great men and women who we have serving in our nation's Air Force during these challenging times, I'm grateful for the opportunity to participate and join the ranks of past artists I admire in capturing the stories of our Airmen for the public and future generations to see and enjoy," Neary said.

(Air Force News Service)

PROUD TO SERVE

By Bo Joyner

Maj. Gen. Stayce Harris is the first female numbered air force commander in the history of Air Force Reserve Command, but it's not that easy to get her to talk about her groundbreaking career or how she made it to the top of 22nd Air Force. She would much rather talk about the 15,000 Air Force Reservists who keep the organization flying and fighting every day.

"I am so impressed by what these Reservists are doing at home and around the world," Harris said during a recent interview from her new office at Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Marietta, Ga. "I can't wait to get out and visit our units and get an up-close look at the missions they are performing."

She's not kidding about not wanting to wait. Harris officially assumed command in late July. On Aug. 3, she was in Pittsburgh, home of the 911th Airlift Wing. She was back at Dobbins for her promotion and assumption of command ceremony on Aug 9. A few days after that, she was checking out the Airmen of the 440th AW at Pope Field in North Carolina. At this rate, it won't be long before Harris will have visited all 23 locations where the 22nd Air Force operates.

"The 22nd has some amazing missions," Harris said. "And I am so proud to serve as its commander."

In her new position, Harris has command over the Reserve's tactical air mobility operations and other vital mission sets like undergraduate pilot training, flight test operations and a highly mobile civil engineering response force. Reserve aircrews within the 22nd Air Force fly a variety of missions to include aerial spray, fire suppression, hurricane hunting and troop transport utilizing the C-130 Hercules.

Harris, a command pilot with more than 2,500 hours in military aircraft like the KC-135R, C-141B/C, T-38 and T-37, is excited about getting the chance to learn to fly the venerable C-130 while at Dobbins. Piloting the Herc will broaden the general's already-extensive flying experience and help her stay current during the two-year leave of absence she is taking from United Airlines to serve as 22nd Air Force commander.

With United, Harris flies the Boeing 747-400 aircraft with international routes to Asia and Europe. She said she will miss flying for the commercial airline and exploring other parts of the planet half a world away

but is looking forward to "settling down" for the next couple of years.

Harris hasn't settled down in any one place for very long during a distinguished Air Force career that began soon after she received her commission through the University of Southern California's Air Force ROTC program in 1981. It was at USC that Harris discovered her passion for flying.

The general said she had never even considered a career as a pilot until her ROTC instructor suggested it to her. Harris decided to give it a shot, and the first time she sat down in a cockpit, she was hooked.

"I knew right away this is what I was meant to do," she said.

Harris served on active duty until 1990 when she began working for United and the following year made the transition to the Air Force Reserve. As a Reservist, she has broken down a lot of barriers and served as a trailblazer for women of color. She was the first African-American woman to command a flying squadron, the 729th Airlift Squadron at March ARB, California, and the first to command a flying wing, the 459th Air Refueling Wing at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. Harris was also the first black female aviator to attain the rank of general in the Air Force and the first to command an air expeditionary group, the 494th AEG at Moron Air Base, Spain.

The general also has a wealth of experience in the individual mobilization augmentee world. Among her numerous individual assignments, she has served as the individual mobilization augmentee to the deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force and the mobilization assistant to the commander of U.S. Africa Command and commander of Air Mobility Command.

It was her wealth of experience and ability to lead that prompted Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, AFRC commander, to select Harris as 22nd Air Force commander.

As the commander of 22nd Air Force, Maj. Gen. Stayce Harris oversees the Reserve's air mobility operations and other vital mission sets like undergraduate pilot training, flight test operations and a highly mobile civil engineering response force. (Staff Sgt. Mark Thompson)





STAFF SGT. MARK THOMPSON

Senior Airman Kati Leonard, a loadmaster with the 440th Airlift Wing, talks with Harris during the general's recent visit to Pope Field, North Carolina.

"You represent the finest of our Citizen Airmen," Jackson said to Harris during her assumption of command and promotion ceremony. "It's not because of broken barriers or statistics that you were chosen for this position, but it was because of your leadership."

Gen. Darren W. McDew, AMC commander, described Harris as a "pioneer" while presiding over her promotion ceremony.

"We promote based on potential," McDew said. "Harris entered active duty among 8,929 officers in 1982 and is one of 18 in her year group to be promoted to major general. I am convinced there is no limit for her. The America we live in ultimately allows us to achieve the things we are qualified, competent and willing to do. Challenge Harris and she will deliver every time."

Challenged to lead the men and women of the 22nd Air Force, Harris said she will look to her personal heroes, the Tuskegee Airmen — famed black aviators who trained at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, and helped assure U.S. victory during World War II — for inspiration.

"These were Airmen who were set up to fail," she said. "But they refused to do so. They were told that they couldn't do the job, but they responded with a drive and determina-

tion to succeed, and they ended up performing their mission better than anyone else had ever done it."

She took the example set by these American heroes to heart and has made a career of perseverance by demonstrating calm and steady leadership when faced with adversity.

"One of the best pieces of advice I have ever been given was to 'just fly your airplane,'" she said. "Stay on course. Don't get distracted by the turbulence of the day — it's only temporary. Stay focused on where you are going, and you'll get there."

Harris' ability to create an environment where members focus on shared goals and objectives has paid dividends for the Air Force Reserve wherever she has served.

"I never wanted to be one of the guys," she said. "But I always knew I could be part of the team, so that's what I strived to do — to be part of the team."

It's her knack for team building, in part, that has helped Harris become the leader she is today.

"Stayce started traveling the world early in her childhood with her father (an Air Force technical sergeant) and her mother," Jackson said. "And traveling has always been a passion of hers. Traveling the world has allowed her to meet numerous people and understand various cultures, and that

has helped her become the team builder she is today. She has a great team here in 22nd Air Force, and I know she'll bring it even closer together."

Harris said her main objectives are to "continue to provide combat-ready forces that are responsive to our nation, to remain relevant in our missions and to look for emerging mission opportunities." She'll have to do all of this at a time when budgets are shrinking and the numbered air forces are having to operate with a smaller footprint.

Still, Harris is confident the units that are a part of 22nd Air Force will continue to excel.

"I was so impressed with the Airmen at both Pittsburgh and Pope and the attitude that they bring to the job," Harris said, noting that both the 911th and 440th AWs have gone through some tough times recently.

In February 2012, the Air Force announced that the 911th would be closing, only to reverse its decision in 2013. Earlier this year, the Air Force announced plans to deactivate the 440th.

"Facing deactivation, it would be easy for the Airmen of the 440th to be bitter, but that's not what I witnessed at all," she said. "I witnessed Airmen who were proud to serve and dedicated to the mission."

"Proud to serve" is a phrase Harris uses a lot.

"I NEVER WANTED TO BE ONE OF THE GUYS, BUT

I ALWAYS KNEW I COULD BE PART OF THE TEAM,

SO THAT'S WHAT I STRIVED TO DO — TO BE PART

OF THE TEAM."

"I'm an American Airman and as an Airman, I am humbled and honored to serve as the 22nd Air Force commander," she said.



STAFF SGT. JACLYN MCDONALD

Gen. Darren W. McDew, Air Mobility Command commander, and Hillard W. Pouncy, an original Tuskegee Airman, pin stars on Harris during her recent promotion ceremony.

TAKING CARE OF AIRMEN

By Bo Joyner

“What’s your story?” That’s the question Brig. Gen. Richard Scobee likes to ask the Airmen he comes in contact with on a daily basis. And he wishes everybody else would do the same. “I love talking with our Airmen and hearing their story,” he said. “The next time you see an Airman, ask him what his or her story is. I guarantee you will come away inspired and impressed.”

Scobee, who is scheduled to take command of 10th Air Force Oct. 18 in a ceremony at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, certainly has an inspiring and impressive story of his own to tell. The son of astronaut and American hero Dick Scobee, the general has carved out a distinguished Air Force career that has taken him to the four corners of the Earth and is now bringing him back to the heart of Texas.

As 10th Air Force commander, Scobee will be responsible for all of Air Force Reserve Command’s fighter; bomber; special operations; rescue; airborne warning and control; combat operations; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; remotely piloted aircraft; space; and cyber units.

It’s a daunting task, but one that Scobee is definitely qualified for. During his career, he has served as an F-16 pilot, instructor pilot and flight examiner both domestically and overseas in Germany, South Korea and Egypt. He has commanded a fighter squadron, an operations group and two fighter wings (including the 301st Fighter Wing at NAS JRB Fort Worth), and he deployed as commander of the 506th Air Expeditionary Group at Kirkuk Regional Air Base in Iraq in 2008.

From October 2010 to October 2013, he served as deputy director of operations, Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, where he was responsible for safeguarding the air sovereignty of North America, including Canada, Alaska and the continental United States.

Immediately before assuming command of the 10th, he served as the director of plans, programs and requirements

for the Air Force at the Pentagon. In that job, Scobee was responsible for the flying hours for 17 types of aircraft in a wide variety of mission areas. Also, plans, programs and requirements analyzes a \$125 billion-per-year program that recommends and presents options to senior leaders and is the Air Force Reserve conduit for coordinating change with the chief of the Air Force Reserve to meet the needs of the Air Force.

Scobee was a senior at the Air Force Academy, just three months shy of graduation, when his father commanded the Space Shuttle Challenger for Space Transportation System mission 51-L in January 1986. The mission was designed to deploy a satellite to study the approaching Halley’s Comet and to inaugurate the Teacher in Space program. Launch was delayed numerous times due to bad weather and technical issues. When Challenger did finally lift off the launch pad, an O-ring seal failure led to an explosion that destroyed the shuttle 73 seconds into the flight, killing the general’s father and the other six members of the crew.

Most of the country was watching live on national television at the time.

“The whole world got to see how my dad died. I wish they could have seen how he lived,” Scobee said. “He was a great father. I was not the most talented kid growing up, but when my dad was around it was like every pitch I threw was a strike and every time I swung the bat it was a home run. He had a way of making you feel special.”

Scobee said his dad was a mechanic at heart, who kept pushing himself to reach greater heights.

“Dad was the first enlisted astronaut and the first mobility

Brig. Gen. Richard Scobee (a colonel at the time) addresses Airmen assigned to the 506th Air Expeditionary Group, Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, in 2008. “I am so impressed and so proud of our Air Force and how much we as Airmen contribute to what’s going on over here,” Scobee said of the time he spent as commander of the 506th AEG. Scobee is scheduled to become the commander of 10th Air Force on Oct. 18. (Senior Airman Randi Flaugh)





MICHAEL J. PAUSIC

Scobee presides over the retirement ceremony for Col. Michael Ricci earlier this year at the Pentagon. The general has served around the world during his distinguished career and he is excited about returning to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, to serve as 10th Air Force commander.

Air Force astronaut,” the general said, noting that his father enlisted in the Air Force in 1957, serving as an engine mechanic at Kelly AFB, Texas. While off duty, he attended San Antonio College and eventually earned a bachelor of sci-

“I KNOW IT’S A LITTLE CLICHE, BUT OUR AIRMEN

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ence degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Arizona in 1965, the same year he was awarded an officer’s commission. He earned his pilot’s wings in 1966 and served as a combat aviator in the Vietnam War before going on to become a test pilot and eventually an astronaut.

“I remember asking him one time how do you go from turning wrenches to being the commander of the space shuttle, and he said, ‘Just do the best you can in whatever job you are doing at the time and always be prepared.’”

The general has tried to follow that advice wherever he has gone in his Air Force career, and he’ll continue trying to do so as the 10th Air Force commander. He said his No. 1 priority will be to provide the best combat Air Force at the least possible cost for the American taxpayer. He is going into his new job with a couple of tough hurdles to overcome.

“I think the biggest challenges facing us right now are money and aging weapons systems,” Scobee said. “We are operating in an environment right now that is fiscally restrained, and we are having to operate with an aging fleet of aircraft. Those two factors combine to create some difficult obstacles.”

Still, Scobee believes he has the answer to overcoming these obstacles, and that answer is the 16,000 people who work throughout the 10th Air Force.

“I know it’s a little cliché, but our Airmen truly are our great-

est asset,” he said. “I know if I can take care of our Airmen, they can take care of the mission.”

Taking care of his Airmen is a lesson Scobee learned early on in his career and one that has been reinforced over the years.

“When I was in Iraq, my command chief was Chief Master Sgt. Gary Brown, and I remember he told me one time, ‘If you ever fail our Airmen, I will find you and I will put a boot in your ... shin,’” the general recalled. “Those words definitely stuck with me.”

Scobee remembers having to hit the ground running in Iraq — an assignment he considers one of the highlights of his career.

“The third day I was there, we had a vehicle improvised explosive device go off, and we had 26 casualties,” he said. “I wish every American citizen could have been there that day to see our Airmen go to work and help the people who were injured. The skill and the passion they displayed were incredible. I have never been more proud of our people or more proud to wear this uniform.”

Brown, who currently serves as the command chief master sergeant to the commander of the 310th Space Wing, Schriever AFB, Colorado, remembers that day, and he remembers the leadership Scobee provided.

“General Scobee was without a doubt the best commander I have had in my 32-plus years of military service,” he said. “He is absolutely passionate about taking care of his Airmen. From the chow hall to having the right equipment and the right training, he makes sure his Airmen have everything they need to do their job.”

Brown said he was especially impressed with the way Scobee went about making important decisions.

“He truly listened to his people,” the chief said. “He took input from everybody before deciding on a course of action, and he always used sound judgment.”

Brown said he is confident Scobee will do a great job of leading the men and women who work under the 10th Air Force umbrella.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that he will be a great NAF commander,” he said.

Maj. Gen. William Binger, the current 10th Air Force commander, agrees. “I couldn’t be happier for 10th Air Force and personally for General Scobee,” he said. “He is a great leader with the poise, personality and dedicated leadership to take the 10th to the next level.”

Binger went on to say that “it’s truly been an honor to serve with the men and women in 10th Air Force. Their dedication and commitment to excellence ensured 10th Air Force units remained combat-ready. It has been a pleasure to lead the Air Force’s most diverse NAF these past three years.

“Though we reduced the 10th Air Force staff footprint, we gained two new independent group organizations and are about to add another wing. We have expanded the Air Force Reserve’s operational reach into new and emerging missions, like ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) and cyberspace and added capability in space and special operations. Our active associations in the A-10 and F-16 are Air Force model programs that increase fighter pilot absorption, seasoning and experience of young active-duty fighter pilots.”

Scobee said he is excited about his new assignment and returning to the Fort Worth area, but he is most excited about having the opportunity to serve the people who work throughout 10th Air Force.

“My dad taught me the importance of service,” he said. “And I couldn’t be more proud to serve as the commander of 10th Air Force.”



Scobee and his son, Andrew, kneel near the grave of Dick Scobee earlier this year during the NASA Day of Remembrance. Dick Scobee was the commander of the Space Shuttle Challenger, which exploded shortly after launch in 1986. His grave is near the memorials to the Space Shuttles Challenger and Columbia in Arlington National Cemetery’s Section 46.

New AEF Construct

Changes designed to make deployments more predictable, allow Airmen to deploy with units

The Air Force's redesigned air expeditionary force construct will modify how Reservists mobilize for contingencies and support combatant commanders.

The new AEF construct, scheduled to start this month, is intended to make deployments more predictable for Reservists and improve opportunities for them to deploy with their units. Under the revised construct, Air Force Reserve Command units will deploy larger numbers of Airmen from the same unit under a 1:5 mobilization-to-dwell ratio for aviation/maintenance and agile combat support Airmen.

The revised construct establishes a 48-month mobilization battle rhythm or window in which a Reservist may deploy for up to six months and be home for up to 42 months. This will allow wings to more effectively posture forces to meet global mission requirements while allowing them to continue to train at home station.

In the past, Airmen deployed as individuals or small elements in a system of tempo bands, based on their Air Force specialty codes. As a result, Airmen from bases throughout the Air Force came together downrange.

"Our Airmen have performed superbly in their individual deployments under the current AEF structure for the last 11 years," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh, who approved the new AEF construct in April 2013. "I visited a deployed squadron last year that was manned by 81 Airmen from 41 different bases. While we've proven we can be successful with that approach, we believe the new AEF model is a more efficient way to get the job done. This new construct will facilitate better teamwork and unit performance during deployed operations."

While there are other subtle changes, the most noticeable changes for Airmen will be a stabilized battle rhythm and an opportunity to deploy with unit teammates. Air Force leadership has worked hard to secure the 1:2 deploy-to-dwell ratio as the baseline active component standard battle rhythm while continuing the 1:5 mobilization-to-dwell ratio as the reserve component mobilization battle rhythm. While this is the goal, some high-demand specialties may deploy more frequently.

"The new AEF construct should provide more opportunities for Air Force Reservists to deploy with members of their own units," said Brig. Gen. Derek P. Rydholm, AFRC director of plans, programs, requirements and assessments. "It will increase morale and esprit de corps among our Reserve units and provide Reservists a better idea of when and with whom they will deploy."

For more information on AEF battle rhythm and individual base dwell times, contact your local unit deployment manager or base deployment manager.

(Staff reports)

The Air Force's redesigned air expeditionary force construct is designed to provide Airmen a more stable battle rhythm as well as a better opportunity to deploy with members of their unit.



In Our Corner

Air Force's top leader discusses Air Force Reserve's future

By Master Sgt. Shawn J. Jones

Citizen Airmen have an advocate at the Air Force's highest level.

During a visit to Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, home of Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James discussed several issues related to the Air Force Reserve's future.

As the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard continue to grow in proportion to the overall Air Force, greater integration and collaboration among active-duty and reserve component Airmen is expected, James said.

The Air Force faces a very tight budget environment, which is forcing officials to seek cost efficiencies wherever possible while maintaining the readiness to provide airpower when the nation calls. The air reserve components are uniquely positioned to answer that call on an as-needed basis with combat-ready, cost-effective Airmen who do not require year-round, full-time pay and benefits.

The merits of the reserve components aren't news to James, who served as the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs from 1993 to 1998.

"Nobody has to convince me," James said. "I'm already there when it comes to the value the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve bring to our total force."

In order to capitalize on Guard and Reserve cost-effectiveness, the Air Force is conducting a mission-by-mission analysis to determine what can be moved from the active component into the reserve components.

"We're going to lean forward and place as much as we possibly can in the Guard and Reserve," James said.

Approximately 80 percent of the analysis will be complete by year's end, she said.

The increase in the Reserve mission set will be accompanied by an increase in the integration between full-time and part-time Airmen. Over the past few years, the number of associate units, in which active-duty and Reserve Airmen serve side by side, has increased from 102 to 124. James said she doesn't want to stop there.

"I think we need to kick it up a notch and do more," she said.

Air Force officials are exploring new creative integration models, and James said she expects staffs at all levels, from the major commands down to individual flights, to be integrated where appropriate.



Lt. Col. Bill Gutermuth (left) briefs Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James as Brig. Gen. Edmund D. Walker, Force Generation Center commander, listens during her visit to Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, in August.

She said it is especially important for senior-ranking Airmen to understand both the active and reserve models of service and that eventually all good candidates to serve as the Air Force chief of staff will have had assignments and experiences that were heavily involved with the Guard and Reserve.

The secretary also raised the topic of career mobility in the active and reserve component.

"We care about having the best talent in our Air Force, and whether that talent resides in the active duty, the Guard or the Reserve, it almost doesn't matter to us," she said. "The point is that we capture such talent and retain such talent for our Air Force going forward."

While it is currently possible for Airmen to move from one status to another, the secretary said a number of policies, processes and laws stand in the way, complicating the transition.

"It's not as seamless as it ought to be," she said.

Air Force officials are looking to recommend changes to some of the policies and laws.

"I would estimate over the next year or so we will have very specific proposals to put forward," James said.

During her visit to Robins, the secretary visited several units, including HQ AFRC.

"Meeting with Secretary James was an incredible opportunity for all of us," said Lt. Gen. James F. Jackson, AFRC commander. "She was able to see first-hand the value of headquarters, the impact it has on our 70,000 Citizen Airmen, and she gained a better understanding of the collective issues we face."

(Jones is the public affairs NCO for the AFRC Recruiting Service at Robins AFB.)

Divorce

Reservist, colleague studying why break-ups are more common for women in the military

By Bo Joyner

Women in the military are more likely to get divorced than male service members, and one Air Force Reservist is trying to figure out exactly why.

Lt. Col. Alicia Rossiter, an instructor and researcher at the University of South Florida in Tampa, and her colleague, Rasheeta Chandler, have teamed up to study why women service members are getting divorced at a higher rate than their male counterparts.

Rossiter, who also serves as the College of Nursing military liaison at USF, and Chandler were surprised when they read a Pentagon report from 2010 that showed 8 percent of women in the military were divorced, while the divorce rate for men was only 3 percent.

"We found that there wasn't much research addressing the demands of a military career and the implications on romantic relationships, so we decided to conduct our own," said Rossiter, who serves as an individual mobilization augmentee at the Uniform Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland.

"We wanted to see if PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), MST (military sexual trauma), and other military-specific variables such as deployments, extended tours of duty, and difficulty assimilating back into the marriage and family were contributing factors in their divorces," Rossiter said.

The pair developed the Chandler and Rossiter Military Divorce Survey to see if these variables were indeed contributing factors. The survey contains 14 items and is administered in an electronic format.

"For our first study, we had 27 veteran and active-duty women from the Tampa area who participated," Rossiter said. Of those, 25 percent reported undergoing a divorce while deployed. The main reasons reported as contributing to the

divorce included deployment, spousal infidelity, stress assimilating back into the marriage and family issues, PTSD, MST, and temporary duty assignments.

"Divorced women were more likely to report experiencing sexual assault while in the military in comparison to those who were not divorced and who primarily reported experiencing sexual harassment," the pair concluded.

"Information from our initial study shows that women in the military who report experiencing MST or sexual harassment may benefit from continued and improved sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention training in the armed forces," Rossiter said. "Universal screening for MST could also help women reintegrate back into their marriage and family post-deployment."

Since completing their initial study, Rossiter and Chandler have refined their military divorce survey for broader application. They are currently looking for volunteers to take part in an expanded study. Female veterans who were in a relationship, married or divorced while serving in the military, as well as divorced veteran and active-duty women at least 18 years of age, are encouraged to complete the Chandler and Rossiter Military Divorce Survey at https://usfhealth.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6D0xujeTxFwmq7H. For more information, Rossiter and Chandler may be contacted at arossite@health.usf.edu and rchandle@health.usf.edu.

Alicia Rossiter (left), an Air Force Reserve lieutenant colonel, and Rasheeta Chandler are studying why women in the military are more likely to get divorced than their male counterparts.



THE HEART OF A BULL

Recruiter meets life's many challenges head-on with a fighter's mentality

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

Raised in American Samoa by his grandmother in a household of strong women, Master Sgt. Stanley "The Bull" Iakopo, Air Force Reserve Command recruiter with the 944th Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., now trains and competes as a professional mixed martial arts fighter.

Iakopo has been an active Guard and Reserve recruiter with the Air Force Reserve Command since 2008 and was a traditional Reservist in the air transportation career field for seven years prior to becoming an AGR. He has been assigned to the 944th FW since 2012.

In 2002, while a member of the all-Air Force Armed Forces rugby team, he was introduced to mixed martial arts. Iakopo's friend invited him and four others to a gym that was looking for some fresh local talent.

"They wanted us to spar," Iakopo said. "We didn't even have mouthpieces. They just threw us in the ring, and we fought. After that, I was the only one in my group of friends who went back."

Throughout his 13-year Air Force career, Iakopo has always been active, both physically and mentally. He played rugby, ran track and played semi-professional football for a while. He is also well educated, with a degree from the University of Hawaii where he majored in speech language pathology with a minor in pre-med. He also earned a master's degree in education from Framingham State University in Massachusetts. While working toward his bachelor's degree in 2001, Iakopo enlisted in the Reserve and began his career with the 48th Aerial Port Squadron at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. He later transferred to the 44th APS in Guam.

"It would cost me around \$500 each month for airfare and a rental car to attend the unit training assemblies," Iakopo said. "I did that every month for five years," a costly expense for a senior airman.

In 2009, everything was nearly taken away from him after he collapsed during physical training. Shortly after undergoing a heart stress test, he

was admitted to the hospital. The diagnosis was mitral valve stenosis, a condition in which the heart's mitral valve is narrowed (stenotic). With mitral valve stenosis, the abnormal valve doesn't open properly, blocking blood flow coming into the left ventricle, the main pumping chamber of the heart. Mitral valve stenosis can cause tiredness and shortness of breath, among other problems.

In Iakopo's case, the condition had slowly developed after he suffered from rheumatic fever as an adolescent. Up until his diagnosis, Iakopo had managed to cope with his fitness tests and any physical exertion.

"After a PT test, the front of my shirt would be covered in blood because of the malfunctioning mitral valve," Iakopo said. "And when I fought, my goal was to finish my opponent in the first round, because I was too gassed if I went into the second round."

Shortly after the diagnosis, Iakopo underwent open heart surgery to clean up the valve. However, after his surgery the problems persisted; his heart would race as high as 200 beats per minute for no reason.

Frequent visits to the hospital emergency room to set his heart to "sinus rhythm," which is the normal regular rhythm of the heart set by the organ's natural pacemaker, were common. At each visit, Iakopo underwent a procedure called cardioversion, which is when a patient is placed under anesthesia and doctors deliver an electrical shock to the chest to reset the heart's rhythm to normal.

In October 2011, Iakopo had his second open heart surgery, this time to replace the calcified valve he had. After careful consideration of which prosthetic valve would best suit him, he chose a cow valve because of the durability for his very active lifestyle. Cow valves are similar to human valves in tissue physiology. His particular valve was from a bull.

"I am in debt to AFRC recruiting for how understanding and supportive they were to me and my family during my medical difficulties," Iakopo said.

Now, the recruiter with the heart of a bull has a perpetual smile on his face and new vigor for life. At 41 years old, Iakopo has no intention of slowing down. When he arrived in Arizona, he began looking for a gym where he could train. He met Cesar Peraza, owner of a boxing and MMA gym. The former professional fighter provides a gym that is family run and a training regimen that is well suited for Iakopo.

"Working with Cesar and the rest of the team has improved my stand-up (fighting) tremendously as well as my jiu jitsu," Iakopo said. "The people are friendly and family oriented."

The Arizona State Boxing Commission does not recognize Iakopo's previous international matches. Therefore,

his debut on June 14 in the "Duel for Domination" at the Arizona Event Center in Mesa was his first recognized fight. Although he dominated the stand-up portion of the fight, he was eventually overcome by his opponent's ground game, an area he admits he needs to improve upon.

"Stanley has all the attributes we look for in a fighter," Peraza said. "He is a real competitor, a great athlete, and he pushes himself above and beyond. It makes it that much easier for us to work with somebody like that at this level."

Because of the performance he displayed during his fight, Iakopo is scheduled to fight again Oct. 4, pending the approval of his No. 1 fan and supporter, his wife, Priscilla.

Iakopo approaches everything he does with the same intensity he displays in the ring. Unlike many other fighters in the sport, he has a wide variety of responsibilities. Balancing his duties as a father and husband, serving his country as an Air Force Reserve recruiter, continuing his education, and finding time to train and compete requires a lot of discipline. Currently, Iakopo is a second-year doctoral student at Grand Canyon University and has high hopes for the future.

"My goal is to achieve the rank of chief master sergeant and obtain a doctorate degree in behavioral health analysis," he said. "Fighting is just a sport for me."

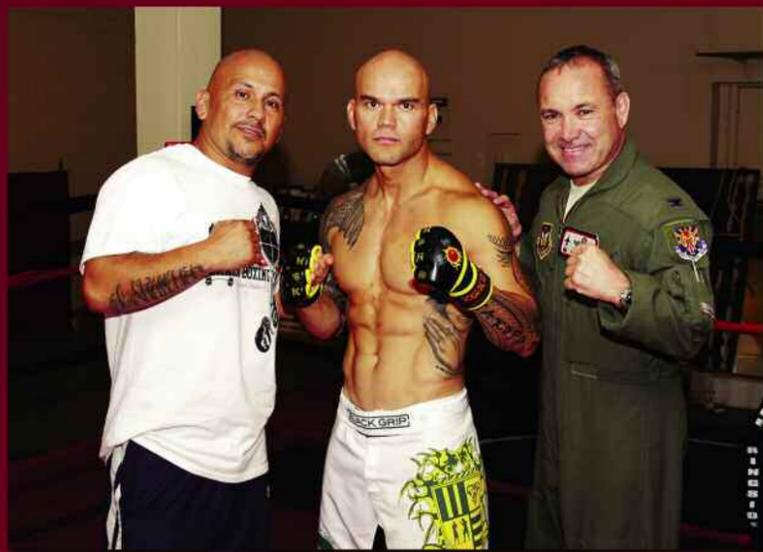
Periodically throughout his life, there have been people who have provided the stability and mentorship to enlighten or get him through difficult times. He attributes his success to his wife, grandmother, mother and key military figures he has come in contact with while in the Reserve. His priorities have always been his wife and five children. If training for a fight conflicts with the interests of family obligations, then his urge to engage in physical combat is put on the backburner.

"He is a man of unique character," said Senior Master Sgt. Christian Jorg, Air Force Reserve Command flight chief recruiter with the 944th FW and Iakopo's direct supervisor. "His uncanny ability to be so happy and positive yet demanding makes him a great recruiter."

Iakopo's motto in response to life's adversities is to "get down and fight." Although always positive and upbeat, he confronts every challenge with an intensity and fighter's attitude. He hopes his story helps or inspires others to fight for what they want in life, regardless of the obstacles they may face.

"Whatever you choose to do in life, don't give 100 percent," Iakopo said. "Give it your all; your all can't be measured."

(Vega is assigned to the 944TH FW public affairs office at Luke AFB.)



(Top photo) Master Sgt. Stanley Iakopo, Air Force Reserve Command recruiter with the 944th Fighter Wing, poses with his trainer, Cesar Peraza, and Col. Kurt J. Gallegos, 944th FW commander. (Middle and bottom photos) Iakopo works with Joe Vigil to get ready for an upcoming mixed martial arts fight.

A Perfect Fit

Attorney blends military and civilian experience to train officer candidates

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Natasha Stannard

Capt. Brian Walker didn't need to take a leave of absence from the law practice he owns in Fort Worth, Texas, or take the pay cut that went with it in exchange for spending the summer at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, where sweat pours down faces like rain trailing down a window during a rain storm. He also didn't need to trade the space of his 50-acre ranch with five horses and crops ready for harvest for a 600-square-foot billeting room.

"It's a sacrifice I wanted to make because I believe that teaching is so important," Walker said. "There are things that I have seen in our Air Force that I think we need to instill in our officer corps. That is important to me, so I decided I want to make a sacrifice to be a part of the process of training officers."

Walker was the first judge advocate general officer to serve as an instructor at the Air Force Officer Training School's Commissioned Officer Training course.

The captain went through COT five years ago. The

course instructors train all pre-commissioned doctors, lawyers and chaplains. At that point, he had been a lawyer for five years with case experience in federal and state courts.

Walker returned to COT to share with his students his experience both as an officer and civilian lawyer.

He didn't, however, reveal his Reserve position to his students until a couple of weeks into the five-week course.

"It's funny because we were going over our impressions of him. Some of us were spot-on, but my personal first impression was of him running off the stage and yelling, 'Flight, get in the room,'" said 2nd Lt. (Dr.) Christina Loyke, one of Walker's students. "We weren't really expecting him to say, 'I just left my civilian law firm to come here and teach, and I'm in the Reserve.'"

She also noted



Capt. Brian Walker, Commissioned Officer Training course instructor, is the first judge advocate to instruct at the school. Walker is an Air Force Reserve member and owns a law practice in Fort Worth, Texas. The school often integrates Reserve and Air National Guard members into its staff to strengthen total force initiatives.

that his professional experience aided class instruction.

"He's very good at presenting everything, especially when we did the military law section, which was a topic no one had any idea about in our class," Loyke said. "He knows how to teach it in a manner we can understand, rather than just throwing the book at us and saying, 'Okay, learn it.'"

Loyke said the captain's experiences, both military and civilian, gave the students different perspectives and helped them have a better understanding of the course material.

While Walker said he wasn't sure if he was ready for the 15-hour days of physical training, teaching and drill instructing, he was sure he wanted to make a difference in the Air Force.

"One of the reasons I was zealous about doing this job was (it provided the opportunity) to instill in our trainees the knowledge that they have the ability to be empowered," he said. "They're officers. By virtue of that commission, they have the duty and the obligation to make decisions, to not be

gripped with fear, but to focus on doing the mission and doing it decisively."

Lt. Col. Shannon Juby, commander of the 23rd Training Squadron, was glad the long hours didn't dissuade Walker from teaching at COT.

"The bottom line is that diversity amongst the entire Officer Training School staff is highly desired," Juby said. "We work together across the group to provide the best preparation we can for our trainees, regardless of (Air Force specialty code) or component. Captain Walker is a perfect fit to our OTS team and brings a lot of enthusiasm and energy to the training environment."

Walker returned to ranch life the first week of August. However, he plans to travel back to Maxwell AFB to give another COT class his Reserve judge advocate and civilian law perspectives.

Reservists who are interested in shaping the next generation of COT graduates by augmenting a course at Maxwell may contact Lt. Col. Brent Larson of the 23rd Training Squadron at DSN 953-0347.

(Stannard is assigned to the 42nd Air Base Wing public affairs office at Maxwell AFB.)

Making a Connection

Alaska F-22 pilot flies vintage aircraft to share his love of aviation with the next generation

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Dana Rosso

During the 477th Fighter Group's August unit training assembly weekend, Lt. Col. Kevin Sutterfield flew two sorties as a flight examiner, providing check rides to other Reserve pilots. It was a fairly typical UTA for the F-22 pilot.

The weekend before was anything but typical as Sutterfield shared his passion for history and love of aviation with more than 250,000 people who attended the open house at Joint Reserve Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

"I started flying with the Commemorative Air Force about a year ago — initially in the T-6 (Texan) and then in the BT-13 (Valiant)," Sutterfield said. "It was a special opportunity to fly the T-6 during the JBER show as part of the warbird flyby because we were honoring Mike Hunt, a 92-year-old World War II veteran and Alaska flying legend."

According to its website, the Commemorative Air Force was founded to "acquire, restore and preserve

in flying condition a complete collection of combat aircraft, which were flown by all military services of the United States, and selected aircraft of other nations for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations of Americans."

"Flying these vintage airplanes is fun," Sutterfield said. "But the true joy is connecting with the crowds, especially the kids. We have to connect the next generation to 'The Greatest Generation' if we hope to pass on their inspiring stories."

As the son of an Air Force pilot, Sutterfield's love of flying began at an early age.

"My dad was a fighter pilot and taught me how to fly when I was in high school," he said. "I still hear dad's voice in the back of my head when I'm making a landing: 'Easy ... make it smooth.'"

Sutterfield's father also introduced him to the Reno Air Races, which he competed in for the first time in September.

"It's a great combination of speed, skill and camaraderie," he said. "My dad is infectiously curious and is

always trying something different or learning something new. That (attitude) has taught me that flying the F-22 is not the pinnacle, it is just one of the many exciting things happening in aviation."

Before he could compete in the event, the rookie pilot had to attend Pylon Racing School. The week-long school gives pilots a chance to prepare, practice and become certified to race in the national championship air races.



Lt. Col. Kevin Sutterfield, Reserve F-22 pilot assigned to the 477th Fighter Group, prepares to fly a T-6 Texan during the Arctic Thunder Open House July 27 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. Sutterfield is a member of the Commemorative Air Force, an organization whose goal it is to preserve World War II-era aircraft in a flyable condition and demonstrate them around the country.

"The Air Races are a great opportunity to combine flying and competition," Sutterfield said.

(Rosso is assigned to the 477th Fighter Group public affairs office at Elmendorf-Richardson.)



Outstanding Airman

An Air Force Reserve pararescueman is one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. Tech. Sgt. William Posch, assigned to the 308th Rescue Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, received the honor at a ceremony in September. Posch works in one of the most physically challenging, low-density, high-demand career fields in the military. Pararescuemen are dedicated to their motto "These Things We Do, That Others May Live." Posch demonstrated that through more than 140 combat rescues as well as leading the evacuation of 126 Americans from the U.S. Embassy in Juba, Sudan, during a violent uprising. Posch also planned and executed upgrade training for 18 fellow pararescuemen 90 days ahead of schedule and was one of three Airmen selected for an exercise with Navy Seals.

Volunteerism is core to Posch's character. He works with the Make A Wish Foundation to create a GI Joe combat scenario for terminally ill children and has dedicated more than 1,200 hours to the American Red Cross Volunteer Lifesaving Corps.

